

Unit Overview: Parent Guide

Lightning Thief, Grade 4

What is the goal of this unit?

- Your child will read fiction and nonfiction texts to understand traditional stories that focus on the big topic – the quest. Your child will explore how literature can help us make sense of the world and how literature from the past can influence our current lives and contemporary stories.

What topics and skills is your fourth grader learning in this unit?

- Traditional stories
- The quest
- Greek mythology
- Character description and development
- Informational writing

What tasks will your child engage in to help them consider the topics and skills of this unit?

- **Culminating Writing Task:** Your child will bring together all her learning near the end of the unit by writing an essay that explores how the idea of the quest is part of the main text of the unit *The Lightning Thief*.
- **Extension Task:** Your child will extend her learning by selecting and researching a mythological character and then writing an explanation of how the character is a part of our lives today.

Your child will read these texts and watch these videos:

Text Title	Author/Source	How it is used in the Unit
<i>The Lightning Thief</i>	Rick Riordan	Main text of the unit
<i>Favorite Greek Myths</i>	Mary Pope Osborne	Text read in groups
<i>Where the Mountain Meets the Moon</i>	Grace Lin	Student text
<i>Percy Jackson & The Olympians: The Lightning Thief</i>	Chris Columbus	Read Aloud
<i>Hercules</i>	Ron Clements and John Musker	Read Aloud

<i>D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths</i>	Ingri and Edgar Parin D'Aulaire	Read Aloud
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Ideas for discussing mythology and traditional stories

- What is a myth?
- How do myths help people understand events?
- Why are myths important?
- How do stories from the past appear in current stories?
- How do stories help us make sense of things?
- Do you have any family stories from your own culture that explain why certain things happen?
- Are there any mythological characters your family talks about?

Want to deepen your and your child's knowledge on the topic being studied?

Here is a suggested book list:

Title	Author
<i>Athena The Brain</i>	Joan Holub and Suzanne Williams
<i>Everything Mythology</i>	Blake Hoena
<i>Greek Myths</i>	Olivia Coolidge
<i>Hades: Lord of the Dead</i>	George O'Connor
<i>Juliet Dove, Queen of Love</i>	Bruce Coville
<i>Medusa The Mean</i>	Joan Holub and Suzanne Williams
<i>Ten of the Best Mythical Hero Stories</i>	David West

What does independent reading look like at home?

Independent reading gives your child the opportunity to read and interact with books that are on her reading level and that address topics that she chooses. Supporting independent reading at home helps build your child's confidence with reading, her reading stamina and reading achievement, and will help her do better in school.

Here are some ways you can encourage independent reading at home:

- Let your child pick out books that she finds interesting
- Prioritize reading. Protect time every day for reading (weekends and school breaks too!). Before bedtime is a great time to read.
- Read together
- Read aloud
- Discuss your child's reading. Ask questions like:
 - What was that book about?
 - What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - What did you learn?
 - What questions do you have about what you read?
 - What didn't you understand about what you read?
 - What do you want to learn more about after reading the book?
 - How does this book connect to other books you've read?