



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

Hercules and Geryon's Cattle



Long ago, in a time when gods and monsters roamed the earth, the mighty hero Hercules was bound to serve King Eurystheus. As penance for a terrible deed, Hercules had to complete twelve impossible labors, each more perilous than the last. His tenth task was to retrieve the magnificent red cattle of Geryon, a monstrous three-bodied giant, from the far-off island of Erytheia, beyond the Pillars of Hercules, a place considered the very edge of the world.

Hercules began his arduous journey, traveling west toward the setting sun. The scorching heat of the desert was immense, and in his frustration, he shot an arrow at Helios, the sun god, demanding relief. Impressed by Hercules' audacity and courage, Helios lent him his golden cup, a magical vessel that could carry him across the vast ocean. Hercules sailed in this cup to Erytheia, a land guarded by dangers untold, including the fierce currents of Oceanus.



Upon reaching the remote island, Hercules immediately encountered Orthrus, Geryon's fearsome two-headed dog, and Eurytion, the giant herdsman. With his immense strength and swift action, Hercules swiftly dispatched both guardians, but not before the commotion alerted Geryon himself. The monstrous giant, with his three heads, three torsos, and six arms, rose from his dwelling, armed with three shields and three spears, ready to defend his prized cattle with formidable might.

A fierce battle ensued, testing Hercules' legendary strength and cunning. Geryon attacked with all his might, a whirlwind of weapons and bodies, but Hercules, ever resourceful and powerful, used his bow and arrows, tipped



with the potent venom of the Lernaean Hydra. He shot Geryon, piercing his multiple bodies and bringing the colossal giant down. With Geryon defeated, Hercules gathered the vast herd of cattle. The return journey was equally challenging, fraught with storms, attacks from wild beasts, and even the wrath of Hera, who sent a gadfly to scatter the cattle across the land, forcing Hercules to spend a year rounding them up.



Despite these numerous trials and divine interference, Hercules persevered, eventually bringing the remaining cattle back to King Eurystheus. This labor demonstrated not only Hercules' incredible physical prowess and combat skills but also his unwavering determination, patience, and resilience in the face of overwhelming obstacles. His journey to the edge of the world and back solidified his reputation as the greatest hero of his age, a testament to what mortals could achieve.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

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

- (A) Hercules, a mighty hero completing impossible labors.
- (B) Eurystheus, the king who assigns difficult tasks.
- (C) Geryon, a three-bodied giant guarding cattle.
- (D) Helios, the sun god who helps heroes.

(2) In this myth, Hercules had to travel to the far-off island of Erytheia to retrieve the magnificent red cattle belonging to _____.

— continue writing on the lines below

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



- A Difficult and tiring B Exciting and adventurous C Quick and easy
 D Short and pleasant

(4) Hercules shot an arrow at Helios, the sun god, out of frustration. Do you think this was a wise or foolish action, and what does Helios's reaction tell us about Hercules's character or reputation?

(5) This myth describes Hercules's journey to the "edge of the world." What universal human experience or virtue does this part of the story emphasize, and how might it still resonate with people facing challenges today?

