

Advanced English 9



Reader Response and Reflection - Exemplar

Name: Susie Student

Directions: Select one full-length work from the list included on the Advanced English 9 summer assignment handout. After reading complete a Reader Response and Reflection sheet. Students will turn in their completed Reader Response and Reflection sheet to their teacher on the first day of English class in September. **All responses MUST be typed, using Times New Roman, size 12 font. When providing textual evidence, answers MUST include MLA citations. Students are not permitted to use contractions in their responses.**

1. In 7-10 sentences, explain the plot of the novel.

In Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan, Percy is a 12-year-old boy who has been sent to different schools because of his academic and discipline issues. Percy senses that he is different but assumes it is just his life. Kids pick on him, teachers seem to hate him, and he does not do well in any of his classes except one because of the teacher, Mr. Brunner. On a field trip, Percy fights off a creature that everyone says does not exist, and he begins to think he imagined it. Later, after school lets out, he goes with his mom to the ocean and ends up being chased by a Minotaur, losing his mother, and finding out his best friend is a satyr. At Camp Half-Blood, he trains to become a hero and finds out that his father is Poseidon when, after a game of catch-the-flag, a symbol appears above his head marking him as son of the sea god. He also learns he has been accused of stealing Zeus' master lightning bolt. He sets off on a quest to clear his name along with Annabeth, daughter of Athena, and Grover, his satyr-guardian/friend. They travel across the country, find enemies, and eventually, the lightning bolt in a place they did not expect. Percy returns it and gets his mother back.

2. What events were the most significant and why? Describe at least three events in detail.

1. Percy is acknowledged by his father after helping to unwittingly win the game of catch-the-flag at Camp Half-Blood. This is the first time he feels important or special instead of like an outsider. Although he had not felt like he fit in as either a mortal or demi-god, knowing who his father is shows Percy that he is part of something.
2. Percy is given a quest to find and return the lightning bolt by Chiron/Mr. Brunner and the oracle. By being sent out on a mission, Percy realizes that there are others who need to be able to depend on him. It teaches Percy that he can be responsible and make a difference, no matter what others may want or expect from him.
3. When Percy returns the lightning bolt, he meets his father. I feel that this is more significant than completing his mission because it gives Percy a chance to see that the man behind the mythology exists. It also allows Percy to decide how he feels about the world he now is part of and whether he is willing to accept the immortal world or re-enter the mortal world.

3. What reactions did you have while reading this novel? Take a quote from the book, describe your emotional reaction to what was said, and explain why you had this reaction.

I was nervous for Percy when he met the different challenges and creatures in the book but I was also excited for the adventures he had. When Percy saw his mother disappear however, I felt fear and sadness at the idea that she had died. It made me think about what life would be like without my mother and I did not like that idea. Percy had a strong connection to his mom, like I do with mine. I felt that it would be overwhelming to be without her. On page 29, Percy says, "A word about my mother...Her name is Sally Jackson and she's the best person in the world..." This statement shows how strongly he feels about her and how deep their connection is.

4. Using the STEAL (Say, Think, Effect on others, Actions, Looks like) method pick one character from the novel to analyze. List three adjectives to describe the character using textual support through STEAL.

Grover is a dynamic character who is crucial to Percy's journey. I do not believe that Grover was only focused on making Percy a hero although he obviously supported him. "Grover has big dreams. Perhaps bigger than are reasonable. To reach his goal, Grover must first demonstrate great courage by succeeding as a keeper, finding a camper and bringing him safely to Half-Blood Hill" (Riordan 76).

Despite his own goals, Grover cares about Percy. He is always the first to check on Percy after he loses his mom and stays with him when he's injured. Grover, small and nervous, seems as though he could not protect Percy, and even fails more than once. That never stops him from trying and never changes his unending support of his charge no matter how others may perceive him.

Grover even brings out the best in Percy. When Percy thinks the young satyr is a crippled kid he defends him from the school bullies. Grover's loyal to Percy and will to do anything for him. He is more than just his keeper; Grover is Percy's friend.

5. Discuss a part of the novel that reminded you of something in another text, short story, play, piece of art, mythology, movie, and/or television series and explain why.

I thought about when I was younger and in school. On page 39, Percy and his mom talk about why he must go to boarding school and Percy says, "Because I'm not normal." His mother tells him that it is not a bad thing that he is not just like everyone else which is something my mom would have said. But, Percy always felt different, as though others did not see things the way he did and that made him stick out from the other kids. It also seemed like he saw the teachers picking on him because he did not always get what they were talking about. I also saw a teacher I had in middle school in Mr. Brunner because he was cool and seemed to really like all his students.

6. For you, where was the climax in the plot? Why?

The climax was when Percy realized how much of the events had been set just to frame him. He realized that someone was trying to start something much bigger than just taking the lightning bolt and that the person had to be someone close to him. Finding out that it was Luke was a sad turn of events but taught Percy that he could handle a lot more than the thought he could.

7. Provide textual evidence to identify and explain the relevance of one of the major themes in the novel. Remember, theme is not one word. It is a complete thought. See the exemplar on how to do this accurately.

Percy learned to accept who he was even if it did not make his life any easier. He accepted that life can be hard and that it is more important to keep trying and keep solving problems. Percy started off without a clear sense of identity and low self-esteem. By the end of his quest/journey, Percy was sure of who he was and was confident enough to stand up to one of the biggest bullies in his life: his step-dad.

"He raised his hand, and my mother flinched. For the first time, I realized something. Gabe had hit my mother. I didn't know when, or how much. But I was sure he'd done it. Maybe it had been going on for years, when I wasn't around.

A balloon of anger started expanding in my chest. I came toward Gabe, instinctively taking my pen out of my pocket" (Riordan 348-349).

After this incident with Gabe, Percy and his mother were both able to come to the understanding that Percy could not fight his mother's battles for her. Just as she could not tell him whether he should choose the mortal

or immortal world. Both Percy and his mother were left to make the decisions that they felt were best. "If my life is going to mean anything, I have to live it myself. I can't let a god take care of me...or my son. I have to...find the courage on my own. Your quest has reminded me of that" (Riordan 352).

8. What are some of the symbols (discuss at least two) found in the novel? Use complete thoughts to explain what these symbols represent. For each symbol discussed, provide the quote and page number. See the exemplar on how to do this accurately.

One of the symbols in the novel, *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, was the pen that Percy was given by Mr. Brunner. The pen shows up in the first chapter of the book when Percy must fight off a fury. The pen has the ability to change into a sword called Riptide when Percy needed it to fight mythological creatures or beings. This is symbolic of both the power of words and belief because the pen would not hurt a mortal (it just went through them) but it could face down some of the worst creatures with Percy's strength behind it. It also makes me think of the adage, "The pen is mightier than the sword" which creates an ironic link to how the pen is used in the novel.

Another symbol from the novel is the master lightning bolt. "Zeus's master bolt,' Chiron said, getting worked up now. 'The symbol of his power, from which all other lightning bolts are patterned'" (Riordan 134). The bolt is a symbol of ultimate power for the gods. When it is stolen, everything seems to fall apart because the gods no longer work together to solve problems or help mortals. The bolt symbolizes that without a strong ruler, everything else just falls apart.

9. Discuss the following literary devices, and explain how each helps the author to achieve his/her purpose: point of view, dialogue, and tone.

In *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, the point of view is in first person narrative. It is written from the perspective of Percy. I feel that the author did this to create dialogue between the character and the reader, making the story something we could connect to. I also think it added to the tension and suspense because it was as though we were experiencing the events with Percy.

The dialogue in the novel is meant to teach us about Percy and his friends while moving the story along. Through conversations, we find out why Annabeth has an issue with Percy, and why she is so intent on helping him. We also find out why Annabeth lives at the camp year-round when she talks about her dad who remarried and a step-mom that does not want her around. "He doesn't care about me,' she said. 'His wife – my stepmom – treated me like a freak...Finally, I took the hint. I wasn't wanted. I ran away'" (Riordan 200). The author helps us understand who the characters are and what they want through the conversation they have.

The tone of *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief* varies between tension from danger, and that of a storyteller just trying to teach the reader a lesson. Percy spends a lot of time telling the reader that they should not want to be a demi-god or have powers like his because of all the danger it comes with. The tone is friendly, but intent on saying that things may not always work out the way one would like or even that it worked out for Percy.

10. Using quotes from the novel, explain the most confusing or surprising part.

One of the most surprising events to me was on page 86 when Percy finds out from Annabeth that monsters do not die. "Monsters don't die, Percy. They can be killed but they don't die...They don't have souls, like you and me. You can dispel them for a while, maybe even for a whole lifetime if you're lucky. But they are primal forces. Chiron calls them archetypes. Eventually, they re-form" (Riordan 86). Upon reading this revelation I wondered how Percy would chose to continue since he cannot really kill a monster. This knowledge made his journey even more challenging. How is Percy going to prepare to fight monsters and get his mother back if he is not able to really kill them? Would he worry that they would come back and get revenge on him? I had a lot of questions and was pleased with the answers to my questions at the end of the novel.