



MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES

afreet	:	powerful evil demon of Arab mythology
basilisk	:	serpent, lizard or dragon said to kill by its look or by its breath
behemoth	:	hippopotamus like beast mentioned in the book of Job
centaur	:	a creature from Greek mythology that is said to look like a man from the waist upward and has the legs of a horse
cerberus	:	three headed watch dog of Hades, the Greek under world
chimera	:	fire breathing monster of classical mythology with a lion-head, a goat's body and a serpent's tail
cyclops	:	giants with a single eye in mid-forehead
fafnir	:	dragon slain by Siegfried in German mythology
furies, eumenides, erinyes	:	goddesses of classical mythology who had serpent for hair and punished evil-doers
gigantes	:	giants with a man's torso and legs of a serpent, defeated by the gods and Hercules
golem	:	man-made human-like creature of Jewish legend
gorgons	:	winged female creatures of classical mythology
griffin/gryphon	:	creature of classical mythology, having an eagle's head and wings and a lion's body
harpies	:	ravenous shiny monsters of classical mythology
hippocampus	:	sea horse with a horse's forelegs and the tail of a fish
hydra	:	nine-headed water snake, which sprouted two heads when one was struck off
kelpie	:	Scottish water spirit that is usually a horse that drowned its riders
leviathan	:	fiery, scaled, seven-headed sea serpent
lilith	:	biblical female demon living in deserted places
pegasus	:	winged horse of Greek mythology
phoenix	:	fabulous bird of classical mythology said to rise from the ashes after destroying itself on a burning altar.
roc	:	bird of enormous size and strength in Arabian legend.
salamander	:	a reptilian monster, able to live in fire
sphinx	:	creature of classical mythology having the head of a woman and the body of a lion.
unicorn	:	white horse-like animal with a long single horn
yeti	:	large hairy manlike animal said to live in the Himalayas

MYTHOLOGICAL CREATURES & ALLUSIONS

Acropolis – A raised area holding a building or cluster of buildings – after the citadel of Athens (Greece) on which the Parthenon and the Erechtheum stand.

Amazons – A woman of imposing build. In Greek mythology Amazons were a tribe of female warriors who matched men in battle - in physical strength and military prowess.

Ambrosia – In Greek & Roman mythology, the food of the gods, thought to confer immortality. The word is used to mean something with an especially delicious flavour or fragrance.

Apollonian – relating to the Greek god Apollo or his cult – the word is used to mean characterized by clarity, harmony, and restraint; serenely high-minded; noble.

Atlas – a person who, in addition to his own responsibilities, is capable of bearing those of others as well – a reference to the Titan in Greek Mythology who carries the heavens on his shoulders.

Augustan – relating to, or characteristic of any literary period noted for refinement and classicism, as was the period of the Roman emperor Augustus Caesar.

Berserkers – Uncontrolled anger, a frenzy. In Nordic mythology, berserkers were warriors who were given certain intoxicants, before a battle, that would bring them to a state of such uncontrolled rage that they would take any risks in battle, without any fear.

Boswell - James Boswell (1740-95) is best known for his biography of Samuel Johnson. His name is now synonymous with a constant companion and observer, especially one who records those observations in print.

Calvin – someone who insists on adherence to strict moral principles and behaviour – a reference to John Calvin, the 16th century Protestant preacher.

Calypso - A type of music that originated in the islands of the West Indies, named after the sea-nymph in Greek mythology who delayed Ulysses in his travels.

Casanova – a man who is amorously and gallantly attentive to women – a reference to the 18th century Venetian author and adventurer who is believed to have displayed these tendencies.

Ceres – Any grain, such as wheat, oats, barley, etc., named after Ceres, goddess of farming and agriculture.

Cervantes – a writer of genius and wit – a reference to Miguel de Cervantes, the author of 'Don Quixote'.

Chronicle - A list of events in the order they happened, named for Cronus (Saturn), father of Jupiter and leader of the titans.

Clark Kent – One who can prepare for action almost instantly – from the story of Clark Kent/Superman. Clark Kent is the shy bespectacled reporter for the Daily Planet newspaper. However, as soon as trouble threatens he transforms himself into Superman, the superhero from the planet Krypton who is able to fly and has superhuman strength.

Cornucopia - An overflowing store; an abundance – from the Greek mythological horn that was an ever overflowing vessel of fruit, grain etc., signifying prosperity.

Cyclopean - Very big; huge; relating to or suggestive of a Cyclops

Cyclops – the single-eyed giant in the Greek epic 'The Odyssey'.

Dali – a person who is very imaginative and creative, but eccentric in social behaviour – a reference to Salvador Dali, the Spanish surrealist who displayed these attributes.

Daniel – a person who is both wise and righteous, and therefore a good judge or decision-taker – a reference to the biblical character who displayed these attributes and was considered one of the most important of the Jewish prophets.

Delphic – meaning ambiguous or obscure, is derived from Delphi, the place, in Greek mythology, of the Oracle of Delphi, who made cryptic pronouncements and predictions.

Dickens – a writer who, like Dickens, focuses on the common man and the gaps between social strata.

Don Juan – a person who is promiscuous or woos various ladies at the same time – a reference to character, in a 14th century Spanish play, who displayed these tendencies.

Epicurian – Epicurus was a Greek philosopher who believed that the greatest good was to seek modest pleasures in pursuit of peace and happiness – the word 'epicurean' has acquired a slightly more extreme meaning, that the pursuit of pleasure is the route to happiness.

Falstaff – a fat and crude, but jovial and comic person – a reference to a certain character, in Shakespeare's plays, who displayed these attributes.

Faust – someone who sacrifices spiritual or moral values for material gains – a reference to the character, in German legends, who did this. He is immortalised in Goethe's work.

Flora – Plants as a group, flowers, after the Roman goddess of flowers, also Flora.

Fort Knox – A place that cannot be broken into. Fort Knox is a US army base in the state of Kentucky. The US Treasury has maintained its Bullion Depository in this base since 1937. Due to the location of the Depository at the fort, the term "Fort Knox" is often used to convey the idea of cutting-edge security, impenetrability, and excessive wealth.

Freud – a person who sees sex as the major motivation behind people's actions – a reference to Dr. Sigmund Freud, whose theories of psychoanalysis focus significantly on sexual desire as motivation.

Goliath – a very tall and big person – a reference to the giant in the biblical story of David and Goliath.

Harpy – A predatory person, a shrewish woman – from the Greek mythological monsters that were predatory birds with the heads of a women.

Hector – in Greek mythology, a Trojan prince in Homer's Iliad – the word is used to mean a bully / to bully.

Hercules – in Greek mythology, a hero of extraordinary strength, a Titan – the word 'herculean' is used to mean with (or demanding) extraordinary strength or effort.

Hermetic – a Greek mythological character, Hermes Trismegistus was believed to have invented a magic seal to keep vessels airtight, and from his name is derived the adjective 'hermetic' meaning airtight.

Holmes – a person with an inquisitive and investigative mind – a reference to Sherlock Holmes.

Houdini – one who is skilled at getting out of difficult situations – a reference to the 19th century magician and escapologist.

Hydra – A monster very difficult to kill – In Greek mythology, the Hydra was a many-headed snake, whose heads grew again as they were cut off. Hercules eventually killed the Hydra, helped by a companion who burnt each neck as Hercules cut off the head.

Job – is a person with a lot of patience, even when faced with difficulty or discomfort – a reference to the biblical character who displays these attributes.

Jovial – displaying hearty conviviality and good cheer – from Roman mythology where Jove or Jupiter was regarded as the source of happiness.

Judas – one who betrays a dearly-held cause or person – a reference to Judas, in the Bible, whose act of betrayal led to the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus.

Jules Verne's – One who has travelled widely – In Jules Verne's novel Around the World in Eighty Days (1873), the Englishman Phileas Fogg wagers other members of his London club that he can travel around the world in eighty days. He just manages it, travelling with his French valet Passepartout by many forms of transport including train, boat, sledge, and elephant.

Juno – of stately bearing and regal beauty – like the Roman goddess Juno.

Laconic – Using few words; terse or concise – in Greek mythology and history, the Laconians (people of Lakonikos, the area including and around Sparta) were noted for, apart from their simplicity and bravery, their brevity in speech.

Lancelot – a faithful and gallant assistant – a reference to King Arthur's favourite Knight.

Lethe – Slow-moving, drowsy, exhausted. In Greek mythology the Lethe was the river of forgetfulness or oblivion, one of five rivers separating the Greek underworld from the land of the living. Souls often became drowsy as they listened to the river's murmuring.

Lochinvar – a bold and gallant person – a reference to 'young Lochinvar' in Sir Walter Scott's epic 'Marmion'.

Lothario – a handsome, seductive, ladies man; a casanova – a reference to a person of such nature in 'Don Quixote'.

Luther – a person who challenges established authority as erroneous – a reference to Martin Luther, the preacher who rebelled against the Catholic church and is seen as the founder of Protestantism.

Machiavelli – a clever but scheming and manipulative administrator – a reference to the 16th century author of "The Prince", a book which was originally interpreted as promoting scheming and manipulative administration.

Malthus – a writer who, like Malthus, considers population growth to be the impediment to economic health.

Mammon – Wealth – Mammon, deriving from the Aramaic word for 'riches', is the personification of wealth, seen as greedy and selfish materialism. Someone who is said to serve Mammon puts his desire for money and material wealth above all other things.

Man Friday – a close friend and constant companion – a reference to Crusoe's companion on the desert island, in Daniel Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe'.

Manna – Miraculous help - Manna was the 'bread' believed to have been provided by God for the Israelites when they were crossing the desert during their flight from Egypt, as spoken of in the Bible. It is believed to have sustained them until they reached safety.

Marie Antoinette – One who has no understanding of common people – Marie Antoinette (1755-93) was the wife of Louis XVI and queen of France. Her extravagance combined with a much-quoted response 'Qu'ils mangent de la brioche' (traditionally translated as 'Let them eat cake'), supposedly made on being told that the poor people of Paris were unable to afford bread, have led to her being regarded as a figure of arrogance.

Mars – Warlike, relating to or suggestive of war. Named for Mars, the mythological god of war.

Medusa – a character in Greek mythology who, with serpents for hair, was so terrible to behold that the very sight of her turned viewers to stone.

Mentor – in Greek mythology, Ulysses's trusted counselor, in whose guise Athena became the guardian and teacher of Telemachus – the word is used to mean a wise and trusted counselor or teacher, especially in occupational settings.

Mephistopheles – an evil and manipulative person – a reference to the Devil, to whom (Goethe's) Faust sold his soul.

Mercurial – Quick and changeable in temperament; volatile; having the characteristics of eloquence, shrewdness, swiftness, and thievishness attributed to the Greek god Mercury.

Midas – one who has the gift of turning any situation to one of advantage and benefit – a reference to King Midas in mythology, whose touch turned things to gold.

Milquetoast – A milquetoast is a weak, ineffectual or bland person. It is derived from the character Caspar Milquetoast from the 1924 comic strip 'The Timid Soul'.

Mr. Hyde – a disagreeable alter-ego that a person may have – a reference to the misanthropic Mr. Hyde of Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Narcissus – a character in Greek mythology who was in love with his own beauty.

Nectar – a delicious and invigorating drink, the sweet secretion that bees gather from flowers – from the Greek mythological word for the drink of the gods.

Nelson – Being disregarding of – Admiral Nelson (1758-1805), lost his right eye in battle in 1794. According to tradition, at the battle of Copenhagen in 1801 Nelson put his telescope to his blind eye to look at the approaching Danish fleet, and, with the words 'I see no ships', ignored the British government's orders to retreat. To 'turn the eye of Nelson' to something is the same as 'turn a blind eye' to it, in other words to pretend not to notice.

Nemesis – a deity in Greek mythology, the goddess of retribution or revenge

Nero – one who continues to pursue pleasure, or his desires, even when faced with difficulties or misfortune – a reference to the Roman emperor Nero, who is believed to have continued to play on his fiddle, even as Rome was in flames.

Oedipus – a son who (often subconsciously) competes with his father for his mother's affections – a reference to the psychological guilt complex named after Oedipus, the character in Greek mythology who (albeit unknowingly) kills his father, Laius, and marries his mother, Jocasta.

Olympian – in Greek mythology, Olympus is the abode of the gods. 'Olympian' is used to mean majestic in manner, superior to the mundane, surpassing others in scope and effect.

Oracle – Solemnly prophetic, characteristic of the Oracle in Greek mythology, to whom gods and men would go for advice when in confusion or difficulty.

Palladium – (apart from the element of that name) A sacred object believed to have the power to preserve a city or state – from the name of the Greek goddess Pallas Athena, who was believed to watch over the safety of places.

Pan – A sudden, intense, contagious fear. The Greek god Pan was known for causing such fear in people.

Peter Pan, a person who behaves as one far younger would – from the classic tale by J M Barrie of the adult fairy who continued to act as a boy would.

Phoenix – A bird in Egyptian mythology that lived in the desert for 500 years and then consumed itself by fire, later to rise renewed from its ashes. The word is used to mean a person or thing of surpassing beauty or quality.

Pickwick - a round-faced, clean-shaven, portly gentleman wearing spectacles – a reference to Mr. Pickwick in Dickens' 'Pickwick Papers', who is described, and presented in illustrations, as such a person.

Plutocracy – rule or government by the rich – In mythology, Pluto lived in the underworld, surrounded by mineral wealth.

Procrustean – in Greek mythology, Procrustes was an inn-keeper who fit his customers into his beds, either by chopping their legs to shorten them, or by squashing them, or by stretching them if need be.

Prometheus – in Greek Mythology, a Titan who stole fire from Olympus and gave it to humankind – the word 'promethean' is used to mean boldly creative, defiantly original.

Proteus – a deity in Greek mythology who was capable of changing shape at will – this leads to the adjective 'protean' with the general meaning of "versatile", "mutable", "capable of assuming many forms"

Psyche – The soul or mind, named for Psyche, the wife of Cupid.

Quixote – a dreamer who is always trying to accomplish honourable but impossible tasks – a reference to Don Quixote, the character created by Cervantes in his book of the same name.

Rip van Winkle – a person who is living in the past, has not kept pace with the changing times – from the story of the man who slept for 20 years and awoke to find the world had passed him by.

Robin Hood – one who breaks the rules or the law but does so (or claims to do so) in the interests of the poor and disadvantaged – from the story of Robin Hood, who robbed the rich to give to the poor.

Scaramouch – is a buffoon or boastful clown – a reference to the character invented by a 17th century Italian actor, Tiberio Fiorelli.

Scrooge, someone who is very miserly and hoards his wealth – a reference to Ebenezer Scrooge in Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", who, in turn, is the inspiration for Disney's Scrooge McDuck, (Donald's uncle).

Shylock – one who calculates the value of every penny, and is unwilling to let go of even the smallest value – a reference to the usurious money-lender in Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice."

Spartan – Simple, frugal, or austere; rigorously self-disciplined or self-restrained – as were the people of Sparta in ancient Greece.

Stentorian – Extremely loud and clear (of voice) – after Stentor, a herald in the Greek army at Troy (the Iliad).
Chimerical – in Greek mythology the Chimera is a monster made up of grotesquely disparate parts. The word 'chimerical' is used to mean created by, or as if by, a wildly fanciful imagination; highly improbable.

Stygian – Gloomy, dark, infernal, hellish – in Greek mythology, the Styx was the river that carried the spirits of the dead to the netherworld (hell).

Svengali, someone who controls someone else's career for his own questionable ends – a reference to the character, in George du Maurier's play 'Trilby', who transforms Trilby into a great singer using hypnosis, but she cannot perform without his help in entering a state of trance.

Sybilline – resembling or characteristic of a prophet or prophecy, derived from Sybil, a prophetess in Greek Mythology.

Tantalus – Arousing desire or expectation for something that may be unattainable or mockingly out of reach. This is as Tantalus (in Greek mythology) experienced – each time he reached for water or food, these eluded his grasp, leaving him eternally thirsty and hungry. Tantalising also means 'attractive and inviting'.

Titanic – Having great stature or enormous strength; huge or colossal; of enormous scope, power, or influence – attributes of the Titans in Greek mythology.

Vesuvius – A fit of rage – Vesuvius is an active volcano near Naples, in southern Italy. It erupted violently in AD 79, burying the towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Volcanic – of, resembling or caused by a volcano or volcanoes, powerfully explosive. Vulcan was the Greek god of fire and forged the weapons and jewelry of the gods. Platonic - transcending physical desire and tending toward the purely spiritual or ideal – characteristic of Plato or his philosophy.

Walt Disney – One who finds animals cute – Walt Disney (1901-66), the creator of Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse, is sometimes associated with the 'cute' portrayal of animals, both in animated cartoons and in his nature documentaries.

Watson – a constant companion and assistant – a reference to Dr. Watson, the companion of Sherlock Holmes.

Zephyr – a gentle wind, after the Greek god of the West wind, also Zephyr.

RELIGION

Religion	Country of Origin/Practice
Babism	- Persia
Bahaism	- Persia
Buddhism	- India, China, South-East Asia
Confucianism	- Ancient China
Druses	- Lebanon
Hinduism	- India
Islam	- Middle and Far East
Jainism	- Northern India
Judaism	- Israel and world wide
Manichaeism	- Persia
Mazdaism, Zoroastrianism	- Ancient Persia
Mithraism	- Ancient Persia
Parseeism	- Western India

Rastafarianism
Shamanism
Shintoism
Sikhism
Sufism
Taoism
Wahhabism
Zen Buddhism

fiesta
heresy
tartuffe
mysticism
conventicle
gospel
libation

- Jamaica
- Northern Siberia and North America
- Japan
- Punjab/India
- Iran
- China
- Saudi Arabia
- Japan and formerly China
- religious festival as on a saints day especially in a Spanish speaking country
- religious doctrine differing from the orthodox view
- religious hypocrite
- religious meditation especially as a means of experiencing communion with the divine
- religious meeting, especially when illegal and held in secret
- religious doctrine
- religious ritual involving the pouring of a liquid

