



Read each myth or legend carefully. Use details from the passage to answer the questions in complete sentences.

Hercules and the Lernaean Hydra

Long ago, in the ancient lands of Greece, where gods and heroes roamed, a fearsome challenge awaited the mighty hero Hercules .

Hercules, known for his incredible strength, was tasked with completing twelve difficult labors. His second labor was to defeat the Lernaean Hydra, a monstrous serpent with many heads and venomous breath , living in the swamps of Lerna. His loyal nephew, Iolaus, joined him on this perilous quest.

The Hydra was a terrifying foe. Every time Hercules bravely cut off one of its heads with his sword, two new heads would instantly sprout in its place. The battle seemed endless, and Hercules realized his immense strength alone was not enough to overcome this relentless creature.

In a moment of clever thinking, Iolaus had an idea. As Hercules chopped off a head, Iolaus quickly used a burning torch to cauterize the wound, preventing new heads from growing. Together, they worked, Hercules cutting and Iolaus sealing, until only the Hydra's single immortal head remained. Hercules then crushed this final head with a mighty rock.

With the Lernaean Hydra finally defeated, Hercules and Iolaus had completed another impossible labor. This myth teaches that even the greatest strength needs cleverness and teamwork to overcome truly difficult obstacles, showing that some problems require more than just brute force.



COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

(1) Who is the main character in this myth, and what is their role?

- (A) Hercules, a mighty hero
- (B) Zeus, king of the gods
- (C) Iolaus, Hercules' nephew
- (D) Hydra, a multi-headed monster

(2) Hercules faced a monster that grew two new heads for every one he cut off, so he needed to _____ to defeat it.

— continue writing on the lines below

(3) What does the word "cauterize" mean as it is used in the story?

- (A) cutting off quickly
- (B) burning to stop bleeding or regrowth
- (C) making something stronger
- (D) hiding it away

(4) Why did Hercules need Iolaus's help to defeat the Hydra? What does this tell us about solving difficult problems?

(5) What do you think this myth was trying to explain or teach? How does its message connect to something in real life today?



