

UNIT 1



Greek Mythology Myths



PART 1

ORAL TASKS

1. How many Greek gods do you know? Say something about them.
2. Do you know how the universe and human beings come into being?
3. In different cultures, there are different myths about the creation of the universe. Please tell different creation stories that you know.

PART 2

INTRODUCTION

The word *myth* comes from the Greek word *mythos*, which means “story” or “speech”. Myth is often used to describe a story that explains events or objects that occur in nature, such as the creation of certain flowers or animals, the location of deserts or oceans, and even the origin and cycle of the seasons. Myths may also be stories about the origins of customs or traditions.

The gods and goddesses were a major part of everyday life in ancient Greece, and each god had a particular role. Zeus, for example, the ruler of the sky and the leader of the gods, was also a protector of guests and travelers. Athena was the protectress of Athens, and she was also the goddess of wisdom and war. Poseidon was another protector of Athens, and as the ruler of the sea, he was an important god for sailors and those who traveled by boat.

Within the Pantheon, the gods often married each other, and some of them had more than one spouse or partner at a time. Sometimes the gods married their siblings, parents, or children. The god Zeus, for example, had many partners other than his wife, Hera, who was also his sister. Throughout the various mythological stories, Zeus appeared to have had more than one hundred fifteen mistresses! The gods and goddesses were often paired in different ways because the myths were always developing and being retold. As people began to believe different things about different gods, they associated the gods with one another in new ways. Zeus, as the most powerful god, often seemed to be a part of all the other gods' lives.

This excerpt recounts the creation of the universe, how different gods and goddesses have come into being, how they fight against each other, and how human beings come into being.

PART 3

TEXTUAL READING¹



Creation

1► Before there was land or sea, people or gods, nothing existed, except Chaos². Chaos was a space of neither order nor disorder. During Chaos' reign, there was no organization of any kind in the universe. There was no sun or moon. There were no mountains or rivers, nor any such features on earth. In fact, there was no earth at all. It was a period of vast emptiness. Even time did not exist. Eventually, Chaos divided itself into the earth, the sky, and the sea. When the division was complete, everything was peaceful and perfect.

reign: 统治

emptiness: 空无

peaceful: 和平的

2► After Chaos divided into the earth, the sky, and the sea, one goddess came into being without being born to any mother. Her name was Gaia³, which means earth, and she took control over the earth as it took shape. Mountains became separate from the plains, and rivers and oceans were formed. Like an artist at a canvas, Gaia was busy creating a beautiful masterpiece. Soon, however, the goddess began to long for children to help populate and rule this magnificent new world.

goddess: 女神

canvas: 画布

masterpiece: 杰作

populate:
居住, 生活

magnificent:
宏大的

pregnant: 怀孕的

3► Gaia's desire for children was so great that eventually she became pregnant by herself. The child she bore was named Uranus⁴, and he became the ruler of the sky. In every way, Uranus was the equal of his mother, and

1 本篇出自: Michelle M. Houle. *Gods and Goddesses in Greek Mythology*. Berkeley Heights, N. J.: Enslow Publishers, Inc., 2001.

2 Chaos: 混沌。希腊神话中指天地未分时的混沌状态。

3 Gaia: 盖娅。希腊神话中的大地母神, 从混沌状态中繁衍出来, 是古老的一类神, 为天神宙斯的祖母。

4 Uranus: 乌拉诺斯。盖娅女神的第一个孩子, 掌控天空, 为天神。天神与大地神盖娅生育了下一代神。

soon Gaia and Uranus had children together.

monster: 怪兽

giant: 巨人

overthrow: 推翻

womb: 子宫

monstrous:

怪兽似的

frightening:

可怕的

exceedingly:

极其地

craftsman: 匠人

thunder: 雷

lightning: 闪电

cavern: 洞穴

4► Gaia's first three children were **monsters**, called the Hundred-handed Ones⁵. They were **giants**, and each had fifty heads and a hundred hands. Although Gaia loved her children and was proud of them, Uranus was afraid that someday one of these children would **overthrow** him. Because of this fear, Uranus hated the children and forced them back into Gaia's **womb**.

5► After the hundred-handed monsters had been born and were pushed back into their mother's womb, Gaia gave birth to three more **monstrous** children. These were giants called the Cyclopes⁶. Each had but a single eye, which was positioned directly in the middle of his forehead. Although they were **frightening** to look at, these young gods were **exceedingly** strong, and they were excellent **craftsmen** who made **thunder** and **lightning** for their mother to use as tools and weapons. Unfortunately, Uranus was afraid of these children, too. So, in order to get rid of them, Uranus tied the Cyclopes up and threw them into a deep **cavern** called Tartarus⁷. Tartarus was far, far away, and Uranus felt safe in believing that he would never see these monster-children again.

6► Saddened by the loss of the Hundred-handed Ones and the Cyclopes, and angry at the cruel Uranus, Gaia gave birth to a third group of children. These were called the Titans⁸, and there were twelve of them—six goddesses and six gods. They were very different from their older **siblings**. The Titans were beings with human characteristics, and they were not monsters at all. The goddesses' names were Tethys, Theia, Mnemosyne, Rhea, Themis, and Phoebe.⁹ The gods' names were Oceanus, Hyperion, Iapetus, Cronus, Crius, and Coeus.¹⁰

sibling: 兄弟姐妹

5 *the Hundred-handed Ones*: 百臂巨人, 有 50 个头和 100 只手, 是乌拉诺斯与盖娅的孩子。乌拉诺斯惧怕孩子们会推翻他, 又把他们塞回了盖娅的子宫。

6 *Cyclopes*: 希腊神话中的独眼巨人, 能制造雷电给母亲盖娅作工具和武器。

7 *Tartarus*: 地狱底下暗无天日的深渊; 地狱。乌拉诺斯惧怕独眼巨人, 再次残忍对待自己的孩子, 将他们扔进地狱。

8 *Titan*: 巨人, 提坦神。共有 12 位提坦巨神, 包括 6 位女神和 6 位男神。

9 6 位提坦女神的名字依次是: 忒提斯、忒伊亚、摩涅莫辛涅、瑞亚、西弥斯、福柏。

10 6 位提坦男神的名字依次是: 俄克阿诺斯、许珀里翁、伊阿珀托斯、克罗诺斯、克利俄斯、科俄斯。



7► Uranus was still afraid that one day one of his children would overthrow him. Because of this fear, he pushed the Titans back into Gaia's womb alongside their siblings, the Hundred-handed Ones. Gaia was **enraged** by Uranus's refusal to allow her children to live freely. She **desperately** wanted her children to live without **restraints** and to enjoy the world. Finally, she came up with a plan that would allow her children to be born into the world and remain there.

enrage: 激怒

desperately:
极度地

restraint: 限制

8► Gaia could speak to the children in her **cavernous** womb, and she had no trouble convincing them to help with her plan. Cronus, the youngest of the twelve Titans, was the most eager to help his mother. So, the two set out to **trick** Uranus and free the Titans and the Hundred-handed Ones from their mother's prison-like womb.

cavernous:
洞穴状的

trick: 欺骗

9► Cronus and Gaia waited for the perfect opportunity to **enact** their plan. Finally, one night, when Uranus came to Gaia's bed, Cronus crept out of Gaia's womb and **stabbed** his cruel father with a **sickle**, a **curved** knife used to harvest crops. As Uranus lay dying, his fears of being overthrown by one of his children having come true, Uranus leaned forward and **cursed** his son: "Cronus," he pronounced, **gasping** for breath, "it will come to pass that one of your children will do to you what you have just done to me." Then, with a final **shudder**, Uranus died, a look of anger and **betrayal** in his eyes.

enact: 实施

stab: 刺

sickle: 镰刀

curved: 弯曲的

curse: 诅咒

gasp: 喘气

shudder: 颤抖

betrayal: 背叛

10► After Uranus died, Gaia and her children felt free for the first time. The Titans and the Hundred-handed Ones were reborn from their mother's womb, and the Cyclopes were freed from Tartarus. All of Gaia's children decided to make Cronus their king. Cronus married his sister, the Titan named Rhea, and ruled over the universe for a long, peaceful time.

The War Between the Titans and the Olympians

11► After the death of Uranus, the world was at peace again. Cronus, the king of the Titans, and Rhea, his most noble sister and wife, had matters well in hand. Unfortunately, the curse of his father, Uranus, **haunted** Cronus day and night. Was it possible that one day he, too, would have a child who would overthrow him?

haunt: 萦绕

12► One day, Rhea announced that she was going to have a baby, but her husband was not happy. Cronus was so afraid that history would repeat itself that he did, in fact, manage to repeat history. Like his father before him,

overpower: 战胜

grab: 抓住

swallow: 吞下

horrified: 恐惧的

sadden: 使悲伤

Cronus reasoned that if he could keep his children from growing up, none could ever become strong enough to overpower him. So, when Rhea gave birth to her first child, Cronus quickly grabbed it and swallowed it whole. Rhea was both horrified and saddened at the loss of her first-born child. In a similar manner, Cronus swallowed all of the next four children that she gave birth to, and Rhea vowed to get them back, any way she could.

wrap: 包裹

blanket: 毯子

gobble: 吞食

13 ▶ By the time Rhea discovered that she was pregnant for the sixth time, she had figured out a plan to trick her husband and save the newborn child from being swallowed whole. So, when it was nearly time for her to give birth, Rhea pretended to have her baby. She took a large stone and wrapped it in a baby's blanket. When Cronus came to gobble down the newborn child, Rhea gave him the wrapped-up stone. Quickly, Cronus swallowed the stone, just as he had swallowed the other children. In fact, Cronus' focus on swallowing the newborn god was so great that he did not even realize that he had been tricked.

glaring:
愤怒的

14 ▶ Later, when the time came for Rhea actually to have her child, she fled to the island of Crete¹¹. There, away from the glaring eyes of her husband, Rhea secretly gave birth to a son, whom she named Zeus¹². He was a beautiful and strong baby, and Rhea knew that when he grew up, he would be a truly powerful god. Rhea realized that she could not return home to her husband with the child. Cronus would only try to destroy the newborn god, as he had done with the others. Therefore, for his protection, Rhea left Zeus to grow up secretly on Crete where he was suckled by a goat and raised by minor native deities called nymphs. While Zeus was a child, Cronus never suspected that he had been tricked and that he actually had a stone resting solidly in his stomach.

suckle: 哺乳

deity: 神

nymph: 仙女

suspect: 怀疑

solidly: 牢牢地

15 ▶ When he had grown into a young man, Zeus left Crete to join his mother. Rhea arranged for Zeus to become a servant to his father. Cronus did not know that his new servant was actually his son. One day, Zeus brought his father a cup of wine, which Cronus drank quickly. This cup of wine contained a special potion, which made Cronus throw up. Cronus was so violently ill

potion: 药剂

throw up: 呕吐

11 Crete: 希腊的克里特岛。

12 Zeus: 宙斯。古希腊神话中的众神之王，奥林匹斯十二主神之首，统治宇宙万物的至高无上的主神。人们常用“众神和人类的父亲”“神王”来称呼他。



that he even threw up the stone wrapped in the blanket. Then he threw up all of the children he had swallowed before. The children emerged from their father's stomach as fully grown adults. Their names were Poseidon, Hades, Hera, Demeter, and Hestia.¹³ These were Zeus' brothers and sisters, and they were all glad to see each other in the light of day. Although they were happy to be free, the six siblings knew they must do something immediately, or their father would swallow them all over again. Quickly, they ran away while their father continued to **moan** and **clutch** his stomach.

moan: 呻吟

clutch: 紧紧抓紧

16▶ This young generation of gods fled to Mount Olympus¹⁴ to escape their **irate** father, and because they claimed Mount Olympus as their home, the young gods were called the Olympians. After they had fled to safety, the Olympians quickly formed a plan. At once, they declared war on Cronus and many of the other Titans. The young gods wanted to rule the world in their father's place. Yet their struggle had a **dual** purpose: while they were fighting for control over the earth, they were also fighting for their lives, since they knew that Cronus would swallow them again if he ever got the chance.

irate: 发怒的

dual: 双重的

17▶ And so a great war began. At first, it seemed likely that the Titans would be **victorious** and remain in control of the earth. The young Olympian gods felt **outnumbered** and overpowered. The tide began to turn, however, when a few Titans changed sides and fought with Zeus and his siblings. Prometheus¹⁵, the son of the Titans Themis and Iapetus, was one who **switched** his **allegiance**. Prometheus' name means "one who thinks ahead", and with his ability to see the future he could **foresee** that the Titans would lose the battle against the Olympian gods. Prometheus and his brother Epimetheus¹⁶ refused to fight against the Olympians because of this foresight.

victorious:
胜利的

outnumber:
数目上超过

switch: 改变

allegiance: 效忠

foresee: 预见

18▶ The Cyclopes and the Hundred-handed Ones also joined the Olympians in their fight against the Titans. They did not feel bound to the Titans, and they believed that the Olympian gods would rule with **steadier** hands. Zeus

steady: 稳定的

13 克罗诺斯将曾经吞进肚里的孩子吐了出来，他们分别是波塞冬、哈德斯、赫拉、德米忒耳、赫斯提。

14 *Mount Olympus*: 奥林匹斯山。克罗诺斯的六个孩子逃亡奥林匹斯山，并居住在那里。

15 *Prometheus*: 普罗米修斯。提坦巨神西弥斯和伊阿珀托斯之长子，具有先知先觉的能力。

16 *Epimetheus*: 厄庇墨透斯。提坦巨神西弥斯和伊阿珀托斯之次子，普罗米修斯之弟，是后知后觉者。

asked the one-eyed Cyclopes to make weapons for his army, and these skilled craftsmen made a special weapon for each of the gods. For Zeus, **thunderbolt**: 霹雳 the leader, the Cyclopes fashioned a special **thunderbolt**, which could be thrown long distances with great force. For Poseidon, they created a magnificent **trident**: 三叉戟 **trident**, or three-pronged spear, which could defeat any enemy. Finally, knowing that resistance came in many forms, the Cyclopes made Hades a magic **helmet**: 头盔 **helmet** that could make him invisible, even to the immortal eyes of Cronus and the other Titans.

19 ▶ The war between the Titans and the Olympians was terrible. With the help of the Hundred-handed Ones, who fought bravely without ever tiring, the **surrender**: 投降 Olympians soon forced the Titans to **surrender**. After the Titans had given up, Zeus challenged Cronus to a wrestling match. The winner would control Mount Olympus, to which the Titans were still laying claim. After beating Cronus three times, Zeus declared the Olympian gods to be the winners.

20 ▶ After the war, the Olympians sent most of the Titans to Tartarus to be locked up for **eternity**: 永恒 **eternity**. The victors built a **bronze**: 铜 **bronze** gate over the mouth of the cavern, and the Hundred-handed Ones were placed outside as guards. Atlas¹⁷, another child of Iapetus and Themis, who had led the Titans into battle, received a special punishment. He was forced to hold the world on his back for all eternity. This turned out to be a far more challenging task than **imprisonment**: 囚禁 **imprisonment** in Tartarus.

21 ▶ Cronus, the former ruler of the universe, was not sent to Tartarus with his siblings. Though Cronus had swallowed his children whole, Zeus and the other Olympians did not want to destroy him in **revenge**: 复仇 **revenge**. Instead, Cronus was sent away to live on the Island of the Dead, where he stayed forever. Although originally he had wanted to destroy the Olympian gods, Cronus, once defeated and exiled, sent dreams to his son Zeus to guide him from afar.

22 ▶ After all the punishments were handed out, Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon made a bet to determine who would rule each part of the world. Hades became the lord of the dead and the Underworld, which was sometimes called Hades in his honor. Poseidon gained control of the seas and all the

17 *Atlas*: 阿特拉斯, 是提坦巨神西弥斯和伊阿珀托斯的另一个孩子。以肩顶天的提坦巨神之一, 因与提坦神一起反对奥林匹斯诸神而被宙斯惩罚用双肩在世界最西处支撑天宇, 以防止天空 (乌拉诺斯) 和大地之母 (盖娅) 再度结合。



waters on earth. Zeus became the lord of the sky; and since the sky covers everything on earth, he became the king, or father, of the gods.

23 ▶ After these important decisions were made, the other Olympian gods were also given jobs. Demeter became the goddess of agriculture and of all growing things. Hestia became the goddess of the **hearth**, or fireplace, and the home. Hera, too, protected the home and became the goddess of marriage and childbirth after she married her brother, Zeus.¹⁸

hearth: 灶台

24 ▶ Once the Olympians had defeated the Titans and taken on their new roles, they, too, had children. Some of these gods were born under rather extraordinary circumstances. Athena, for example, was born out of the side of Zeus' head. She became the goddess of wisdom and the protector of Athens. Hera became pregnant on her own and gave birth to Hephaestus¹⁹. Hephaestus was the god of fire and became the blacksmith of the gods. Ares²⁰ was the child of Hera and Zeus, and he became the god of war.

25 ▶ Apollo, the god of light and music, and his twin sister, Artemis, the maiden goddess of the hunt, were the children of Leto, who was the daughter of the Titans Phoebe and Coeus. The goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite²¹, had an unusual birth: she was born out of the waves of the sea.

26 ▶ Hermes was another son of Zeus. His mother was Maia, one of the daughters of Atlas. Hermes grew very quickly, and he was swift-footed, even as a baby. Later, he became the official messenger of the gods because he was so fast. He was often depicted with wings on his hat and sandals, and because he was always moving about, he was a particular protector of travelers.

27 ▶ These gods and others lived on Mount Olympus after their victory over the Titans. From the height of this great mountain, the new rulers could look down on all of Greece and keep watch over the world, for the control of

18 本句与上段是奥林匹斯诸神的分职：哈德斯成为冥界和地界的主宰，是冥界的代名词；波塞冬掌管海洋和所有水域；宙斯为天神，天管万物，也是众神之父；德米忒耳成为农业和生长女神；赫斯提是灶神；赫拉，与赫斯提一样，也守卫家园，在嫁给哥哥宙斯后成为婚姻和生育女神。

19 *Hephaestus*: 赫淮斯托斯。赫拉独自怀孕所生，火神和铁匠之神。

20 *Ares*: 阿瑞斯。赫拉和宙斯的儿子，战神。

21 *Aphrodite*: 阿芙洛狄忒。爱神与美神，从海浪中生出。

which they had fought so hard.

Prometheus and Earth's First Inhabitants

yearn: 渴望

28► After the world was created and the gods had fought their wars, the land that lay below Mount Olympus remained unpopulated, even though Gaia, the first goddess, had long **yearned** to make creatures to inhabit the earth. Finally, Zeus decided it was time.

roam: 游荡

29► It was a good time to be created. No monsters **roamed** the earth, and the world was at peace. Zeus began to make creatures to populate this beautiful world. However, just as he was beginning, he was called away to settle a matter dividing his fellow Olympians. He decided to appoint Prometheus and Epimetheus, sons of Titans who had fought with the Olympians, to continue the project of creating earth's first inhabitants.

30► Although the brothers were Titans by birth, they had sided with the Olympians in the war against Cronus and the other Titans because, blessed with the gift of being able to see the future, Prometheus had foreseen the Olympian victory. Prometheus was the more sensible of the two brothers, and he always planned ahead. Epimetheus, on the other hand, always meant well, but he never planned ahead. Epimetheus never thought about the consequences of his actions until after he had completed them.

sculptor: 雕塑家

31► Zeus had chosen these brothers for the project of creating the first people and animals on earth because Prometheus was an excellent potter and **sculptor**. Prometheus could make just about anything, and he had a good imagination. Epimetheus was invited to work on the project because he was always eager to help his brother.

clay: 泥土

sculpt: 雕塑

32► Because Zeus had only just started to make the various earth creatures, the brothers had a lot of work ahead of them. After using **clay** to **sculpt** the new creatures into their basic shapes, Prometheus went to Athena, the goddess of wisdom, for advice on how to complete the work. Epimetheus stayed behind to give the unfinished creations their final distinguishing features.

compose: 组成

33► Athena's advice was simple. She told Prometheus that since the creatures were already **composed** of earth and water, having been fashioned from clay, the only element lacking for life was air. So, Athena advised Prometheus to hold each of the newly shaped creatures up to the sky. When the wind blew



into them, she promised, they would breathe and be truly alive.

34 ▶ Meanwhile, Epimetheus continued to work. He enjoyed showing off his creative powers and granted a wide variety of interesting physical **attributes** to all the different creatures. Epimetheus gave some of them fur and hair, which would protect them from the elements. He gave others teeth and **claws** so that they could easily collect and eat food. In addition, he gave some of the creatures strength and speed.

attribute:
特征, 属性

claw: 爪子

35 ▶ When Prometheus returned from his talk with Athena, he found that once again, his brother had acted before thinking. Epimetheus had been so excited about designing the new animals and so generous with his creative powers that he had completely forgotten to save any special gifts for the human beings. By the time the sculptor had gotten around to the humans, he had run out of ideas. They were left weak and defenseless, and they would have remained so forever if Prometheus had not stepped in. Once he realized that his brother had created a **species** unable to stand on its own in the new world, Prometheus set forth to fix the mistake and make human beings strong and capable of surviving among earth's other inhabitants.

species: 物种

36 ▶ First, Prometheus decided to help the humans stand **upright** like the gods. He turned their heads upward to the sky. This adjustment gave them the power to reason. Then he raced to the heavens where he lit a **torch**, using the fire of the sun. He used this fire to light up the new creatures' powers of thought and speech. These special powers helped set the humans apart from the other animals.

upright: 直立的

torch: 火炬

37 ▶ At first, the gods approved of Prometheus' work. They were glad to see that there was a species on earth that had the ability to think and speak. But Prometheus was still not satisfied. He saw that Epimetheus' poor planning had left the new humans physically weak compared to the other inhabitants of the earth. They were hungry, sad, and scared. Finally, to help the humans, Prometheus left Mount Olympus and went to live on earth with the people, in order to teach them the skills they would need to survive in the new world.

38 ▶ First, Prometheus showed the humans how to build houses so they would not have to live in caves. Then he taught them how to read, and how to write numbers and letters. He helped the people learn how to tame animals and how to sail on the seas. He showed them how to heal themselves

omen: 预兆

when they were sick. After he had shown the people how to foretell the future and recognize **omens** by looking at the way birds flew, some of the other gods became impressed by the new people. They decided to help, too. Demeter, the Olympian earth goddess, taught the new race of creatures about edible plants. With this help, the humans had better access to food, and they began to prosper and live happily for the first time.

slaughter: 屠杀

39 ▶ Although some of the gods were excited about the development of the humans, other gods were beginning to worry that the humans were becoming too powerful. However, despite the growing concerns of his fellow gods, Prometheus was so pleased with his creations that he decided to help the humans even more. Until this time, humans were only allowed to **slaughter** other animals if they were performing a sacrifice to the gods. They ate only the plants that Demeter instructed them to eat. Prometheus could see that the humans would probably need to eat the meat of other animals to survive.

shiny: 闪亮

morsel: 少量

offering: 祭品

lean: 瘦的

hide: 兽皮

entrails: 内脏

40 ▶ So Prometheus came up with a plan. First, he cut up an ox, as if for a sacrifice. Then, he divided the sections into two piles. In one pile, Prometheus wrapped up the bones of the ox and hid them under **shiny morsels** of fat. This pile looked like the more attractive **offering** in a sacrifice. For the other pile, Prometheus took the **lean** meat and other edible parts of the ox and wrapped them in **hide**, topping the pile with **entrails** to make the offering look disgusting.

savory: 可口的

outraged:
愤怒的

41 ▶ Once this was done, Prometheus asked Zeus to choose one of the two piles and keep it as the sacrificial offering; the humans would take whichever pile Zeus rejected. Not knowing that the good meat was actually hidden beneath the hide and entrails, Zeus chose the pile shimmering with fat. Once Zeus had made his choice, he had to stick with it, even after he discovered that he had chosen a pile with no edible meat in it. From then on, people offered the fat and bones of animals to the gods, and they kept the **savory** parts of the animals for themselves. Zeus was **outraged** that Prometheus had tricked him, but he decided to save his revenge for later.

42 ▶ This was not the only trick Prometheus played on the Olympian gods for the sake of the humans. Since the new race of creatures had no fur, they were often cold, and even though they were now allowed to eat meat, they had no way to cook it. Human beings did not know about fire or how to