



# Percy Jackson The Titan's Curse

Teen Book Review

*Transfiguring Adoption is a nonprofit organization seeking to nurture growth in foster and adoptive families by giving a HOOT about their families. Transfiguring Adoption does not intend for its reviews nor its reviews nor its this discussion packet to be professional, medical or legal advice. These reviews and discussion guides are intended to help parents to better be able to connect and understand their children who come from traumatic backgrounds.*

*Copyright © Transfiguring Adoption 2019*

*All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without permission in writing from the nonprofit.*

*[transfiguringadoption.com/media](http://transfiguringadoption.com/media)*

# Contents

## Section I

Why are we using books, movies, and video games to help children?.....03

## Section II

This Only Works TOGETHER - Parent & Child.....04

## Section III

How To Use Our Discussion Packets.....05

**Comprehensive Review**.....07

**Discussion Guide**.....11

**About the Reviewer**.....25

As far back as ancient Greece people were utilizing books as methods for working through various ailments. The term, bibliography, is what we pair with the phenomenon of using media, specifically books, to help people suffering from trauma or psychological issues. While the Transfiguring Adoption is NOT claiming to be professionals in the psychological or mental health arena, we do believe that families can glean from this concept in using movies, video games, and, naturally, books, to help foster or adoptive children process their story.

## Section I

### **Why are we using books, movies, and video games to help children?**

- **Partially disengage mind from fear/problems**  
Immersing yourself in media helps you to escape from reality for a bit. This can give our minds a partial break from the worry and stress so that we have more energy to attach the issue when we come back to it.
- **Introduced to new solutions**  
We might discover new solutions to problems as we experience a character in media conquer an issue.
- **Emotional vocabulary**  
Discovering more ways to express how we feel and think can help us to communicate our own thoughts and feelings. Overall, more effective communication allows us to ask for better assistance with our feelings and issues.
- **Identify with characters/stories**  
You have heard the saying, “no man is an island.” No person wants to feel like they are alone in their thoughts, feelings, or experiences. When we discover a character in media struggling with similar issues as our own, it helps to “normalize,” our life situations and feel comforted. This can also help us to discover our own identify as a character goes through process in their life.

## Section II

### **This Only Works TOGETHER - Parent & Child.**

Here is why it is IMPERATIVE that a parent or trusted adult walk through these questions and media with a child:

- **Trauma Triggers**

An event or language in a piece of media might remind our children of past events in their lives which were traumatic. If we are to assume that they have not yet had enough life experience to successfully walk through these situations and make sense of them, then they will need a safe adult to be able to process feelings and emotions.

Some caregiver might be nervous or scared to discuss the details of sexual abuse, physical abuse, and so on. Our children are also scared but have no choice but to live through it. Our children need an adult who can help them process through issues by listening. They need an adult who knows when information needs to be given over to a trusted therapist and other professionals.

- **Reliving Trauma**

Some media might not simply suggest or bring up past trauma but could expose a child to a similar situation as what they have experienced. If a child is exposed to such media, it goes without saying that they will need a safe adult to help them process their thoughts and emotions. They will even need a safe adult who may not have the right answers but can get the child to a professional who can help.

- **Living in a Dream World**

As much as negatively living through trauma can have a devastating effect on our children, too much of a good thing can also have a poor effect when it is experienced on their own. Some children who have come from traumatic backgrounds may have trouble separating fantasy from reality. When given media where the main character is always rescued in the nick of time, the waif always marries royalty, or all problems are solved in a neat package, our children could be given over to considering this is how the world operates and that the solutions of the characters will produce similar fantastical results. It is important to have a trusted adult on duty who can applaud the fun of a tale but also bring everyone back down to reality.

- **Never Really Find Results**

Again it can be a pitfall for caregivers to be nervous about a topic and simply hope that children will learn by experiencing a book or movie on their own. The problem is that many of our children lack the life experience to be able to connect the dots to see how a character's struggles and life solutions could be compared to their own life.

A trusted adult can help a child to glean solutions and conversations from a piece of media to make real life change begin.

## Section III

### How To Use Our Discussion Packets:

#### 1. **Exposure as a Family**

Watch, read, or play the respective media this packet discusses together before you begin the conversation. It is important that parent and child experience things together. Natural bonding and teachable moments come about when we experience things together.

#### 2. **Wait for the Right Time**

As foster and adoptive parents, many of us want to help our children so badly that when we get a new resource we want to try it out faster than a child wants to open up presents on Christmas. However, it is important to judge when your child is ready to talk about issues brought up by media.

If your child is struggling with habitual lying and just reprimanded earlier in the day at school, there might be intense feelings of guilt and embarrassment. It may not be the correct time to point out that Pinocchio gets in trouble when he lies and try to begin a discussion about how lies can harm your life. Instead wait a day or two when everything is going right in your family's world, and then try to begin a conversation.

People who are hurt, angered, frustrated or depressed due to a topic are not going to be open to having a dialogue about the issues.

#### 3. **Nudging Toward Identification**

If we look at this conversation as a swimming pool, "Nudging Toward Identification" is going to be the shallow end of the pool. The goal is to simply notice - just notice - similarities you might see in a character's life and your child's life. This step is helping our children to see that they might be able to relate with a character. The media is going from merely a source of entertainment to something we possibly - POSSIBLY - could connect with in some manner.

This might come in the form of phrases such as:

- "Hey, did you notice that in the book Sally had to figure out how to make friends at school too?"
- "Tom's brother in the movie was really good at soccer just like you, right?!"
- "Too bad you're not in the story with Samantha, because you like learning about science as much as she does, right?"

#### 4. **Emotional Involvement**

In Step 3 we helped our child to consider that they might be able to connect with a character. During this step, if the atmosphere is still good for conversation, we are going to push the similarities with the media character a bit further. We are going to take a look at specific situations and emotions. We are going to take a look at issues that characters confronted and discuss solutions and emotional outcomes. Hopefully, through this step our children will be able to more deeply and emotionally be able to identify with a character.

We might ask questions such as:

- "Sally made up stories to try and make new friends. Do you think this was the right way to make friends? Why? What should she have done differently?"

- “How do you think Tom felt when missed the goal and lost the soccer game for his team? What would you tell him? Do you ever feel like Tom?”
- “Which do you think made Samantha feel better, winning the science fair or making new friends at school? Do you ever feel like that? Why?”

#### 5. **Continued Conversations**

Always remember that helping children walk through trauma is not a sprint but a marathon. Do not get discouraged if the right time to talk about themes in a piece of media don't turn up right away. Do not get discouraged if your child doesn't want to talk about anything “deep” or life changing.

Some people have reported that their children might watch a movie, lightly discuss it, and then a month later begin asking deeper questions about a theme or topic in the media.

As parents our job is to create an atmosphere where learning and growth can happen AND CAN CONTINUE HAPPENING. We need to equip ourselves with the tools to be ready for those small windows of time that our children are ready to discuss and learn from us.

---

*Transfiguring Adoption is a nonprofit organization seeking to nurture growth in foster and adoptive families by giving a HOOT about their families. Transfiguring Adoption does not intend for its reviewers nor its reviews to be professional, medical or legal advice. These reviews and discussion guides are intended to help parents to better be able to connect and understand their children who come from traumatic backgrounds.*

## Comprehensive Review

### Transfiguring Adoption's Overview:

The target audience for this book is middle school readers who have read books one and two of the series. The book is a great tool to teach healthy friendships, help with deciphering difficult feelings these reader may have and also to spark up interest in Greek mythology. The books specifically good for foster/adopt readers because the main characters are similar to their stories. Many of them are separate from one or both parents and feel like outcasts in "normal" society. They have anger and trust issues with mostly everyone they come in contact with.

This is the third book in this series and I believe it is one of the best. All of these books are fast paced and keep the reader engaged with the material. I also think that the Greek Mythology information is interesting and may cause your reader to want to do more research into the Greek gods. Though these books are written for young adults, I believe that any avid reader can get entertainment from them. It makes it even easier to have fun conversations about the relationship between the characters if you have read the book too!

This book specifically deals with loss and not understanding where you belong. The author does a great job at portraying this group of characters as a makeshift family even though they are not related or sometimes even the same species. The book affirms that in order to do great things you must surround yourself with great people and going alone is never an option.

---

**\*\* Spoilers Could Be Ahead \*\***

---

### How Is This Relevant To Adoption & Foster Care?

This book series is great for foster and adopted families because of the way the author breaks down common emotions and situations foster and adopted readers have experienced. Feelings of abandonment, anger, loss, insecurity, isolation, and love are experienced by our characters in a way that is easy to spark conversations between the reader and caregiver. The author also mixes in a good amount of humor that both reader and caregiver can use to help get through some of the more tense moments.

I would encourage families to read this book and book series together. It would be a great story for young adult readers to read to parents and parents to also take turns reading it to parents or other siblings. The books are easy to read and will keep the audience's attention with the twists and turns of the story.



---

## Discussion Points:

- **Importance of Healthy Friendships**

Percy and Grover travel across the country to save Annabeth from the clutches of a villain known as the General. During this travel they encounter other monsters, pain, and loss, but continue to push forward. The question here could be phrased in terms of time or distance or in effort, either way your reader should be able to give you some insight on their friendships and how much they matter. Talk about the ways that these friendships are healthy or unhealthy and how children might strive to develop healthy relationships of their own.

- **Belief/Hope**

Grover spends a good portion of this book still searching for Pan, the Lord of the Wild, and is consistently told that Pan is missing or gone. Grover doesn't give up hope and is blessed with a glimpse of Pan's power in this book. Readers could interpret this topic a few ways. Our current world has blinders on when it comes to personal relationships and family values at times. Our readers may be seeking the "perfect" family or relationship and their friends (and some adults) may not believe these exist anymore. Talk about how we all might have different beliefs but it's important to respect what others might believe, even if it's different than what they believe. This can also be a time to talk about maintaining hope for their futures even if sometimes it feels like no one else believes their dreams will come true.

- **Being Defined by the Past**

Many of the characters are battling events from their past in this book. Zoe was exiled from her family and feels lost, Thalia spent years in a frozen state and has missed out on the growth and regression of her friends, Bianca and Nico spent decades at the Lotus Hotel and have very little knowledge of the current world, and Annabeth is still struggling with the relationship with her dad and step-mom. These are all extreme examples of past struggles, but many of our readers have feelings of loss or regret that stem from their past. These feelings can stick with them for the rest of their lives if not worked through with a counselor or just through conversation with a trusted parent or friend. Talk about the way the characters are processing their past trauma and whether that's healthy or unhealthy and how the youth can strive to work through their own trauma in a healthy way.

- **Expectations of the Future**

We are given more insight on Percy's future and that while necessary does appear to be riddled with pain, loss, and strife. He understands and acknowledges that this is his burden to carry and knows what must be done in order to fulfill his destiny, but that doesn't make it any easier to complete. It would be interesting to know if your reader had a similar fortitude. Most people would make changes to their lives if they were aware that their current actions were going to lead to hardship. It is human nature to not want to endure pain and instead go the easy route. As a parent of three adopted children I fully understand that we, as caregivers, are wired completely different. We know the road ahead is going to be difficult and painful, but we push ahead because that is what we are called to do.

- **Future Planning**

These books are a great tool to get your reader's imagination flowing. They are full of action and lead to the reader wanting to guess what happens next. After your reader finishes this book, ask them to write down a prediction for 3-4 characters for the next book. Make sure to ask them questions about the characters and have them develop their thoughts about each one. Follow up with them as they read book 4 to see if they were correct. This is a great tool to get your reader to start thinking ahead. This is a skill that many of us have developed from a young age, but many trauma brains don't seem to grasp. It could be because they had to spend so much time worrying about the present that they were unable to think about the future or their present and past were not great so thinking of the future seemed pointless. Regardless of the reason it is our job as caregivers to help our readers develop this skill.

---

## **Cautionary Points:**

- **Loss of a parent due to alcoholism**

A character's mother is mentioned to have died in a drunk driving incident. For readers that have experienced drug or alcohol abuse in their family this could be a trigger. Be open to a more lengthy discussion and maybe use the character's feelings to help frame your readers emotions.

- **Mortals can sometimes be worse than "monsters"**

It is mentioned that mortals will do just about anything if they are being paid. The term mercenary is used here to describe a group of mortals willingly working for a monster and doing horrific things because they are being paid. In our world we have met many mortals who are also monsters, but it is hard to understand their motivation. It is likely your readers have come in contact with people like this and it has left scars, some visible and some not. It is our job, as caregivers, to show our readers that not all mortals are monsters and it is OK to trust again.

- **Death of a friend and sibling**

A character sacrifices herself to help save her friends and defeat a monster. This could be a trigger for those readers who have lost someone close to them and more so if the person was close to their age. Losing someone doesn't always mean death either. Some of our readers may have been separated from siblings when they came into care and that is also a form of loss. It could also be a more tragic loss because they know the sibling isn't gone, but they still may not be able to see them.

# Discussion Questions

## Chapter 1

1. **When have you been the most embarrassed by your parents?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The chapter starts off with Sally Jackson driving Percy, Annabeth, and Thalia to a boarding school and on the drive, she tells the girls every embarrassing baby story she can about Percy. Our readers may have some fun answers about this one. They also may try to act embarrassed, but secretly love and yearn for this kind of attention. Sometimes over the top love and mushy stuff can get through to them that you care and love them. This may be something they missed in prior homes so lay it on thick every so often!

2. **What do you think a school dance should look like? (Fun question)**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The heroes interrupt a school dance to help Grover rescue two half blood siblings, but they must blend in with others at the dance. This leads to some awkward moments of dancing and conversations (normal for any middle school dances I remember) See if your reader and get into their imagination about what they would like to see at an event like this. Often children who have a background of trauma may not have gotten to engage in normal childhood experiences like a dance, so this can be a way to encourage them to think about and look forward to age-appropriate activities that they may get to experience.

## Chapter 2

1. **Why do you think Grover called in for back up?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Grover requested that Percy, Annabeth, and Thalia come and help him rescue Nico and Bianca DeAngelo from a boarding school. Normally Satyr's identify half-bloods and they keep them safe until it is time to bring them to camp half-blood. Grover has had issues in the past with saving half-bloods and he asked for help. This is a great way for you to solidify that everyone needs help and it is okay to reach out when you are in over your head.

2. **Who do you think The Hunters are? Why do you think Thalia was not happy to see them?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Our heroes are saved from a monster by Artemis and her hunters at the last moment before their inevitable demise. The Hunters seem to be a highly skilled fighting force that are more proficient with bows than the Apollo campers! We will learn more about this group and their godly leader in the coming chapters, but it's fun to see your readers think about the story and try to guess where the author will go next! This skill is easy to use in these instances but can help them start to understand the cause and effect of their actions in the real world.

### **Chapter 3**

**1. How would you react to being told you are a Demi-god?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Nico and Bianca believe they are orphans and are now being told that one of their parents is alive and a god! Our readers might be able to relate, on a smaller scale. They may not remember their bio parents or maybe they didn't meet one of them at all. How would they react to finding out a long lost loved one is alive? Any feelings are okay here and some might be more pronounced than others. Let your reader take the conversation wherever it will go. If they have been reading this series the idea of being a demi-god could be exciting or terrifying depending on the reader.

**2. If you were able, would you join the Hunt?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: After receiving the news of their lineage, Bianca is taken to a meeting with Artemis and the lead huntress Zoe. It is there that she is offered to join the Hunt, the group that follows Artemis into battle wherever she goes. If she joins, she will become immortal and never age past her current age now. The catch is that she must swear allegiance to Artemis and can never love a boy for the remainder of her life. Since this option is available to only girls our male readers will have very short answers here, but our female readers might have to think about their response. Bianca is only 12 and is now being asked to make a life changing decision. How many of our readers made life altering choices at the age of 12 or younger?

**3. If you were Nico, how would you respond to Bianca's choice?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Nico doesn't know yet, but Bianca has sworn allegiance to Artemis and will be leaving him in the care of the counselors at Camp Half-Blood. This will be another loss in his life and might be the biggest one he has ever had to endure. A sibling relationship with our readers can be stronger than any parent link ever. These are the people that have endured the most with them and shared the good and bad experiences. Our readers should have strong feelings about this action, and they may feel bad for Nico, especially if they have been separated from their own siblings.

### **Chapter 4**

**1. Can you relate to Artemis and Apollo's relationship?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Artemis and Apollo are twins and they fight like my kids. It is funny to read them banter back and forth because these are gods who are supposed to be wise and full of knowledge. If your readers have siblings, I am sure the exchange between the twins is very familiar. If they don't, maybe you can ask them about cousins or friends at school and see how they respond.

**2. Have you ever done something that seemed too scary or you weren't prepared for?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Apollo gives the controls on the sun chariot to Thalia and allows

her to drive the group to Camp Half-Blood. Thalia isn't even sure how old she technically is right now, but Apollo assures her that she is nearly 16 and convinces her to take the wheel. The trip ends with Thalia crashing the sun chariot into the lake outside of the camp after nearly burning down half of New England. Your reader's answers to this question could vary depending on their experiences. Some of our readers come from very sheltered backgrounds where they didn't experience much. This could have been due to a religion, lack of money, or other philosophical reasons, but going into the foster system can also lead to only doing what is safe. Maybe people treat our readers like they are "broken" because of their past. It is our job to find the balance of challenging our readers to grow but doing it in a safe way. A roller coaster would be a great example. Some readers may be apprehensive about trying a thrill ride, but once they get on it, they might love it, or they will be able to say they did it at least once!

## **Chapter 5**

### **1. Would you be irritated by Nico?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Up to this point Nico is a perfect example of child-like wonder. He is amazed by everything he sees and says whatever is on his mind. His exuberance is starting wear on all those around him as a lot of serious things are happening, and he is aloof like a small child would be. Our older readers with younger siblings will know exactly how the main characters feel to be around Nico. He wants to see and know everything, but his constant questions can wear on you. Small siblings are the same way! Our younger readers may think he is a bit annoying, but they could be reminded that they acted the same way to older siblings or even their parents when they were younger.

### **2. What did we learn about Thalia? Does this change how you think about her?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: (Potential Cautionary Point) Up to this point we only have some surface knowledge of Thalia, she was a runaway with Luke and Annabeth, she was turned into a tree before she could enter camp 7 years prior to save her life, and she is a daughter of Zeus. Now we learn that her mom has passed away due to a drunk driving accident. This revelation might hit home for some of our readers who have lost parents. This might be a topic you let sit for a few minutes and give your reader time to think about a response. If they have lost a parent or have dealt with an alcoholic parent this could be a caution point.

### **3. Would you go and rescue Annabeth? Where do you think she is?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy has another prophetic dream and sees Annabeth, who recently disappeared, coming up on Luke who appears to be holding something that is crushing him. Annabeth goes to help him, and Luke makes her take the entire weight off his back. He then walks away tell her it was all part of the plan to have help be on the way. This is obviously a trap to get someone, probably Percy, to rescue her. I wonder if your reader would throw caution to the wind and risk themselves to save a friend. Our

foster/adopt readers don't normally put themselves in danger for others. We all have the fight/flight/freeze instincts and most readers that have experienced trauma do tend to rush in to save others if it means they may also get hurt too. *The second question is once again aimed at trying to stoke the readers imagination.*

## **Chapter 6**

### **1. Why do you think Annabeth kept the scarf from their first quest?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy and Annabeth were gifted a scarf from Aphrodite in their first quest and Percy thought that Annabeth had gotten rid of it, but he found it stored in the attic of the Big House at camp. Your reader might go the practical route here and answer that it was a gift from the gods and of course it should have been kept. They could also go the more romantic route and infer that Annabeth has feelings for Percy and wanted to save a memento from their first quest together. Any answer is correct, but make sure you follow up with your reader and have them defend their decision. This will help them start to develop their own voice and give you some insight on their thought process.

### **2. Why do you think the Oracle came down to the creek to deliver the prophecy?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: At the end of a capture the flag game, Percy and Thalia were ready to have a god sized throw down and the Oracle came strolling into the middle of the fray. This caused everyone to stop in their tracks because she had never left the attic before. Your reader could answer this question multiple ways. The Oracle leaving its normal resting place is weird, but maybe it left because the prophecy is that important. The reader may also read in the prophecy that at least one of the heroes or hunters will be killed on this quest. This could lead to some wild speculation about coming events and that is what you are hoping for. Encourage the readers imagination and ask them questions that help them build on theories further!

## **Chapter 7**

### **1. Have you ever been so focused on something that you forgot about your friends or family's problems?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: In the beginning of this chapter Percy and Grover are carrying the Oracle back to her spot in the big house and Grover tells Percy that he is itching to leave camp. Percy assumes that he also wants to search and rescue Annabeth, but Grover wants to continue his search for Pan the nature god. A common character trait among foster/adopt readers and many teenagers in general is narcissism. Percy totally forgets about Grover's ambitions and dreams because he is solely focused on his own. Sometimes our readers can get this way when they are only focused on what they want or need. They forget that others have needs, desires, and wants that are different from theirs. It is a common practice in our home to ask our readers to stop and think about someone else before they continue their path. We call them acts of kindness and find that they are essential in helping them grow into well rounded young adults.

**2. When was the last time you were passed up for something you thought you deserved?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The party to help rescue Artemis was made and it did not include Percy. He is beside himself that he would be left out, but it told by Chiron that it is for the best. Your reader may not feel like they have been passed up yet or they might feel like they are constantly underestimated. Each reader has their own hang up, but many trauma affected readers have a strong feeling about what is or isn't fair. They are constantly watching and judging how others are treated and how they are treated. If they feel like someone else is getting more benefits or treated better, you will be made aware of it.

**3. Have you ever been trusted to do what you think is right?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy calls his mom and tells her about the recent events. After hearing about the events Percy is dealing with Sally tells him that she fully supports whatever decision he makes. Percy is taken aback because he believes his mom is giving him her blessing to go against Chiron's orders. Instead she tells him that he is at the point in his life where he must start making choices for his own good and learn to deal with the consequences of those choices. You may have not had this conversation with your reader yet, but the time is coming soon where they must understand you will not be able to make every choice for them. Foster/adopt readers often rely on others to make the hard choices for them because it takes the blame from them if the choice turns out to be the wrong one. Our job as parents is to empower our readers to be confident to make good choices. We must make sure they are aware they are not immune to the consequences of such actions. This is a hard lesson to learn and needs to be repeated consistently, but books like these can help you model these choices in a more engaging way.

**Chapter 8**

**1. What is the biggest promise you have made? Were you able to keep it?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: In this chapter, Percy tells Nico that he will go with the group on the quest and he will keep his sister safe. This is a big promise from Percy who knows that some of the party will perish on this journey. This is the only way that he can prevent Nico from following the group though. This question could be a loaded one from your reader. They might have made a promise to keep siblings safe through the transition and an older sibling might have had to be a pseudo-parent for a time being. These promises are hard to keep for adults and exponentially harder for a teenager. Keep in mind your readers story when you ask this question and be prepared for a tough response. You will be able to mitigate the trauma triggers that could arise from this question because you know their story.



## **Chapter 9**

### **1. Why does Mr. D dislike heroes so much? Do you agree with him?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Mr. D catches Percy sneaking out of camp and binds him in order to bring him back. Percy, feeling hopeless, lashes out at Mr. D and asks him why he hates heroes so much. Percy tells Mr. D he wouldn't know what it is like to have friends and care about people. Mr. D shares that he has no love for heroes because they are vain, ungrateful, and selfish lot. They use whoever they want and then betray them as soon as their use runs out. This is not the first time you see a hero made to be the bad guy, but Mr. D has a point. Many tales of Greek Heroes end with them treating the people they need very terribly.

### **2. If you were a hero, would you be different than Mr. D's description? How?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: I would expect some of our readers to say they wouldn't be different because some of them would have the blunt honesty that old a child could have. Others would want to be different and more noble. Whether or not your reader would be the same or different, challenge them to be kind to others. To be the opposite of what Mr. D's description of heroes.

### **3. If you could bring back an extinct animal, what would you choose? (fun question)**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The general has one of his servants bring him teeth to "grow" a beast to track and destroy the hunters while at the Smithsonian. The teeth they originally brought were from a saber tooth tiger and grew some fluffy kittens! This isn't what the general had in mind and he quickly found the beast he was looking for, but it brings up a fun question. Would you reader pick dinosaurs, woolly mammoths, or maybe the dodo bird. It could be fun to do some research together on extinct animals and then pick one to "bring back!"

## **Chapter 10**

### **1. What connection do you think Zoe and the General have?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy literally runs into the group that is on the quest to find Artemis and relays information about the grown soldiers, monster, and the General to Thalia and Zoe. Zoe is in disbelief that the General is in Washington and seems troubled by the news. This is another attempt to engage the reader's imagination and see if they can guess how these two characters are related. Given the way that both characters react about each other it is easy to deduce that they are related or have had a close bond in the past. It is also interesting to try and figure out how old Zoe is. This could be a clue for her past.

**2. Why do you think it took defeating a monster together for Zoe to trust Percy?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The group prevails against a huge metal lion due to some quick thinking by Percy and expert marksmanship by Zoe and Bianca. After the fight, Zoe instructs Percy to take the lion's pelt and to formally join the quest. As a parent of an adopted teenager it felt like having to have a shared experience of danger or extreme excitement for them to trust me. My oldest son was afraid of roller coasters and it wasn't until him and I rode one together that he started to believe me that I would keep him safe. What are things you had to do in order to gain your readers trust? Ask them how they were able to gain the trust of a friend or even a sibling!

**Chapter 11**

**1. Tell me how you feel about Zoe's quote that mortals are sometimes worse than monsters.**

CAREGIVER NOTE: (Potential Cautionary Point) The group is beside themselves that mortals would work for the General, but Zoe tells that he uses mercenaries and they will do anything if they are paid. This question could be a potential trigger because many of our readers have experienced mortals being terrible to each other and to the readers specifically. In our world monsters are not real, but many humans can have some monster qualities at their worst moments.

**2. Why didn't Thalia want to join the Hunters? Could you leave part of your family behind to become immortal?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy and Thalia are talking about her past and he figures out that she was recruited to join the hunters by Zoe. The reason they don't get along is because Thalia didn't join the hunters in order to stay with Luke and Annabeth. She refused to leave Luke who was like family to her in order to gain immortality. Our readers may or may not have a similar sibling relationship that would stop them from making this choice. Sibling relationships of trauma affected kids can be a stronger bond than that of a parent and child. These readers have suffered and grown together that their stories are entwined, and they rely on each other for safety and guidance. Sometimes it can even morph itself into a pseudo-parent/child relationship with an older sibling taking on the mom or dad role to their younger brothers or sisters.

**3. Where did Percy's sword come from? Do you own anything that was handed down from an older generation?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy has a dream where he is a part of someone else's memory and during this dream he learns that his sword was the property of Zoe Nightshade. He also learns that Zoe was alive during ancient Greek times which answers one of our other questions about Zoe's background. This would be a good time to bring up family antiques or treasures that have been passed down. This topic could be hard for some readers because some may have lost their past when they were re-homed. Some others may have treasured pictures or items given to them by bio-parents. These could look like

trash to us but would be treated like gold by our readers. A good activity would be to show your readers some cool stuff you may have inherited or old pictures of family!

## **Chapter 12**

### **1. Have you ever gotten a “gift” that might not seem so safe? (Fun Question)**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Our group of hero's is given a gift by Pan, the Lord of the Wild. He sends a huge wild boar to help them travel the rest of their journey, but this boar is wild and tries to kill the heroes before they can corral it. As caregivers we try our best not to give our readers things that they could hurt themselves with, but sometimes our gifts might not look all that safe at first glance. This would be a fun time for you to show your readers some old toys and point out how dangerous those were! A couple that come to mind are old school Lawn Darts, metal Tonka trucks, and red rider BB guns. These were staples of my childhood and my parents didn't think they were unsafe at the time.

## **Chapter 13**

### **1. Can you relate to Bianca and Nico's story about moving?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy is told by Bianca that her and Nico were forced to move from school to school every couple months by a lawyer. There was no explanation of the moves and they never knew who their parents were. They only know that their parents died and left them a sum of money to care for them. Besides the money part this might hit home for some of our foster readers or a reader that was adopted after being in the foster system. As caregivers we are aware that our readers can move at a moment's notice and that they have very little control of their circumstances while in the system. This can be a very traumatic experience and the affect the loss of family after family can take years to work through. Sometimes the loss of a foster family can be worse than the initial loss of a parent or the first removal.

### **2. Tell me about a time you broke the rules to do something nice for someone else.**

CAREGIVER NOTE: (Possible Cautionary Point) The heroes were told that when they entered the God's Junkyard they shouldn't touch or take anything or there would be stiff consequences. However, Bianca noticed a small figurine that would complete Nico's Mytho Magic set and she couldn't help herself. This action set off a chain of events that lead to Bianca being lost or killed by a monster. Our readers are not saints and kids that have experienced trauma are known to push the envelope when it comes to boundaries. They want to test the waters and see where the breaking points are. Some readers will always have a reason to break rules and paint themselves as a hero even though what they did was wrong, and they knew it was. This question would be a good way to help you see behind the crime and get a better understanding of their mindset. \*\*\*\*Please stress to your reader that they will not get in trouble for sharing information you may not be aware of. \*\*\*\*

## **Chapter 14**

### **1. What does being exiled mean? Can you relate to Zoe even more now?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Zoe shares with Percy that she helped a hero steal the golden apple from her family's garden. By doing this she was exiled from the garden and discarded by her family. Many of our readers may feel like they were exiled from a previous foster family that didn't work out or from their bio-parents. This feeling may be greater if the bio-parents have new children and your reader is aware of them. The feeling of loss and despair can be heart wrenching and confusing for them. On the other hand, your reader might see their removal from their bio-parent as an escape from a bad situation. In each case it is your responsibility to push any positive feelings forward and try to replace the negative ones. If your reader sees themselves as a hero and someone who triumphed, then celebrate that. If they are heartbroken about the loss, try to spin them to a more positive idea. Remind them how brave they are to fight this battle and that you will always be there for them through it all.

### **2. What makes Rachel Elizabeth Dare special?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy is on the run from skeleton monsters and runs into Rachel Elizabeth Dare. He nearly tries to cut her in half with riptide, but since celestial bronze won't hurt mortals, she was fine. The biggest reveal was that Rachel saw riptide, not a ballpoint pen. She even saw the skeleton monsters that were chasing Percy. Mortals are not normally able to see through the mist and this girl wasn't fooled by anything! Once your reader answers the questions and explains the significance behind it, ask them if they want to be able to see through the list. Some might be scared to see the world for what it is. While others might love the idea of a no filter life.

### **3. Have you ever been in a food fight? What would be the best "weapon"? (Fun Question)**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The group of heroes distract the skeleton monster with an impromptu burrito fight! This helps them escape and create a little havoc on their way out! Having been a part of a few food fights and 'goo games' with youth group leadership I can tell you the best or worst food to fight with is pudding... It's gross and sticky plus it never washes out of clothes. A fun one is whole stewed tomatoes because they are soft but leave behind a big mess! Dream up some crazy food fight scenario with your reader and maybe try to recreate it using silly string, slime or some other non-food items!

## **Chapter 15**

### **1. What are you afraid of or what fear have you overcome?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Throughout this book we are reminded that Talia is not a big fan of heights and being up high at all. Percy knows her secret and tries to help her as much as he can, but Talia keeps pushing forward and facing her fear. You know your reader very well and may already be aware of a difficult fear they have. It could be something easy

like heights, the dark, or snakes, but it could also be food insecurity, feeling safe in their bed, or having hot water and electricity. The latter fears can be worked on with a trust-based relationship. As the reader begins to trust that you are a safe person for them those fears will subside. They may always be there because the traumas experienced that caused the fear doesn't go away, but it is your job as the caregiver to acknowledge the fear and explain that you understand why the reader is acting the way they are.

**2. Who is Bessie and why is he important to the story?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Bessie is a cow serpent... Yep, a cow that is shaped like a serpent in the sea. Percy helped rescue him right before he left camp to join the quest and Bessie has been following him ever since. Now it seems that Bessie must be sacrificed in order to bring down the Gods. If someone sacrifices Bessie they gain unlimited power and can destroy Olympus. Ask your reader if they would be able to sacrifice Bessie to obtain an unlimited power supply. It will be interesting to see their response. In my experience most foster/adopt readers love animals because they are innocent and show unconditional love. Bessie is described as an innocent animal and I know my readers would find it hard to hurt an animal for their own gain.

**3. Have you ever gotten unexpected help from an unexpected person?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy and the group of heroes are once again under attack from the manticore, who is trying to lure Thalia into a dream of power and glory by killing Bessie and overthrowing the gods. Under duress, Percy calls Mr. D at camp and pleads for help politely and somewhat begrudgingly. Mr. D comes through and is about to defeat the manticore and his servants buying the heroes time to reach their destination. Your readers, like Percy, may be dumbstruck at the power Mr. D showed in the face of the monsters. He is normally apathetic to the heroes and doesn't seem to mind if they expire or disappear. Our readers may not expect a lot of people to help them and when they do it is a surprise. Readers affected by trauma normally grow up in a home that is isolated from the world. They are told that outsiders are mean or out to get their family, so when someone acts nicely towards them it can be viewed as a radical response. This euphoric feeling can get addictive though. Keep an eye out for your readers to "play the victim" in situations where they could and should be able to handle things themselves.

## **Chapter 16**

**1. Tell me about a time you sacrificed your happiness for others.**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The group of heroes isn't traveling as fast as they need to in order to reach Artemis or Annabeth by dusk. One of the biggest reasons is Bessie. They must keep him safe from Luke and the titans, but Bessie is a sea cow and not very swift. Grover volunteers to bring Bessie back to Long Island to keep him safe from harm. This is a big sacrifice because Grover really wants to help save both Artemis and Annabeth and he really doesn't like water. Your reader may need help with this question because it

is sometimes hard to see where you did something for others, but I am sure they do it each and every day. Something simple like helping a younger sibling draw a picture or taking time to read a book with them could be a great example. They are giving up something they want to do in order to make someone else happy.

**2. Who do you think attacked the car carrying Zoe, Thalia, and Percy?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: One their way to rescue Artemis and Annabeth the heroes are attacked by a lightning bolt. This is peculiar because those are normally Zeus's weapon of choice and his own daughter was in the car. However, the prophecy did say that someone would perish by the hands of their father. This question is meant to just get your reader thinking and maybe to create a hypothesis about the upcoming chapters in the book. As adults we think ahead and try to be one step ahead, but many of our readers don't have the same forethinking ability. Books, movies, and video games can help them stretch that muscle and start to develop a wider range of thinking. These are also easy ways to engage your reader if they might not be interested. If they have a rooting interest in the story and want to be proven right, they are going to want to keep reading.

**3. Who is the General?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: At last we find out who the General is, his name is atlas and he is a titan. Atlas was tasked with holding up the universe by the gods after the titans were defeated. Atlas is also Zoe's father! Maybe your reader predicted this all along and maybe this one caught them completely by surprise. If they were right, make sure to congratulate them. If they were off, you can just talk about the ramifications of this reveal.

## **Chapter 17**

**1. Do you think you could turn Luke's offer down?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: It appears that Luke's life depends on recruiting Thalia to the side of Kronos and the General. He is pleading with her to join him in the quest to destroy Olympus and Camp Half-Blood. Luckily for all those involved Thalia rebukes his advances and charges to fight him and the General with Zoe and Percy. If your reader puts themselves into Thalia's place it may be hard for them to turn down his offer. Luke was Thalia's partner in crime, her protector, and her confidant for a long time before they met up with Grover and tried to enter camp. Now she is seeing him for the first time after being resurrected and he isn't the same person anymore. Ask your reader a follow up question about how hard they think it was for Thalia to say no to Luke and why they think that way.

**2. If you were to rush into battle and had to choose between Atlas or Luke, who would you go after and why?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Seems like an easy answer, pick the demigod over the titan and just accept that you may have a better shot. Your reader may surprise you by taking the harder path and accepting that if they are to go down it would be better to go out trying to take down the bigger foe. The key part of this question is the “why” it is imperative that our readers not only make a choice but learn to defend the choice in their words. Whether or not we agree with them is one thing! I think helping our reader develop their voice and critical thinking is a big task that foster/adopt caregivers must try to work on constantly. Luckily these books give us many instances where your reader can defend opinions!

**3. Do you agree with Thalia’s decision about how to deal with Luke?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The battle with Luke and Atlas has commenced and our heroes have come out on top once again. Atlas is once again in his forced prison of holding their literal weight of the world on his back and Luke is cornered by Thalia. Thalia now has a choice- she can bind Luke and allow him to be tried for his crimes on Olympus or she can push him off the cliff where he will more than likely not survive. Thalia chooses option 2 and shoves Luke off the cliff to the dismay of those around her. Our readers may think this is justified, Luke did some heinous things by betraying his friends and family by aligning himself with Kronos. On the other hand, we live in a world where it is not our responsibility to exact justice for crimes committed. Personally, I remind my readers that the easy way is always to deal with it yourself, but the easy way is not always the right way. We have a system that can deal with crimes in place and it is not our job to determine the punishments for those that wrong us. The same determination could be made for anyone who may have hurt your readers before they came to live in your home. As caregivers we want to take our pound of flesh but know that the right thing to do is let the law decide the fate of the abusers.

**Chapter 18**

**1. What do you think happens after we die?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: This question can take you many directions, just go with it! Once the heroes are at a safer spot away from the battle, they tend to Zoe who suffered a fatal injury from the fight with her father Atlas. Zoe does pass away, and her soul is taken by Artemis and released as stars into the atmosphere where she can live on forever. Depending on your views of faith and the afterlife your family may have a different idea of life after death than others. The death of a character in a book, movie or TV show can sometimes spark conversation for younger readers. If you have a religious background your views on the afterlife may be well known, but if you don’t these are great jumping off points to have an age appropriate discussion about what happens after we die.

## **Chapter 19**

### **1. Do you understand why Thalia joined the hunt?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: The Gods are determining what to do with Percy and Thalia because of their immense power to bring down Olympus when they turn 16. Some Gods vote obliteration, and some voted to reward them for the heroic acts in San Francisco. During this discussion Thalia was offered to be Artemis's lieutenant of the Hunt. Thalia accepted the offer assuring that she would never turn 16 because she would no longer age. She also felt like this was the best option for her going forward. Our readers may understand the choice, but also may not understand the sacrifice Thalia is making. The choice seems like a home run with being immortal and having constant companionship with a god, but you also give up having the experiences a young adult has. It is a good reminder that even the best options still have a downside and a cost. Readers with a trauma background sometimes fail to see the negative (or positives) of a decision they agree with. Like most people they get a tunnel vision mentality and focus on the benefits of the choice. It is our place to remind them of the costs of the choice or to simply prompt them to think of all outcomes before committing. One of the hardest things to do as a caregiver is see a potential pitfall that your reader misses and holding back your reservations to teach them this lesson.

### **2. Has someone ever told you a hard truth? What did they say and why was it hard to hear?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Athena pulls Percy aside and tells him that his father Poseidon has taken a great risk by vouching for Percy. She tells him that whether he likes to hear it or not, he is dangerous to the safety and security of Olympus and the world. Hard truths are a part of life, and sometimes they are concerning "blind spots" we have. Your reader might have some narcissism in them and that can be a hard thing to hear even if it is true. People that love and care about us can sometimes cut the deepest because they have no benefit from telling us something that will upset us. If you hear an unwelcome truth from a person you deeply care about it causes you to think about it more and might make you see it to be true. This happens for adults as well and can be just as hard to hear. I have been made aware of my blind spots from my kids in the past and that has helped shape me into a better dad and person. The biggest take away you can stress to your reader is how to appropriately react to a truth from a place of love and respect. I tell my readers to always think first about who is talking to you and then about what is said.

## **Chapter 20**

### **1. How do you feel about Luke surviving and losing Zoe and Bianca?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: It is revealed that Luke has survived his fall and is sailing on his ship with Krono's army. We lost two characters who were fighting for the "good" side in this book and one of the bad guys somehow survives an over 50-foot fall onto a rocky ground?!?!?! Luke is a character that is divisive because many of our readers can relate



to his thought process. He was tossed aside by distant parents and didn't feel like he belonged or was loved by parental figures. So, he seeks out revenge in a over the top way, but he is angry, full of vengeance and wants someone to pay for all the bad things that he has endured. On the other side he is a bad guy and shouldn't be spared over people who are good. This is a great lesson to show our readers that life isn't always fair, and it is not up to us to control who gets to live or die. There must be something more to Luke's story and he is being kept around to possibly seek redemption or finish his cause.

**2. Would you keep Nico's Identity from the Gods and Chiron? Why or why not?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Percy has the unenviable task of telling Nico that Bianca was lost in battle. Nico reacts about as well as you can expect since he demanded that Percy keep her safe on the quest. Just then Percy and Nico are attacked by the skeleton warriors and Nico sends them straight to the underworld. This confirms Percy's thoughts that Bianca and Nico are children of Hades. Nico runs away from camp and Percy and Percy decides to keep this bit of information from the Gods. The last thing he wants is more fighting on Olympus and another child of the Big Three running around would cause more problems between the gods. Secrets are sometimes hard for trauma affected readers. They may have been abused in the past and forced to keep "secrets" from other adults or they may have seen abuse and forced to keep a family secret so they wouldn't get removed. These are forms of manipulation and your readers might not be able to hold any more secrets.

**3. What do you think is going to happen with Percy, Grover, Annabeth, and Luke in the next book?**

CAREGIVER NOTE: Make sure they have finished reading before asking! Since this book is the exact middle of the series and we now have three books of information about these 4 characters it is good to see where your readers are at with each character. Keep them interested and engaged with the material with this question. Have your readers put on their future hats and try to predict the story lines for each character. Write these predictions down and see how right they were after the next book. These books are a great tool to get your reader's imagination flowing. They are full of action and lead to the reader wanting to guess what happens next. After your reader finishes this book, ask them to write down a prediction for 3-4 characters for the next book. Make sure to ask them questions about the characters and have them develop their thoughts about each one. Follow up with them as they read book 4 to see if they were correct. This is a great tool to get your reader to start thinking ahead. This is a skill that many of us have developed from a young age, but many trauma brains don't seem to grasp. It could be because they had to spend so much time worrying about the present that they were unable to think about the future or their present and past were not great so thinking of the future seemed pointless. Regardless of the reason it is our job as caregivers to help our readers develop this skill.

## About the Reviewer

### **Steve Madole**

I am an adoptive dad of three boys living near Grand Rapids, MI with my wife, our cats and dog. We also fostered many other children in the last 5 years! I have done many trainings with the Dr. Karen Purvis Institute and try to keep up on different trauma training's monthly. My whole family nerds out on comic books, video games, movies and regular books! We often read a lot of the same comics and books which can lead to some awesome conversations!