

Task: This term we have been reading 'The Hunger Games', did you know that Suzanne Collins based her book on an ancient Greek myth?

- 1) Read 'Theseus and The Minotaur' carefully and answer the comprehension questions.
- 2) Look carefully at the extract from 'The Hunger Games' which describes the rules.
- 3) Add information about both stories to the Venn diagram below. Think about: Characters, events, setting and themes e.g. peace, war, heroism. This is to help you compare the two stories and find similarities and differences between them.

The Story of Theseus and the Minotaur



King Minos was the king of Crete. He was angry and enjoyed attacking the city of Athens when they weren't expecting it. King Aegeus, who was the king of Athens, wanted to stop the attacks so he struck a deal with Minos. In return for peace, Aegeus would send over seven girls and seven boys to be offered to King Minos's terrifying beast – the Minotaur.

Theseus was fed up. Minos had been telling Athens what to do for nine years now and, tomorrow, 14 more children would be shipped off to meet the Minotaur. He went over the plan in his head and knocked on the door of his father's study.

Before Aegeus could even stand up to meet his son, Theseus had started talking. "This deal with Minos has gone on for too long. Families are terrified that their children will be picked next. We should be protecting our people – not feeding them to the Minotaur! Tomorrow, when the boat comes, I am going to take the place of one of the boys. Then, I will defeat the Minotaur and we can live in peace."

Aegeus was shocked. He knew that his son was strong and brave but the Minotaur was huge and fierce. In fact, it was so fierce that it had to be locked inside a complex maze. Aegeus begged Theseus to find another way but he had already made up his mind. Eventually, Aegeus had to agree.



"I will not be happy until I know that you are safe," he told Theseus. "The moment that I can see your ship, I want to know that you have won. If you have defeated the beast, replace your ship's black sails with white ones. Then, I will know that you are coming home safely." Theseus nodded and promised his father that his sails would be white.

Later that day, Theseus climbed into the ship alongside 13 shivering children. When the boat arrived in Crete, they were met by Minos and his daughter, Ariadne. As Minos led the children to the palace, Ariadne pulled Theseus to one side. She explained that she wanted to escape from her father and his unfair laws. As a result, she told Theseus that she would help him if he promised to take her away from Crete.

Theseus and the Minotaur

Agreeing to help, Theseus and Ariadne went to see Daedalus. He had invented the labyrinth that the Minotaur was being kept in. Wanting to be a hero, Daedalus agreed to help. Later that night, the three met at the entrance to the labyrinth.

Holding out a ball of string, Daedalus explained his plan. "This labyrinth has been designed to be so complicated that I can't even escape it. However, if you unravel this string behind you, you will be able to use it to find the entrance again. Ariadne and I will stay here to make sure that nobody else comes in. Good luck."

With that, the doors to the labyrinth closed and Theseus set off to find the Minotaur. Leaving the string behind him, he searched through the narrow passages until, at last, he was face to face with the beast. The Minotaur was stronger but Theseus was quicker and smarter. After a long battle, Theseus emerged victorious. The Minotaur had been defeated.

Theseus immediately made his way to the ship with Ariadne. He had done it! No more children would ever have to meet the Minotaur. Feeling tired but happy, Theseus hoisted the black sails of his ship and headed for home, forgetting all about the promise that he had made to his father.



Theseus and the Minotaur

Questions

Theseus and the Minotaur

1. Each year, how many girls were offered to the Minotaur? Tick one.

- three
- seven
- five
- one

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they occurred.

- Theseus and Ariadne asked Daedalus for help.
- Theseus defeated the Minotaur.
- Theseus and the children set sail for Crete.
- Aegeus begged Theseus not to go.

3. Look at the paragraph beginning **Before Aegeus could even...**
Find and copy one word which means the same as **beat**.

4. Who gave Theseus the ball of string?

5. Add in the missing words to complete the sentence.

On the way back from Crete, Theseus forgot to change his _____-coloured sails to _____-coloured sails.

6. Imagine that you are Theseus about to fight the Minotaur.
Describe how you feel.

7. What do you think happened when Theseus arrived home? Explain your answer.

8. Describe King Minos's character using the text to help you.

Twenty of them have Katniss Everdeen written on them in careful handwriting.

Two of the three chairs fill with Madge's father, Mayor Undersee, who's a tall, balding man, and Effie Trinket, District 12's escort, fresh from the Capitol with her scary white grin, pinkish hair and spring green suit. They murmur to each other and then look with concern at the empty seat.

Just as the town clock strikes two, the mayor steps up to the podium and begins to read. It's the same story every year. He tells of the history of Panem, the country that rose up out of the ashes of a place that was once called North America. He lists the disasters, the droughts, the storms, the fires, the encroaching seas that swallowed up so much of the land, the brutal war for what little sustenance remained. The result was Panem, a shining Capitol ringed by thirteen districts, which brought peace and prosperity to its citizens. Then came the Dark Days, the uprising of the districts against the Capitol. Twelve were defeated, the thirteenth obliterated. The Treaty of Treason gave us the new laws to guarantee peace and, as our yearly reminder that the Dark Days must never be repeated, it gave us the Hunger Games.

The rules of the Hunger Games are simple. In punishment for the uprising, each of the twelve districts

must provide one girl and one boy, called tributes, to participate. The twenty-four tributes will be imprisoned in a vast outdoor arena that could hold anything from a burning desert to a frozen wasteland. Over a period of several weeks, the competitors must fight to the death. The last tribute standing wins.

Taking the kids from our districts, forcing them to kill one another while we watch – this is the Capitol's way of reminding us how totally we are at their mercy. How little chance we would stand of surviving another rebellion. Whatever words they use, the real message is clear. "Look how we take your children and sacrifice them and there's nothing you can do. If you lift a finger, we will destroy every last one of you. Just as we did in District Thirteen."

To make it humiliating as well as torturous, the Capitol requires us to treat the Hunger Games as a festivity, a sporting event pitting every district against the others. The last tribute alive receives a life of ease back home, and their district will be showered with prizes, largely consisting of food. All year, the Capitol will show the winning district gifts of grain and oil and even delicacies like sugar while the rest of us battle starvation.

"It is both a time for repentance and a time for thanks," intones the mayor.

Theseus and the Minotaur

The Hunger Games

