

**Guided Reading Notes**  
**for**  
**Edith Hamilton's**  
***Mythology***

**Introduction**

1. What is the difference between primitive and classical mythology?
2. How are the Greek gods different from Egyptian or Mesopotamian gods?
3. What is "the miracle of Greek mythology?"
4. What are the "dark spots" referred to by Edith Hamilton?
5. How does she define mythology?
6. What is her explanation for differing views of the same gods?

**Part One: The Gods, The Creation, and the Earliest Heroes**

**Chapter 1      The Gods**

1. Identify the best known writers of Greek and Roman mythology.  
A. Ovid                      B. Homer                      C. Hesiod                      D. Pindar  
E. Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides                      F. Aristophanes                      G. Plato                      H. Virgil
2. What is the best guide to Greek mythology?
3. Briefly describe the twelve gods of Olympus by both Greek and Roman names.  
A. Zeus (Jupiter)                      B. Hera (Juno)                      C. Poseidon (Neptune)  
D. Hades (Pluto)                      E. Athena (Minerva)                      F. Phoebus Apollo (Apollo)  
G. Artemis (Diana)                      H. Aphrodite (Venus)                      I. Hermes (Mercury)  
J. Ares (Mars)                      K. Hephaestus (Vulcan)                      L. Hestia (Vesta)
4. Describe some of the lesser Gods of Olympus.  
A. Eros                      B. Hebe                      C. Iris                      D. The Graces                      E. The Muses
5. Describe some of the Gods of the Waters.  
A. Poseidon (Neptune)                      B. Ocean                      C. Triton                      D. Proteus                      E. Naiads
6. Describe some of the Gods of the Underworld.  
A. Charon                      B. Cerberus                      C. Acheron, Cocytus, Styx                      D. The Furies                      E. Sleep and Death
7. Describe some of the lesser Gods of the Earth.  
A. Demeter (Ceres)                      B. Dionysus (Bacchus)                      C. Pan (Faunus)                      D. Castor and Pollux  
E. The Satyrs                      F. Nymphs                      G. Boreas, Notus, Eurus, Zephyr  
H. The Centaurs                      I. The Gorgons                      J. The Sirens                      E. Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos
8. Describe the two lesser Roman gods Saturn and Janus.

**Chapter 2    The Two Great Gods of Earth: Demeter (Ceres)/Dionysus (Bacchus)**

1. What do Greeks believe are two basic gifts that earth gives to man?
2. How are Dionysus and Demeter different from the Twelve Gods of mythology?
3. How does the myth of Demeter explain the seasons of spring and winter?

4. According to myth, how is Dionysus born? How is this related to Dionysus' association with grapes and wine?
5. What is he known as, and what does he teach humans?
6. What are the two contrasting ideas associated with the worship of Dionysus?
7. Why is Dionysus considered so important to Greeks?
8. How does Dionysus become a symbol of resurrection?
9. What is the connection between Dionysus and the Greek theater?

### **Chapter 3      How the World and Mankind Were Created**

1. What is Hesiod's version of the creation of man?
2. Who are Prometheus and Epimetheus?
3. What gifts does Epimetheus give to animals? What does Prometheus give to mankind to make us superior to animals?
4. What is the second version of creation, the five stages of man?
5. What does Prometheus do that angers Zeus?
6. How is Prometheus tortured?
7. Why is Pandora created?
8. Why does Zeus send a flood to earth?
9. Who are the only two survivors?
10. Who are the Stone People?

### **Chapter 4      The Earliest Heroes**

1. Summarize the story of Prometheus and Io
2. Summarize the story of Europa
3. Summarize the Cyclops Polyphemus
4. Summarize the Flower-Myths: Narcissus, Hyacinth, and Adonis

