

Scaffolding Suggestions for Helping Students Read Mythology

STUDENTS' NEEDS	POSSIBLE SCAFFOLDS
<p>Understanding allegory and applying it to the myths:</p> <p>Has difficulty explaining what the myth symbolizes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the definition of allegory and show the student how you apply the concept to "Helios." • Using a different myth, offer these questions that can help the student figure out what the myth symbolizes: <i>What does the god do for or to people? What are the actions and reactions of the gods and/or human beings? How do these actions help you figure out the allegory?</i>
<p>Finding anthropomorphic traits the gods display:</p> <p>Needs support in separating divine and human traits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review with the student the meaning of <i>anthropomorphic</i>. • Make a list of human traits that Helios displays in that myth. • Using another myth, have the student study the god's reactions to situations, people, and words spoken and pinpoint the traits she notices.
<p>Understanding lessons and themes in the myths:</p> <p>Has difficulty figuring out the themes and purposes of the myths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the student to think about the main purposes or point of the myth. <i>What is it trying to teach us about nature? About people? About justice? About vanity? About the place of human beings?</i>
<p>Comparing gods from Greek, Norse, and Inca cultures:</p> <p>Needs help grasping similar themes, purposes, and divine and human traits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with two myths from different cultures and review their themes—what each myth represents or is trying to teach. Help students see whether the purposes of the two different myths are to explain the natural world or to illustrate what the gods represent to the people. • Repeat this exercise, this time looking at the divine traits the gods exhibit and the human traits they show. • Model and think aloud as much as you have to in order for students to observe your process and internalize it so that they can make similar comparisons.