Hercules: The Twelve Labors

Hercules strangled two serpents from his cradle
Heracles was the greatest of the mythological heroes. In Roman mythology, he is known as Hercules. He was the son of Zeus (Jupiter) and Alcmene, a mortal. Alcmene was married to Amphitryon, the Theban general. Zeus appeared to her as Amphitryon. Zeus seduced her and she birthed Hercules as a result. Because his father was a god, Hercules was given the status of a demi-god. Only magic could do him harm.

Hercules had a twin brother, Iphicles. However, Iphicles was the son of Amphitryon and Alcmene. Therefore, Iphicles was not born with the same strength, nor was he a demi-god. Iphicles was a mortal.

Zeus’ wife, Hera (Juno), was angry with Zeus for having affairs with mortal women. She took her anger out on Hercules. As the twins slept in a shield used as their cradle, Hera put serpents in the cradle in an attempt to kill him. Iphicles fell from the cradle. Hercules, the demi-god, was born with so much power that he killed the serpents.

Hera continued to plot against Hercules. Eventually, Hera used magic to drive him crazy. As a result, he killed his wife, Megara, and his three children. When he came to his senses, Hercules decided to kill himself. However, his good friend Theseus persuaded him not to take his life. Some sources say that his wife escaped death and she was given to Iolaus when Hercules left Thebes.

Hercules knew that he needed to make penance for what he had done. Therefore, he went to the Oracle at Delphi. She told him to see Eurystheus, his cousin, who would give him tasks to complete. Again, Hera took advantage of the situation. She helped Eurystheus devise twelve labors or tasks for Hercules to complete as his atonement for the killing of his family.
The first task was to kill the lion of Nemea, which lived in a cave in the mountain. The lion had skin so strong that nothing could puncture it.

Hercules found the lion, and drew his arrow. Each time he shot an arrow, it would bounce off, leaving the lion unharmed. Hercules’ olive-wood club was no match for the hard head of the lion. The club only left a ringing in the lion’s ears. The Nemean Lion went back to his cave and fell asleep.

Hercules saw that the cave had two entrances. He blocked the smaller entrance and he entered the larger opening. He grabbed the lion by the throat and he began to choke it to death. Hercules lost a middle finger on his left hand when the lion bit him.

Hercules skinned the lion with its own claw. He returned to Eurystheus, wearing the lion’s skin as a coat.
This task was more dangerous than the first. Hercules had to travel to the marsh land of Lerna, accompanied by his chariot driver and nephew, Iolaus. There he found the monster. The Hydra had the body similar to a dog and it had eight snake heads that were each attached to extremely long necks.

When the Hydra came out from its hole under a tree, Hercules shot flaming arrows at the monster. He rushed the Hydra, and began to batter its heads. However, as fast as he could crush a head, another grew in its place.

Hercules drew his sword and he called for Iolaus. As Hercules cut off each head, he burned the top of each neck so that another would not grow back in its place.

After killing the Hydra, Hercules dipped his arrows into her blood. Whoever was struck by one of those arrows would die a painful death from the poisonous blood of the Hydra.
The third task was to capture the Ceryneian hind, which was a white deer with gold horns and brass hooves. This deer belonged to Artemis, the goddess of wild animals, and the protector of young girls. Hercules chased that deer all over Greece for over a year before catching her.

He drew an arrow and shot her in the leg and the arrow went through to the other leg. Her legs were pinned together, but not a drop of blood came from the deer.

When the deer fell, Hercules removed the arrow, grabbed her, and threw her over his shoulder as he took her to Eurystheus, King of Mycenae.

Artemis was upset, but she forgave Hercules because he explained to her that capturing her beautiful female deer was a part of his atonement. Eurystheus freed the deer and the deer returned to Artemis.
The Erymanthian Boar was a creature with a tusk like an elephant. Its skin was so thick that an arrow could not pierce it. Hercules was given the task to capture the wild boar. Each day, the boar would come down from the mountain and it would destroy anything in its path. In fact, people were gouged by the tusk of the boar.

Finding the boar was not difficult because it could be heard snorting loudly. Hercules chased the boar as winter approached and it became stuck in the snow. When he came upon it, he jumped on it, and roped its legs together. A net was placed over the boar and Hercules threw the boar across his shoulders, and carried it on his back.

When Eurystheus, King of Mycenae, saw Hercules and the boar, he ran and hid in his partially buried brass jar. The king was both amazed and frightened by the demi-god.
Eurystheus gave Hercules the task of cleaning the filthy stables of King Augeias in one day. Augeias owned several thousand heads of cattle and he never took time to make sure that their mess was removed. This task was given to actually annoy Hercules. Eurystheus hoped to see Hercules covered in dung.

Hercules went to King Augeias, and told him that he would clean his stables. Hercules did not tell him it was a task given to him by Eurystheus. Augeias bet Hercules that he could not complete the task in a day. Hercules told the king that he would do it in a day for a tenth of his cattle. The king agreed.

Augeias’ son was left to witness the cleaning of the stables. Hercules tore a huge opening on both sides of the walls of the yard where the stables were located. Then he dug trenches to the two nearby rivers. The water from the rivers rushed through the trenches into the stables. The king’s filthy stables were clean.

When Augeias found out about Eurystheus’ tasks for Hercules, he refused to pay the bet. Hercules took him to court and King Augeias’ son testified for Hercules. Hercules won the case, but Eurystheus did not count the task because he was paid to do it. King Augeias’ son was banished.
Hercules’ fifth task was to rid the marshes around Lake Stymphalus of a flock of birds. The birds of Stymphalis were more than pests. They were brass-feathered creatures whose beaks could pierce through armor. Whenever anyone came in close contact with them, the birds’ feathers would spear the person to death. In addition, they were destroying the crops.

The idea of ridding an area of birds may have seemed like an easy task to Hercules. However, these birds were multiplying so fast in a dense, dark forest that it made flushing them out very difficult.

Athena and Hephaestus, the smith-god, came to his aid. Hephaestus made a pair of huge clappers out of bronze. When smashed together, they made such a loud noise that the birds were startled from their hiding places. As the birds took flight, Hercules shot each one down with his arrows. Those that got away, never returned.
LABOR 7
Capture the Wild Bull of Crete

Hercules next task was to capture the bull of Crete. This white bull was supposed to have been used as a sacrifice to the gods, but King Minos kept it and he sacrificed another in its place. Minos built a labyrinth under his palace. There he kept the bull. Each year, he would feed prisoners to the bull.

Zeus was so upset with Minos that he let the bull escape. The bull was running all over Crete causing trouble, and frightening women and children. It also tore down property.

Hercules climbed a tree and waited for the bull. Once it appeared, Hercules jumped on its back and placed a ring in its nose. Hercules took the bull to Eurystheus who released the bull to terrorize people in Athens.
King Diomede fed his four horses the flesh of strangers to his kingdom of Thrace. Hercules next task was to capture the horses.

When Hercules arrived in Thrace, he went directly to Diomede’s stables. He drove the horses down to the seashore. When Diomede heard the commotion, he and his guards followed in hot pursuit. The battle began.

Hercules stunned Diomede with his club. When he fell, his own horses ate him.

Hercules’ ship was much too small to take the four horses. Therefore, Hercules harnessed them to Diomede’s chariot and he drove to Macedonia.
Eurystheus’ daughter wanted the belt of Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons. Therefore, he ordered Hercules to bring it to him as one of his tasks.

The Amazons were great female warriors and Hippolyta was considered the greatest warrior among them. Her belt had been given to her by Ares as a reward for her accomplishments. She used the belt to carry her sword and shield. Hercules knew of her reputation and his friends realized that he needed help. Therefore, they accompanied him to the land of the Amazons.

When Hercules arrived, he explained to Hippolyta why he needed the belt. She agreed to give it to him. However, Hera made things more difficult. She disguised herself as one of the Amazons and went about them saying that Hercules and his friends were there to abduct Hippolyta. The Amazons prepared for a battle and they rode their horses to the shore.

Hercules saw that they were coming armed for a fight. He killed Hippolyta, and took the belt. He and his men fought until the Amazons retreated. Then, he set sail for Mycenae, where he gave the belt to Eurystheus.
Eurystheus ordered Hercules to travel to Erythia in order to bring back the cattle of Geryon. Geryon was a monster described as having three heads and three pairs of legs. Geryon’s cattle were guarded by Cerebus’ brother, Orthus, as well as Eurytion, a herdsman. Orthus was a two-headed hound.

Shortly after landing on the island, Hercules was attacked by Orthus who he slewed. Eurytion had the same fate. When Geryon heard the news, he prepared to attack Hercules who was leaving with the cattle. However, Geryon’s fate was the same. Hercules killed him with his arrows, and took the cattle.

Hercules’ challenge was getting the cattle to Eurystheus. On his journey back, Hercules had to kill two sons of Poseidon who were trying to steal the cattle. One bull escaped by jumping into the sea and it was found by another son of Poseidon, Eryx. Eryx added the bull to his own herd. When Hercules found it, he had to wrestle Eryx three times. Hercules won those matches, but he had to kill Eryx before returning the bull to its herd.

Hera got involved in delaying his return. She sent a gadfly to agitate the cattle, which scattered everywhere. Hercules had to go about gathering them together. We do not know how long it took for him to do this, but we do know that he delivered the cattle to Eurystheus who sacrificed them to Hera.
Hercules had been working to satisfy the tasks for over eight years. Eurytheus told him that he had to complete two more tasks because he had profited from the horses and he had not counted the hydra’s heads. The eleventh task was to bring Eurytheus the apples of the Hesperides. The Hesperides were nymphs. Their father was Atlas, the titan who held the earth on his shoulders.

Hera had given these apples to Zeus as a wedding present. These apples were kept in a garden guarded by Ladon, the hundred-headed dragon, and by the nymphs as well. Eurytheus and Hera assumed that Hercules could not complete this task because he didn’t know where the garden was located.

Hercules traveled throughout the world looking for the garden. He experienced one challenge after another. For example, he had to fight Ares’ son, Kyknos. Finally he seized the sea-god Nereus who knew the location of the garden. Hercules struggled with Nereus until he got the information he needed. He was challenged by two sons of Poseidon, Antaeus and Busiris. Hercules had to kill Busiris in order to escape.

Hercules came upon Prometheus and he killed the eagle that tortured Prometheus. The grateful Prometheus told him to send Atlas to get the apples, while Hercules held the world on his shoulders. Atlas agreed and obtained the apples. Hercules took the apples to Eurystheus who had to give them to Athena because they belonged to a god.
The worst and final task was before Hercules. Eurystheus ordered him to bring back Cerberus, the three-headed hound that guarded the gates of the Underworld. Cerberus was also described as having a dragon's tail, a mane of snakes, and claws like a lion. It was the hound’s job to guard the gates so that ghosts would not leave the Underworld, the kingdom of Hades and his wife, Persephone.

Hercules considered how he must prepare for a trip to a place no mortal had ever returned. He visited Eumolpus who initiated him into the mysteries that would allow him to have peace there. Accompanied by Hermes, Hercules made his way to the Underworld where he saw monsters and spirits of those he had known in life. He rescued his friend, Theseus, who had traveled there earlier.

It was necessary for Hercules to go before Hades to ask him to allow Cerberus to accompany him for a while so that he could complete the last task. Hades agreed only if Hercules could wrestle the hellhound into submission with his bare hands. Hercules believed in himself, so the battle was set.

Cerberus put up a good battle as he scratched, bit, and clawed Hercules. However, Cerberus was no match for Hercules, the demi-god. Hercules took the hound to Eurystheus. With this last task completed, Hercules had atoned for killing his wife and children. Cerberus returned to Hades.
Major Gods and Goddesses

Hercules appears in both Greek (Heracles) and Roman mythology. The following is a chart that will help you clarify the names of the gods and goddesses in variations of the stories of Hercules and other myths.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>Roman</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aphrodite</td>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>Goddess of beauty and love</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>Apollo</td>
<td>God of prophecy, music, and the sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ares</td>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>God of war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artemis</td>
<td>Diana</td>
<td>Sister of Apollo; goddess of the hunt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Athena</td>
<td>Minerva</td>
<td>Goddess of wisdom and crafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demeter</td>
<td>Ceres</td>
<td>Goddess of fertility, grain, and agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hades</td>
<td>Pluto</td>
<td>Lord of the Underworld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hephaistos</td>
<td>Vulcan</td>
<td>God of volcanoes; he is a craftsman and blacksmith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hera</td>
<td>Juno</td>
<td>Queen of the gods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hermes</td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>The messenger god</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persephone</td>
<td>Proserpina</td>
<td>Queen of the Underworld</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poseidon</td>
<td>Neptune</td>
<td>God of the sea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zeus</td>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>King of the gods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Characters Hercules Encountered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Relation/Role</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amazons</td>
<td>Female warriors</td>
<td>They fought Hercules to protect Hippolyta’s belt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amphitryon</td>
<td>Theban general</td>
<td>He was the husband of Alcmene who fathered Hercules with Zeus; and father of Iphicles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eumolpus</td>
<td>The son of Poseidon</td>
<td>He initiated Hercules into the mysteries that would allow him to have peace in the Underworld.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eurystheus</td>
<td>Mycenaean king and the Hercules’ cousin</td>
<td>Gave the twelve labors to Hercules as atonement for killing his wife and children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hippolyta</td>
<td>Queen of the Amazons</td>
<td>She was given a belt by Ares that Hercules stole. He killed her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iolaus</td>
<td>Hercules’ nephew</td>
<td>He accompanied Hercules to the marsh land of Lerna to kill the hydra. He drove Hercules’ chariot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iphicles</td>
<td>Half-brother of Hercules</td>
<td>He was sharing the cradle with Hercules when Hera sent the snakes to kill baby Hercules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Augeias</td>
<td>Known as one of the argonauts</td>
<td>He possessed several thousand cattle. He bet Hercules that he could not clean stables in a day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Diomedes</td>
<td>Barbaric King of Bistonia (Thrace)</td>
<td>King Diomedes fed his horses human flesh. He met the same fate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Minos</td>
<td>King of Crete; son of Zeus and Europe</td>
<td>He kept the bull of Crete under his palace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megara</td>
<td>Wife of Hercules</td>
<td>Some variations say that she was killed by Hercules during his moment of Hera-induced insanity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oracle at Delphi</td>
<td>Pythia, priestess at the Temple</td>
<td>She sent Hercules to Eurystheus for atonement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prometheus</td>
<td>Stole fire for man to use</td>
<td>Hercules killed the eagle that tortured him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theseus</td>
<td>Mythical founder; King of Athens</td>
<td>He deterred Hercules from killing himself and Hercules rescued him in the Underworld.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Labors 1-6: Multiple Choice Test 1

Circle the correct answer. Provide a sentence statement for number 20.

Labor 1: Kill the Lion of Nemea

1. He killed the lion by
   a. choking it to death.
   b. shooting it with an arrow.
   c. drowning it in the sea.
   d. starving it to death.

2. He returned to Eurystheus
   a. with the meat of the lion on a spike.
   b. with the lion’s eyes.
   c. wearing the skin of the lion as a coat.
   d. with the help of Hermes.

3. What did he lose in the battle?
   a. Middle finger
   b. Left hand
   c. Middle toe
   d. Nothing

Labor 2: Kill the Nine-Headed Hydra

4. What was Iolaus relationship to Hercules?
   a. His twin brother
   b. His chariot driver and nephew
   c. His uncle
   d. His mentor

5. The Hydra had
   a. the fire of a dragon.
   b. killed Hercules’ best friend.
   c. eight snake heads.
   d. had the body of a bull.

6. How did he guarantee that the heads would not grow back?
   a. He tore the heads from the neck.
   b. He tied rope around the each neck
   c. He poured poison on the severed parts.
   d. He burned the top of each neck.
7. What was unique about the hydra’s blood?
   a. The blood was poison.
   b. The blood had magical powers.
   c. The blood could generate a new torso.
   d. The blood could heal a womb.

LABOR 3: Capture the Ceryneian Hind

8. What is another name for a hind?
   a. An elephant
   b. A white deer
   c. A snake
   d. A gander

9. Who owned the hind?
   a. Hera
   b. Zeus
   c. Poseidon
   d. Artemis

10. Did Hercules kill the hind?
    a. No
    b. Yes

Labor 4: Capture the Wild Boar of Erymanthus

11. What was unique about the Erymanthian Boar?
    a. Its skin was as thin as ice.
    b. Its skin was so thick that an arrow could not pierce it.
    c. The skin was so black that the Amazons could not see it at night.
    d. It had the head of a dog.

12. How did Hercules capture the boar?
    a. He roped its legs together.
    b. He tied it to a boulder.
    c. He had the Amazons enclose it in a cave.
    d. He drove it into a cattle pen.

13. How did Eurystheus, King of Mycenae respond when he saw the boar?
    a. He killed it and he had a feast.
    b. He ran to Hercules and he thanked him.
    c. He ran and hid.
    d. He called his servants to celebrate.
Labor 5: Clean the Stables of King Augeias

14. What bet did the king make?
   a. Hercules could not bind the horses to their stable.
   b. Hercules could not ride any of the horses.
   c. Hercules could not clean the stables in a day.
   d. Hercules could not keep a horse from devouring Ialous.

15. How did Hercules clean the stables?
   a. He dug two trenches to the river, which flowed through the stables.
   b. He used the hose to drive the dung into the river.
   c. He shoveled the dung into a ditch.
   d. He hired stable workers to clean it.

16. Why did Eurystheus eliminate this task?
   a. Hercules did not complete the task on time.
   b. Hercules did not follow the king’s directions.
   c. Hercules was paid horses through a court decree.
   d. Hercules had other people clean the stables.

17. What happened to King Augeias’ son?
   a. He was banished.
   b. He went to live with Alcmene.
   c. He was killed by Hercules.
   d. He was sentenced to prison.

Labor 6: Kill the Carnivorous Birds of Stymphalus

18. The birds of Stymphalis were
   a. fire breathing monsters.
   b. brass-feathered creatures.
   c. wingless birds.
   d. disease carrying creatures.

19. Who aided Hercules in ridding the area of these birds?
   a. Zeus and Hera
   b. Artemis and Ares
   c. Athena and Hephaestus
   d. Poseidon and Hermes

20. List three adjectives to describe Hercules.
Answer key

Labors 1-6: Multiple Choice Test 1

Labor 1: Kill the Lion of Nemea
1. He killed the lion by **Choking it to death**
2. He returned to Eurystheus **Wearing the skin of the lion as a coat**
3. What did he lose in the battle? **Middle finger**

Labor 2: Kill the Nine-Headed Hydra
4. What was Iolaus relationship to Hercules? **Chariot driver and nephew**
5. The Hydra had **Eight snake heads**
6. How did he guarantee that the heads would not grow back? **He burned the top of each neck so that another would not grow back in its place.**
7. What was unique about the hydra’s blood? **It was poison**

Labor 3: Capture the Ceryneian Hind
8. What is another name for a hind? **White deer**
9. Who owned the hind? **Artemis**
10. Did Hercules kill the hind? **No**

Labor 4: Capture the Wild Boar of Erymanthus
11. What was unique about the Erymanthian Boar? **Its skin was so thick that an arrow could not pierce it.**
12. How did Hercules capture the boar? **He roped its legs together.**
13. How did Eurystheus, King of Mycenae respond when he saw the boar? **He ran and hid.**

Labor 5: Clean the Stables of King Augeias
14. What bet did the king make? **That Hercules could not clean the stables in a day.**
15. How did Hercules clean the stables? **He dug two trenches to the river, which flowed through the stables.**
16. Why did Eurystheus eliminate this task? **Hercules was paid horses through a court decree.**
17. What happened to King Augeias’ son? **He was banished.**

Labor 6: Kill the Carnivorous Birds of Stymphalus
18. The birds of Stymphalis were **brass-feathered creatures.**
19. Who aided Hercules in ridding the area of these birds? **Athena and Hephaestus**

20. List three adjectives to describe Hercules. **Answers vary.**
Labors 7-12: Multiple Choice Test 2

Circle the correct answer. Provide a sentence statement for numbers 29 and 30.

Labor 7: Capture the Wild Bull of Crete

1. Where did King Minos keep the white bull?
   a. He stole a stable from Zeus.
   b. He built a labyrinth under his palace.
   c. He erected a palace for the bull to be worshipped.
   d. He kept the bull in an underground cave in the forest.

2. What was the bull feed?
   a. Minos would feed prisoners to the bull.
   b. Minos bought the finest cuts of beef for the bull.
   c. Minos only fed vegetables and fruits to the bull.
   d. Minos had fishermen serve his bull the fresh fish of the day.

3. What did Eurystheus do to the bull when Hercules brought it to him?
   a. He killed the bull.
   b. He sent the bull back to Minos’ wife.
   c. He released the bull.
   d. He ate the bull during a feast.

4. Why did Eurystheus respond that way?
   a. The white bull was supposed to have been used as a sacrifice to the gods.
   b. The white bull was to be killed if he returned it.
   c. The white bull was a delicacy.
   d. The white bull belonged to Minos’ wife.

Labor 8: Capture the Man-Eating Horses of Diomedes

5. What did Diomedes feed his horses?
   a. The flesh of strangers to his kingdom
   b. The flesh of his servants
   c. The flesh of the Amazon warriors
   d. The flesh of other horses

6. Why did Hercules drive Diomedes’ horses over land to Eurystheus?
   a. The sea was too turbulent.
   b. The ship was too small.
   c. That was an easier route.
   d. The horses were too unruly.
7. What happened to Diomedes?
   a. Hercules nephew drove him away.
   b. Diomedes died from fear.
   c. Hercules sent him to Athens.
   d. The horses ate him

**Labor 9: Take the Belt of Hippolyta**

8. Who was Hippolyta?
   a. Princess of Thebes
   b. Queen of the Amazons
   c. Queen of Athens
   d. Wife of Poseidon

9. The Amazons were
   a. female warriors.
   b. Australian aborigines.
   c. male headhunters.
   d. mothers of nymphs.

10. What was special about her belt?
    a. It held her thunderbolt.
    b. It was a gift from Ares.
    c. It was a gift from Zeus.
    d. It had a beautiful buckle.

11. Who spread the rumor that Hercules was there to abduct Hippolyta?
    a. Zeus
    b. Apollo
    c. Athena
    d. Hera

12. What happened to Hippolyta?
    a. Hercules killed her and took the belt.
    b. She ran away to a deserted island after Hercules took the belt.
    c. Hercules took her to Alcmene.
    d. She gave Hercules the belt and she died of heart.

**Labor 10: Capture the Cattle of Geryon**

13. Describe the monster Geryon.
    a. It had the head of a bird.
    b. It had three heads and three pairs of legs.
    c. It had the feet of a man.
    d. It had four heads and three pairs of legs.
14. How did Hera get involved?
   a. She sent Hermes to scatter the cattle.
   b. She touched the cattle with a magical potion.
   c. She stole the cattle and she sent them to Geryon.
   d. She sent a gadfly to agitate the cattle, which scattered everywhere

15. How long did it take Hercules to capture the cattle?
   a. Seven weeks
   b. Three nights
   c. Unknown
   d. One day

**Labor 11: Obtain the Apples of the Hesperides**

16. Who were the Hesperides?
   a. Nymphs
   b. Gods
   c. Mortal men
   d. Mortal women

17. In addition to the nymphs, who guarded the apples?
   a. Hermes, the messenger god
   b. Ladon, the hundred-headed dragon
   c. Cerberus, the hellhound
   d. Poseidon, god of the sea

18. Why did Eurytheus and Hera assume that Hercules could not complete this task?
   a. He had to travel the world to find the location of the apples.
   b. He had too many rivers to cross.
   c. The mountains had traps made just for him.
   d. The monsters were too much for him to handle.

19. Who did he fight to get directions?
   a. Poseidon, god of the sea
   b. The sea-god Nereus
   c. The river nymphs
   d. The mountain gods

20. How did Hercules help Prometheus?
   a. He destroyed the mountain Prometheus had to climb.
   b. He took away the labors of Prometheus.
   c. He returned fire that Prometheus had stolen.
   d. He killed the eagle that tortured Prometheus.
21. Who did Hercules send to get the apples?
   a. Atlas
   b. Athena
   c. Hermes
   d. Ares

22. Why were the apples returned to Athena?
   a. They belonged to Poseidon.
   b. Hera had given these apples to Zeus as a wedding present.
   c. They belonged to Athena.
   d. They were a gift to Ares.

**Labor 12: Bring Cerberus to the Surface**

23. Describe Cerberus.
   a. The three-headed hound
   b. The four-headed beast
   c. The beast with two brains
   d. A peaceful and devoted dog.

24. Where did Cerberus live?
   a. Mount Olympus
   b. Athens
   c. In a cave in Greece
   d. Underworld

25. What responsibility did Hades give Cerberus?
   a. To keep Hermes away
   b. To fight the hellhounds of the Underworld
   c. To guard the gates so that ghosts would not leave the Underworld
   d. To be Hades’ invisible force

26. Who initiated him into the mysteries that would allow him to have peace in the Underworld?
   a. Hera
   b. Zeus
   c. Prometheus
   d. Eumolpus

27. Who accompanied Hercules to the Underworld?
   a. Hermes
   b. Theseus
   c. Athena
   d. Eumolpus
28. Why did Hades allow Hercules to borrow Cerberus?
   a. Cerberus wanted to get out and see the world above.
   b. Zeus asked him to allow it.
   c. He wrestled the hellhound into submission with his bare hands.
   d. Hades wanted Hercules to return to, and remain in, the Underworld.

29. Explain why Hera was Hercules’ main antagonist.

30. Which labor was most interesting to you? Why?
Answer key

Labors 7-12: Multiple Choice Test 2

Labor 7: Capture the Wild Bull of Crete
1. Where did King Minos keep the white bull? He built a labyrinth under his palace.
2. What was he feed? Minos would feed prisoners to the bull.
3. What did Eurystheus do to the bull when Hercules brought it to him? He released the bull.
4. Why did Eurystheus respond that way? This white bull was supposed to have been used as a sacrifice to the gods.

Labor 8: Capture the Man-Eating Horses of Diomedes
5. What did Diomedes feed his horses? The flesh of strangers to his kingdom
6. Why did Hercules drive Diomedes’ horses to Eurystheus? The ship was too small
7. What happened to Diomedes? Horses ate him.

Labor 9: Take the Belt of Hippolyta
8. Who was Hippolyta? Queen of the Amazons
9. The Amazons were female warriors
10. What was special about her belt? It was a gift from Ares.
11. Who spread the rumor that Hercules was there to abduct Hippolyta? Hera
12. What happened to Hippolyta? Hercules killed her and took the belt

Labor 10: Capture the Cattle of Geryon
13. Describe the monster Geryon. It had three heads and three pairs of legs.
14. How did Hera get involved? She sent a gadfly to agitate the cattle, which scattered everywhere.
15. How long did it take Hercules to capture the cattle? Unknown

Labor 11: Obtain the Apples of the Hesperides
16. Who were the Hesperides? Nymphs
17. In addition to the nymphs, who guarded the apples? Ladon, the hundred-headed dragon
18. Why did Eurytheus and Hera assume that Hercules could not complete this task? He had to travel the world to find the location of the apples.
19. Who did he fight to get the directions? The sea-god Nereus
20. How did Hercules help Prometheus? He killed the eagle that tortured Prometheus.
21. Who was sent to get the apples? Atlas
22. Why were the apples returned to Athena? Hera had given these apples to Zeus as a wedding present.

Labor 12: Bring Cerberus to the Surface
23. Describe Cerberus. The three-headed hound
24. Where did Cerberus live? Underworld
25. What responsibility did Hades give Cerberus? To guard the gates so that ghosts would not leave the Underworld
26. Who initiated him into the mysteries that would allow him to have peace in the Underworld? Eumolpus
27. Who accompanied Hercules to the Underworld? **Hermes**
28. Why did Hades allow Hercules to borrow Cerberus? **He wrestled the hellhound into submission with his bare hands.**
29. Explain why Hera was Hercules’ main antagonist. **Answers vary. (Zeus fathered him by a mortal; her jealousy always led her to plot against him.)**
30. Which labor was most interesting to you? Why? **Answers vary.**
Hercules’ Trial: A Writing & Communications Activity

The twelve labors were assigned to Hercules as the atonement for the murder of his wife and children. Consider another situation. Hercules has to stand trial for his crime. It is your responsibility to either prosecute or defend Hercules. Select your position: Prosecutor or Defense Attorney.

You are preparing your opening statement for the trial. An opening statement could make or break a case because of its potential power to sway a jury. However, you are not arguing the case in your opening statement. You are presenting facts to show the jury the strength of your case. In preparing your statement, adhere to the following steps. Be prepared to present your statement before your peers.

**STEP 1:** Create an outline. Make sure that you make notes that include the important arguments in Hercules’ case. You will have more than one argument. Note all the major facts in each argument that need to be addressed. Then, add specific details to each point. Be sure to add at least two specific details or examples for each argument. A brief example is as follows:

I. Argument one
   A. Major fact
      1. Specific detail
      2. Specific detail
   B. Major fact
      1. Specific detail
      2. Specific detail

II. Argument two
   A. Major fact
      1. Specific detail
      2. Specific detail
   B. Major fact
      1. Specific detail
      2. Specific detail

**STEP 2:** Create a story. By creating a story, you will present images of Hercules that the jury will remember.
**STEP 3:** Be calm in your delivery. As an attorney, you want to gain the trust of the jury. Do not be argumentative; be conversational. Speak to them. Do not speak at them. Maintain a professional attitude.

**STEP 4:** Engage the jury. You are engaging the members of the jury with storytelling. Some members may have an opportunity to metaphorically step into Hercules’ shoes. A well-told story always grasps the attention of the listener. It will certainly appeal to the emotions of members of a jury.

**STEP 5:** Present your theory. What happened? Explain what you are going to prove. State why there could be no other logical explanation or reasons for what happened.

**STEP 6:** State the evidence. Briefly introduce the evidence. Explain how the witnesses, who will testify, will support your theory. Remember that this is just an opening statement. Be brief.

**STEP 7:** Conclude your statement. Make sure that the last thing the jury hears will be remembered. Be repetitive for emphasis. Then, tell the jury what you expect to get from them.

**STEP 8:** Practice before your oral delivery. Review your opening statement. Have a friend listen to you before making your presentation. Make adjustments as you feel necessary.
## Hercules’ Trial: Opening Statement
### Oral Presentation Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Excellent</th>
<th>3 Good</th>
<th>2 Fair</th>
<th>1 Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery</strong></td>
<td>Holds one’s attention; makes direct eye contact frequently; seldom refers to notes; clarifies position; speaks clearly; emphasizes arguments and key points; fluctuates tone and volume; appears comfortable</td>
<td>Makes eye contact, but refers to notes; satisfactorily fluctuates tone and volume; position understood; states arguments and points; appears comfortable</td>
<td>Reads from notes, while rarely making eye contact; rarely fluctuates tone and volume; position is vague; states some arguments and points; appears somewhat uncomfortable</td>
<td>Reads the entire opening statement; makes no eye contact; speaks low and monotone; position not stated; arguments and points unclear; appears uncomfortable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content/Organization</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrates full knowledge of the case; provides clear purpose, theory, arguments, points, facts, and conclusion</td>
<td>Provides somewhat of a clear purpose, theory, arguments, points, facts, and conclusion</td>
<td>Purpose, theory, arguments, points, facts, and conclusion are not all clearly stated</td>
<td>Purpose, theory, arguments, points, facts, and conclusion are vague</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enthusiasm</strong></td>
<td>Strongly demonstrates enthusiasm for his/her position throughout delivery</td>
<td>Demonstrates some enthusiasm for his/her position throughout delivery</td>
<td>Shows little enthusiasm for his/her position throughout delivery</td>
<td>Shows no enthusiasm for his/her position throughout delivery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Points**
Hercules: A Character Analysis

It is your task to write a character analysis of Hercules. You are to describe his personality, explain his role, and describe how he has changed. (Explain whether Hercules is a flat or round character.)

It is through the development of the characters that we gain insight into their personalities. This is quite easy to determine. We understand their attitudes from what they say, what they do, how they respond in various situations, and what other characters say about them.

Identify Hercules’ role. Is he the protagonist? Is he the antagonist? The plot always revolves around the protagonist who is the main character. The antagonist always presents challenges and obstacles to the protagonist. The antagonist isn’t always human.

Characters either change or remain the same throughout the story. Did Hercules’ attitude change? If he did, why did he change? If not, explain.
Writing a News Article

Your task is to write a news article about one of Hercules’ twelve labors of your choice or choose one of the headlines from below. Remember that a good article answers six things: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Identify those who were involved. Explain what happened, when, and where. Present facts about why it happened and how.

- King Diomedes, Eaten by His Horse
- Hippolyta, Queen of the Amazons Killed
- Prometheus’ Torture Ends
- Hercules Travels to the Underworld
- Cerberus Has Been Sited
- Theseus Rescued from the Underworld