

YHBA Novel Resource

The Lightning Thief
Rick Riordan
Miramax Books
Hyperion Paperbacks for Children
2005

Amy Nelson

About the Author



www.rickriordan.com

Rick Riordan spent fifteen years as a classroom teacher in public and private middle schools in the San Francisco Bay Area and in Texas. In 1997, he began publishing mystery novels for adults. His popular Tres Navarre series has won the top three national awards in the mystery genre – the Edgar, the Anthony and the Shamus. He began *The Lightning Thief* as a bedtime story for his son. The novel draws on Riordan's experience teaching Greek mythology and his interaction with students who have learning differences. It is his first work for young readers. Rick Riordan now writes full-time. He lives in San Antonio with his wife and two sons.

Other books in this series: *The Sea of Monsters*, *The Titan's Curse*, *The Battle of the Labyrinth*

Honors:

New York Times Notable Book for 2005

A New York Times Bestseller

Selected for Al Roker's Book Club For Kids, the Today Show

A Best Book of 2005, School Library Journal

A Best Book of 2005, Child Magazine

Bluebonnet Award Nominee 2006, Texas Library Association

Askews Torchlight Award (UK) Winner, 2006

Chicago Public Library *Best of the Best* Book List, 2005

VOYA Top Shelf Fiction List for 2005

ALA Notable Book for 2005

Amy Nelson, abc school, bear_nelson@yahoo.com

YALSA Best Book for Young Adults 2005
Red House Children's Book Award Winner (UK), 2006
CCBC choice award 2006, Cooperative Children's Book Center
A 2006 Notable Children's Book, National Council for Teachers of English
A Publishers Weekly National Children's Bestseller
Warwickshire Book Award Winner (UK), 2007
Beehive Award Winner 2007 (Children's Literature Association of Utah)
Maine Student Book Award Winner 2007

Rick Riordan
c/o Hyperion Books for Children
114 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10011

Email: tnavarre@earthlink.net

Annotation

Author Rick Riordan was an English and History middle-school teacher for fifteen years. His knowledge of middle-school students is evident in his writing style. Action packed and in the voice of a twelve year old boy, *The Lightning Thief* is full of the pre-teen angst and longing to belong. He understands the middle school years and the language. Girls fall on their "butts" (p.9), and there are "guys acting like doofuses" (p.6) in a school with teachers who are monsters. He is able to capture the drama of middle school life. This will appeal to his middle-school audience.

The main character, Percy's, bad attitude and bad grades masks that he really he is a half-blood. His father is the Greek god Poseidon. Percy is not a failure as many of his teachers think, but has greater abilities than even he can imagine. Percy escapes his school life by defeating a Minotaur--a half man, half bull monster. After this battle, he finds himself in a summer camp for the children of Greek gods.

At camp, he accepts a quest to find Zeus's stolen lightning bolt. This adventure story takes Percy and his friends from New York to California with stops at a hamburger joint/gnome emporium run by Medusa, the St. Louis arch where he meets up with a Chimera (a fire-breathing, poisonous dog), Denver, and Las Vegas. With each stop of the journey, the adventures get more dangerous, and the monsters get tougher to fight.

To complete his quest, Percy must survive the dangers of the mythological world and find Zeus's master lightning bolt, and return it before the summer solstice to avoid the gods going to war. He complete these fetes after finding the lightning bolt in his own backpack which was put there magically by the god Ares. Percy discovers the real thief was his camp counselor, Luke. When he hands the lightning bolt back to Zeus, Percy meets his father Poseidon. Percy then decides to live in the mortal world with his mother.

Students learn about gods, monsters, and legends of Greek mythology, but placed in a modern setting in which students can understand. It is a fantasy in which you learn despite yourself.

There are a few concerns when reading *The Lightning Thief* with school aged students. It is entertaining and educational; however, it is violent. It deals with the issues of death, the after-life, and illegitimacy, which might pose some problems with students. If these issues can be dealt with in a mature manner, *The Lightning Thief* is a great way to introduce Greek mythology to middle-school ages students.

Amy Nelson, abc school, bear_nelson@yahoo.com

Genre:

Fiction/Fantasy/Adventure

Point of View:

The person telling the story is main character Percy Jackson. This story is in first person.

Theme:

There are a couple of themes in this novel. One theme is to learn to accept yourself. Percy must accept that he is a demi-god living in the mortal world with ADHD and being chased by mythical monsters. Another theme is that important things in life are worth fighting for and may not be easily obtained. Perseverance is often needed.

The Title: Very straight forward: Someone stole Zeus's master lightning bolt

Conflict:

There are many conflicts in this novel: Percy vs. monsters, Percy vs. father, Percy vs. step father. The over-all conflict is that someone has stolen Zeus's Master Lightning bolt and it's up to Percy, Annabeth and Grover to get it back. If it isn't returned before the summer solstice, there will be a war between the Gods. What Percy has done to resolve the conflict was to go on a quest to find the lightning bolt. Percy must also deal with an absent father and abusive step-father.

Resolution

The resolution was when Percy brought the lightning bolt back to Zeus so that war was avoided. Percy's mother leaves his step-father by turning him into a statue, and the conflict with his father continues through the rest of the book series.

Characters

Percy- Percy is a twelve year old boy and the prime suspect in the stealing of Zeus's lightning bolt. He proves his bravery by accepting the quest of going to the underworld and retrieving Zeus's lightning bolt when nobody thought he would come back.

Annabeth- Annabeth is a fellow student at camp half-blood. She goes on the quest with Percy to get the lightning bolt back to Zeus. She is one of Percy's friends. She is also the daughter of the god Athena.

Grover- Grover is a satyr, which is half goat, half man. He is the person who protects Percy from the demons. He is Percy's best friend.

Clarisse- Clarisse is a bully. She is the daughter of Ares god of war.

Chiron- He is half-man, half-horse and Percy's teacher at camp and Yancy Academy. He also gives Percy the quest and he sends him to the oracle.

Luke- He is the son of Hermes. He is one of Percy's friends when he is in camp half-blood and helps him fit in. He eventually betrays Percy.

Poseidon- He is the God of the sea and Percy's father.

Amy Nelson, abc school, bear_nelson@yahoo.com

Zeus- Brother of Poseidon, and God of the sky. His thunderbolt was stolen by Luke.

Hades- God of dead and underworld.

Sally- Percy's mother.

Gabe- Percy's step-father

Setting

The story takes place during modern times. This mostly takes place in New York City. Percy is on a quest so he travels to many U.S cities including St. Louis, Denver, Las Vegas, and Los Angeles. The setting also includes the mythological Underworld and Mount Olympus.

Interest/Reading Level:

10 years old and up

Booktalk

In the book, "The Lightning Thief", Greek mythology comes to life. Author Rick Riordan tells of twelve year old Percy Jackson who is about to be kicked out of another boarding school: 6 different schools in 6 years. Percy has been diagnosed with dyslexia, and ADHD. Bad things always seem to happen to him. In chapter one, Percy vaporizes his pre-algebra teacher, but then again, is that such a bad thing? But how and why do all of those things happen?

Percy's bad attitude and bad grades masks that he really he is a half-blood. His father is a Greek god. Percy is not a failure, but has greater abilities than he can imagine. For example, his dyslexia is a sign that his brain is wired for ancient Greek not English. Percy escapes his mundane school life by defeating a Minotaur--a half man, half bull monster. After this battle, he finds himself in a summer camp for the children of Greek gods.

At camp, Percy meets Annabeth who is the daughter of Athena, and finds out that his best friend is half goat. He also accepts a quest to find Zeus's stolen lightning bolt. For his quest he is given a pair of magic shoes from his camp councilor, and a prophesy that says, "You shall be betrayed by one who calls you a friend." This adventure story takes Percy and his friends from New York to California with stops at a hamburger joint/gnome emporium run by Medusa, the St. Louis arch where he meets up with a Chimera (a fire-breathing, poisonous dog), Denver, and Las Vegas. With each stop of the journey, the adventures get more dangerous, and the monsters get tougher to fight.

To complete his quest, Percy must find Zeus's master lightning bolt, and return it before the summer solstice. After surviving the trip to California, Percy must go to the Underworld to meet Hades, but exactly where is the Underworld? If he finds the Underworld, what is down there? Can he and his friends make it out alive? Will he be betrayed by a friend? Will his magic shoes help him back to Earth?

By the end of the book, these questions are answered. We also learn about friendship, endurance, and accepting our failings and abilities. But most importantly, we find out who is the lightning thief.

Discussion Questions

Chapter 1

I Accidentally Vaporize My Pre-algebra Teacher

Pre-Reading:

Brainstorm as many school field trips as you can remember. What's the best (or worst) experience you've ever had on a school field trip?

During:

1. What bad experiences has Percy had on past field trips? Pg 2
2. Why can't Percy get back at Nancy when she starts teasing Grover on the bus? Pg 3
3. When do you first suspect that something may be unusual/supernatural about Mrs. Dodds? Pg 4

Post Reading:

Draw and color a picture of what the stele (Greek funeral stone) might've looked like. Pictures of a stele can be found at the Met Museum web site <http://www.metmuseum.org/home.asp>.

Chapter 2

Three Old Ladies Knit the Socks of Death

Pre-Reading:

Have you ever had a teacher you wanted to do well for? If so, what made you respect that teacher's opinion? If you can't think of a teacher like that, what would a teacher have to be like to make you respect them?

During:

1. Why does Percy decide to study for the Latin exam even though he's given up on his other subjects? Pg 18
2. What leads Percy to believe that Grover and Mr. Brunner think he's in danger? Pg 19
3. What does Percy think the yarn-cutting means? Does Grover seem to agree or not? Pg 27

Post-Reading:

Using a map of New York State, find the Hudson River Valley and plot an imaginary location for Yancy Academy. Draw a map showing which highway Grover and Percy would've taken to get to New York City, and indicate where you think the fruit stand would be.

Chapter 3

Grover Unexpectedly Loses His Pants

Pre-Reading:

What is the place that you feel most at ease – a place you'd like to be more than anywhere else?

During:

1. Why does Percy leave Grover at the bus station? What would you have done in his place? pg 29
2. Why is Montauk special to Percy's mom? Pg 37
3. What new information does Percy learn about his dad as he and his mother are roasting marshmallows? Pg 39

Post-Reading:

A lot of background information about Sally and Percy's lives is given in chapter three. Have students create a timeline with 5-10 events mentioned in the book, and draw a picture for each event. Some possible moments to illustrate: Sally's parents die in a plane crash; Sally meets Percy's father at the beach; Percy strangles a snake in his crib at day care; the one-eyed man stalks Percy on the playground.

Chapter 4*My Mother Teaches Me Bullfighting***Pre-Reading:**

Has someone ever protected you from danger? Have you ever protected someone else? Think of an incident and describe it.

During:

1. According to Grover, who is after Percy? Pg 45
2. What does Percy's mom tell him to do when they get out of the car and why does Percy disobey? Pg 48
3. What happens to Percy's mother? Pg 53

Post-Reading:

Do a "frozen scene". Call up four or five kids and announce that you are the sculptor. Pick a scene from *The Lightning Thief* and assign the students parts. For instance, you might choose Grover appearing at the cabin door in the middle of a storm. Tell students how to pose and then order them to freeze in place. Grover could mime standing in a doorway, looking terrified. Sally could be holding the door, looking at Percy in horror, and Percy could be in bed, staring at Grover's hooves. Other students could be the Minotaur approaching, or even the wind or the door. Finally, instruct each student to begin saying their characters thoughts aloud as soon as you touch them on the shoulder, and to keep talking until you touch their shoulder again. Once students have the idea, break the class into groups of 4-5 and let them choose any other scene from the book so far to act out.

Chapter 5*I Play Pinochle with a Horse***Pre-Reading:**

What do you think life will be like for humans 2000 years from now? Give some examples of how people might live, what they will believe, what technology they will use. What do you think those people of the future will think about us, their distant ancestors?

During:

1. What does the blond girl ask Percy as she's feeding him pudding? Pg 57
2. What is strange about the man who is guarding Percy as he sleeps? Pg 57
3. Why does Grover say he retrieved the Minotaur horn? Pg 59

Post-Reading:

1. Go to www.theoi.com and look up "centaurs." You can also use a standard encyclopedia or other reference book on Greek monsters. There are three different types described. Make a mind map with *centaur* as the middle bubble, then branch out in three directions for the three different types of centaur. Off of each type, list at least five attributes of that kind of centaur.

Chapter 6

I Become Supreme Lord of the Bathroom

Pre-Reading:

Break students into three groups and assign each group to read a different story or description of the god Hermes. Here are three possibilities from the internet:

"Hermes," from [Mythweb](#)

"Hermes," from [Winged Sandals](#)

"Hermes," from [Encyclopedia Mythica](#)

Each group should read the article. At the end of the reading, they will be responsible for telling the story to someone who has not read it. After each group has finished, re-divide the class into trios, with one member from each of the three story groups. Students then take turns reporting their version of the story to their team members. The goal is to be the trio that comes up with the longest list of facts about Hermes. (www.rickriordan.com)

During:

1. What does Percy noticed about the farm house as he walks away from it? What bothers him about the attic? Pg 75
2. How does Annabeth know that Percy is "one of us"? Pg 88
3. Percy says the big girl from the Ares cabin reminds him of Nancy Bobofit. Is Clarisse like Nancy? Why or why not? Pg 89

Post-Reading:

This is a good point in the book to nail down the facts about the Olympian gods. Use the attached graphic organizer as an overhead transparency or projected Word document. (from rickriordan.com)

The Gods of Olympus

In each throne, write anything you think is true about that god or goddess.

Zeus

Hera

Poseidon

Demeter

Ares

Athena

Apollo

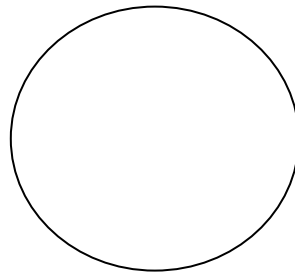
Artemis

Hephaestus

Aphrodite

Hermes

Dionysus



(Hestia)

Chapter 7

My Dinner Goes up in Smoke

Pre-Reading:

You're having a dinner party and can have anything on the menu you want. What food and drink would you choose for you and your friends?

During:

1. Who are Annabeth's parents? Pg 95
2. Why is Annabeth frustrated when she and Percy talk about quests? Pg 99
3. Why does Percy ask for a blue Coke at dinner? Pg 104
4. What does Percy wish for as he puts his dinner into the fire? Pg 105

Post-Reading:

1. Tournament Day.

Divide the class into four teams. Try to make the groups as even in size and ability as possible. . It's best if the teams sit together.

The rules: Everyone on every team must take a turn at the board. The team members have to rotate, and once they establish a "batting order," they must keep that order. Two teams at a time send representatives to the board. Let's call the teams A, B, C, and D, for example. To begin, the first person from team A comes to the board to challenge the first person from team B. You will say the question. The first person to get the right answer written on the board wins. Teams may not help or say anything unless both players are obviously stumped, in which case you can say "teams." At that point, team members may run to the board to assist, but the person whose turn it is still has to be the one who writes the answer. Whichever team wins, gets a point. If there is a tie, the same two people stay up for a second, tie-breaking question. If neither team is able to answer the question, no one gets a point and both players sit down. Then the tournament rotates -- the next person from team B plays the first person from team C. Then team C plays team D. Team D plays team A, and the whole process starts over until you run out of questions or time.

To spice things up, you can have different categories of questions. Start with one pointers, then five-pointers, then ten-pointers. This way, teams don't get discouraged if they do poorly at the beginning. Sample questions are below. You are encouraged to make up your own, but it's very important to ask questions that are conducive to fast, short answers that can be quickly written on the board, and have only one correct answer. (www.rickriordan.com)

Sample Tournament Questions:

1 pointers

1. Who is Annabeth's mother? (Athena)
2. Who is Clarisse's father? (Ares)

5-pointers

1. What sort of animal head hangs above Ares' cabin? (boar)
2. Name one thing that Hermes is the god of. (travelers, thieves, merchants, roads)

10-pointers

1. What lives in the canoe lake? (Naiads)
2. Two words: Dionysus was grounded to Camp Half Blood because he was chasing a what? (wood nymph)

Chapter 8

We Capture a Flag

Pre-Reading:

When you choose teams for a sport or P.E. activity, would you rather pick them yourselves or have the coach do it? Why?

During:

1. According to Grover, why did the “Big Three” gods swear never to have any more children? Pg 113
2. In capture-the-flag, why does Percy feel like he’s being left out of the action? Pg 119
3. Why does Annabeth make Percy stand in the water? Pg 125

Post-Reading:

Have students divided into groups of 3-4 and pick a page of dialogue to read out loud like a script. Students pick parts and only read what is inside the quotation marks for their characters’ lines. Once students have practiced their lines a few times, have them perform for the rest of the class.

Chapter 9

I Am Offered a Quest

Pre-Reading:

Research the Oracle of Delphi. What was it? Why was it important? A good (and fun) place to start is the Winged Sandals website.

<http://abc.net.au/arts/wingedsandals/oracle/>. Here, you can ask the Oracle a question about your future, or see an animated story about how Apollo won his Oracle at Delphi.

During:

1. Why does Percy feel miserable once he gets his own cabin? Pg 127
2. Based on the newspaper article Percy finds under his door, what is happening in the real world while Percy is in camp? Pg 128
5. Why can’t the gods retrieve the bolt themselves? Pg 145

Post-Reading:

1. Make your own Greek style vase.

Chapter 10

I Ruin a Perfectly Good Bus

Pre-Reading:

Many of the campers at Camp Half-Blood have their own magic item. Clarisse has an electric spear. Annabeth has a baseball cap that turns her invisible. What magic item would make sense for Percy, as the son of the Sea God? Design your own magic item.

During:

1. What gift does Luke give to Percy? Why can’t Percy use them? Pg 151
2. What special properties does Riptide have? Pg 153
3. According to Grover, why did Percy’s mom marry Gabe? Pg 159

Post-Reading

Percy Jackson has ten days to go from New York to Los Angeles and back again, and he can't use air travel. Is this possible? Try to use internet sources to "book" and trip for Percy and his friends using buses or trains. How much would the trip cost? How long would it take? Try these sources to start:

www.amtrak.com

www.greyhound.com

Chapter 11

We Visit the Garden Gnome Emporium

Pre-Reading:

What is the worst (or most embarrassing) photograph of you that's ever been taken? Describe it.

During:

1. What does Auntie Em look like when she opens the door? Pg 172
2. How can you tell that Percy isn't thinking straight after he eats his meal? Pg 176
3. What important information does Percy find in Medusa's office? Pg 186

Post-Reading:

Study some obituaries from your local newspaper, then write an obituary for Medusa. Be sure to use facts about her life (from the myths) and her death (from *The Lightning Thief*). What will her funeral arrangements be? Where should people send flowers or charitable donations?

Chapter 12

We Get Advice from a Poodle

Pre-Reading:

Do you think animals can understand when you talk to them? Have you ever had a pet you understand very well?

During:

1. Why does Grover want a searcher's license? Pg 189
2. According to Grover, why did Percy mail Medusa's head to Mount Olympus? Pg 192
3. Who is Gladiola? Pg 195

Post-Reading:

In an earlier chapter, Percy mentions that cell phones are a no-no for half-bloods because monsters can trace the signals. But what if Percy had no choice? Imagine Percy has to send a text message to Chiron about their situation as it stands at the end of Ch. 12. He wants Chiron to know what's going on, but he has to keep it brief so the monsters don't trace the call. A text message can only be 150 characters, maximum (including spaces and punctuation). Write the best message for Percy to send Chiron.

Chapter 13

I Plunge to My Death

Pre-Reading:

In this chapter, Annabeth says she wants to be an architect and build a monument that will last a thousand years. What would you build?

During:

1. Why does Percy try to keep a low profile on the train? Pg 197
2. What new information does Annabeth tell us about her father in this chapter? Pg 200
3. What magic item does Hades have? What are its powers? Pg 204

Post-Reading:

Describe what you might find in the bottom of a river.

Chapter 14

I Become a Known Fugitive

Pre-Reading:

There's an old saying: "There's no such thing as bad press." What does this mean? Do you think it's true? Would you like to be famous in the national news, even if it was for something negative?

During:

1. When he lands in the Mississippi River, what does Percy realize that amazes him? Pg 212
2. What message does the woman in the water bring to Percy? What is her warning? Pg 214
3. What does Percy learn by overhearing the reporters outside the Arch? Pg 216

Post Reading:

On a piece of paper or cardboard, make a trading card for a character from *The Lightning Thief*. This could be a god, half-blood or monster. You can draw a picture of your character or use clipart. You may have to use your imagination if you are doing a picture of Percy, Annabeth, or the other campers.

Decide what information you will put on your card. Besides the character's name, you should have a brief description and any special powers that character have.

Some possible characters for cards: Percy, Annabeth, Grover, Clarisse, Luke, Chiron, Poseidon, Zeus, Hades, Medusa, Minotaur, Furies, Chimera, Echidna, Hellhound, Athena, Hermes.

Chapter 15

A God Buys Us Cheeseburgers

Pre-Reading:

In this chapter, Annabeth says, "Even strength has to bow to wisdom." Do you think that's true? Would you rather be exceptionally strong or exceptionally wise?

During:

1. What is Iris-messaging? How does it work? Pg 202
4. What does Ares say that convinces Percy to help him? Pg 228
9. How does Grover save the day? Pg 240

Post Reading

1. **The Modernized Gods.** In this chapter you met Ares, who in modern times wears biker clothes and rides a Harley Davison with a shotgun holster. How might the other gods or goddesses look in modern times? Pick one god or goddess you know about. Look up information about them. Then write a description of what they might look like today. What clothes would they wear?

Chapter 16

We Take a Zebra to Vegas

Pre-Reading

Describe your dream vacation. Where would you go? What would you do?

During:

1. What's in the backpack Ares gives Percy? Pg 243
2. What news does Ares give Percy about his mom? Pg 244
3. How does Grover make sure the animals will be safe after they are released? Pg 256

Follow-up Activities

The Lotus Casino is designed to make kids never want to leave. Do you think it would keep you entranced? Write a description of a place that would be a "perfect trap" to keep you there forever. What would such a place look like? What activities would be available? What kind of food?

Chapter 17

We Shop For Waterbeds

Pre-Reading:

People are always looking for new ways to sell things. What's the worst or most annoying commercial you've ever seen? What is the best or funniest?

During:

1. How does Annabeth pay for the trip to Los Angeles? Pg 266
2. Who is the spirit in the sea? What does she give to Percy? Pg 271
3. What does Crusty do to his customers? Pg 278

Post-Reading:

Make your own advertisement for Crusty's Waterbed Store.

Chapter 18

Annabeth Does Obedience School

Pre-Reading:

The Greeks believed there were five rivers in the Underworld. Divide the class into five groups and have each group look up information on one of the following. Each group should share the group's findings with the rest of the class.

Acheron, Cocytus, Styx, Lethe, Phlegethon

During:

1. Why does the DOA security guard get annoyed with Percy? Pg 285
2. How does Charon realize Percy and his friends are not really dead? Pg 286
3. What does the River Styx look like? Why does it look this way? Pg 289

Post Reading:

What would you do with a 3-headed dog?

Chapter 19

We Find Out the Truth, Sort of

Pre-Reading:

Who is the most evil person you can think of -- from history or from current times? What makes this person evil? Can an evil person ever have good qualities?

During:

1. How do Grover, Percy and Annabeth end up at the pit of Tartarus? Pg 305
2. How is Hades' aura different than Ares? How does Percy feel when he's in Hades' presence? Pg 309
3. What sort of problems does Hades complain about? Pg 311

Post Reading:

Have students draw their own maps of the Underworld, based on the description in the book. Then let them compare theirs to Grover's map of the Underworld on the author's website: http://www.rickriordan.com/Underworld_map.htm.

Chapter 20

I Battle My Jerk Relative

Pre-Reading:

What's the nicest thing a friend has ever done for you? Have you ever been called to help out a friend?

During:

1. Why does Percy will himself to get soaked in the water? Pg 320
2. What deal does Percy make with Ares? Pg 325
3. How does Percy's ADHD keep him alive in the fight? Pg 328

Post-Reading:

2. **Journal:** Annabeth and Grover have very different views of the battle with Ares. Annabeth calls it terrifying. Grover thinks it's cool. Write a diary entry for either Annabeth or Grover, explaining what happened that day on the beach.

Chapter 21

I Settle My Tab

Pre-Reading:

What do you think will happen when Percy brings the lightning bolt to Zeus? If you were writing the next scene, what would it be like?

During:

1. Why do Percy, Annabeth and Grover split up when they arrive back in New York? Pg 336
2. How does Percy convince the guard at the Empire State Building to let him see Zeus? Pg 337
3. Why Percy start feeling a little sorry for Hades when he sees Zeus' palace? Pg 339

Post-Reading:

Imagine Percy has to write a letter to his father, Poseidon, explaining the choice he made not to petrify Gabe. What would he say? How would he explain his choice? Would he want to tell his father anything else? Any wishes or requests?

Amy Nelson, abc school, bear_nelson@yahoo.com

Chapter 22

The Prophecy Comes True

Pre-Reading:

If someone knew something really bad that was going to happen in your life, and there was nothing you could do about it, would you rather have them tell you or keep it a secret? Why?

During:

1. How did the Ares cabin “honor” Percy from his quest? Pg 354
2. What happens to Grover in this chapter? Pg 357
3. What is the bead for Percy’s first summer? Pg 359

Post-Reading:

Now that we know Luke is the betrayer at Camp Half-Blood, design a wanted poster that can be posted around Mount Olympus. You will need to draw a picture of Luke, perhaps in the form of a mug shot. You will also need to include a physical description, a list of the crimes he is wanted for, the location where he was last scene, any special powers or weapons people should look out for, and a reward, if you want to offer one.

Vocabulary:

Tweed pg 2: thick woolen fabric used for clothing; originated in Scotland

Dyslexia pg 7: learning disorder marked by impairment of the ability to recognize and comprehend written words.

Philosophical pg 8: wise, calm, and reasonable

Talons pg 13: claws of a bird of prey

Eavesdropper: pg 19 a person who listens to talk that they are not supposed to hear

Solstice: pg 19: either of the two points in the ecliptic farthest from the equator.

Hallucination pg 40: a sensory experience of something that does not exist outside the mind, and usually manifested as visual images: also, “seeing things”

Minions pg 46: A subordinate or dependent

Pinochle pg 57: a popular card game played by two, three, or four persons, with a 48-card deck.

Amphitheater pg 62: a circular or oval building with rows of seats around the central open space

Satyrs pg 62: A woodland creature depicted as having the pointed ears, legs, and short horns of a goat

Equivalent pg 77: equal

Labyrinth pg 86: a maze of paths bordered by high hedges, as in a park or garden, for the amusement of those who search for a way out.

Ambrosia pg 88: the food of the gods.

Celestial pg 135: having something to do with the sky

Harbors pg 143: to keep in the mind

Delicacy pg 160: a choice kind of food

Statuary pg 171: a group or collection of statues.

Emporium pg 168: A place where various goods are bought and sold; a marketplace.

Albino pg 291: A person or animal lacking normal pigmentation, with the result being that the skin and hair are abnormally white or milky and the eyes have a pink or blue iris and a deep-red pupil.

Indiana Academic Standards (content):

Social Studies: 6.1.1, 6.1.22

Language Arts: 6.1.2, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.3.2, 6.3.5

Visual Arts: 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.12.1

Anticipation Guide

Before		The Lightning Thief	After	
Agree	Disagree		Agree	Disagree
		Some of your teachers are monsters.		
		Names are powerful things.		
		Your studies at school can be applied to real life.		
		Parents sometimes need help from their children.		
		Kids can overcome ADHD and dyslexia.		
		Greek gods live in the United States.		

Read-Aloud:

Read Aloud #1

Page 1, first 5 paragraphs: “Being a half-blood is dangerous. Most of the time, it gets you killed.....”

This is a short read aloud, which would be great to introduce the book; words like “dangerous”, “painful”, and “scary” are used to peek interest, and build intensity for the upcoming story line.

Before I would use this passage, I would use my booktalk, and anticipation statement worksheet for this book to present some of the themes of the book.

After reading this passage, I would not say or do much of anything. I would let the passage speak for it self. It is the last sentence that sets the tone: “Don’t say I didn’t warn you.”

Read Aloud #2

Bottom of page 87-page 88: “...teachers want you medicated. Most of them are monsters.”

This is a mid-length passage which could be geared for students that struggle with school for various reasons to motivate them to read and participate with the readings. This also can explain to those that don’t struggle in school, how those that do, feel and cope.

Before using this passage, a discussion on pre-teen angst, such as feelings of being an outcast, loneliness, trying to fit in would be appropriate. Also, teaching about ADHD and dyslexia, along with the struggles these students have. If the school library or nurse has videos or other resources, I would use them to discuss these topics.

Afterwards, there needs to be a talk about teachers: both good and bad. Why do people teach? Do they actually like students? What makes a good teacher? What makes a bad teacher? I think everyone has had at least one teacher that was a monster--what do you do when that happens? Bring in a councilor to help students identify “bad” teachers from “tough” teachers; and how to best handle the “bad” ones.

Read Aloud #3

Page 168-183(excerpts): "...the sound of tiny snakes, right above me, ...from about where Aunty Em's head would be."

This is quite a long reading that is excellent at demonstrating how the gods and monsters of Greek mythology quietly mingle in the mortal world. Aunty Em runs a seemingly innocent burger joint and gnome emporium, but looks can be deceiving. This selection really gets the action started. Done are the preparations and warnings. The characters are now face-to-face with danger. It proves that knowing your Greek history and mythology are not only important, but needed for survival. What other topics in school that seem unimportant and boring, are actually needed in real life?

Before using this selection, I would use two journal questions for anticipatory discussion:

- a. An old piece of advice is: "Never talk to strangers." Do you believe this is always the safest thing to do? Why or why not?
- b. What is the worst (or most embarrassing) photograph of you that's ever been taken? Describe it.

After the selection, the students could write Medusa's obituary. Students can study some obituaries from the local newspaper, then write an obituary for Medusa. Be sure to use facts about her life from the myths and her death from The Lightning Thief. What will the funeral arrangements be? Where should people send flowers or charitable donations?

If You Liked The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan, You Might Also Like.....

***The Sea of Monsters** (Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series #2) By Rick Riordan

Percy Jackson's journey continues in the seventh-grade. The year has been quiet, but then an innocent game of dodgeball turns into a death match against a gang of giants.

***The Titan's Curse** (Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series #3)

By Rick Riordan

Again the story continues when the goddess Artemis goes missing. It's up to Percy and his friends to find out what happened.

***The Battle of the Labyrinth** (Percy Jackson and the Olympians Series #4) By Rick Riordan

A mysterious person appears on campus, followed by demon cheerleaders.

***Harry Potter** series by J. K. Rowling

This is a story, like The Lightning Thief about a pre-teen boy who discovers that he is greater than he imagines. A mysterious letter invites Harry to attend a school for wizards. Like Percy, Harry finds friends, sports, and magic in everything from classes to meals.

***The Hobbit** by J.R.R. Tolkien

A wonderful story with wondrous creatures: hobbits, wizards, and dragons. Danger and friendship are also themes of the book.

***Ella Enchanted** by Gail Carson Levine

A story of Ella of Frell, who was given the gift of obedience by a fairy. Ella realizes that this "gift" is no better than a curse.

***Backyard Dragon** by Betsy Sterman

Another story where the past and the present collide. Owen discovers that a 15th-century dragon has been magically transported to current day New Jersey. He, his grandfather, and his friends need to solve this problem

Across Curriculum Connections:

Art: Greek art

Draw and color a picture of what the stele (Greek funeral stone) might've looked like. Pictures of a stele can be found at the Met Museum web site <http://www.metmuseum.org/home.asp>. Standards Art: 6.1.1, 6.1.3

Social Studies: Greek culture & history

Break students into three groups and assign each group to read a different story or description of the god Hermes. Here are three possibilities from the internet:

"Hermes," from [Mythweb](#)

"Hermes," from [Winged Sandals](#)

"Hermes," from [Encyclopedia Mythica](#)

Each group should read the article -- either silently (writing main ideas) or aloud (going around the circle, alternating paragraphs). They may take notes, either way. Warn students that at the end of the reading, they will be responsible for telling the story to someone who has not read it, and they may not refer to the story, although they may refer to their notes. After each group has finished, re-divide the class into trios, with one member from each of the three story groups. Students then take turns reporting their version of the story to their team members. As one person tells the story, another student acts as scribe, and writes down main facts. The goal is to be the trio that comes up with the longest list of facts about Hermes. Obviously, some facts will overlap between versions, but each fact can only be listed once. (www.rickriordan.com)

Standards Social Studies: 6.1.1, 6.1.22

THEME: Greek Gods**Web Resources:**

History for Kids

<http://historyforkids.org/learn/greeks/religion/gods.htm>

THEME: Greek Monsters & Art**Web Resources:**

Theoi Greek Mythology

www.theoi.com

THEME: ADHD**Web Resources:**

Rick Riordan

http://www.rickriordan.com/Teachers_Guide_Lightning_Thief.pdf

Eli Lily-ADHD information

www.adhd.com

THEME: Travel**Web Resources:**

Yahoo

<http://maps.yahoo.com>

Resources:

*rickriordan.com: Wonderful site activities, teachers guide. *I cannot say enough about this site!* It includes maps, graphic organizers, teacher guides, readers guide and more. Everything you need in one stop. I used this site immensely.

*theoi.com: This is a site that contains more than 1500 pages on Greek gods, monsters, and other characters. This site is great for research and gaining background knowledge on Greek characters. The site also includes a family tree of Greek gods and Greek figures in art.

Author's Homepage: "Rick Riordan" www.rickriordan.com
<http://rickriordan.blogspot.com/>

Publisher's webpage: "Miramax Books: Hyperion Paperbacks for Children"
www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com

Publisher's webpage for the author or author's books:
www.hyperionbooksforchildren.com/authors/displayAl.asp?id=371&ai=a

Other Web Resources:

State Library of Louisiana:

www.state.lib.la.us/empowerlibrary/LIGHTNING%20THIEF.pdf

American Library Association

www.ala.org/ala/productsandpublications/periodicals/booklinks/webconnections/may07.cfm

Scholastic Guides

<http://content.scholastic.com/browse/search?query=the+lightning+thief>

"Home school Buzz: Review"

www.homeschoolbuzz.com/reviews.html?content=The-Lightning-Thief--Percy-Jackson-and-the-Olympians--Book-1

Book Activities

Illustrated timeline for the Jackson family. A lot of background information is given about Sally (Percy's mom) and Percy's lives. Have students create a timeline with 7-10 events mentioned in the book, and draw a picture for each event. Some possible moments to illustrate: Sally meets Percy's father at the beach; Percy strangles a snake in his crib at day care; the one-eyed man stalks Percy on the playground.

~This activity is intended for individuals.

~Indiana standards: 7.3.1, 7.3.2, 7.4.1

The Modernized Gods. Ares, in The Lightning Thief wears biker clothes and rides a Harley Davison with a shotgun holster. How might the other gods or goddesses look in modern times? Pick one god or goddess you know about and look up information about them. Check for pictures of them on the internet. Then write a description of what they might look like today. What clothes would they wear, etc.

~This activity is intended for small groups.

~Indiana standards: 7.3.1, 7.3.3, 7.4.3

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Dictionary.com, Lexico Publishing Group, LLC. www.Dictionary.com

Nutmeg Book Award chosen by Connecticut's Youth. www.nutmegaward.org/2008/index.htm

Official website of author Rick Riordan www.Rickriordan.com

Riordan, Rick, *The Lightning Thief*, Miramax Books-Hyperion Paperbacks for Children
2005.

Theoi Greek Mythology: Exploring Mythology in Classical Literature and Art. www.theoi.com