

Name: _____ Date: _____

Exploring Mood

Mood is the feeling you get from reading a piece of writing. Another way to describe mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that creates a feeling. Writers create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot.

In this activity, you will consider the mood of the following excerpt from Scene 8 in *Hercules the Mighty*.

S2: The next morning, Hercules trudges through a dark swamp. Small fires dot the gloom.
S3: He hears savage grunting and hissing.
Hercules: Show your monstrous heads, hydra. My sword awaits you!
S1: Just then, the hydra lurches out from behind some trees.
S2: Hercules quickly ties a cloth around his face, covering his mouth and nose.
Hercules: Aaaaaaah!
S3: Hercules rushes at the hydra and swings his sword, deftly slicing off one of the nine heads.
S1: Hercules cuts off another head. And another.
S2: Soon, there is only one head left.
Hercules: This is easier than I expected.
S3: But then, Hercules watches in horror as two new heads spring from each stump.
S1: Now there are 17 vicious heads writhing and spewing toxic air into his face.
S2: Hercules raises his sword again but freezes when he hears a familiar voice.
Athena: Think before you strike, Hercules!
Hercules: Right . . . the heads will keep multiplying unless I can stop them from growing back.
S3: Hercules sweeps his eyes over the swamp. They come to rest on one of the small fires.
Hercules: I have an idea.
S1: He dips his club into the fire, setting it aflame.
S2: Then he slices off one of the hydra’s heads and uses his burning club to sear the neck and stop more heads from growing.
S3: Dodging the poisonous tongues that flick at him, Hercules slices and sears until no heads remain.
S1: The beast collapses.

Here are two words that could be used to describe the mood at different points in this excerpt:

suspenseful, hair-raising

Suspenseful means “causing a feeling of nervousness or excitement caused by wondering what may happen.”

Hair-raising means “causing terror, excitement, or great surprise.” Something that is hair-raising gives you goosebumps.

The Beginning: Suspenseful

The mood in the first few lines of the excerpt could be described as suspenseful.

1. Part of what makes the mood suspenseful is what is happening in the plot. Answer the following questions about the plot.

A. Why is Hercules in the swamp? What is he planning to do?

B. Will it be easy or difficult? Explain.

C. What will happen if he succeeds?

D. What will happen if he fails?

E. How does the plot help create a suspenseful mood at the beginning of the excerpt?

2. The details that the storytellers provide about the setting also help create a suspenseful mood at the beginning of the excerpt. Here is what they say:

S2: The next morning, Hercules trudges through a dark swamp. Small fires dot the gloom.

S3: He hears savage grunting and hissing.

Which of the following does NOT state a way that the details about the setting help create suspense?

- ☐ A. Hercules is traveling through a swamp—a dark, damp, and gloomy landscape where it’s difficult to see what lies ahead or what lurks below its waters. This creates a suspenseful mood.
- ☐ B. The setting creates a suspenseful mood because the scene takes place during the morning in ancient Greece.
- ☐ C. Hercules hears frightening noises, building suspense about the fierce but yet unseen creature he is about to battle.

The Rest: Hair-Raising!

Once the battle begins, the mood of the excerpt could be described as hair-raising. The descriptive details that playwright Spencer Kayden uses to bring the scene to life help create this mood.

3. Consider the following line.

S3: But then, Hercules watches in horror as two new heads spring from each stump.

Below is one way that the details in the line above help create a hair-raising mood. Complete the sentence in (B) to explain one more way that the details help create a hair-raising mood.

A. The detail that “two new heads spring from each stump” allows the reader to visualize the monster’s new heads sprouting and growing very fast. This is a frightening image, which contributes to the hair-raising mood.

B. The detail that “Hercules watches in horror” helps create a hair-raising mood because

4. Now consider this line.

S1: Now there are 17 vicious heads writhing and spewing toxic air into his face.

Below is one way that details in the line above create a hair-raising mood. Write one more way.

A. When Kayden writes that there are “17 vicious heads writhing,” the reader can visualize the violent twisting movement of the hydra’s many heads—a terrifying image. The reader feels frightened for Hercules and excited to see how he defends himself, contributing to the hair-raising mood.

B. _____

5. And now consider this line.

S2: Hercules raises his sword again but freezes when he hears a familiar voice.

Write a statement explaining how this sentence contributes to the hair-raising mood.

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Exploring Mood

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Hair-raising means “causing terror, excitement, or great surprise.” Something that is hair-raising gives you goosebumps.

The Beginning: Suspenseful

The mood in the first few lines of the excerpt could be described as suspenseful.

1. Part of what makes the mood suspenseful is what is happening in the plot.

A. Why is Hercules in the swamp? What is he planning to do?

B. What will happen if he succeeds?

C. What will happen if he fails?

D. Complete the following sentence: The plot helps create a suspenseful mood at the beginning of the excerpt . . .

- ☐ A. because it is full of suspense.
- ☐ B. because what Hercules is doing is extremely dangerous, and there is a lot at stake for Hercules. This makes the reader nervous and excited about what may happen.
- ☐ C. because Hercules is in a swamp to kill a hydra.

2. The details that the storytellers provide about the setting also help create a suspenseful mood at the beginning of the excerpt. Here is what they say:

S2: The next morning, Hercules trudges through a dark swamp. Small fires dot the gloom.

S3: He hears savage grunting and hissing.

Check the TWO statements that BEST state ways that the details about the setting help create suspense.

- ☐ A. Hercules is traveling through a swamp—a dark, damp, and gloomy landscape where it’s difficult to see what lies ahead or what lurks below its waters. This creates a suspenseful mood.
- ☐ B. The setting creates a suspenseful mood because the scene takes place during the morning in ancient Greece.
- ☐ C. Hercules hears frightening noises, building suspense about the fierce but yet unseen creature he is about to battle.

The Rest: Hair-Raising!

Once the battle begins, the mood of the excerpt could be described as hair-raising. The descriptive details that playwright Spencer Kayden uses to bring the scene to life help create this mood.

3. Consider the following line.

S3: But then, Hercules watches in horror as two new heads spring from each stump.

Check the TWO statements that BEST explain how details in the line above help create a hair-raising mood.

- ☐ **A.** The detail that “two new heads spring from each stump” allows the reader to visualize the monster’s new heads sprouting and growing very fast. This is a frightening image, which contributes to the hair-raising mood.
- ☐ **B.** The detail that “Hercules watches in horror” helps create a hair-raising mood because it allows the reader to understand the intensity of Hercules’s shock and fright. The reader understands that the battle is about to get more intense and thrilling, contributing to the hair-raising mood.
- ☐ **C.** The hydra’s heads grow back after Hercules cuts them off, which is cool.

4. Now consider this line.

S1: Now there are 17 vicious heads writhing and spewing toxic air into his face.

Write a statement explaining how this line helps create a hair-raising mood.

Identifying Mood

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. Another way to describe mood is atmosphere. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a text, it too has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way. For example, the mood could be *calm*, *creepy*, *romantic*, *gloomy*, or *tense*. Authors create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot. The mood can stay the same from the beginning to the end of a text, or it can change.

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Mood Words

Mood is the feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. There are *many* different words you can use to describe the mood of a piece of writing. Here are some to get you started. They are organized into groups of words with similar meanings. We've left space in each box so you can add your own words.

angry

aggravated, enraged, hostile, irate,
violent

happy

content, joyful, delighted, ecstatic, elated

boring

dreary, dull, uneventful, tiring

loving

warm, delicate, romantic, touching,
sympathetic

calm

quiet, serene, tranquil, mellow, harmonious

sad

depressed, melancholy, mournful, tragic,
gloomy

exciting

exhilarating, lively, rousing, thrilling,
energetic

scary

creepy, nightmarish, spooky, haunting,
threatening

fun

amusing, bouncy, cheerful, playful

worried

anxious, nervous, restless, suspenseful, tense,
uneasy

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Analyzing Hercules

Hercules the Mighty is about a young man with some unique gifts: unusual size and strength. In this activity, you'll explore how his feelings about his gifts change over the course of the play.

1. First, read this claim about how Hercules feels about his gifts at the beginning of the play:

Claim: At the beginning of the play, Hercules feels that his gifts make him an outsider.

Next, find two pieces of text evidence that support the claim, and then provide commentary that explains why the text evidence supports the claim:

Evidence 1: _____

Commentary: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Commentary: _____

2. Complete the sentence below to write a claim about how Hercules feels about his gifts at the end of the play:

By the end of the play, Hercules feels _____.

Give two pieces of text evidence for your claim and provide commentary for each.

Evidence 1: _____

Commentary: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Commentary: _____

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Analyzing Hercules

Hercules the Mighty is about a young man with some unique gifts: unusual size and strength. In this activity, you'll explore how his feelings about his gifts change over the course of the play. We've done the first one for you.

1. First, read this claim about how Hercules feels about his gifts at the beginning of the play:

Claim: At the beginning of the play, Hercules feels that his gifts make him an outsider.

Next, read the text evidence we found that supports our claim, and the commentary we wrote that explains why the text evidence supports our claim:

Evidence 1: In Scene I, after Hercules struggles to play the lyre because of his size, Hercules gets very upset and says to his parents, "Everything I do is wrong! Why can't I just be normal?" When his mother tells him he is extraordinary, he replies, "But I have no friends. I scare everyone."

Commentary: Hercules's comments show that he does not appreciate being extraordinary—that being so big and strong makes him feel like an outsider and that he would rather just fit in.

Now give one other piece of text evidence from the play that supports the claim, and then provide commentary explaining why the text evidence supports the claim.

Evidence 2: _____

Commentary: _____

2. Complete the sentence below to write a claim about how Hercules feels about his gifts at the end of the play:

By the end of the play, Hercules feels _____.

Give two pieces of text evidence for your claim and provide commentary for each.

Evidence 1: _____

Commentary: _____

Evidence 2: _____

Commentary: _____

Hercules the Mighty

What determines our identities?

Respond to each statement by checking “agree” or “disagree.” Be prepared to justify your responses.

	Agree	Disagree
1. Life is easier when you fit in.		
2. It’s best to be yourself, even if the world pressures you to be someone else.		
3. Sometimes your identity is a giant question mark.		
4. Understanding who you are is important.		
5. People lose their identity when they try to please others.		
6. Those who are true to themselves are the happiest.		
7. Who you are is always changing.		
8. Your identity is not affected by other people or by what happens to you.		
9. Most people view being an “outsider” as bad.		
10. Everyone has something they are “meant to do” in life.		

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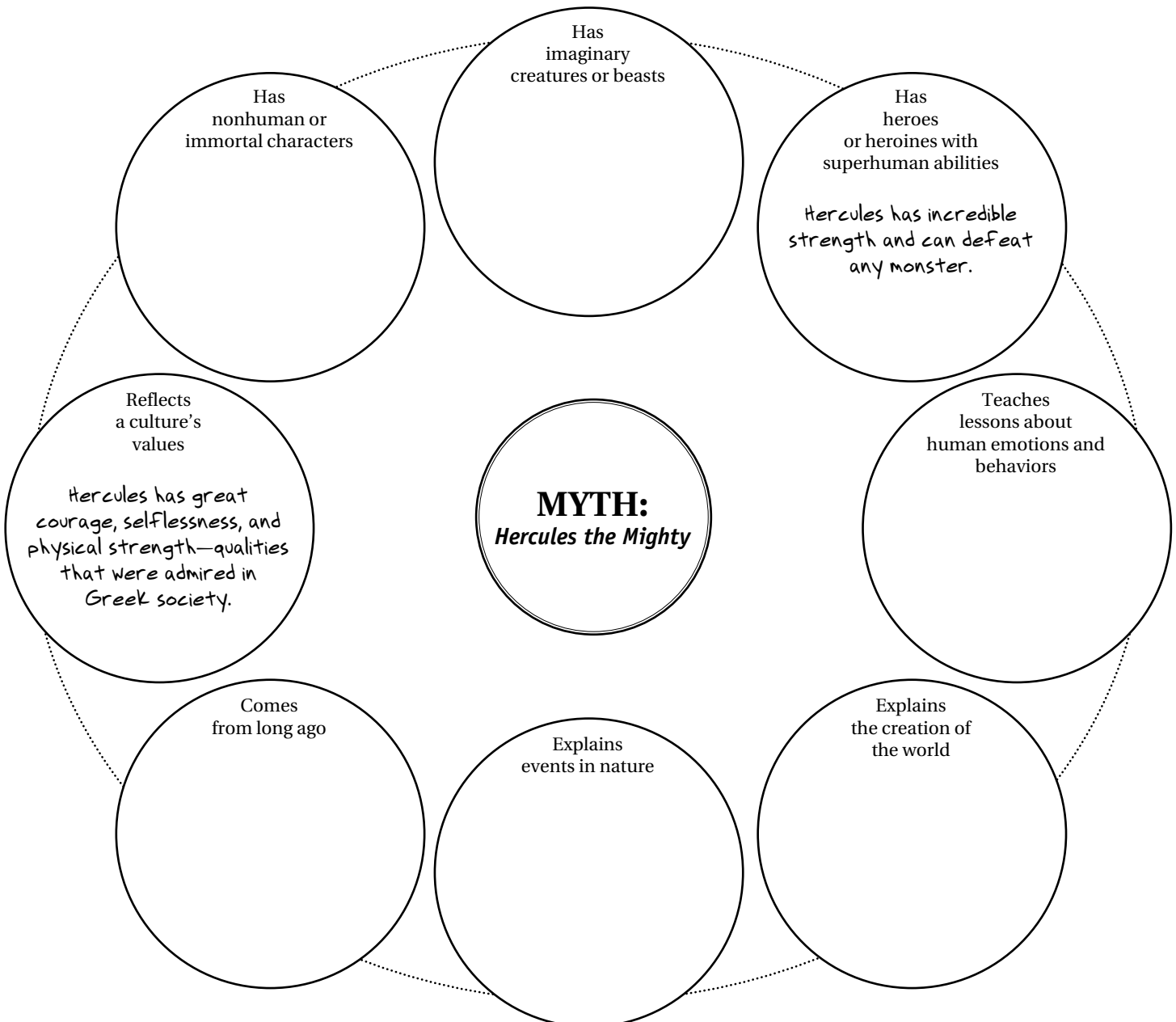
A **genre** is a category of literature or art. Mystery, science fiction, historical fiction, and biography are all genres of literature.

Genre: *Hercules the Mighty*

Hercules the Mighty belongs to two genres: drama and myth. In this activity, you will focus on what makes it a myth.

Directions: The graphic organizer below gives some common characteristics of myths. *Hercules the Mighty* does not have all of these characteristics, but it has many of them. We've explained how the play shows two of these characteristics.

Choose FOUR more characteristics and briefly explain how the play shows those characteristics.



Directions: Answer the questions below.

1. What other stories, plays, or movies have you read or seen that belong to the myth genre?

2. Greek myths often encourage us to think about how we should behave.

A. What kind of behavior does *Hercules the Mighty* encourage or discourage?

B. Do you agree with what the play suggests about how we should behave? Explain.

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Close-Reading Questions

Hercules the Mighty

1. In Scene 1, why does Hercules storm out of class? (character, inference)

2. Based on what Hera says in Scene 2, how does she feel about Hercules? (character, inference)

3. In Scene 3, why might the author have chosen to use the word *looms* (rather than *appears*, for instance) in the line “The girl looks up as Hercules’s giant shadow looms over her”? (word choice)

4. How would you describe Hera’s tone at the end of Scene 4, when she calls Hercules a “foolish lug”? (tone)

5. In Scene 5, why does Hera tell King Eury that Hercules could easily take Eury's kingdom?
(character's motivation)
6. In Scene 7, Hercules tells Athena, "I do not need help. I am the mighty Hercules!" How is this different from the way Hercules talks about himself in Scene 1? What is the reason for this change? (character)
7. At the end of Scene 8, why does Hercules drop to his knees when he sees Zeus? (inference)
8. By the end, have Hera's feelings toward Hercules changed? (character)

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Critical-Thinking Questions

Hercules the Mighty

1. Is it fair that Hercules has to work so hard to earn his place on Mount Olympus?
2. Was it right for Athena to help Hercules defeat the hydra?
3. There are many versions of the myth of the 12 labors of Hercules. *Scope's* version is unusual in that it presents battling the hydra as Hercules's final task. (Traditionally, capturing Cerberus is the final task.) Why might the author have chosen to make fighting the hydra the last of the labors?

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Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

Hercules the Mighty

1. **arduous (AHR-JOO-US)** *adjective*; Something that is arduous is very difficult. It requires a lot of physical or mental effort.
2. **deftly (DEFT-lee)** *adjective*; To do something deftly is to do it easily and skillfully. If Jake deftly changes the subject, he changes the subject smoothly.
3. **dejected (dih-JEK-tid)** *adjective*; To be dejected is to be sad and depressed—to have given up hope.
4. **destined (DES-tind)** *adjective*; *Destined* can mean “meant to be” or “certain to happen.” If Rob says, “I know I’m destined for a life of adventure,” he is saying that adventure is in his future, with a sense that he was born to have such a life. *Destined* can also just mean “heading toward,” as in “The plane is destined for California.”

Destined is a form of the word *destiny*, which means “fate.” Your destiny is what is likely to happen to you in the future.
5. **fawn (fawn)** *noun or verb*; The noun *fawn* means “a young deer.” Fawn can also be a verb. If Ella is fawning over Zendaya, Ella is giving Zendaya loads of attention and praise. Often, *fawn* is used to mean “to flatter someone or treat them as superior in order to get something you want from them.” A salesperson might fawn over a customer in hopes of making a sale.
6. **loathe (lohth)** *verb*; To loathe something is to hate it—to find it disgusting and horrible.
7. **lyre (lahyuhr)** *noun*; A lyre is a stringed instrument that looks like a small harp and was used by the ancient Greeks.
8. **renown (ree-NOWN)** *noun*; Someone or something with renown is famous, highly respected, or admired. An actor who is well-known and admired for her talent has renown. A scientist who is known for making an important discovery has renown, as does a restaurant with a great reputation. LeBron James is a basketball player of great renown.
9. **subdue(suhb-DOO)** *verb*; To subdue someone or something is to overpower it, hold it back, or bring it under control. If a dog is acting crazy, running around and barking, you might be able

to subdue her by giving her a bone to chew on. You might try to subdue your fears, or you might subdue your opinion if it doesn't seem like the right time to express it.

Directions: In the space below or on the back of this page, list any other words from the play whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

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Hercules the Mighty Quiz

Directions: Read *Hercules the Mighty*. Then answer the questions below.

1. In Scene 1, the line “It’s like tickling a butterfly” contains

- (A) a metaphor that tells you that butterflies are ticklish.
- (B) a simile that tells you that the lyre must be played gently.
- (C) symbolism that shows how lovely lyres sound.
- (D) hyperbole that emphasizes how easy it is to play the lyre.

2. In Scene 1, why does Hercules’s father look at the floor?

- (A) He is embarrassed by Hercules.
- (B) He is mad at Hercules’s mother.
- (C) He is thinking about having to tell Hercules who his real parents are.
- (D) He is upset that Hercules has no friends.

3. Which pair of words describes how the author characterizes Hercules in Scene 6?

- (A) confident and proud
- (B) frustrated and angry
- (C) timid and embarrassed
- (D) rude and ungrateful

4. Which line best supports your answer to question 3?

- (A) Hercules: And I thank you for your prayers.
- (B) Hercules: With all my heart. These past 11 years have been arduous. But I must fulfill my duty to the gods.
- (C) S1: Hercules succeeds at all of them and becomes a hero of great renown.
- (D) S2: Hercules grins and flexes his massive biceps.

5. The mood of Scene 8 could be described as suspenseful. Which of the following lines contributes to this mood?

- (A) Athena: Hercules, your 12 labors are complete!
- (B) Zeus: My son, you are home! You are home at last.
- (C) S2: Hercules raises his sword again but freezes when he hears a familiar voice.
- (D) Hercules: This is easier than I expected.

6. Which detail should NOT be included in a summary of the play?

- (A) A child asks Hercules to show his muscles.
- (B) Zeus, the king of the gods, is Hercules’s father.
- (C) Hercules is large and strong.
- (D) The hydra’s breath is poisonous.

Constructed-Response Questions



Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. Describe the relationship between Hera and Hercules. Does this relationship change over the course of the play? Explain. Use text evidence to support your answer.

8. Explain how Hercules changes over the course of the play. Support your answer with text evidence.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Hercules the Mighty Quiz

Directions: Read *Hercules the Mighty*. Then answer the questions below.

1. In Scene 1, the line "It's like tickling a butterfly" contains a simile, a comparison using *like* or *as*. This simile tells you that
 - (A) playing the lyre is easy.
 - (B) the lyre must be played gently.
 - (C) lyres look like butterflies.
 - (D) butterflies are ticklish.
2. In Scene 1, why does Hercules's father look at the floor?
 - (A) He is embarrassed by Hercules.
 - (B) He is mad at Hercules's mother.
 - (C) He is thinking about having to tell Hercules who his real parents are.
 - (D) He is upset that Hercules has no friends.
3. Which pair of words describes Hercules after he completes the first 11 labors in Scene 6?
 - (A) confident and proud
 - (B) angry and frustrated
 - (C) shy and embarrassed
 - (D) rude and ungrateful
4. Which line supports your answer to question 3?
 - (A) Hercules: And I thank you for your prayers.
 - (B) S2: Hercules grins and flexes his massive biceps.
 - (C) Hercules: I did. It was easy.
 - (D) both B and C
5. The mood of Scene 8 could be described as suspenseful. Which of the following lines helps create this mood?
 - (A) Athena: Hercules, your 12 labors are complete!
 - (B) Zeus: My son, you are home! You are home at last.
 - (C) S2: Hercules raises his sword again but freezes when he hears a familiar voice.
 - (D) Hercules: This is easier than I expected.
6. Which detail should definitely be included in a summary of the play?
 - (A) Zeus, the king of the gods, is Hercules's father.
 - (B) King Eury is Hercules's cousin.
 - (C) The hydra lives in a swamp.
 - (D) Songs are written about Hercules.

Constructed-Response Questions



Directions: Write your answers to the questions below on the back of this paper or type them up on a computer.

7. How does the author show that Hera dislikes Hercules? Use text evidence to support your answer.
8. In Scene 7, Hercules says, "I do not need help. I am the mighty Hercules!" What does this line tell you about how Hercules has changed since the beginning of the play? Use text evidence.



Hercules the Mighty

Pronunciation Guide to Names

**Go to Scope
Online to listen
to these names
pronounced
aloud!**

Athena [ah-THEE-nah]

Eury [YUR-ee]

Hera [HEE-rah]

Hercules [HUR-kyuh-leez]

Zeus [Z00S]

Thank you to expert from Richard Martin from Stanford University for his help with these names.

Glossary of Literary Terms

alliteration (uh-LIH-tuh-RAY-shuhn): When two or more words in a group of words begin with the same sound (usually, the same letter or group of letters). For example: *Anne's awesome apple; Fred's frozen french fries*. See also: *figurative language*.

antagonist (an-TAG-uh-nist): The opponent or enemy of the main character, or protagonist. See also: *protagonist*.

aside (uh-SAHYD): Words spoken to the audience by a character in a drama that are not supposed to be heard by the other characters onstage. An aside is usually used to let the audience know what a character is thinking.

characterization (kar-ik-ter-uh-ZAY-shun): The means through which an author reveals a character's personality. Characterization may be *direct* or *indirect*. In **direct characterization**, the writer or a narrator tells the reader what the character is like: "Ben was a quiet, serious boy." In **indirect characterization**, the author shows the reader or audience member what the character is like through (1) how the character looks, (2) what the character does, (3) what the character says, (4) what the character thinks, and (5) how the character affects other characters. From these five things, the reader or audience member understands the character's personality.

climax (KLAHY-maks): The point in a play, novel, short story, or narrative poem at which the conflict reaches its greatest intensity and is then resolved. The climax is also the part of a narrative when the reader or audience member experiences the most-intense emotions. See also: *plot*.

conflict (KAHN-flikt): A struggle between opposing forces. A conflict may be external (between the character and another person, society, nature, or technology) or internal (a struggle within the character).

dialogue (DAHY-uh-lawg): The conversation between characters in a work of literature.

dynamic character (dahy-NAM-ik KAR-ik-ter): A character who undergoes a significant internal change over the course of a story. This may be a change in understanding, values, insight, etc. See also: *static character*.

figurative language (FIG-yer-uh-tiv LANG-gwidj): The *literal* meaning of a word is its definition as you would find it in a dictionary. Figurative language uses words in some way *other* than for their literal meanings to make a comparison, add emphasis, or say something in a fresh and creative way. Examples of figurative language include *alliteration*, *hyperbole*, *idiom*, *imagery*, *metaphor*, *onomatopoeia*, *personification*, and *simile*. (You can find definitions of these words in this glossary.)

flashback (FLASH-bak): A scene in a story that occurred before the present time in the story. Flashbacks provide background information about events happening during the current narration. They may be presented as memories, dreams, or stories of the past told by characters.

foreshadowing (for-SHAD-oh-ing): Clues or hints about something that is going to happen later in the story. Authors use foreshadowing to build suspense and to prepare the reader for what happens later.

hyperbole (hahy-PUR-buh-lee): Extreme exaggeration used for emphasis or effect; an extravagant statement that is not meant to be taken literally. For example: “I almost died of boredom.” Hyperbole is frequently used in humorous writing. See also: *figurative language*.

idiom (ID-ee-um): An expression that cannot be understood from the meanings of its individual words. For example, “it’s raining cats and dogs” is an idiom that means it’s raining really hard—but there is no way to know that from the meanings of its individual words. See also: *figurative language*.

imagery (IH-muhj-ree): Language that portrays *sensory experiences*, or experiences of the five senses: sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch. Authors use imagery to describe actions, characters, objects, and ideas, and to heighten the emotional effect of their writing. One way authors create imagery is through the use of figurative language. See also: *figurative language*.

irony (AHY-ruh-nee): There are three types of irony: (1) **dramatic irony**, when the reader or audience member is aware of something that the characters are not aware of; (2) **situational irony**, when something happens that is the reverse of what you expected; and (3) **verbal irony**, when the name or description of something implies the opposite of the truth (for example, calling a very tall person “Tiny”).

major character (MEY-jer KAR-ik-ter): A main or important character; a character who plays a large role in a story. Major characters usually face some sort of obstacle, and they will be present

throughout all, or almost all, of a story. A story can have one major character or several. See also: *minor character*.

metaphor (MET-uh-for): The comparison of two unlike things to illuminate a particular quality or aspect of one of those things. For example, “Karen was a ray of sunshine” is a metaphor in which Karen is compared with a ray of sunshine. The metaphor suggests that Karen was cheerful, happy, warm, hopeful—qualities we associate with the sun. Metaphors state that one thing *is* something else; they do not use the words *like* or *as*. See also: *figurative language*, *simile*.

minor character (MY-ner KAR-ik-ter): A character who does not play a large role in a story. Minor characters usually do not face any obstacles during the course of the story, and they usually do not change during the course of the story. The reader does not usually learn much about minor characters. They are just there for the major characters to interact with and to help advance the plot. See also: *major character*.

mood (mood): The feeling the reader gets from a work of literature. Another way to describe a story’s mood is *atmosphere*. When you walk into a place, it has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way; when you “walk into” a story, it too has an atmosphere that makes you feel a certain way. For example, the mood could be calm, creepy, romantic, sad, or tense. Authors create mood through word choice, imagery, dialogue, setting, and plot. The mood can stay the same from the beginning to the end of a story, or it can change.

onomatopoeia (on-uh-maht-uh-PEE-uh): The use of words whose sounds imitate the sounds of what they describe, such as *hiss*, *murmur*, *growl*, *honk*, *buzz*, *woof*, etc. See also: *figurative language*.

personification (per-son-uh-fih-KAY-shun): Describing nonhuman animals, objects, or ideas as though they possess human qualities or emotions. For example: “The moon smiled down at her,” “I felt the cold hand of death on my shoulder,” “There is a battle being fought in my garden between the flowers and the weeds.”

plot (plaht): The sequence of events in a story. The plot includes the opening event (what happens at the beginning/the main problem that the main character faces), the rising action (what happens to intensify the problem), the climax (when the problem reaches its most intense point and begins to be resolved), the falling action (what happens to solve the problem), and the resolution (how things end).

point of view (poynt uhv vyoo): The perspective from which a story is told. In other words, who is telling the story—a character in the story or an outside narrator. There are several types of point of view: (1) **first-person point of view**, where the narrator is a character in the story who describes things from his or her own perspective and refers to himself or herself as “I”; (2) **third-person limited point of view**, where the narrator is not a character in the story but the narrator can describe the experiences and thoughts of only one character in the story; (3) **third-person omniscient point of view**, where the narrator is not one of the characters and is able to describe the experiences and thoughts of every character in the story.

protagonist (proh-TAG-uh-nist): The main or central character of a work of literature. Usually, the main character is involved in a conflict or struggle with the antagonist. See also: *antagonist*.

setting (SEHT-ing): The environment in which a story takes place, including the time period, the location, and the physical characteristics of the surroundings.

simile (SIM-uh-lee): When two unlike things are compared—using *like* or *as*—in order to illuminate a particular quality or aspect of one of those things. For example, “Randy’s voice is like melted chocolate” is a simile in which Randy’s voice is compared to melted chocolate. The simile suggests that Randy’s voice is rich, smooth, sweet, warm—qualities we associate with melted chocolate. See also: *figurative language, metaphor*.

static character (STAT-ik KAR-ik-ter): A character who does not undergo a significant change over the course of a story. See also: *dynamic character*.

symbol (SIM-buhl): An object, setting, event, animal, or person that on one level is itself, but that has another meaning as well. For example, the American flag is really a piece of fabric with stars and stripes on it, but it also represents the United States and ideals like freedom, patriotism, and pride. In a story or play, rain could be a symbol; the rain would really be rain, but it might also represent an idea like sadness or leaving the past behind. *Symbolize* means “to be a symbol of.”

symbolism (SIM-buhl-izm): The practice of using symbols. See also: *symbol*.

theme (theem): A story’s main message or moral.

tone (tohn): The author’s attitude toward the subject matter or toward the reader or audience. Words that could describe tone include *doubtful, humorous, gleeful, serious, and questioning*. Tone is conveyed through the author’s word choices and the details that he or she includes.

Note: *Scope* does not accept Google Docs. If you are e-mailing your entry, please send a .pdf or .doc file.

Hercules Contest

At the start of the play, Hercules feels like an outsider because of his gifts. By the end, his feelings about his gifts have changed. Explain the changes that occur. Use text evidence. Five winners will each get *The Red Sun* by Alane Adams.

Entries will be judged on:

- ⇒ a clearly stated central idea
- ⇒ use of supporting evidence
- ⇒ good organization and transitions
- ⇒ grammar, spelling, and punctuation

My name: _____

My home phone number: _____ My grade: _____

My teacher's name: _____ My teacher's e-mail: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

School phone number: _____

My parent or legal guardian consents
to my participation in this contest.

Parent's or legal guardian's signature: _____

Include this form with your written entry and send both to: scopemag@scholastic.com
or mail them to: Hercules Contest, c/o *Scope*, P.O. Box 712, New York, NY 10013-0712

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY October 25, 2017!