

An Introduction
to

MYTHOLOGY

Myth: What do you know?

Answer as many of the questions as you can.

Do not worry if you know a few of the answers. No grade will be given for this pretest!

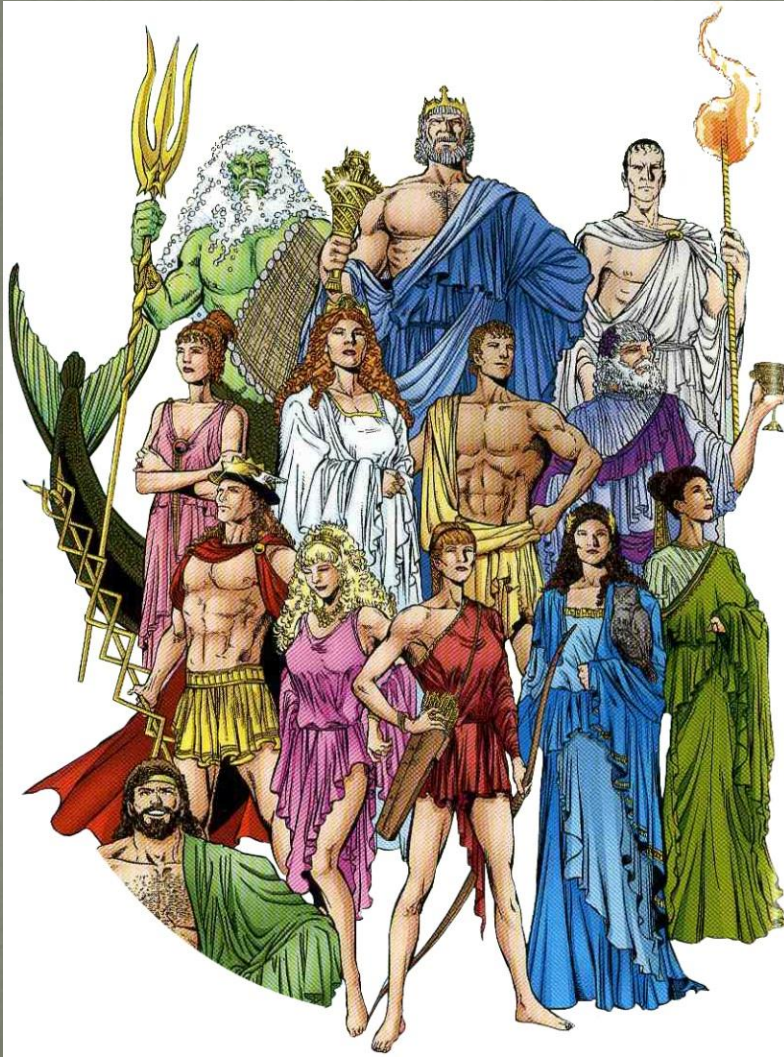
Who was the chief Greek god?



Whose face launched a thousand ships?



What was Mt. Olympus noted for?



Who went in search of the Golden Fleece?



What Norse god gave his name to Thursday?



What goddess was born from the foam of the sea?



Who was the Greek god who ruled the dead?



What Greek myth explained seasons?



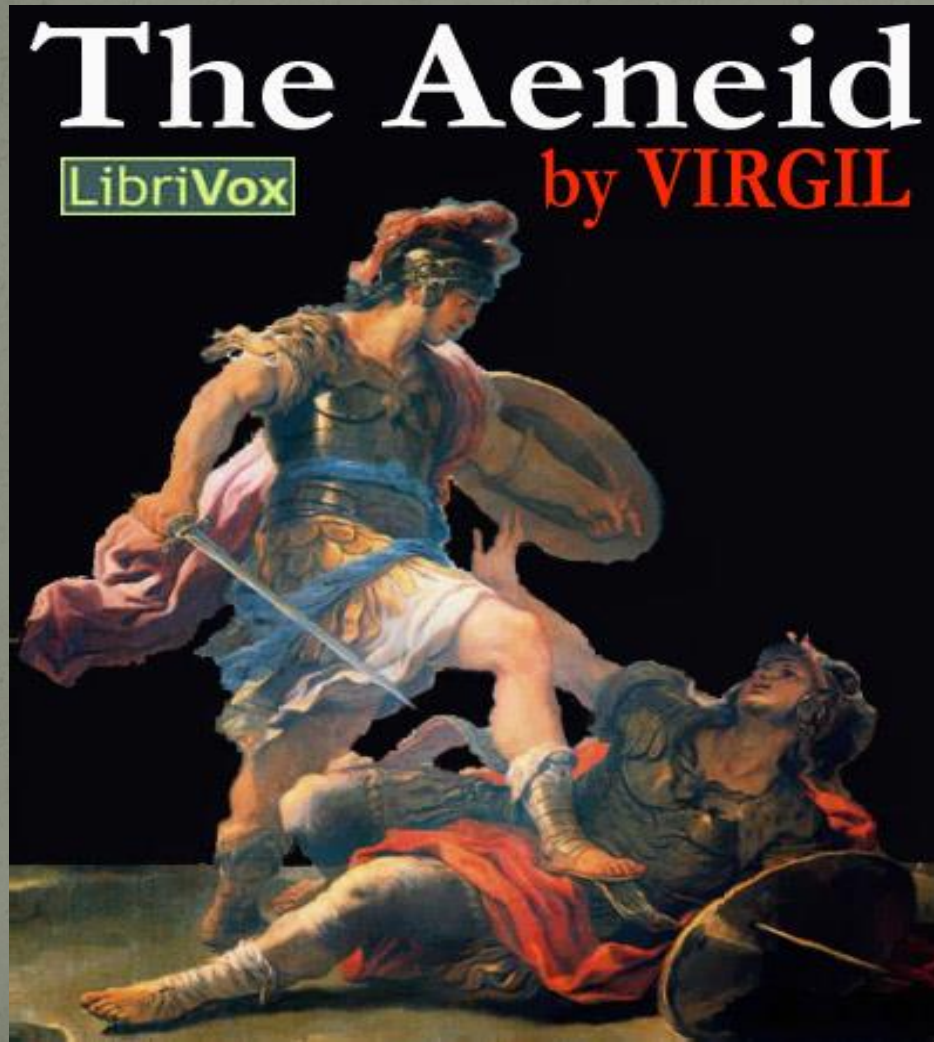
How did Pandora resemble Eve?



What god was the volcano named after?



What Roman epic did Virgil write?



Who were the Sirens?



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What power did Medusa have?



On what myth was the musical “My Fair Lady” based?



What was the Sphinx?



Who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*?



Who was the official ferryman to the underworld?



How many labours was Hercules known for?



Who built the labyrinth and why?



What was the Holy Grail?

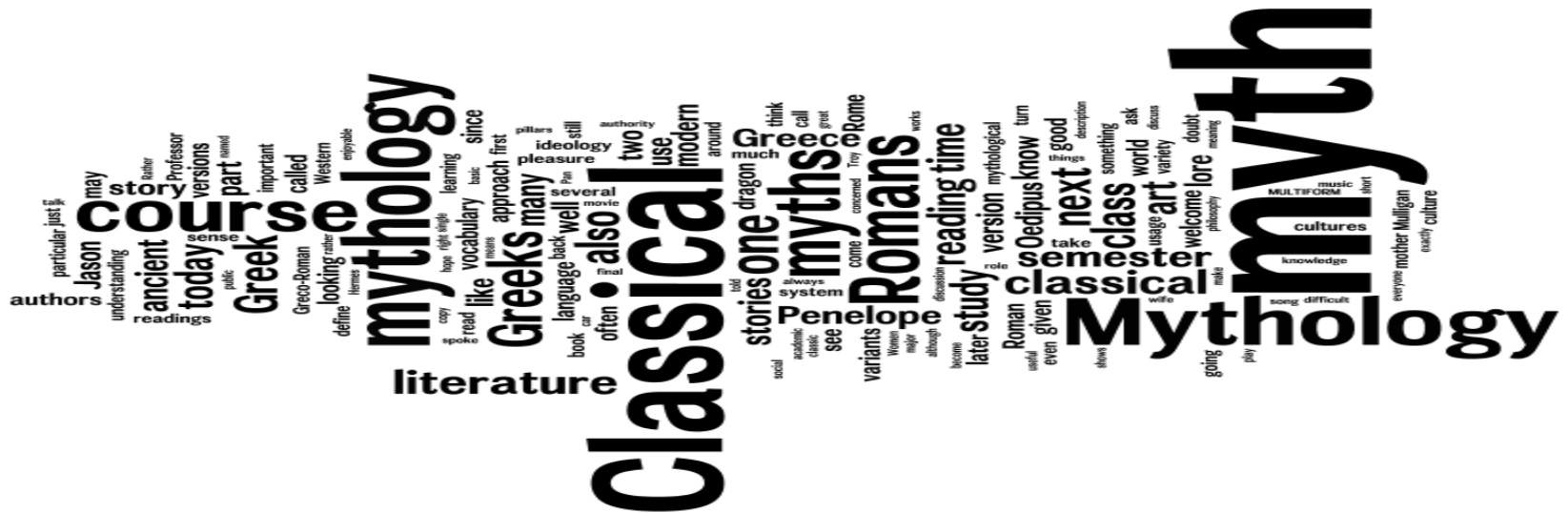


Who was King Arthur's queen?



What is Mythology?

- A myth is a sacred narrative (or story) explaining how the world and humankind assumed their present form
- Mythology can include an traditional story that involves elements of spirituality, mysticism, legend

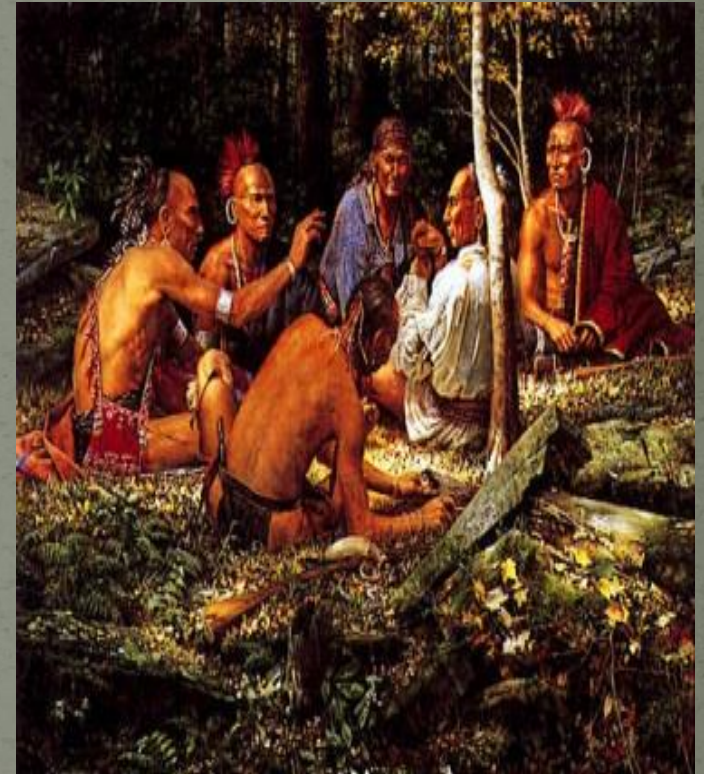


- Once you understand the myths of a culture, you can understand the people of that culture much better
- For example, the Christian Creation story involves:
 - Curiosity
 - Disobedience
 - Law and order
 - Male vs. Female

Do you see these elements in our society today?

How Do Myths Spread

- Myths are stories, and stories get told
- These stories are passed down from generation to generation by oral tradition (or word of mouth)
- Before the technological age, stories carried great weight. You couldn't google your way out of a story that was difficult to understand



“You’ll never believe what happened...”

What Do Myths Do?

- Myths define social customs and beliefs
- Myths are allegories, similar to parables in the Bible
- Myths explain natural phenomena
- Myths explain psychological phenomenon such as love or anger
- Myths contain archetypes that reveal what all humans are like



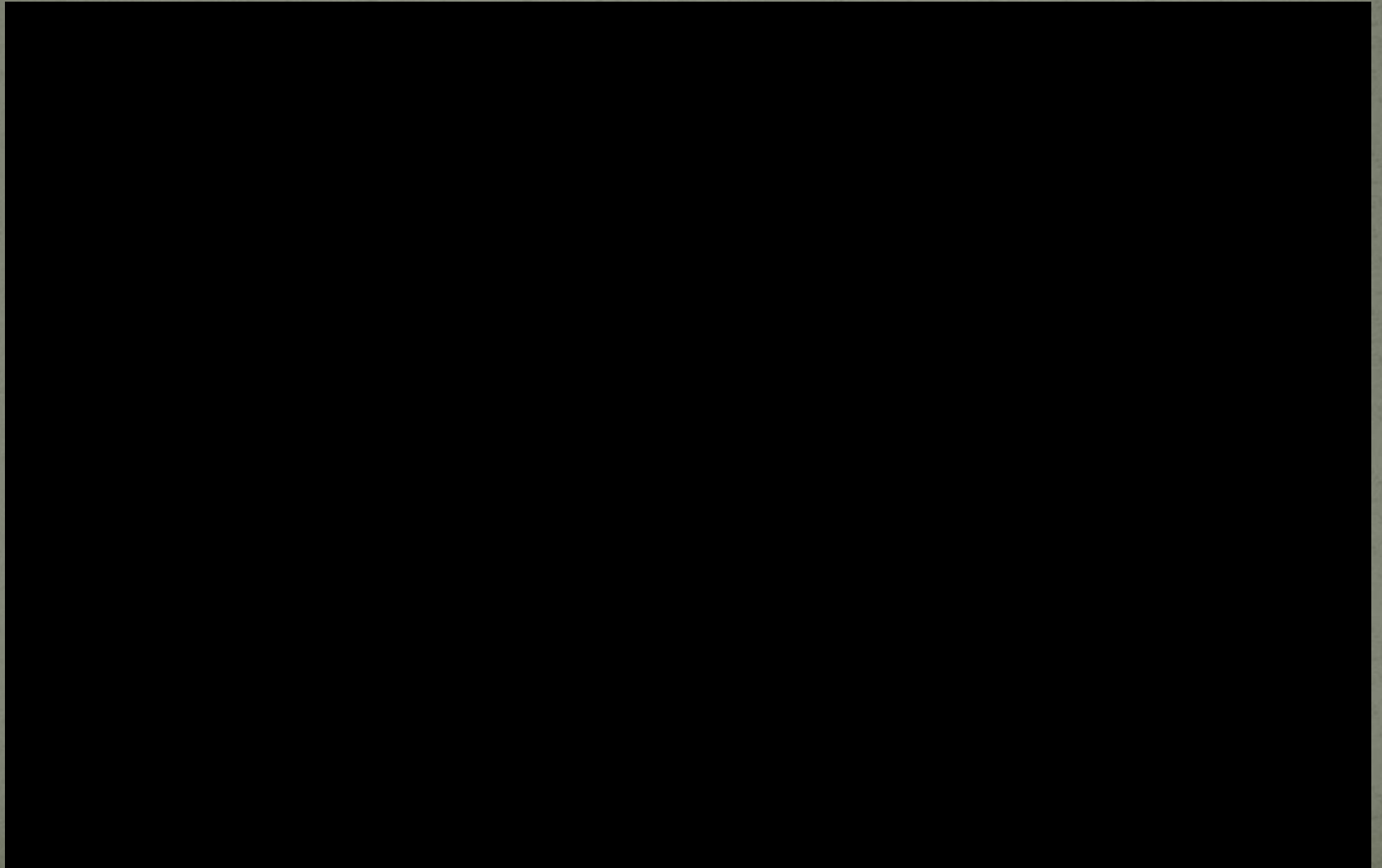
Types of Myths

- **Creation myths** explain where the world and its creatures came from



- **Cosmogony myths** describe the way the world, the heavens, the sea, and the underworld are put together, and how the sun and moon travel around them

Creation of the Titans and the gods



- **Origin of humanity myths** help explain where humans came from, often the pet creation of a deity playing in the mud
- **Introduction of disease and death myths** often describe that first humans living in a paradise that is marred when someone introduces unhappiness.



- **Afterlife myths** help people explain where the human soul goes after the body dies



- **End of the world myths** suggest how the world will eventually end



The Mythological Players

- Deities
 - The supernatural entities that hold power over the world and the people in it. Often called gods and goddesses



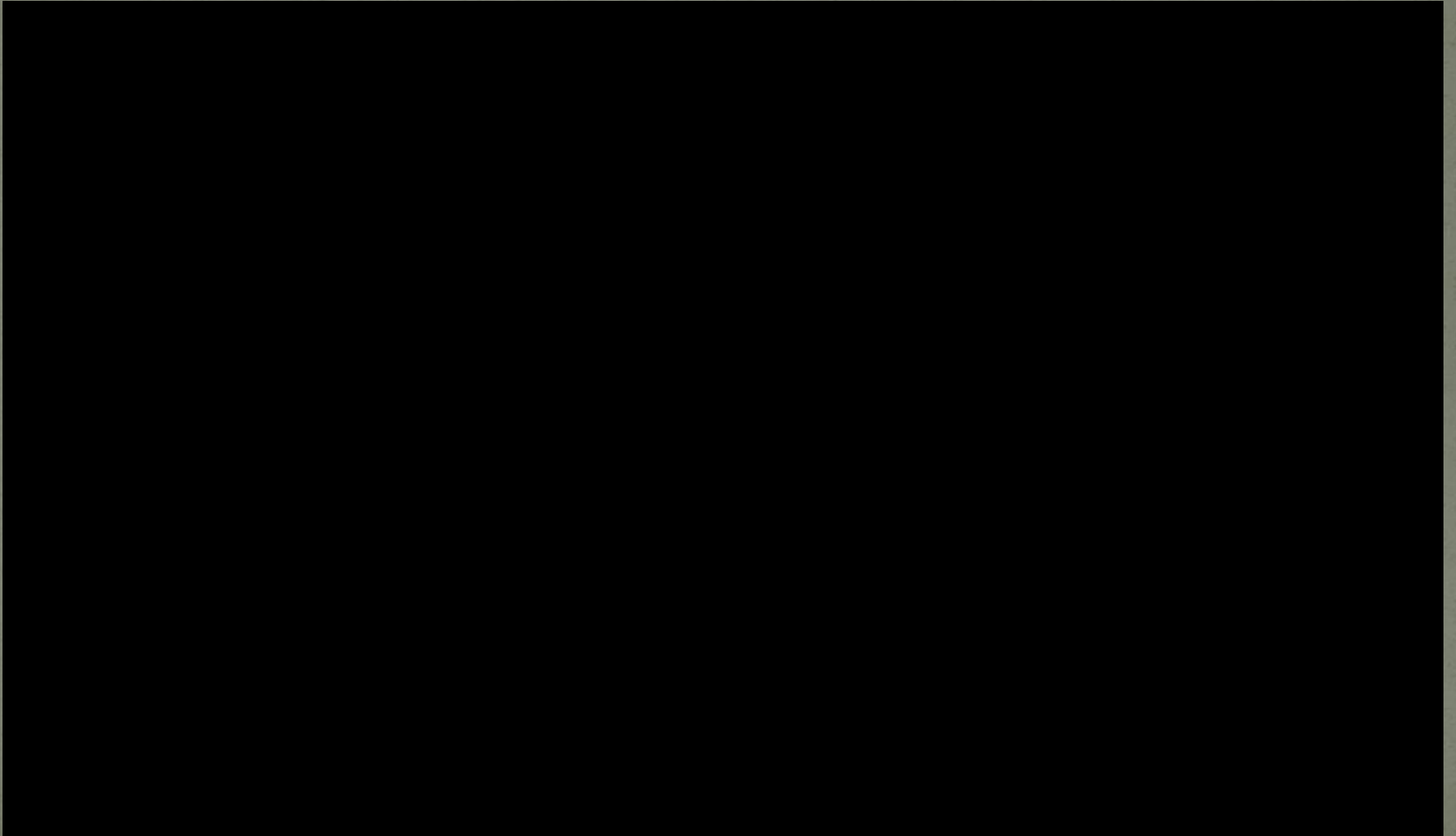
- Antigods
 - The non-benevolent deities; negative beings who live and walk the earth with humans. Might include devils, dragons, demons, monsters, or giants.



- Heroes
 - Human characters who perform amazing feats of daring, strength, or cleverness. They're usually male, and their defining characteristics are evident from childhood



A hero in action...



Could myths be real?

