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READING FOR THE STATE ASSESSMENT

On the end of year assessment for English Language Arts, you will be asked to read several different passages and answer questions based on those passages. The following units will review some of types of texts you will be asked to read and some of the types of questions you will be asked to answer.

Myth



*Download the attached pdf to take notes during the lesson.

A **Myth** is a traditional story, especially one concerning the early history of a people or explaining some natural or social phenomenon, and typically involving supernatural beings or events.

Myth usually features ruling gods, goddesses, deities, and heroes having god-like-qualities, but status lower than gods.

Myths exist in every society, as they are basic elements of human culture. The main function of myths is to teach moral lessons and explain historical events.

For more information on the **Greek Gods** that often occur in myths, click on the link below.



Reading Myths

Reading Tip:

- A myth text tells a story and thus has a beginning, middle, and end.
- Because myth texts are stories, they have characters (usually gods), and some characters are more important than others.
- Decide what is important by focusing on characters and interactions to which the author of the myth text devotes most attention.

Background:

- Although when we think of mythology we think of a collection of stories, there is a beginning to them. Understanding the beginning of the story, the creation of the world, gives us a framework to build upon as we learn about the different myths.
- The short answer to how the Greeks viewed the creation of the world is this: Scary old gods came first; they got stomped down by their kids, who were better looking, younger gods. These gods created humans. Humans and gods fought for supremacy, and the humans won a few rounds but

Now that you understand how to approach a myth, read the following myth: [Arachne](#)

Name: _____ Class: _____

Arachne

By Olivia E. Coolidge
2001

Olivia E. Coolidge (1908-2006) was a British-born American writer and educator. Coolidge published 27 books, several of which were written for young adults. In Coolidge's adaption of a Greek myth, a talented weaver is challenged by the goddess of wisdom, Athena. As you read, takes notes on how Arachne feels about her own skills and what happens as a result.

- [1] Arachne was a maiden who became famous throughout Greece, though she was neither wellborn¹ nor beautiful and came from no great city. She lived in an obscure² little village, and her father was a humble dyer of wool. In this he was very skillful, producing many varied shades, while above all he was famous for the clear, bright scarlet which is made from shellfish, and which was the most glorious of all the colors used in ancient Greece. Even more skillful than her father was Arachne. It was her task to spin the fleecy wool into a fine, soft thread and to weave it into cloth on the high-standing loom within the



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Types of Questions

The first set of questions ask the reader to identify the theme (Part A) and then support (Part B) that theme with details from the text. Remember, a **theme** is a main idea or an underlying meaning of a literary work.

Remember from the previous unit that, in fiction writing, the central idea is the **theme**. To determine the theme, the reader must look at the whole passage. Use the [theme litmus test](#) to answer any questions about theme.

Characterization in literature is the process authors use to develop characters and create images of the characters for the readers. There are two different approaches to characterization, including **direct characterization** and **indirect characterization**. With **direct characterization**, the author tells us what he or she wants us to know about the character. With **indirect characterization**, the author shows us things about the character to help us have an understanding of the character's personality and effect on other characters.

Five Methods of Characterization

An acronym, **PAIRS**, can help you recall the five methods of characterization: physical description, action, inner thoughts, reactions, and speech.

- **Physical description** - the character's physical appearance is described. For example, characters might be described as tall, thin, fat, pretty, etc. We might be told the color of hair or something about the clothing of the character. How the character dresses might reveal something about the character. Does the character wear old, dirty clothing, or stylish, expensive clothing?
- **Action/attitude/behavior** - What the character does tells us a lot about him/her, as well as how the character behaves and his or her attitude. Is the character a good person or a bad person? Is the character helpful to others or selfish?
- **Inner thoughts** - What the character thinks reveals things about the character. We discover things about their personalities and feelings, which sometimes helps us understand the character's actions.
- **Reactions** - Effect on others or what the other characters say and feel about this character. We learn about the relationships among the characters. How does the character make the other characters feel? Do they feel scared, happy, or confused? This helps the reader have a better understanding of all the characters.
- **Speech** - What the character says provides a great deal of insight for the reader. The character might speak in a shy, quiet manner or in a nervous manner. The character might speak intelligently or in a rude manner.

from Study.com <https://study.com/academy/lesson/methods-of-characterization-in-literature.html>

For more practice on characterization, click on the following link.

[Characterization Practice](#)
[Answers](#)

Click [here](#) for more practice reading and answering questions based on a Myth.