

李新萍 邵凌 编著

# 大学英语

# · 阅读 教程

## 文化篇

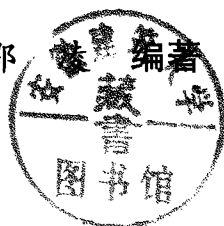
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# 大学英语阅读教程

## (文化篇)

李新萍 邵



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## 编者的话

为了丰富大学生和英语爱好者英语学习内容，提高他们的语言文化综合素质，我们编写了这册（文化篇）作为《大学英语阅读教程》系列之二。希望通过本书能提高学习者的英语阅读理解能力，同时也帮助他们扩大文化视野，提高文化意识。

本册内容涉及文学、艺术，不同国家和民族的生活、习俗、信仰、价值观以及对日常事物的看法和情感。在编写过程中，我们力求使内容通俗易懂，集知识性、实用性和趣味性为一体，努力做到既提高读者的英语阅读理解能力，又丰富读者的文化知识。

本书共分30个单元，每个单元有两篇课文，每篇课文后都有注释和练习，有利于读者理解课文，巩固所学知识。

由于编者水平有限，错误在所难免。恳请同行和读者提出宝贵意见。

编 者

2005年11月于北京



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## **Unit 1**

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### **Greek Mythology**

#### **TEXT A**

##### **Pre-reading Study**

**Get yourself familiar with the following words and expressions:**

flouted *vt.* 轻视, 嘲笑

testify *vt.* 证明, 证实, 作证

model *vt.* 模拟

Zeus *n.* 宙斯

Hera *n.* 宙斯的妻子(赫拉)

Aphrodite *n.* 阿芙罗狄蒂(爱与美的女神)

Thebes *n.* 底比斯(古希腊皮奥夏地区的主要城邦)

uncanny *adj.* 离奇的

alien *adj.* 相异的, 背道而驰的

vulture *n.* 秃鹰

Poseidon *n.* 波塞冬(海神)

Stallion *n.* 牡马(尤指种马)

Graeae *n.* 格里伊三姐妹

## The Nature of Greek Gods and Goddesses

In many respects the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology resembled extraordinarily powerful human beings. They experienced emotions such as jealousy, love, and grief, and they shared with humans a desire to assert their own authority and to punish anyone who **flouted** it. However, these emotions and desires took supernaturally intense form in gods and goddesses. As numerous literary descriptions and artistic representations **testify**, the Greeks imagined their gods to have human shape, although this form was strongly idealized.

The Greeks, moreover, **modeled** relationships between divinities on those between human beings. Apollo and Artemis were brother and sister, **Zeus**<sup>1</sup> and **Hera** were husband and wife, and the society of the gods on Mount Olympus resembled that of an unruly family, with Zeus at its head. The gods could temporarily enter the human world. They might, for example, fall in love with a mortal, as **Aphrodite**<sup>2</sup> did with Adonis<sup>3</sup>; Apollo<sup>4</sup> with Daphne<sup>5</sup>; and Zeus with Leda<sup>6</sup>, Alcmena, and Danae. Or they might destroy a mortal who displeased them, as Dionysus<sup>7</sup> destroyed King Pentheus of **Thebes** for mocking his rites.

The Greek goddess Artemis<sup>8</sup> was associated with hunting and wild animals. She was also connected to childbirth, nature, the harvest, the moon, and the protection of young women.

Not all Greek divinities resembled human beings. They could also be **uncanny**, strange, and **alien**, a quality made visible in

artistic representations of monsters. For example, the snake-haired Gorgon Medusa had a stare that turned her victims to stone. The **Graeae**, sisters of the Gorgons<sup>9</sup>, were gray-haired old crones from birth. They possessed but a single tooth and a single eye between them. Typhoeus was a hideous monster from whose shoulders grew a hundred snakeheads with dark, flickering tongues.

Even the major deities of Olympus showed alien characteristics at times. A recurrent sign of divine power is the ability to change shape, either one's own or that of others. **Athena**<sup>10</sup> once transformed herself into a **vulture**; **Poseidon** once took the form of a stallion.

The ability could prove convenient such as when Zeus assumed the form of a swan to woo Leda. Zeus turned Lycaon, a disrespectful king, into a wolf to punish him for his wickedness. The ability to exercise power over the crossing of boundaries is a crucial feature of divine power among the Greeks.

## Notes

1. Zeus [希神]宙斯,万神之主,万物的主宰。(罗马神话中的 Jupiter)
2. Aphrodite [希神]阿芙罗狄蒂(爱与美的女神,罗马神话中的 Venus)
3. Adonis [希神,罗神]阿多尼斯,美少年(爱与美的女神 Aphrodite 所爱恋的美少年)
4. Apollo [希神,罗神]阿波罗,美男子,太阳神
5. Daphne 达芙妮,[希神,罗神]居于山林水泽的仙女,美丽的少女。
6. Leda [希神,罗神]勒达(斯巴达之后,主神 Zeus 化为天鹅与之做爱,生 Pollux 和 Helen)

7. Dionysus [希神]狄俄尼索斯(酒神,即罗马神话中的 Bacchus,通常与放荡不羁、酗酒,过度社交等行为连在一起)
8. Artemis [希神]阿耳特弥斯(月神与狩猎女神,罗马神话中的 Diana)
9. Gorgons [希神]蛇发女怪,能用眼神使人变成石头。
10. Athena [希神]雅典娜(智慧与技艺的女神,罗马神话中的 Minerva)

### After-reading Activities

#### I. Tell whether the following statements are true or false.

1. All the Greek gods were basically like human beings in appearance.
2. The relationships between Greek gods were supposed to be different from the relationships between human beings.
3. Gods would fight if they were displeased with one another.
4. The shapes of gods seemed changeable.
5. The Greek gods could fall in love with human beings.

#### II. Fill in the table with information from the text.

Gods & goddesses	Forms they could take
Graecae	gray-haired old crones, possessed but a single tooth and a single eye between them
Typhoeus	
Athena	
Poseidon	
Zeus	

**III. Answer the following questions.**

1. What features did the Greek gods and goddesses have as they were compared to human beings?
2. How were the gods and goddesses related to human beings?
3. In what ways did the gods and goddesses show their mighty power?

**TEXT B****Pre-reading Questions**

1. Can you name some ancient Greek heroes?
2. How were the Greek heroes related with gods and goddesses?

**The Nature of Greek Heroes**

Greek mythology also told how divinities interacted with heroes, a category of mortals (凡人) who, though dead, were believed to retain power to influence the lives of the living. In myths heroes represented a kind of bridge between gods and mortals. Heroes such as Achilles<sup>1</sup>, Perseus<sup>2</sup>, and Aeneas<sup>3</sup> were the products of a union between a deity (神) and a mortal. The fact that the gods often intervened to help heroes — for example, during combat — indicated not the heroes' weakness but their special importance. Yet heroes were not the equals of the gods.

With a logic characteristic of Greek myth, heroes typically possessed a defect to balance out their exceptional power. For example, the warrior Achilles, hero of the Trojan War, was

invulnerable except in the ankle. The prophet Cassandra, who warned the Trojans of dangers such as the Trojan Horse, always prophesied the truth but was never believed. Heracles(大力英雄), constituted an extreme example of this paradox(自相矛盾的话). His awesome strength was balanced by his tendency to become a victim of his own excessive violence. Nevertheless, the gods allowed Heracles to cross the ultimate boundary by gaining admission to Olympus.

Myths about heroes are particularly characteristic of Greek mythology. Many of these heroes were the sons of gods, and a number of myths involved expeditions(远征) by these heroes. The expeditions generally related to quests or combats. Scholars consider some of these myths partly historical in nature — that is, they explained events in the distant past and were handed down orally from one generation to the next. Two of the most important of the semihistorical myths involve the search for the Golden Fleece and the quest that led to the Trojan War.

The greatest expedition of all was that which resulted in the Trojan War. The object of this quest was Helen, a beautiful Greek woman who had been abducted(诱拐) by Paris, son of King Priam of Troy. Helen's husband Menelaus<sup>4</sup> and his brother Agamemnon<sup>5</sup> led an army of Greeks to besiege(包围) Troy. After ten years, with many heroes dead on both sides, the city fell to the trick of the Trojan Horse — a giant wooden horse that the Greeks built and left outside the gates of Troy while their army pretended to withdraw. Not knowing that Greek heroes were hiding inside the horse, the Trojans took the horse into the city. The hidden Greeks then slipped out, opened the city gates and let their army in, thus defeating

Troy. The Iliad, an epic poem attributed to Greek poet Homer, tells the story of the Trojan War. The story continued with the Odyssey, another long poem attributed to Homer, in which the Greek hero Odysseus made his way home after the Trojan War. Odysseus returned to his faithful wife, Penelope<sup>6</sup>, whereas Agamemnon returned to be murdered by his faithless wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover.

Historians considered the Trojan War entirely mythical until excavations in Turkey showed that there had been cities on the site of Troy and that fire had destroyed one of these cities at about the time of the Trojan War, sometime from 1230 BC to 1180 BC.

## Notes

1. Achilles *n.* [希神]阿基里斯或阿喀琉斯(荷马史诗《伊利亚特》中的英雄,是珀琉斯和西蒂斯之子,杀害赫克托耳的人)
2. Perseus *n.* [希神]珀尔修斯(宙斯之子,杀女怪 Medusa 的英雄), [天]英仙座
3. Aeneas *n.* 特洛伊战争中的勇士
4. Menelaus *n.* 斯巴达王, [希神]阿伽门农之弟
5. Agamemnon *n.* [希神]阿伽门农(特洛伊战争中希腊军队的统帅)
6. Penelope *n.* [希神]珀涅罗珀(Odysseus 的忠实妻子,丈夫远征 20 年,期间她拒绝了无数求婚者)

## After-reading Activities

### I. Tell whether the following statements are true or false.

1. In Greek mythology Achilles was a god.
2. Greek heroes usually had a weak point in spite of their great



power.

3. Greek myths were considered by some scholars historical events in the distant past.
4. The Trojan war was started because of a beautiful woman called Helen.
5. After all the story of the Trojan War is only a myth.

**II. Fill in the blanks with the given words below, changing forms where necessary.**

result	from	mother	wife	consider	ruler
--------	------	--------	------	----------	-------

Zeus, the 1 of the Greek gods, had many relationships with Greek goddesses and mortal women that 2 in offspring. Zeus even gave birth to a child without a 3 — Athena, the goddess of wisdom, sprang from his head. Metis is 4 to be Athena's mother because, as one story relates, she was Zeus's pregnant 5 when he swallowed her just before Athena emerged 6 his head. Zeus married his sister Hera after Metis's death.

**III. Read the following passage and match the words from Column A with the definitions from Column B.**

A. Words	B. Definitions
1. Sagas	A. very interesting or exciting, so that you have to pay attention