

A381_2017AbstractLauveRachel

Abstract

Greek mythology and civilization have not stayed confined to just the Mediterranean. As the mythology made its way to the Roman Empire, and as western civilization developed, allusions to mythology have become common in classical works such as Shakespeare's plays to the very names of our planets; even the architecture of Washington, D.C. reflects Greek civilization. Greek mythology has even become steeped in popular literature, as is the case for *Percy Jackson and the Olympians*, a middle-grade series written by Rick Riordan that explores what it would be like if the Greek gods themselves moved to western civilization and continued to have demigod children. The series has achieved great commercial success, but is often praised for its seemingly magical ability to turn reluctant readers into avid readers. In this paper, I examine what sets reluctant readers apart from readers who struggle, the idea of text accessibility, and what makes Riordan's series more accessible than the original Greek myths. This paper also explores how the series exists as a "tough text" by Cindy O'Donnell-Allen's criteria for the term and presents multiple strategies that could be used in teaching *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* alongside *The Odyssey*.

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