

THE QUEENSLAND READERS

澳大利亚语文



AUTHORIZED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

WILEY-BLANKENHORN



西方家庭学校原版教材与经典读物

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LESSON 1

SOME FAVOURITE GREEK MYTHS

sur-round-ed	thou-sands	myths
an-cient	mourn	in-ven-tor
pres-ence	quoits	whis-pered
char-i-ot		

PEOPLE have always tried to explain the wonders by which they were surrounded; and the way in which, thousands of years ago, the people of that day thought about many things, seems very strange to us now. From the Greeks who lived nearly three thousand years ago, we have many stories which tell us how they explained things then. These stories are called myths.

To the ancient Greeks everything seemed to be alive. The sun was the golden-haired god, Apollo, who drove through the heavens in his **chariot**¹ of fire. The clouds were his cattle, feeding in the fields of heaven. The moon was his twin sister, the goddess Diana, who rode through the sky in her silver car.

The earth was called Ceres, the mother of all things. All the winter she was said to mourn for her lost daughter, Spring, who had been stolen from her, and could only return each year to spend a few months with her mother.

¹ chariot: *An ancient Roman vehicle.*

The sea was looked upon as the angry god, Neptune, the earth-shaker, who was in love with Ceres; while the wind was the swift-footed Mercury, who stole the clouds, the cattle of the sun, and, by playing among the trees, was the inventor of music.

Some of the most interesting of the old Greek myths are those which were used to explain the presence of certain flowers on the earth. The lovely purple **hyacinth**¹, for example, was said to have come about in this way.

Hyacinthus was a beautiful Greek boy who was greatly beloved by Apollo. The two often spent the whole day together in hunting or fishing, in running races or playing games.

One day, the story goes, they were playing at their favourite game of quoits, when Apollo's quoit struck the boy on the head. The purple blood flowed in a rapid stream from a great gash in the boy's temple; it was clear that he had but a few moments to live.

Quickly, ere it was too late, Apollo whispered over him a few magic words, which had the effect of changing the youth into a lovely flower. Every year, as the purple hyacinth put forth its bloom, it reminded the Greeks of the purple blood which had flowed from the temple of Hyacinthus.

The **narcissus**² was said to have been a beautiful boy, who, looking one day into a clear fountain, fell in love with his own

1 hyacinth: *A plant with a pretty flower, which grows from a bulb.*

2 narcissus: *Another kind of bulbous plant with a small star-like flower.*

likeness. He died of this love-sickness, and on the spot where he breathed his last sprang up the flower which still bears his name.

If you watch a sunflower, you will see that its face is always turned to the sun. The Greeks explained this in the following way.

They said there was a beautiful young girl called Clytie, who loved Apollo, and who sat in the fields all day looking at him, as he rode through the heavens in his chariot. Day after day she sat and looked after him with longing eyes, but Apollo never seemed to see her.

Every day poor Clytie grew more and more unhappy, until the gods in pity changed her into a sunflower. But she did not forget Apollo, and to this day she turns her face towards him, from morn till night, as he drives across the sky.

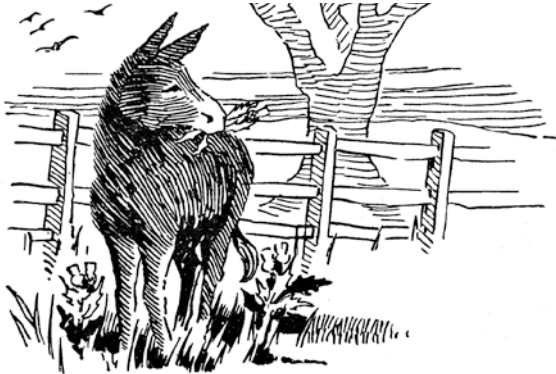


LESSON 2

NICHOLAS NYE

dar-nel	sprawl	twit-ter-ing
foaled	munched	drowse
gump-tion	knob-ble	crouch
trudge	ghost	

THISTLE and **darnel**¹ and **dock**² grew there,
And a bush, in the corner, of **may**³;
On the orchard wall I used to sprawl
In the blazing heat of the day;
Half asleep and half awake,
While the birds went twittering by,
And nobody there my lone to share
But Nicholas Nye.



1 darnel: A weed that grows as a pest among corn.

2 dock: Another troublesome weed.

3 may: A shrub with a white flower.

Nicholas Nye was lean and gray,
Lame of a leg and old,
More than a score of donkey's years
He had seen since he was foaled;
He **munched**¹ the thistles, purple and spiked,
Would sometimes stoop and sigh,
And turn to his head, as if he said,
“Poor Nicholas Nye !”
Alone with his shadow he'd drowse in the meadow,
Lazily swinging his tail,
At break of day he used to bray—
Not much too hearty and **hale**²;
But a wonderful **gumption**³ was under his skin,
And a clear calm light in his eye,
And once in a while, he'd smile—
Would Nicholas Nye.

Seem to be smiling at me, he would,
From his bush in the corner, of may,—
Bony and ownerless, widowed and worn
Knobble-kneed, lonely and gray;
And over the grass would seem to pass
'Neath the deep dark blue of the sky,

1 *munched: Chewed loudly.*

2 *hale: Full of life.*

3 *gumption: Common sense.*

Something much better than words between me
And Nicholas Nye.

But dusk would come in the apple boughs,
The green of the glow-worm shine,
The birds in nest would crouch to rest,
And home I'd trudge to mine;
And there in the moonlight, dark with dew,
Asking not wherefore nor why,
Would brood like a ghost, and as still as a post,
Old Nicholas Nye.

—WALTER DE LA MARE

LESSON 3

THE BRAVE MEN ON THE BRIDGE

Por-se-na	spear	thigh
sheath	Ho-ra-tius	con-suls
shield	cit-i-zens	arm-our
tri-umph		

A Story of Ancient Rome

WHEN Rome grew to be a great city, the people had a quarrel with their king. This king was a proud man, and he had a wicked son. At last the people drove the king and his family out of the city, and said they would not be ruled by a king again. This king of Rome went to another king named Lars Porsena, and asked him for help to win back his crown.

Lars Porsena loved fighting, so he sent his messengers to the towns and villages of his kingdom, to call together all the fighting men. Other chiefs came to join him, and, at the head of a great army, Porsena marched towards Rome. As they passed through the country, they burned villages, and destroyed the corn in the fields. When the flames of other villages warned the folk near Rome that a great army was coming, they packed up some of their goods, and fled to Rome for safety.

At last, the people on the walls of the city could see a great cloud of dust rolling nearer and nearer. Then they saw the gleam of thousands of spears and shields, and heard the sound of trumpets. Porsena's army was close at hand.

There was only one way by which the great host could enter the city. That was by crossing the wooden bridge which led to the River Gate. If the city was to be saved, the bridge must be broken down. But was there time to do this before the enemy came up to it ?

The captain who guarded the River Gate was a brave man named Horatius. He came to the **consuls**¹, as the chief men of the city were called, and said, "In that narrow path on the other side of the bridge, three men could easily hold back a thousand for a time. If two more men will help me, we will keep back the enemy long enough for the bridge to be broken down."

At once two other soldiers stepped forward, ready to help Horatius. The three brave men rushed across the bridge, and took their places in the narrow pathway, while the other Romans behind them set to work with axes, crow-bars, and levers, to loosen the props and posts that held up the bridge.

The great army moved more slowly as they entered the narrow path leading to the bridge. They thought they would soon be able to cross to the River Gate and enter the city. When

¹ consuls: *Two men were elected each year as consuls; they were the Governors of Rome.*

the soldiers in the front ranks saw three Romans standing in the way, they laughed. How could three men keep back a great army ?



"THE THREE BRAVE MEN RUSHED ACROSS THE BRIDGE"

Then, one after another, the enemy chiefs rode out against the brave Romans, but one after another they were struck down