

July 28, 2017

Dear Honors English:

Let me begin by saying what a pleasure it is to write to you today. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Ian Supak, and I'm going to be your English I teacher for the coming year. As of now, you should have a copy of your summer reading book, *Gods, Heroes, and Men of Ancient Greece*.

If you haven't started reading it yet, that's okay – you've got time! (I'd start soon, however.) If you have started reading it, that's wonderful. However, no matter which category you may be in, I wanted to touch base with you about a little background information for the book, as well as the specific requirements for your English work for the summer.

Gods, Heroes, and Men of Ancient Greece (or "GHM", as I'll refer to it through the rest of this letter) is a book which provides an overview of a wide span of Greek mythology. For those of you who have already spent time reading mythology (or even just enjoy stuff like Percy Jackson), understanding the events won't be that much different than what you've read before. However, if you've never really studied Greek mythology, don't worry! This book is fairly easy to read. Some of the sentences and vocabulary might be a little difficult, but for the most part, you'll be in good shape.

In addition to GHM, I have one other piece of reading that I'd like you to explore before we meet in August. It's an excerpt from a book called *The Republic*, and it's written by an ancient Greek philosopher named Plato. Where GHM is an example of fictional writing of the time, the excerpt from Plato is an example of a *non-fiction primary source* – it gives us a slightly different perspective on the Greeks than the mythology does. If you're wondering where to find that reading, good news!

On the other side of this letter is a set of instructions for the summer, including where to find the additional reading and what to do with it. Check out those instructions as soon as you can.

In addition, *and perhaps most importantly*, there is a set of 60 vocabulary words that are useful to know as you read the book. When you return in August, you will have a test over your understanding of the book, as well as a test over the vocabulary. Don't worry – the test will not test all 60 of the words, and it will not happen immediately after you return. We will have time to discuss any concerns or questions. You can be sure of that.

Anyway, as with much of your vocabulary work in my class, we'll be using vocabulary.com as a resource. If you've never used this before, it's a great website for learning vocabulary, and we'll be learning more about it as the year goes on.

I can't wait to meet you all, if I haven't already. If you have any questions about ANYTHING, email me at isupak@brothermartin.com. See you in August!

(Don't forget to look at the instructions on the back!)

Sincerely,

Ian Supak

Brother Martin High School
English I Honors, 2017-2018
Summer Reading To-Do List

Before doing anything else, let me begin by saying that to find all needed materials, including additional copies of this letter, head to the Brother Martin website. Scroll down on the right side of the homepage and look for a section marked ANNOUNCEMENTS. Under that heading, you'll see a section titled "Summer Reading Information." Click there, and you'll find everything you need to complete the items below!

1. Read Parts One through Four ONLY of the book *Gods, Heroes, and Men of Ancient Greece*, by W.H.D. Rouse. Put another way, begin with Myth I, "The Beginning of Things," and stop when you've finished Myth XXXIII, "Helios and Phaethon." We'll take a look at Part Five when you get back to school.
2. For EACH of the myths that you read (meaning you'll repeat this step 33 times), do one of the following:
 - a. In one short sentence, summarize what the myth is about. For example, "The Beginning of Things" might be summarized as follows: *Uranos and Cronos create the universe and fight to protect their own power.*
 - b. For a more interesting challenge, instead of writing a sentence, RETITLE the myth. Be creative! Again, using the first myth, we might substitute *Trouble in the Family*.
 - c. (Two side notes: you can switch between sentences and titles whenever you want – they don't all have to be the same. In addition, *don't handwrite these!* Put them in a Google Doc, Word document, or something similar. I'll have a template for you to copy them into when you come to school in August.)
3. You may be worried about memorizing the complex names of all these Greek characters. Let me help. If you have a basic understanding of the following names before you return, you're good to go: **Uranos, Cronos, Prometheus, Zeus, Hera, Heracles, Jason, and Theseus**. We can help each other out with the rest.
4. In an updated browser, head to this link:
<https://www.vocabulary.com/lists/1123965>
This is the vocab list for GHM. Get familiar with the website, and practice the words!
5. Go the Brother Martin website, and head for the "Summer Reading Information" link I described above. There, you'll find a copy of the excerpt from *The Republic*. Read it. (Don't worry if it seems to get more complicated as it goes along. Do your best!)
6. Finally, also at the above link, you'll see a set of guided reading questions to use with the excerpt from *The Republic*. In the same document that you used for the myth summaries/titles, write some answers to these questions. No answer should be longer than 2-3 sentences. Keep them short!
7. If you have questions about anything above, email me at isupak@brothermartin.com.

See you in August!