

Making Meaning of Myths

Many modern symbols used in advertising draw upon references to Greek Mythology.

Did you know that, NIKE, in Greek mythology, was the goddess of victory? Nike fought with the god, Zeus, in her battle against the Titans, and in Greek art she is sometimes represented as winged and carrying a wreath or palm of victory. It is no wonder that the most successful tennis shoe company has chosen her as a symbol to represent its product.

 <p>Logo</p>	 <p>Product</p>	 <p>Nike, Greek Goddess of Victory</p>	<p>The Nike Shoe Company chooses to use the mythological reference to the goddess, Nike, to sell their tennis shoes. Because the goddess, Nike was victorious, the company is suggesting that people who buy their tennis shoes will fly faster on the track and court and will be winners too. Notice how their logo resembles the wing on the statue of Nike</p>
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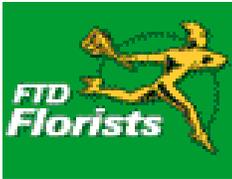
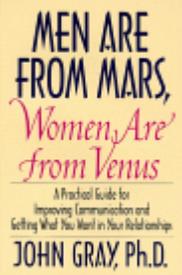
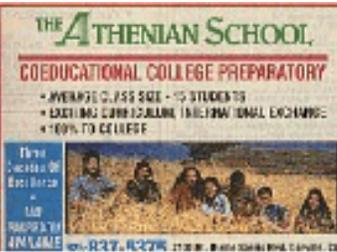
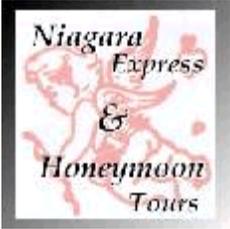
ACTIVITY ONE:

1. Look below at each icon or symbol used in current advertising. Describe what you see.

2. What is the product being sold, the service being offered, or the idea being represented?

3. Refer to mythology **table one** under these symbols to determine the mythological reference. Who or what reference is used? Briefly describe the god, goddess, character or event.

4. Then, explain why the advertiser has chosen to use that particular reference to mythology to sell their product, services, or idea. What connotation (the emotional associations of words) do they want the consumer to associate with their product?

Mythological Figure or Concept	Story or Role in Greek or Roman Mythology
<u>ZEUS</u> (JUPITER)	ZEUS was the most powerful ruler of all the gods and lived on top of Mount Olympus. He is often associated with the lightening bolts that he hurled through the sky when he lost his temper. The eagle, a symbol of power, has often been used to represent Zeus.
<u>HERA</u> (JUNO)	HERA was Zeus' jealous and proud wife. A symbol often associated with her is the proud peacock with many colors.
<u>POSEIDON</u> (NEPTUNE)	POSEIDON , brother to Zeus, was another strong and powerful god who ruled the seas. His moods changed as often as the ocean tides. A symbol often associated with Poseidon is a three pronged fork called a trident.
<u>ARES</u> (MARS)	ARES , son of Zeus and Hera, was the god of war and an instigator of fights. He personified the bloody and brutal battle. He was very unpopular among the Greeks.
<u>APHRODITE</u> (VENUS)	APHRODITE ,the beautiful goddess of love, was born from the sea.
<u>ATHENA</u> (MINERVA)	ATHENA , the goddess of wisdom, was believed to have been born from Zeus's forehead. She was also the defender of the just cause.
<u>ARTEMIS</u>	ARTEMIS was one of the principle goddesses of Greek mythology. She was the twin sister of the god, Apollo, and she was the goddess of the moon. She was the chief hunter to the gods . Atremis was also the protector of young women.
<u>THE SIRENS</u>	SIRENS , in Greek mythology, were sea nymphs with the bodies of birds and the heads of women. They had voices of such sweetness that mariners who heard their songs were lured to their deaths when they jumped from cliffs onto the rocks where the nymphs sang.
<u>HERMES</u>	HERMES , messenger of the gods, was the son of Zeus. As the special servant and courier of Zeus, Hermes had winged sandals and a winged hat and bore a golden Caduceus, or magic wand. He was also the god of commerce, and the protector of traders and herds.
<u>CUPID</u>	CUPID , son of Aphrodite, was depicted as a winged youth. Sometimes he carried a flower, but more commonly the bow and arrows, with which he shot darts of desire into the bosoms of gods and men.

<u>ATLAS</u>	ATLAS fought in the war against the Olympic gods. As punishment, he was condemned to bear forever on his back the earth and the heavens, and on his shoulders, the great pillar that separates them.
<u>KING MIDAS</u>	KING MIDAS was a king in Greek mythology who was granted one wish. He wished that everything he touched turned to gold. At first, he was overjoyed at the thought of being the richest man in the universe. However, he soon realized that his wish had negative consequences, for his food and water turned to gold. In some versions of this story his daughter dies when he touches her, and she is transformed into a gold statue
<u>THE ODYSSEY</u>	The famous Greek hero, Odysseus, spent ten years after the Trojan War attempting to make his way back home. His journey was an exciting adventure filled with trials and tests. The name of the book that tells his story is called <i>The Odyssey</i> .

Activity Two: Look at **table two** of the gods, goddesses and mythological figures.

1. Design your own logo for a make-believe company based on **one** of them.
2. Your company's product must have some reference or association to the mythological figure you have selected.
3. Your logo needs a company name and a visual. You need to write an explanation for why you have selected that image and reference to represent your company.

EXAMPLE:

<p>DEMETER is the goddess of grains, crops and agriculture. I have chosen her symbol, the sheaf of wheat, to promote my natural food company where all products are organically grown. I am trying to use Demeter's association with the earth to advertise the goodness of the foods I sell.</p>	 <p>Demeter Natural Foods</p>
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Table Two:

<p>APOLLO</p>	<p>APOLLO, son of Zeus, was the god of the sun. He was also the god of poetry, music and song. Apollo was a gifted musician, who delighted the gods with his performance on the lyre. Apollo was the special protector of young men.</p>
<p>HEPHAESTUS</p>	<p>HEPHAESTUS, in Greek mythology, was the god of fire and metalwork. As the artisan of the gods, Hephaestus made their armor, weapons, and jewelry.</p>
<p>IRIS</p>	<p>IRIS, in Greek mythology, is the goddess of the rainbow. Iris left Olympus only to convey the divine commands to humankind, by whom she was regarded as an adviser and guide. Traveling with the speed of the wind, she could go from one end of the earth to the other, and to the bottom of the sea or to the depths of the underworld. She was represented as a beautiful maiden, with wings and robes of bright colors and a halo of light on her head, trailing across the sky with a rainbow in her wake.</p>
<p>AEOLUS</p>	<p>AEOLUS, in Greek mythology, was the keeper of the winds. The god Zeus had given him the power to still and arouse the winds. When the Greek hero, Odysseus, visited Aeolus, he was welcomed as an honored guest. As a parting gift, Aeolus gave him a favoring wind and a leather bag filled with all the winds.</p>
<p>HESTIA</p>	<p>HESTIA, goddess of the hearth, was the eldest daughter of the Titans. Hestia was the peacemaker in the sometimes tumultuous world of the gods. She was believed to preside at all sacrificial altar fires. Prayers were offered to her before and after meals, and most cities had a common hearth where her sacred fire burned.</p>