

ANSWER KEY FOR LESSON 35 OF C IS FOR COTTAGE

READING SELECTIONS

MEDUSA READING QUESTIONS A

1. What do the words *despair*, *toil*, and *writhe* mean?

The word “despair” means “to feel hopeless”; the word “toil” means “to work”; and the word “writhe” means “to twist and turn” (like a snake).

2. One of the Gorgons, Medusa had once been a beautiful woman. However, one day she offended the goddess Athena, who turned her into an ugly creature. What do we learn regarding her appearance from the poem? In other words, what did Medusa look like? *Teachers may tell a more detailed story of Medusa. Medusa was one of the Gorgons, who were daughters of Ceto and Phorcus, both of whom were children of Gaea (the goddess of the earth) and Pontus (the god of the sea). In one story, the Gorgons—there were three of them, Medusa, Stheno and Euryale—were born monsters, along with their siblings Scylla, the Grease and the Sirens. In another story, they were born beautiful. Medusa, however, did something that caused a transformation. Medusa polluted Athena’s temple by her show of love to the sea god Poseidon. When she was with child, Athena punished her by changing her into “a winged monster with glaring eyes, huge teeth, protruding tongue, brazen claws and serpent locks, whose gaze turned men to stone.”¹*

3. The author presents Medusa as a woman who tries to make herself beautiful (despite the fact she was very ugly). Find the parts in the poem that show her attempt to make herself pretty.

She makes a great effort to arrange her head of snakes. In lines 5 through 10, we read of her eternal work trying to get her hair in order: “It must have caused her sore distress / That head of curling snakes to dress. / Whenever after endless toil / She coaxed it finally to coil, / The music of a Passing Band / Would cause each separate hair to stand / On end and sway and writhe and spit,— / She couldn’t ‘do a thing with it.’” but the music of a band that passed her way, like the music of a snake charmer, would make her head a mess once again..

4. The author turns the strange and gruesome myth of Medusa into a funny story. What details in the poem do you think are especially funny?

The poem involves a woman who, no matter what she does, cannot possibly make herself beautiful by putting her hair in place. Anyone who has had a “bad hair day” can appreciate the humor of Medusa’s situation in which no matter what one does, one’s hair will not stay in place. Although on a bad day, our hair may be especially unmanageable and look a mess,

¹ Graves, p. 127.

*nothing could be as bad as the Gorgon sister's hair, which would "sway and writhe and spit."
This exaggerated situation also creates humor.*

5. According to the myth, Medusa was so ugly she would petrify (or turn to stone) anyone who looked at her. According to the poet, why does Medusa turn people into stone?
She apparently does not want to be seen with such a bad hairdo.

THE GOLDEN FLEECE READING QUESTIONS B

1. What is the setting of this story (time and place)?
The fleece that Jason planned to capture was kept in a sacred grove of Colchis, an ancient country once located on the coast of the Black Sea, located in Asia Minor. Today the area is located north of Turkey.
2. What were the men who journeyed with Jason and later became heroes?
Fifty of Jason's noble Greek friends traveled to capture the golden fleece. The company, called the "Argonauts" because they sailed the ship "Argos," included Hercules, Theseus, Orpheus, and Nestor. The Greek root of the word "naus" means "ship," from which we get the words "nautical," "astronaut" and "cosmonaut."
3. Is this story fiction or non-fiction? How can you tell?
The story's fantastical elements, such as the dragon's teeth changing into warriors and the whole idea of a golden fleece taken from a flying ram, indicate that the work is clearly fiction.
4. Name at least three great deeds that Jason did in his adventure.
Jason had to earn the golden fleece by doing great deeds, including planting a field full of dragon's teeth, fighting the warriors that grew from the teeth, and the dragon himself.
5. Why was Jason heralded as a hero at the end of the story?
Jason's courage, not his golden fleece, made the people of Thessaly choose him for king.

PHONICS EXERCISE A

1. a
2. c
3. a
4. a
5. c
6. c
7. c
8. b
9. a
10. b

PHONICS EXERCISE B

1. relief
2. believe
3. view
4. field
5. handkerchief

GRAMMAR EXERCISE A

1. T or F The present principal part is used after the helping verbs *do* and *did*.
2. T or F There are three principal parts of a verb.
3. T or F The past participle is always used with the helping verbs *has*, *have* and *had*.
4. T or F *Spoken* is the past participle of the verb *speak*.
5. T or F The present principal part is used for verbs in commands, such as "Go home!"
6. T or F The past participle of *go* is *gone*.
7. T or F The perfect tenses all use the past participle.
8. T or F The future uses the past participle.
9. T or F The past principal part of some verbs is the same as their past participle principal part.
10. T or F The present tense uses the past participle.

GRAMMAR EXERCISE B

Teachers may quiz students on the principal parts listed in the book, and may want to go further and have the students learn the additional of irregular verbs, which can be found in any good dictionary.

GRAMMAR EXERCISE C

1. John has (bear, bore, borne) his grief well.
2. Yesterday I (buy, bought, boughten) some flour for the pizza I will make tonight.
3. The cold wind (blow, blowed, blew) on the faces of the people anxious for the bus to come.
4. Have you (shake, shook, shaken) out the down comforter outside?
5. Yesterday Emily and her sister Haley (shine, shone, shineded) their flashlight into the dark closet and discovered their brother hiding underneath a clothes basket.
6. Have you ever (bite, bit, bitten) into an apple and discovered half a worm?
7. You should have (run, ran, runned) after him to tell him that he forgot his lunch.
8. Will Jonathan (speak, spoke, spoken) to his father about the problem?

9. Did you (catch, caught, caught) the dog that escaped from the yard?
10. We (strike, struck, struck) a match to see what was inside the chest.

GRAMMAR EXERCISE D

1. Do not (speak, spoke, spoken) so loudly when your sister is sleeping.
2. I will need to (catch, caught, caughten) the bus tomorrow at 7:30 in the morning.
3. Have you (blow, blew, blown) out all of the candles downstairs?
4. It was so cold in the house yesterday, I (shake, shook, shaken) all day!
5. Did you (run, ran, runned) all the way to his house?
6. Andrew (bear, bore, borne) the heavy satchel on his back throughout the entire mountain hike.
7. Please (shine, shone, shined) the light under the sink so that I can fix the pipe.
8. I need to (buy, bought, boughten) more paper for my notebook.
9. With his heavy hammer, the farmer (strike, struck, stricken) the latch of the barn to break it open.
10. Tom (bite, bit, bitten) his fingernails with worry.