Hercules
by Paul Storrie and Steve Kurth

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Hercules

Getting Started

What If?

The coach for your school’s baseball team has been training you to be a great hitter. He has taught you everything you know. You are a terrific hitter and have been leading your team to victories. You have even become a local sports hero. The team is so successful, you are almost certain that it will make it into the state championship.

During the season, your coach tells you to begin taking steroids, so that you can increase your strength and endurance. You know that steroids are illegal and will put you at an unfair advantage. You do not want to cheat. But you feel loyal to your coach for all he has taught you.

Make notes about how this would affect you.

• How would you feel if you cheated by taking steroids?
• What is your duty to the coach and the rest of the team?
• What is your duty to yourself?

Connect to The Exchange Question Discuss how this situation could relate to The Exchange Question: Should a hero be loyal no matter what? Summarize your discussion.
Introduction

Read the Introduction on pages 6–9 in Hercules. The Introduction will help you understand key concepts in the book. Knowing them will help you discuss and write about the book.

The Introduction includes information about
- characteristics of Greek gods
- characteristics of Greek mythological heroes
- Greek myths

After you read the Introduction, answer these questions to check your understanding.

1. How are Greek gods similar to and different from humans?

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

   ________________________________________________________________

2. What do Greek mythological heroes have in common?

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3. How have myths and stories about mythological characters been told in the twentieth century and today?

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Introduction: Key Concepts

Personal Experience Chart

Study the Personal Experience Chart for endurance. Write about a personal connection using the word endurance.

Personal Experience Chart

Key Concept: ____________________________

Define or rename: ____________________________

Specific Examples

Running a long distance requires physical endurance.

Mental endurance helps you do your best when taking a long exam.

Emotional endurance helps people deal with tragedy.

Personal Connection: ____________________________

On a separate sheet of paper, create a similar Personal Experience Chart for each of the Key Concept words.
Respond to Pages 11–29

1. **Personal Response**  Hera’s jealousy of Hercules causes her to seek revenge. Has anyone ever been jealous of you? What did the person do to show that he or she was jealous?

2. **Conclusions**  How does Hercules use his gifts of strength and endurance to defeat the great lion? Use the words *endurance* and *muscular* in your response.

3. **Comparisons**  Hercules does not question the oracle, and he is careful not to offend the gods. What does this show about Hercules’s attitude toward the gods? How does this compare to the way Hera treats Hercules?

4. **Generate Questions**  Write a question about this section for someone else reading this book. Exchange questions with them. Do you agree with their answer?
5. Judgments  Hercules’s heroic qualities allow him to do things average humans cannot. List how Hercules’s heroic qualities help him complete his tasks in the Cluster.

Which is Hercules’s most valuable quality? Why? If he had to lose a quality, which could he most easily do without?

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Respond to Pages 30–50

1. Personal Response  Hercules is known for his legendary strength, intelligence, and endurance. If you could have any one of these gifts, which would you choose? Why?

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2. Inference  Why does Hercules obey the king, even though the obstacles Hercules faces put him in danger? How do the labors affect Hercules’s reputation? Use the words obstacles, revenge, and labor in your response.

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3. Character’s Motive  For his eighth labor, Hercules tells the horse trainer that he is going to steal one of the mares from the stable. Why does he do this?

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What If?

4. Connect  Look at your notes on Student Journal, page 2. Think about what might happen if you had to decide whether or not to be loyal to a dishonest leader. Compare this to Hercules. How does Hercules’s loyalty help him and hurt him?

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5. **Antagonist** Many characters threaten Hercules. Their actions make up sub-plots. Sub-plots make a story more complicated than a simple linear story. Explain what each enemy does to Hercules, and what it says about each of their motives in the chart.

**Character Description Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>What the Character Does</th>
<th>What This Shows About the Character</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hera</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurystheus</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geryon</td>
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Which of these characters is the biggest threat to Hercules? Why?

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