

FROM GREEK HEROES TO SUPERHEROES



The word *hero* comes from the Greek and it means "protector" or "defender".
A hero / heroine in Greek mythology, was a demigod. A demigod is the son or daughter from one immortal and one mortal parent.
A hero / heroine also refers to characters who, in the face of danger and adversity, show courage and self-sacrifice - heroism - for some greater good of all humanity. This definition originally referred to martial bravery but extended to more general moral excellence.

Read the descriptions of the following Greek heroes and match the correct numbers in the circles.



Theseus was the hero of Athens who saved the people from having to send off their sons and daughters as human sacrifices to the monstrous Cretan minotaur. With the help of the creature's half-sister, Ariadne, Theseus killed the monster and found his way out of the labyrinth.

When Achilles was a baby, a prophecy said that he would be killed with an arrow. So, his mother dipped him in the river Styx to try to make him invulnerable. And invulnerable he was, except for the spot on his heel where his mother held him.

Odysseus is probably best known as the eponymous hero of the *Odyssey*. This epic describes his travels, which lasted for 10 years. On the way home from Troy, he and his twelve ships are captured by the Cyclops Polyphemus while visiting his island. Odysseus takes a barrel of wine, and the Cyclops drinks it, falling asleep. Odysseus and his men take a wooden stake, ignite it with the remaining wine, and blind him.

When he was a baby, Hercules was very strong: he strangled a snake!! Hercules is famous for his many adventures too. One cycle of these adventures is called the "Twelve Labours".

Jason is the Greek legendary hero who was sent to capture the Golden Fleece to win back his throne. He left with a band of the greatest heroes the world has ever known and had a series of epic adventures.

Perseus is a major hero from Greek mythology best known for his clever decapitation of Medusa, whose head turned people to stone. He also rescued Andromeda from the sea monster.