

## Greek mythology

Greek ‘myths’ (short for mythology) are a series of stories about the Gods and magical beings of Greece. We’ll bet you’ve heard of some of the famous – and infamous! – characters already, such as **Heracles**, (the strongest man on Earth) **Zeus**, (the God of the sky and king of the gods) **Pegasus** (a flying horse) and **Hades** (the god of the underworld).

Created thousands of years ago, **Greek myths** were epic stories about **Greek gods**, passed down over generations. They often feature heroic battles and terrible creatures, and taught the importance of bravery, intelligence, and right and wrong. They showed that even the gods, like mortal men, could be punished or rewarded for their actions. Details of the ancient tales have been found on everything from pottery to temples to stone statues!

Greek myths were a huge part of the **religion** in Ancient Greece, and offer a glimpse into the lives of the ancient people who told them. Check out five of these fascinating Greek myths below, and meet the people-eating, fire-breathing beasts and the heroes who battled them!

### Scylla and Charybdis

**The Monster:** Scylla and Charybdis

**The Hero:** Odysseus

**The Battle:** On both sides of a narrow stretch of sea, monsters lie in wait. On one side, **Scylla** thrashes around her **six snakelike heads**, ready to crunch on passing sailors. On the other, **Charybdis** creates a **deadly whirlpool**. No person has ever faced these beasts and escaped unharmed. Now the king, **Odysseus**, and his crew must pass them to get home. They edge around Charybdis’ spiralling sea, saving the ship from being swallowed whole. But Scylla swoops down and gobbles up six men. “Row!” Odysseus shouts, leading the rest of the crew past Scylla and out of the deadly channel. Having survived the dreaded beasts, Odysseus and his men continue their journey.

### Theseus and the Minotaur

**The Monster:** The Minotaur

**The Hero:** Theseus

**The Battle:** Half-man, half-bull, the **Minotaur** lurks in an underground maze waiting for his next meal – children sent to him as a sacrifice. Lost in the labyrinth, the kids surely will be devoured. But brave king **Theseus** has had enough of his land living in fear of the Minotaur. He accompanies the group and is prepared to fight. Hearing the Minotaur breathing nearby, he springs toward it. Dodging the monster’s deadly horns, he thrusts his sword into the beast. The Minotaur is dead, but will the group find its way out? Luckily, Theseus unspooled a piece of string as he walked through the maze, and leads the children out to safety.