

## **List of Novels for Unit 6-2: Myths, Legends, and Heroes**

### **Core Novels**

*Atticus of Rome* by Barry Denenberg (C)

Atticus, a young boy who has been torn from his family and home and sold as a slave to a Roman aristocrat, quickly learns that not all is as it seems in the republic of Rome. Politicians and greedy merchants plot against each other, and Atticus must do his best to protect his kindly master...and, in turn, the Emperor of Rome. Murder and lies fill his new life as a spy for Lucius Opimius.

*Greek Myths* by Olivia Coolidge (A+)

From the terror of Medusa and the Minotaur to the Labors of Heracles and journeys of Theseus, the stories in this collection have thrilled and enthralled people for centuries with their high drama, hazardous quests, and unforgettable characters (both mortal and immortal). Under Olivia Coolidge's skillful pen, the landscape of early Greece and its famous legends bloom with vigor and are perfectly suited to the adventure-seeking reader.

*The Golden Goblet* by Eloise Jarvis McGraw (A)

A young Egyptian boy named Ranofer struggles to reveal a hideous crime and reshape his own destiny: Ranofer must find a way to thwart the plottings of his evil brother, Gebu, so he can become master goldsmith like their father in this exciting tale of ancient Egyptian mystery and intrigue.

*The Hero's Trail a Guide for a Heroic Life* by T. A. Barron (A+)

The Hero's Trail: A Guide for a Heroic Life by T.A. Barron

Smaller, more intimate stories about real-life people from all cultures and walks of life. Barron profiles people who exemplify heroic qualities, both well-known and less recognizable. Illustrating the importance of survival instincts in times of crisis, for example, the author mixes stories about Satchel Paige and Abraham Lincoln, Ruby Bridges and Anne Frank with the story of 10-year-old Joshua Dennis, who sang and prayed before being rescued from the mine where he was trapped for five days in 1989. Each chapter opens with a hiking story that illustrates a heroic quality and an inspirational quote.

*Holes* by Louis Sachar (E)

"If you take a bad boy and make him dig a hole every day in the hot sun, it will turn him into a good boy." Such is the reigning philosophy at Camp Green Lake, a juvenile detention facility where there is no lake, and there are no happy campers. In place of what used to be "the largest lake in Texas" is now a dry, flat, sunburned wasteland, pocked with countless identical holes dug by boys improving their character. Stanley Yelnats, of palindromic name and ill-fated pedigree, has landed at Camp Green Lake because it seemed a better option than jail. No matter that his conviction was all a case of mistaken identity, the Yelnats family has become accustomed to a long history of bad luck, thanks

to their "no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather!" Despite his innocence, Stanley is quickly enmeshed in the Camp Green Lake routine: rising before dawn to dig a hole five feet deep and five feet in diameter; learning how to get along with the *Lord of the Flies*-styled pack of boys in Group D; and fearing the warden, who paints her fingernails with rattlesnake venom. But when Stanley realizes that the boys may not just be digging to build character--that in fact the warden is seeking something specific--the plot gets as thick as the irony. It's a strange story, but strangely compelling and lovely too.

*Call It Courage* by Armstrong Sperry (C)

Mafatu's name means "Stout Heart," but his people call him a coward. Ever since the sea took his mother's life and spared his own, he has lived with deep fear. And even though his father is the Great Chief of Hikuero--an island whose seafaring people worship courage--he is terrified, and consequently, he is severely scorned. By the time he is twelve years old, Mafatu can bear it no longer. He must conquer his fear alone. . . even if it means certain death.

## **Guided Reading**

*Flush* by Carl Hiaasen (E)

You know it's going to be a rough summer when you spend Father's Day visiting your dad in the local lockup. Noah's dad is sure that the owner of the *Coral Queen* casino boat is flushing raw sewage into the harbor--which has made taking a dip at the local beach like swimming in a toilet. He can't prove it though, and so he decides that sinking the boat will make an effective statement. Right. The boat is pumped out and back in business within days and Noah's dad is stuck in the clink. Now Noah is determined to succeed where his dad failed. He *will* prove that the Coral Queen is dumping illegally . . . somehow. His allies may not add up to much--his sister Abbey, an unreformed childhood biter; Lice Peeking, a greedy sot with poor hygiene; Shelly, a bartender and a woman scorned; and a mysterious pirate--but Noah's got a plan to flush this crook out into the open. A plan that should sink the crooked little casino, once and for all.

Perseus and Medusa, Graphic Greek Myths and Legends by Nick Saunders (E)

In a series of six titles, these books present exciting retellings of ancient stories in a graphic novel-style format. Dramatic, action-packed illustrations bring each myth to life. Readers will be captivated by stories in which heroes battle monsters, gods interact with humans, and long-kept secrets are revealed. Ideal for reluctant readers, this series provides an accessible and enjoyable way to learn about the Greek myths.

*The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan (A)

The escapades of the Greek gods and heroes get a fresh spin in the first book in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series, about a contemporary 12-year-old New Yorker who learns he's a demigod. Perseus, aka Percy Jackson, thinks he has big problems. His father left before he was born, he's been kicked out of six schools in six years, he's dyslexic, and he has ADHD. What a surprise when he finds out that that's only the tip of the iceberg: he vaporizes his pre-algebra teacher, learns his best friend is a satyr, and is almost killed by a minotaur before his mother manages to get him to the safety of Camp Half-Blood--

where he discovers that Poseidon is his father. But that's a problem, too. Poseidon has been accused of stealing Zeus' lightning bolt, and unless Percy can return the bolt, humankind is doomed. Riordan's fast-paced adventure is fresh, dangerous, and funny. Percy is an appealing, but reluctant hero, the modernized gods are hilarious, and the parallels to Harry Potter are frequent and obvious. Because Riordan is faithful to the original myths, librarians should be prepared for a rush of readers wanting the classic stories. Sequels: *Sea of Monsters* and *The Titan's Curse*

*The Children of the Lamp The Akhenaton Adventure* (by PB Kerr (A))

You can tell from the very first page that P. B. Kerr had great fun writing his novel, *The Akhenaten Adventure*. The way the author introduces his cleverly named characters, the atmospheric setting, the fun tone of his narration--all indicate that a hugely entertaining story is in store. The first installment of his *Children of the Lamp* sequence is set firmly in the present day, but it soon breaks away and encompasses several wonderfully colorful parts of the globe, England and Egypt included. John and Philippa Gaunt, two twelve-year-old not-very-identical twins, live a privileged life on the Upper East of Manhattan. The twins realize there's something amiss with their world when a string of strange things begin to happen after their wisdom teeth are extracted--they dream the same dreams, become stronger, their zits clear up, and wishes wished in their presence inexplicably come true. And, when their estranged Uncle Nimrod asks them to come to England for the summer during one such shared dream, the discovery of their destiny is set in motion. P.B. Kerr's debut novel for children is a slick, zeitgeisty fantasy adventure that is sure to win him a new raft of fans. *The Blue Djinn of Babylon* is next up for those who get hooked.

*Sea of Monsters* by Rick Riordan (E)

In this second installment in the series, Percy, Poseidon's 13-year-old demigod son, is desperate to rescue his friend Grover, captive of the bloodthirsty Cyclops Polyphemus, and to retrieve the healing Golden Fleece. The sheepskin is needed to restore the protection around Camp Half-Blood, the only safe haven for the children of gods and humans, heroes-in-training in our modern world. However, the camp has already been compromised and the quest for the Golden Fleece has been awarded to the bully Clarisse. Encouraged by Hermes, Percy sets off for the Bermuda Triangle anyway with his friend Annabeth and classmate Tyson, who turns out to be a half-brother and a Cyclops as well. Adventure follows chaotic adventure at a rapid pace, and readers with even a passing acquaintance with the *Odyssey* will enjoy this fresh use of familiar stories. Percy is an appealing kid, and the subject of a chilling prophecy may resonate with readers. Those who start the series with this title will be drawn in by the clever humor and have the opportunity to go back to *The Lightning Thief* (Hyperion, 2005) before moving on to the third book in the series, *The Titan's Curse*.

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Reviews taken from *Amazon.com*

If there are any "Guided Reading" novels that you would like to see as a "Core" novel, please contact Fred Carrigg or Kelly Ford.