

Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief

Study Notes



Directed by: Chris Columbus
Certificate: PG (contains moderate fantasy violence and threat)
Running time: 118 mins
Release date: 12 February 2010

Synopsis

Trouble-prone Percy Jackson is having problems in High School – but that’s the least of his challenges. It’s the twenty-first century, but the gods of mount Olympus seem to have walked out of the pages of Percy’s Greek mythology texts and into his life. Percy has learned that his real father is Poseidon, god of the sea, which means Percy is a demigod – half human, half god. At the same time Zeus, the king of all gods, has accused Percy of stealing Zeus’ lightning bolt...

Before seeing the film

1. This film is adapted from Rick Riordan's original book *The Lightning Thief* from the Percy Jackson & the Olympians series.

- Compare the full film synopsis from www.percyjacksonthemovie.com with the blurb from the book.
- Compare the book's cover along with the film poster too.
- What do you notice that's different? What is the same?

2. Which gods make up the Twelve Olympians in Greek mythology? Use books, the internet and other sources to find out. Zeus is the god of the sky and thunder, and his symbols are the lightning bolt and the eagle. What about the other Olympians? Which ones do you hope to see in the film?

3. Mount Olympus is the highest mountain in Greece and in Greek mythology it is known as the home of the gods. What are the highest mountains in other countries?

After seeing the film

1. The Empire State Building features in the film as the portal to Mount Olympus. It was once the tallest building in the world and is still the tallest in New York. Research the tallest buildings in other cities. Plot them on a world map, then draw a graph to compare their heights.

2. Choose one or two gods or mythical creatures to research. Create a class 'Guide to Gods and Monsters'. How are they depicted in art and books? What are their stories? How does this compare to how they were portrayed in the film? Choose from the following list of characters that featured in *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*.

- Zeus
- Hades
- Persephone
- Athena
- Poseidon
- Medusa
- Chiron

3. Read the blurbs for the remaining books in the Percy Jackson and the Olympians series: *The Sea of Monsters*, *The Titan's Curse*, *The Battle of the Labyrinth* and *The Last Olympian*. Imagine if these were made into films too. Choose one of the books and make a poster or storyboard a trailer for a film adaptation.

Written by: Matthew Poyton