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The Story of Medusa and Athena

Do Now/ Entrance Slip

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there lived a beautiful maiden named Medusa. Medusa lived in the city of Athens in a country named Greece—and although there were many pretty girls in the city, Medusa was considered the most lovely.

Unfortunately, Medusa was very proud of her beauty and thought or spoke of little else. Each day she boasted of how pretty she was, and each day her boasts became more outrageous.

On and on Medusa went about her beauty to anyone and everyone who stopped long enough to hear her—until one day when she made her first visit to the Parthenon with her friends. The Parthenon was the largest temple to the goddess Athena in all the land. It was decorated with amazing sculptures and paintings. Everyone who entered was awed by the beauty of the place and couldn't help thinking how grateful they were to Athena, goddess of wisdom, for inspiring them and for watching over their city of Athens. Everyone, that is, except Medusa.

When Medusa saw the sculptures, she whispered that she would have made a much better subject for the sculptor than Athena had. When Medusa saw the artwork, she commented that the artist had done a fine job considering the goddess's thick eyebrows—but imagine how much more wonderful the painting would be if it was of someone as delicate as Medusa.

And when Medusa reached the altar, she sighed happily and said, “My, this is a beautiful temple. It is a shame it was wasted on Athena, for I am so much prettier than she is—perhaps someday people will build an even grander temple to my beauty.”

Medusa's friends grew pale. The priestesses who overheard Medusa gasped. Whispers ran through all the people in the temple, who quickly began to leave—for everyone knew that Athena enjoyed watching over the people of Athens and feared what might happen if the goddess had overheard Medusa's rash remarks.

Before long the temple was empty of everyone except Medusa, who was so busy gazing proudly at her reflection in the large bronze doors that she hadn't noticed the swift departure of everyone else. The image she was gazing at wavered and suddenly, instead of her own features, it was the face of Athena that Medusa saw reflected back at her.

"Vain and foolish girl," Athena said angrily. "You think you are prettier than I am! I doubt it to be true, but even if it were—there is more to life than beauty alone. While others work and play and learn, you do little but boast and admire yourself."

"Nonsense," Athena retorted. "Beauty fades swiftly in all mortals. It does not comfort the sick, teach the unskilled, or feed the hungry. And by my powers, your loveliness shall be stripped away completely. Your fate shall serve as a reminder to others to control their pride."

And with those words, Medusa's face changed to that of a hideous monster. Her hair twisted and thickened into horrible snakes that hissed and fought one another atop her head. And with that, Athena sent Medusa with her hair of snakes to live with the blind monsters—the gorgon sisters—at the ends of the earth, so that no innocents would be accidentally turned to stone at the sight of her.

The Key Elements of Mythology

Myths are stories that explain the world and humans' experiences. Mythological stories and characters reflect a culture's past and traditions and, most importantly, tell the story of the values and beliefs that are central to a culture, and to the human race.

The universal appeal of myths is, in part, a result of **elements** that are typical or common across most myths. These repeated elements include symbols, themes, patterns, and characters. These elements help to develop and communicate the theme of a myth. Common themes in myths include the struggle between the forces of good and evil, the quest of a hero, or the origin of some aspect of the natural world.

Parent	Child
Tension between Opposing Forces in the Universe	Myths are often structured around the tensions between opposing forces in the universe, like light versus dark and good versus evil. Often the main characters in myths have responsibility for resolving conflicts between these opposing forces; for example, heroes fighting to overcome evil monsters.
A Struggle for Power	The struggle for power in a myth occurs between two opposing forces. This struggle for power may be between two supernatural forces, a supernatural force and a mortal, or two members of a single family. This struggle may be a result of desire for control, vanity, or jealousy. Often this struggle ends with punishment or even death.
Explanation of the Origins of Life and the Natural World	Many myths come from humans' early desire to explain the origins of life and the natural world. They try making sense of the wonders of the world they perceived. Myths often attempt to answer the fundamental questions: How did the world come to be? Who are we? What is our purpose on earth? Because ancient people could not rely on science, they told these stories to provide an explanation about where we came from and how things came to be.
Fate and Prophecy	The idea of fate, and its overwhelming power, is a central theme in many myths. Neither gods nor humans seem able to escape fate, despite many attempts to do so. Making this theme even more prominent, many myths begin with a prophecy. This prophecy then shapes the actions and interactions of the various characters of the myth.
Supernatural or Non-human Characters	Some of the characters in myths are often non-human even though they possess human qualities and emotions. These characters might include gods, goddesses, and supernatural beings. These non-human characters often possess super-human powers and use them to interact with our human world by, for example, controlling the weather. Gods and goddesses may also visit the human world by disguising themselves in different forms.
A Quest or Completion of a Task	Myths often tell stories of human characters who travel between worlds to complete a task; for example, finding someone or something. Often this involves travel between the present world and other worlds like Mount Olympus, the home of the gods, or the Underworld, which is hidden beneath the Earth and is the kingdom of the dead.

Defining Unknown Words

Word	Context Clues	Justify:
	What does the underlined word mean?	What <u>strategy</u> did you use? Did the word use prefixes to help you define the word? Cite evidence to support answer.
Lovely		
Proud		
Boasted		

Awed		
Grew Pale		
Wavered		
Vain		

Degrees of Pride Definition

Pride (Proud – Positive)	Pride (Proud – Negative)

Pride Bank	
You worked hard toward a goal and accomplished your goals	Letting you or your family and friends suffer because you do not want the help
Vanity	Measuring our achievements against someone else vs. our own pervious performances
Using pride to put others down	Using Pride to maintain a certain standard in things you do. (Holding High Standards)
You are proud of who you become	

Pride (Proud – Positive)	Pride (Proud – Negative)

The Story of Medusa and Athena TDQ's

Question

Answer

Evidence

**Why does
Medusa feel like
she is superior
(better than)?**

**What god or
goddess is
Medusa
challenging?**

What's the challenge?		
What significant event occurred in paragraph nine?		

<p>What was the purpose of this event?</p>		
<p>What Element(s) of Mythology does this myth display?</p>		

How does the author develop the point of view of the narrator?

A. The narrator understands that Medusas' actions will be a problem.

B. The narrator knows the feelings of characters besides Medusa and Athena.

C. The narrator is able to influence Medusa.

D. The narrator feels great concern for Medusa.

What is the theme of The Story of Medusa and Athena?

Topic Sentence (Main/Central) Idea: (In one sentence what is The Story of Medusa and Athena about.)

When was the myth of The Story of Medusa and Athena introduced in the Percy story?

What is Element of Mythology in The Story of Medusa and Athena (from **“The Key Elements of Mythology”**)

Summarize Element of Mythology in The Story of Medusa and Athena (from **“The Key Elements of Mythology”**)

Conclusion/ Claim: In one sentence, what is the theme of the myth?

Restate the Claim/ Theme:

Detail from The Story of Medusa
and Athena that supports theme:

Justification/ Explanation

Detail from The Story of Medusa
and Athena s that supports theme:

Justification/ Explanation

Detail from The Story of Medusa
and Athena that supports theme:

Justification/ Explanation

Conclusion: How are all of these quotes/ details connected?

Glue Here