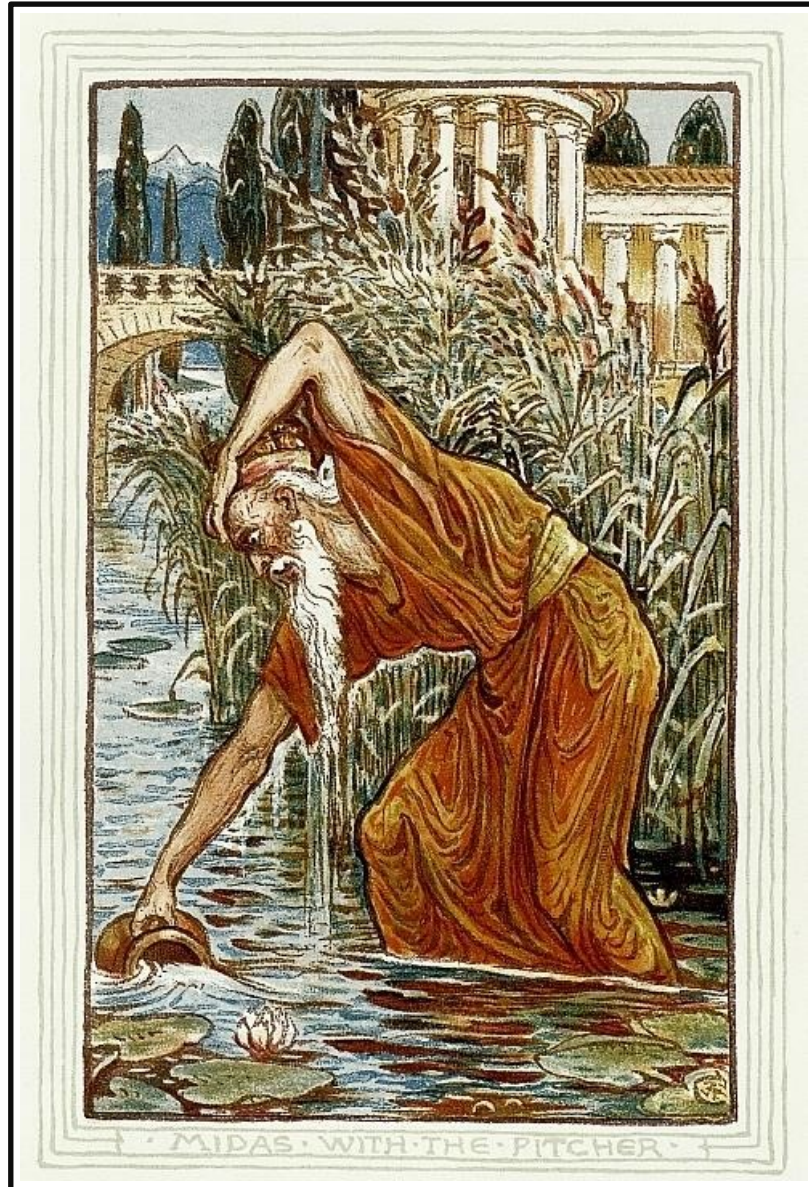


The Age of Fable

Stories of Gods and Heroes by Thomas Bulfinch



A Reading Guide by Lisa Kelly



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Lesson Notes

1. “Connection” questions and prompts were written to bridge the gap between chapter readings. They were designed to bring forth what students already know about a topic so that the new information can be connected to it.
2. Have students define the words listed under “Words to Know” either independently or together orally with the teacher. Teachers and students should locate any listed places, read and discuss any notes included at the beginning of each lesson and discuss the pronunciation of any words, as needed.
3. Students should either have the book read aloud to them or should read each chapter (or reading section) together with the teacher or should read the book independently, whichever best fits.
4. After reading, students should narrate. There are multiple narration suggestions for each chapter.
5. Any lessons in literary terms can be included or omitted as it best fits the needs of your students.

Editions –Illustrations and Maps

This guide was written based upon the Gramercy edition, since it can be purchased as an affordable hardcover with illustrations, tables and charts, a dictionary/index and a large map at the front of the book. However, this edition does include a few pictures with nudity/violence. Use the free online version at Project Gutenberg or Sacred Texts for a text-only version. A free illustrated version is available at Internet Archive to be borrowed. Linked maps can be found at the website for those using the latter versions. Living Book Press also has a nice edition with appropriate illustrations.

Literary Elements

- myths & fables
- heroes and heroines
- allegory

Expressions, Idioms and Word Connections

In addition to the generally included notes for Words to Know, this guide extends this with Expressions, Idioms and Word Connections to Know. All which further expand on the impact myths have on our language.

Picture Study & Final Projects

Many images of famous paintings depicting scenes described in *The Age of Fable* can be found in the appendix under “Picture Study”. Images are labeled with a corresponding letter, but are arranged first by vertical images and second by horizontal images. For example, “Image C” does not directly follow “Image B”, since it is in a horizontal [landscape] orientation vs. a vertical [portrait] orientation. The images included have been selected to exclude nudity and extremely violent scenes. Please preview as needed for your family.

Some suggestions for final projects can be found in the appendix as well.

Reading & Writing Extensions

Some chapters include reading and/or writing extensions. Feel free to add or omit these as best fits your family.

Exam Prompts

- Describe a memorable scene. What made this scene memorable?
- Name several characters from this book. Choose two and tell about each one.

There are more exam prompts in the guide. This is a sample only.

Reading Schedule

Chapter #	Titles
1	Introduction
2	Prometheus and Pandora
3	Apollo and Daphne—Pyramus and Thisbe—Cephalus and Procris
4	Juno and her Rivals, Io and Callisto—Diana and Actaeon —Latona and the Rustics
5	Phaeton
6	Midas—Baucis and Philemon
7	Proserpine—Glaucus and Scylla
8	Pygmalion—Dryope—Venus and Adonis—Apollo and Hyacinthus
9	Ceyx and Halcyone
10	Vertumnus and Pomona—Iphis and Anaxarete
11	Cupid and Psyche
12	Cadmus—The Myrmidons
13	Nisus and Scylla—Echo and Narcissus—Clytie—Hero and Leander
14	Minerva and Arachne—Niobe
15	The Graeae and Gorgons—Perseus and Medusa—Atlas—Andromeda
16	Monsters: Giants—Sphinx—Pegasus and Chimaera—Centaur —Griffin—Pygmies
17	The Golden Fleece—Medea
18	Meleager and Atalanta
19	Hercules—Hebe and Ganymede
20	Theseus and Daedalus—Castor and Pollux—Festivals and Games
21	Bacchus and Ariadne
22	The Rural Deities—The Dryads and Erisichthon —Rhoecus—Water Deities—Camenae—Winds
23	Achelus and Hercules—Admetus and Alcestis—Antigone—Penelope
24	Orpheus and Eurydice—Aristaeus—Amphion—Linus —Thamyris—Marsyas—Melampus—Musaeus
25	Arion—Ibycus—Simonides—Sappho
26	Endymion—Orion—Aurora and Tithonus—Acis and Galatea
27	The Trojan War
28	The Fall of Troy—Return of the Greeks—Orestes and Electra
29	Adventures of Ulysses—The Lotus-eaters—The Cyclopes —Circe—Sirens—Scylla and Charybdis—Calypso
30	The Phaeacians—Fate of the Suitors
31	Adventures of Aeneas—The Harpies—Dido—Palinurus
32	The Infernal Regions—The Sibyl

33	Aeneas in Italy—Camilla—Evander—Nisus and Euryalus —Mezentius—Turnus
34	Pythagoras—Egyptian Deities—Oracles
35	Origin of Mythology—Statues of Gods and Goddesses —Poets of Mythology
36	Monsters (modern)—The Phoenix—Basilisk—Unicorn—Salamander
37	Eastern Mythology—Zoroaster—Hindu Mythology—Castes—Buddha —The Grand Lama—Prester John
38	Northern Mythology—Valhalla—The Valkyrior
39	Thor's Visit to Jotunheim
40	The Death of Baldur—The Elves—Runic Letters—Skalds—Iceland —Teutonic Mythology—The Nibelungen Lied —Wagner's Nibelungen Ring
41	The Druids—Iona

The Age of Fable –Chapter 1

- * Read Chapter 1 [Introduction] from *The Age of Fable*.

Before the Reading

- Connection: Use the title and cover illustration to help you predict what this book might be about. [The subtitle for *The Age of Fable* is “Stories of Gods and Heroes”. Share this with students to help with this discussion.] Be sure to read and discuss the notes under “Literary Elements” as well.
- Words to Know: extinct, theology, oblivion, orators, equable, quaffed and caduceus
- Note: Use the large map at the beginning of the book, if included, to help locate places listed under “Map Work”. Alternatively, see the linked map: “Mythological Map of Greece and Western Asia Minor”. [R: Literature, The Age of Fable](#)
- Note 2: This chapter introduces a large number of names/characters. Remind students that they will be mentioned again in subsequent chapters.

People	Pronunciation	Map Work	Other	Illustrative Passages
Jupiter/Jove/Zeus		Mount Olympus	Hyperboreans	“Song of Hyperborean” (Moore)
Hebe		Delphi	Aethiopians	“Comus” and <i>Paradise Lost</i> (Milton)
Apollo		Euxine Sea (Black Sea)	Elysian Plain	<i>The Odyssey</i> (Homer)
Minerva/Athena	mi-nur-vuh	Hellas (Greece)	Wain (Bear)	Cowper
Vulcan/Hephaestus		Thessaly	Seasons	Shakespeare
Saturn/Cronus		Lemnos	Titans	Spenser
Rhea/Ops	ree'-uh	Isle of Cyprus	Chaos	<i>Childe Harold</i> (Byron)
Oceanus	oh-see-ah-nus	Arcadia (region in the central Peloponnese)	Tartarus	“Prophecy of Capys” (<i>Lays of Ancient Rome</i> , Macaulay)
Hyperion	hahy-peer-ee-uhn	Rome	Aegis	
Iapetus	ahy-ap-i-tuhs	Italy	Cestus	
Themis			Satyrs	
Mnemosyne	Mnee-moh-si-nee		Saturnalia	
Eurynome			Vestals	
Neptune/Poseidon			Muses	
Metis			Calliope	
Atlas			Clio	

Pluto/Hades			Euterpe	
Juno/Hera			Melpomene	
Iris			Terpsichore	
Mars/Ares			Erato	
Diana/Artemis			Polyhymnia	
Venus/Aphrodite			Urania	
Eros/Cupid			Thalia	
Anteros			Graces	
Mercury/Hermes	her-meēs		Euphrosyne	
Maia			Aglaia (Aglaea)	
Latona			Thalia	
Dione			Fates	
Ceres/Demeter	sir'-eez		Clotho	
Proserpine/Persephone	pro-ser-pine pur-sef'-uh-nee		Lachesis	
Bacchus/Dionysus	bak-uhs		Atropos	
Semele	sem'-uh-lee		Erinyes/Furies (Eumenides)	
Nemesis			Alecto	
Pan/Faunus	fawn'-uhs		Tisiphone [ti-sif-uh-nee]	
Momus			Megaera	
Plutus				
Quirinus/Romulus				
Bellona				
Terminus				
Pales				
Pomona				
Flora				
Lucina				
Vesta				
Janus				
Penates				
Lares				

Literary Elements

A **myth**, according to Merriam-Webster, is “a story often describing the adventures of beings with more than human powers that attempts to explain mysterious events or that explains a religious belief or practice”.

Here are some types of characters you might meet in a myth:

- heroes
- heroines
- tricksters
- mythical creatures or monsters

What types of characters do you think that you might meet in this book?

What is the title of this book? Discuss the use of the word “fable”.

The word **fable** derives from the Latin word *fabula*, which originally meant about the same as the Greek *mythos*. Like *mythos*, it came to mean a fictitious or untrue story. Myths, in contrast, are not presented as fictitious or untrue. Fables, like some myths, feature personified animals or natural objects as characters. Unlike myths, however, fables almost always end with an explicit moral message, and this highlights the characteristic feature of fables—namely, that they are instructive tales that teach morals about human social behavior. Myths, by contrast, tend to lack this directly didactic aspect, and the sacred narratives that they embody are often hard to translate into direct prescriptions for action in everyday human terms. (*Britannica*)

After the Reading

Narration Suggestions

- Name some of the characters introduced in this chapter. Choose three to describe more fully.
- Give four questions you would ask of this chapter.
- Draw a picture which includes illustrations of several characters introduced in this chapter. Give your picture a title or caption and share it with someone, describing each one depicted.
- Sketch a map of how the Greeks envisioned the world using the description given in the chapter. Give labels and a title to your map and share it with someone, telling of it.



The Age of Fable –Chapter 2

- * Read Chapter 2 from *The Age of Fable*.

Before the Reading

- Connection: Which characters introduced in the previous chapter did you find interesting? What more would you like to know of them?
- Words to Know: discord, sagacity, prodigal, reflux, pious and impiety
- Note: Use the large map at the beginning of the book, if included, to help locate places listed under “Map Work”. Alternatively, see the linked map: “Mythological Map of Greece and Western Asia Minor”. R: Literature, The Age of Fable
- Present Image A: *Pandora’s Box*. Encourage thoughts and ideas about this picture. Refer back to this image after the reading and discuss it further. Does anything surprise you about this picture?
Appendix

Proper Nouns for an Oral Narration

People	Pronunciation	Map Work	Other	Illustrative Passages
Prometheus	proh-meeʹ-thee-uhs	Mount Parnassus [par-nah-sus]	Chaos	<i>Paradise Lost</i> , Book IV (Milton)
Epimetheus	ep-ee-meeʹ-thee-us	Mount Caucasus [kaw-kuh-sihs]	Titans	“Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte” (Byron)
Minerva/Athena	mi-nur-vuh		Golden Age	Shelley
Jupiter/Jove/Zeus			Silver Age	
Pandora	pan-dohrʹ-uh		Brazen (Bronze) Age	
Astraea -Goddess of Innocence and Purity			Iron Age	
Neptune/Poseidon			Milky Way	
Deucalion	due-kayʹ-lee-uhn			
Pyrrha	pihr-rah			
Triton				
Eve				
Iapetus	ahy-ap-i-tuhs			

After the Reading

Narration Suggestions

- How is the story of Eve similar to the story of Pandora? How is it different?
- Choose the Golden, Silver, Brazen (Bronze) or Iron Age and describe it.
- Write an account of Astraea. [Use the footnotes, if included, for more information about her.]
- Draw a picture of any scene from this reading section. Give your picture a title or caption and share it with someone, telling about the scene depicted.
- Choose the Golden, Silver, Brazen (Bronze) or Iron Age and draw a picture of it. Give your picture a title or caption and share it with someone, telling of it.
- Explain why Prometheus has become the symbol of endurance and strength of will.

Reading & Writing Extension

- Read Milton's "Hymn on the Nativity". Copy verses 14 and 15. Tell how they relate to this chapter.

The Age of Fable –Chapter 3

- * Read Chapter 3 from *The Age of Fable*.

Before the Reading

- Connection: Name the ages described in the previous chapter. Choose one and describe it. Name some characters from the previous chapter. Choose one and tell more of this character.
- Words to Know: commemoration, illustrious, rejoined, abhorred, oracles, malady, amatory, edifice, sepulcher, burlesqued, metamorphosis and credulous
- Word Connections to Know: Connect the words “Aurora Borealis” to Aurora and Boreas [Borealis]. [Ans. Aurora Borealis is derived from the Greek words “Aurora” meaning “sunrise” and “Boreas” meaning “wind”. Aurora Borealis is defined as a broad band of lights that have a magnetic and electrical source and that appears in the sky at night especially in the arctic region; they are also called northern lights (Merriam-Webster). It would have been rare for the Greeks to have seen these lights as they are much further south than places which usually can see them.]
- Present Image B: *Thisbe*. Encourage thoughts and ideas about this picture. Name two things you see in this picture. Name something you notice about the painting [colors, light, location, etc.] Refer back to this image after the reading and discuss it further. What in the painting points to the story you know of Thisbe? [Appendix](#)

Proper Nouns for an Oral Narration

People	Pronunciation	Map Work	Other	Illustrative Passages
Apollo	a-pol'-lo	Mount Parnassus	Python	<i>Childe Harold</i> (Byron)
Daphne (nymph)	daf-nee	Babylonia	Pythian games	Armstrong (poet)
Cupid/Eros (Venus's boy)			Belvedere	Waller (poet)
Peneus (river god)			Laurel Tree	“Adonais” (Shelley)
Hymen			Tomb of Ninus	“Sylph's Ball” (Moore)
Diana/Artemis			Davy's Safety Lamp	“Lusiad” (Mickle)
Jupiter			Lelaps	“Legendary Ballads” (Moore)
Pyramus	peer'-uh-muhs			
Thisbe	thiz'-bee			
Semiramis	sem-ir'-uh-mis			
Aurora/Eos				
Cephalus	sef'-uh-luhs			
Procris				

After the Reading

Narration Suggestions

- Describe the Pythian Games. Research the origins of the Olympic Games. Compare them to the Pythian Games by tabulating a chart.
- Retell either the story of Apollo and Daphne, Pyramus and Thisbe or Cephalus and Procris.
- Draw a picture of any scene from this chapter. Give your picture a title or caption and share it with someone, telling of the scene depicted.
- If you could meet any character from this chapter, then who would it be? What would you ask or tell this character?



Reading & Writing Extensions

- Read the excerpt of Pyramus and Thisbe from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by William Shakespeare [Act V, Scene 1]. How does it relay their story? How does their story compare to Romeo and Juliet's story?
- Read Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Write a paragraph summarizing the main theme of the poem and your opinion of it.

