



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

## Orpheus and Eurydice: A Journey to the Underworld



Long ago, in ancient Greece, music held a truly special and magical power. It could soothe wild beasts and make even the trees sway.

The most gifted musician was Orpheus. He played a lyre, a stringed instrument, with such skill and passion that all of nature paused to listen. His heart belonged to his beloved wife, Eurydice, whose beauty was as gentle as his melodies.



One tragic day, a venomous snake bit Eurydice, and she died, her spirit descending into the dark Underworld, the realm of the dead. It was ruled by the stern god Hades and his queen, Persephone. Overwhelmed by deep grief, Orpheus decided he would brave the terrifying journey to the land of the dead to bring his wife back.

With only his lyre, Orpheus entered the Underworld. His enchanting music charmed the ferryman Charon and even put the fearsome three-headed dog, Cerberus, to sleep. He stood before Hades and Persephone. His mournful songs were so moving that even the cold rulers of the dead were touched. They agreed to let Eurydice return to the living world, but with one strict condition: Orpheus must walk ahead of her and not look back, not even once, until they both had completely exited the Underworld.



As they climbed the winding path towards the light, Orpheus heard Eurydice's faint footsteps. He longed to see her, to know she was truly there. Just as they neared the very edge of the living world, filled with doubt, Orpheus



glanced back. In that instant, Eurydice, still a shadow, was pulled back into the eternal darkness, vanishing forever. Orpheus had failed, his love and doubt leading to irreversible loss. This myth teaches about the power of love and music, but also the danger of doubt and the importance of trust, reminding us that some losses are final and conditions must be honored.

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**COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS**

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

- A Orpheus, a gifted musician who loved his wife.
- B Hades, the stern god who ruled the Underworld.
- C Cerberus, the fearsome three-headed dog.
- D Charon, the ferryman of the dead.

**(2) Hades and Persephone agreed to let Eurydice return, but only if Orpheus did not**

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*— continue writing on the lines below*

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**(3) What does the word 'venomous' mean as it is used in the story?**

- A poisonous
- B very large
- C fast-moving
- D brightly colored

**(4) Why did Orpheus glance back at Eurydice, even though he was told not to? What does this tell us about human nature or the importance of trust?**

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

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