

## Myth #8 Hercules-Labors 7-12

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**READ CLOSELY AND SHOW EVIDENCE OF THINKING BY ANNOTATING. Annotate all readings by highlighting the main idea in yellow; the best evidence supporting in blue, and any interesting phrases in green.**

### **Labour seven: capturing the Cretan Bull**

The seventh task Eurystheus gave to Heracles was to capture the Cretan Bull. This was a legendary creature that wreaked havoc on the island of Crete, destroying crops and land. After getting permission from King Minos, Heracles managed to catch the bull with his bare hands and sent it back to Eurystheus' court. Upon seeing the creature, Eurystheus hid in his jar and decided to sacrifice the animal to Hera. The goddess rejected the offer, as this would glorify Heracles' success even more. Instead, the animal was left free and went to the area of Marathon, getting the name Marathonian Bull. It was later caught by Theseus and was sacrificed to Athena and Apollo.

### **Labour eight: stealing the Mares of Diomedes**

The Mares of Diomedes were fearsome animals that had been trained to eat human flesh. They were owned by Diomedes, king of Thrace. It was believed that due to their unnatural diet, the horses were seized with madness, uncontrollable and sometimes they even breathed fire. According to one source, Heracles brought a number of young men with him to help him with his task. After they managed to steal the animals, they were all chased by Diomedes and his army. Heracles told his companion Abderus to take care of the horses, while he was fighting Diomedes. Upon his return, Heracles realised that Abderus was devoured by the mares. Overcome with anger, Heracles fed Diomedes to his own horses, and later founded the city of Abdera in memory of his friend. After the horses were fed, they became calm and Heracles seized the opportunity to bind their mouths shut. He brought them back to Eurystheus, who either sacrificed them to Hera or left them roam free, as they had now become permanently calm.

### **Labour nine: stealing the girdle of Hippolyta**

Admete, the daughter of Eurystheus, learned that Hippolyta, queen of the Amazons, had been given a girdle as a gift from her father, Ares, and wanted it for herself. So, Eurystheus decided to make this the ninth labour that Heracles would have to complete.

Heracles took some friends with him and set sail for the region of Themiscyra, where the Amazons dwelled. On their way there, they stopped at the island of Paros, where the sons of king Minos of Crete killed two of Heracles' friends. Furious, Heracles killed the sons of Minos and demanded that two of the inhabitants replace his dead comrades. Thus, two of Minos' grandsons joined the band, and they all set sail again.

After a brief stop at the court of Lycus, a friend of Heracles, they eventually reached the land of the Amazons. Hippolyta had heard of the glorious feats that Heracles had performed, and impressed,

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she immediately agreed to give her girdle. Heracles asked her to have lunch together on the ship and Hippolyta eagerly followed. At the same time, however, a disguised Hera went to the Amazons and started spreading rumours about Heracles wanting to abduct their queen. The Amazons decided to confront Heracles and rode towards the ship. Upon seeing them, Heracles thought that this had all been set up by Hippolyta and that she had no intention of handing over the girdle; so, he killed her, took the belt and set sail back to Tiryns.

Labour ten: stealing the cattle of [Geryon](#)

The tenth labour of Heracles was to steal the cattle of Geryon, who lived on the island of Erytheia, somewhere in the west. Heracles went on his quest, and he first had to cross the desert of Libya. At some point, having been so frustrated at the heat, he shot an arrow at the sun. Helios, the sun god, was so impressed by Heracles' courage, that he decided to help him by offering him his own golden chariot with which he sailed across the sea from west to east every night. Heracles hopped on the chariot and reached Erytheia overnight.

There, his first obstacle was the two-headed dog Orthrus, brother of Cerberus, the three-headed dog and guardian of the Underworld. One blow with Heracles' club was enough to kill Orthrus. Eurytion, the herdsman, heard what happened and when he tried to confront Heracles, he was killed in the same way. Geryon immediately grabbed his three shields and three spears, while wearing three helmets and attacked the hero. However, a powerful shot of an arrow from Heracles' bow was enough to pierce Geryon's forehead and sent him to his demise.

Bringing the cattle back to Tiryns was another task on its own. According to the Roman version of the story, Heracles took the road over the Aventine Hill where Rome would later be built on. There, a giant named Cacus stole some of the cattle, but they were later retrieved, called out by the animals remaining in the possession of Heracles. As an extra obstacle, Hera sent a gadfly to irritate the animals and scatter them. Heracles managed to get them back within a year. Before he reached Tiryns, though, Hera caused a flood that raised the level of a river so much that it could not be crossed. So, Heracles started piling stones into the river, and bridged the two riverbanks. He eventually reached Tiryns, where the cattle were sacrificed to the goddess.

Upon finishing the tenth labour, Eurystheus told Heracles that he considered two of the labours invalid; the Hydra was not slain by Heracles alone but was helped by Iolaus, while he accepted payment for the cleaning of the Augean Stables. So, two more labours had to be completed. These were:

11. to steal the Hesperidean Apples,
12. to capture Cerberus, guardian of the Underworld.

Labour eleven: stealing the apples from the garden of [Hesperides](#)

The Hesperides were nymphs of the sunset that tended a garden somewhere in the far western corner of the world. Heracles managed to capture the Old Man of the Sea, a shape-shifting sea deity, in order to find out the exact location of the garden. During this quest, Heracles also

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confronted the half-giant Antaeus, who was invincible by drawing power from his mother, Gaea (the earth), as long as he touched it. To kill him, Heracles held him high so his feet wouldn't touch the ground, and crushed him with his hands.

There are two versions on how Heracles managed to acquire the apples. One version has it that he reached the Hesperidean Garden, where he killed Ladon, the dragon guardian of the apples, and took the apples. According to another version, he came across Atlas, the Titan god who was condemned to hold the heavens on his shoulders. Atlas was also the father of the Hesperides, and thus had access to the garden at any time. Heracles persuaded Atlas to change places for a while, so that Atlas would fetch some of the apples. Atlas agreed and indeed took some of the apples. However, on his return, he decided he did not want to take the heavens back on his shoulders. Heracles tricked him and he said he would be keeping the heavens but wanted to adjust his cloak first. Atlas agreed to take the heavens back momentarily, but Heracles walked away taking the apples with him.

### **Labour twelve: capturing Cerberus, guardian of the Underworld**

The final labour that Heracles had to complete was to capture Cerberus, the three-headed dog and guardian of the Underworld. Before going to the Underworld, Heracles decided to be initiated in the Eleusinian Mysteries, so that he would be taught how to travel alive from the world of the living to the realm of the dead and vice versa. He then went to Tanaerum, where one of the entrances to the Underworld lay, and was helped there by Athena and Hermes. The goddess Hestia also helped him with negotiating with Charon, the boatman that guided the souls over the river Acheron towards the Underworld.

Once he reached the Underworld, he met Theseus and Pirithous, the two heroes that had been incarcerated in the Underworld by Hades for attempting to steal Persephone. According to one version of the story, snakes coiled around their legs and then turned into stone. A different version has it that the god of the Underworld feigned hospitality and invited them to a feast. However, the chairs on which the heroes were seated magically caused forgetfulness, thus keeping them there. Heracles pulled Theseus from his chair, managing to save him; however, part of his thigh was stuck to it, thus providing an explanation of the supposedly lean thighs of Athenians. When the hero tried to save Pirithous, though, the earth started trembling; it seems that because he desired Persephone for himself, it was so insulting that he was not allowed to leave.

Heracles found Hades and asked him to take Cerberus to the surface. The god agreed on the condition that no weapons should be used to achieve it. Heracles managed to subdue the dog with his hands and brought it on his back to Tiryns. Eurystheus fled in horror into his jar and asked Heracles to take the monster back to the Underworld, releasing him from any other labours.

After the Twelve Labours were complete, Heracles decided to join Jason and the Argonauts in their attempt to obtain the Golden Fleece

**WRITE A REFLECTION-(3 paragraphs-5 sentences each)-This needs to be submitted through google classroom.**

**One paragraph that reflects on what the writer said**

- Here's where you summarize the main points of the story

**One paragraph that reflects on the writer's style**

- How does the author use rhetorical devices (similes, metaphors, symbols etc.)
- What is the theme/author's message

**One paragraph that reflects the reader's thoughts on the content of the Story**

- Here's where you can discuss your reaction to the story, did it speak to you? Did you like it, why or why not?