

A Guide for Using

D' Aulaires' *Book of* *Greek Myths*

in the Classroom

*Based on the book written by Ingrid and
Edgar Parin D'Aulaire*

*This guide written by Cynthia Ross
and illustrated by Theresa M. Wright*



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Introduction

A good book can touch our lives like a good friend. Within its pages are words and characters that can inspire us to achieve our highest ideals. We can turn to it for companionship, recreation, comfort, and guidance. It also gives us a cherished story to hold in our hearts forever.

In *Literature Units*, great care has been taken to select books that are sure to become good friends!

Teachers who use this unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- Sample Lesson Plans
- A Pre-reading Activity
- A Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Authors
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including:
 - *quizzes*
 - *hands-on projects*
 - *cooperative learning activities*
 - *cross-curriculum connections*
 - *extensions into the reader's own life*
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- Research Ideas
- A Culminating Activity
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography
- Answer Key



We are confident that this unit will be a valuable addition to your planning, and hope that as you use our ideas, your students will increase the circle of “friends” that they have in books!

Sample Lesson Plan

Each of the lessons suggested below can take from one to several days to complete. Take your time and allow your students and yourself to enjoy each activity.

Lesson 1

- Introduce the book and the background of Greek myths.
- Do the pre-reading activity found on page 7.
- Read about the authors. (page 5)
- Share the book summary with your students. (page 6)
- Introduce the vocabulary list for Section 1. (page 8)

Lesson 2

- Read pages 8-15 Olden Times, Gaea and the Titans.
- Do the hands-on activity “Volcanoes.” (page 13)
- Do Curriculum Connections “Odd or Even.” (page 14)
- Quiz Time (page 11)

Lesson 3

- Introduce vocabulary. (page 8)
- Read pages 16-69, Zeus and His Family.
- Introduce Paper Weaving. (page 17)
- Cooperative Learning Activity: Mythology in Astronomy Notebook (page 18)
- Investigate prefixes and suffixes. (page 19)
- Quiz Time (page 16)

Lesson 4

- Introduce new vocabulary. (page 8)
- Do a vocabulary crossword puzzle. (page 10)
- Read pages 70-107.
- Mapping Skills: Greece (page 22)
- Cooperative Learning Activity: Masks for a Greek Play (pages 23-24)
- Poetry: “Prometheus” (page 25)
- Into Your Life: Prometheus (page 27)
- Quiz Time (page 21)

Lesson 5

- Introduce vocabulary. (page 8)
- Read pages 108-147, Mortal Descendants of Zeus.
- Paper Bag Puppets (page 29)
- Pantomime (page 30)
- Poseidon’s Domain (page 31)
- Melampus, Friend to the Animals (page 32)
- Quiz Time (page 28)

Lesson 6

- Introduce vocabulary. (page 8)
- Read pages 148-189.
- Hands-on Journal “I Am Theseus” (page 34)
- A Name is a Name Research Activity (page 35)
- Mythical Math (page 36)
- Earthquake in a Bottle (page 37)
- Quiz Time (page 33)

Lesson 7

- Discuss any questions your students may have about the myths.
- Choose Book Report formats for students to use with this or a complementary book.
- Begin work on the culminating activity (pages 41-42).
- Begin Research activities. (page 40)

Lesson 8

- Administer Unit Tests 1, 2, and/or 3. (pages 43-45)
- Discuss test answers and possibilities.
- Discuss students’ enjoyment of the book.
- Discuss where students have come across these names and characters before.
- Provide a list of related readings for your students.

About the Authors



The d'Aulaires are author-artists. Ingri Maartenson Parin d'Aulaire was born on December 27, 1904, in Kongsberg, Norway, daughter of Per Maartenson who was the director of Royal Norwegian Silver Mines, and Line Sandsmark. She attended Kongsberg Junior College, the Institute of Arts and Crafts in Oslo, Norway, and then studied art at the Hans Hoffman School of Art in Munich, Germany. This is where the d'Aulaires met. She also attended the Academie Scandinave, the Academie Gaugin, and the Academie Andre L'Hote in Paris, France.

Edgar is the son of a noted Italian society painter, Gino d'Aulaire. His mother was an American, Ella Parin. He was born in Switzerland, lived in Paris and later in Florence. He used his mother's maiden name for his artistic works. Edgar Parin d'Aulaire began his career by illustrating fifteen books which were published in Germany.

Ingri and Edgar married on July 24, 1925. In 1929 they traveled to America where they were introduced to the world of children's books with the publication of *The Magic Ring*. They settled in New York in 1929 and resided on their farms, Lea Farm in Wilton, Connecticut, and Upper Lea Farm in South Royalton, Vermont. They became naturalized citizens in 1939.

Edgar and Ingri worked separately on their art until they met the late Anne Carroll Moore who suggested that they combine their talents and create picture books for children. Their illustrations are created through the use of a traditional method of drawing directly on lithograph stone. This is then adapted to acetate separations.

The d'Aulaires have toured Europe, North Africa, and the United States to acquire material for a long list of distinguished children's books. They have never written a book unless they first lived in the regions that provided the background for their folktales. As a result, the d'Aulaires produce a relaxed, humorous, and earthy quality in their picture books.

They have many books to their credit and have been honored with the American Library Association Caldecott Medal for their book *Abe Lincoln* in 1939 and the Catholic Library Association Regina Medal in 1970 for continued distinguished contributions to children's literature. They are also members of the Authors Guild of America of the Scandinavian-American Foundation. Their twenty picture books for children have been translated into German, French, Burmese, Norwegian, Turkish, Japanese, Korean, and Braille.

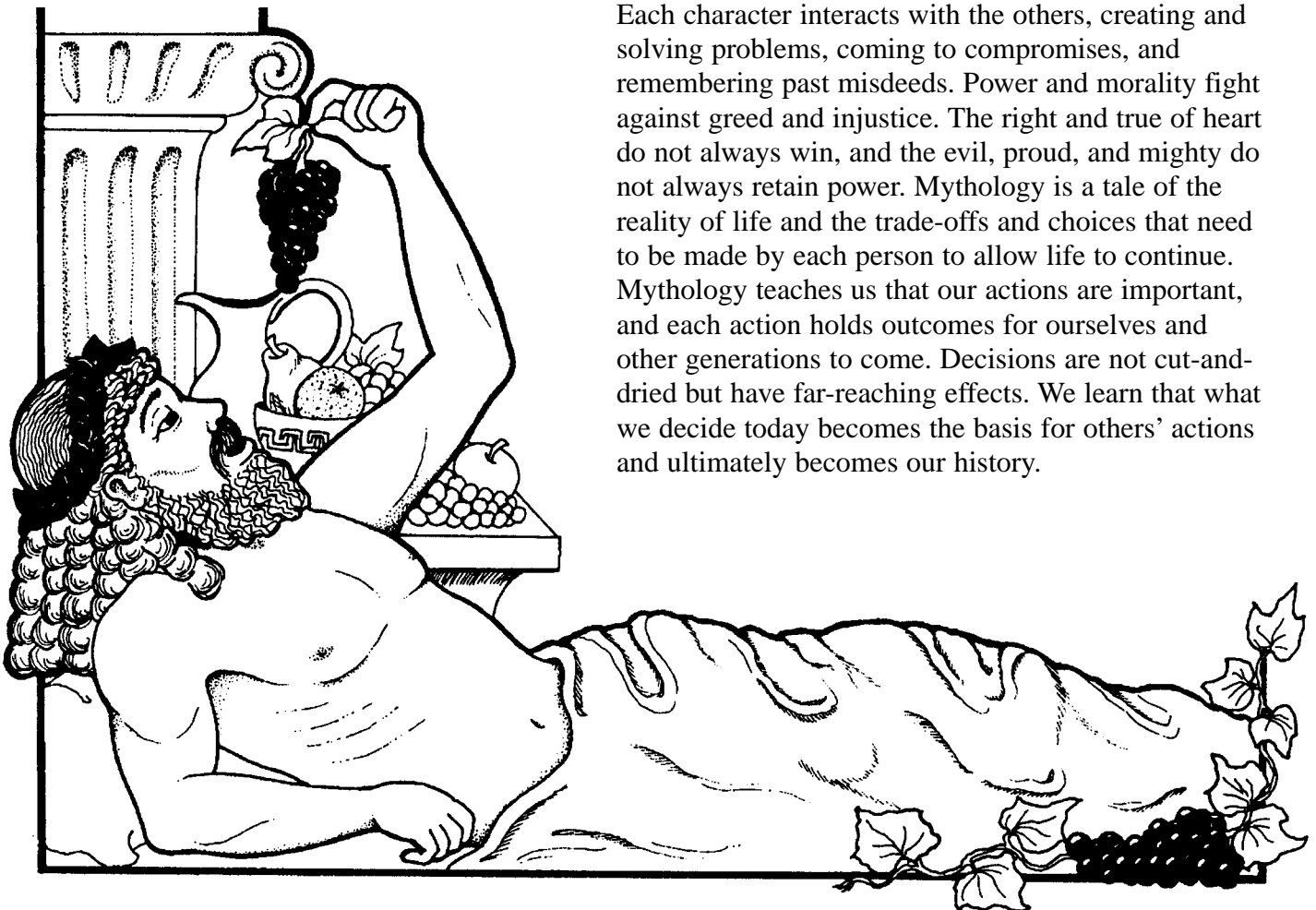
D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths

(1962, Doubleday)

(Available in Canada from Doubleday Dell Seal, U.K from Doubleday Bantam Dell, and Australia from Transworld Publishers)

D'Aulaire's Book of Greek Myths is a well-known book containing Greek myths that have been adapted for children. The stories are organized around Zeus and his family, minor gods, and their mortal descendants. It is rich in complex illustrations, filled with symbols that bring to life the classical tradition of myth. The prose is straightforward and easy to read aloud, the stories thrilling and concise. Each story is easily read at one sitting, leaving class time for discussion and/or activities.

This children's classic traces the Greek creation myth. Beginning with a section entitled "Olden Times," the d'Aulaires introduce their readers to the creation of Mother Earth, Gaea; her union with the universe, Uranus; and the creation of their first children, the Titans, and their second creation, the Cyclopes, which causes a split between the love of their mother, the earth, and their father, the universe. Gaea marries again to the seas, Pontus. This union produces the life of the earth, nature, and mortal man. From this one family springs all the problems that will continue to face man. Struggles for power or love are part of the nature of man and gods. As the children of Gaea and Uranus rebel against their parents for love and power, a structure of behavior develops that will follow man throughout his existence. Greek myth develops like a daily soap opera.



Each character interacts with the others, creating and solving problems, coming to compromises, and remembering past misdeeds. Power and morality fight against greed and injustice. The right and true of heart do not always win, and the evil, proud, and mighty do not always retain power. Mythology is a tale of the reality of life and the trade-offs and choices that need to be made by each person to allow life to continue. Mythology teaches us that our actions are important, and each action holds outcomes for ourselves and other generations to come. Decisions are not cut-and-dried but have far-reaching effects. We learn that what we decide today becomes the basis for others' actions and ultimately becomes our history.