

# INTRODUCTION

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The *Daily Warm-Ups series* is a wonderful way to turn extra classroom minutes into valuable learning time. The 180 quick activities review Greek, Roman and Norse mythology. These daily activities may be used at the very beginning of class to get students into learning mode, near the end of class to make good educational use of that transitional time, in the middle of class to shift gears between lessons – or whenever else you have minutes that now go unused. In addition to providing students with fascinating information, they are a natural path to other classroom activities involving critical thinking.

You may want to use the activities for bonus marks or as a check on a knowledge of mythology that is built and acquired over time. However you choose to use them, *Daily Warm-Ups* are a convenient and useful supplement to your regular lesson plans. Make every minute of your class time count!



*Sisyphus is one* of the craftier men in mythology. He suspected that cattle from his herd were being stolen by Autolycus and placed nearby in his herd. Sisyphus tricked Autolycus by signing the bottom of the hooves of his cattle. They read, "Stolen by Autolycus".



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Think of another way Sisyphus could have tricked Autolycus. Keep in mind that Autolycus could change any spot or mark on a cattle's hide, so a tattoo would not work. Write your idea below.

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*Because of his irreverence* toward Zeus and Hades, Sisyphus was not liked. He once locked Thanatos, the god of Death, in chains. He cheated his way out of the underworld by tricking Persephone. Finally, as punishment for these acts, he was condemned to push a boulder up a hill in the underworld for eternity. Before he could reach the top of the hill, the boulder always rolled back down.



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How would you feel if you were Sisyphus? How would you try to get out of this punishment? Explain.

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67

**Heracles' eleventh labour** was to steal the Golden Apples from the Garden of the Hesperides in the western part of the Mediterranean.

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In mythology and literature, fruit is often highly desirable. What are the qualities of fruit that make characters want it? What stories or ideas do you associate with fruit? Explain.

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68

**When Heracles arrived** at the Garden of the Hesperides, he spoke to Nereus, who convinced him to trick Atlas into picking the Golden Apples. Atlas, a Titan, was busy holding up the sky and the earth that floated in it.

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What does it mean when someone “carries the weight of the world”? How might such a burden be lessened? Describe what you would do to help someone who feels such a burden.

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**In revenge** for the loss of his son while visiting Aegeus, Minos demanded that Athens send young Athenians to be eaten by the Minotaur. To stop the sacrificing of Athenian youths, Theseus had to find the Minotaur in its Labyrinth, kill the monster and get back out. Ariadne, a daughter of Minos and Pasiphae, gave Theseus a ball of twine to ensure his return from the Labyrinth.



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How do you think Theseus used the twine? Can you think of any other way Theseus might have found his way out of the Labyrinth? Explain.

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**After leaving Crete**, Theseus and his companions sailed on to the island of Naxos. Theseus left Ariadne on the island and departed. Because he forgot Ariadne, the gods punished him. Instead of remembering to hoist a white sail of success as he returned to Athens, Theseus sailed with the black one of despair. His father Aegeus assumed that Theseus was dead because of the black sail, and he leapt into the sea to his death.



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What do you think of Theseus' punishment? What lesson might people draw from this part of the Theseus story? Write your ideas below.

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**Hector killed** Achilles' friend Patroclus. Then Hector put on the armour that Patroclus had borrowed from Achilles.



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What does it mean to wear another person's armour? What was signified by Hector's taking of the absent hero's helmet and breastplate? Write your ideas below.

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**Distraught over the death** of his best friend, Achilles returned to battle. Because he had lost his armour to Hector, he wore a dazzling new suit of metal.



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Do you feel different when you get something brand new? Have you ever had a new pair of running shoes and felt like you could run a little faster or farther? Describe how you think Achilles felt in his new armour.

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