

Tuesday 19th May y4 Skills

To investigate Greek myths (comprehension and punctuation)

Theseus and the Minotaur

King Minos of Crete was protected by a fearsome monster called the Minotaur. It was two metres tall and was half human and half animal. Its head was like a shaggy bull with curved horns as sharp as razors. Its eyes flashed fire. From the neck downwards it was human and had a huge, hairy, barrel chest. The Minotaur did not eat ordinary food. It fed on human flesh!

Now the Minotaur was so savage and dangerous that King Minos kept it hidden in a dark, dank maze of caves and tunnels called the Labyrinth. Each year Minos sent seven boys and seven girls down into the Labyrinth. They were never ever seen again. The people of Crete were terrified that King Minos would choose their children to feed to the Minotaur.

In the end, Princess Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, took pity on the people. She persuaded Theseus, a young warrior, to climb down into the Labyrinth and get rid of the Minotaur for ever. Ariadne told him to take a ball of wool with him and unwind it as he passed through the maze of tunnels so that he could find his way out again afterwards.

With trembling legs, Theseus began to grope his way through the pitch-dark twisting tunnels. In a short while Theseus heard the snuffling of the monster as the Minotaur charged. coming. A blood-chilling roar echoed through the passages as the monster face to face so he Theseus knew he could never defeat the monster so he decided to trick it. He flattened himself against the cave wall as the beast thundered towards him. Its foul stink filled his nostrils and the ground beneath his feet shook as the monster thundered past him. It passed so close to him that its bristly hair scratched his chest like thorn twigs.

As soon as it had passed him, Theseus struck the Minotaur with his sword. The monster fell in a heap bellowing with fury but Theseus plunged his sword in again and killed the beast.

He threaded his way back to the surface again and was greeted by cheering crowds. The evil king's protector, the Minotaur, was gone for good. They would never be troubled by it again and all their children could sleep safely in their beds once more.

An ancient Greek legend





- 1 What was the name of the beast?
 - 2 Write a description of the Minotaur. Look for clues in the passage. Describe its appearance, where it lived and what it ate.
 - 3 a) What was the name of the hero?
b) Write down what you think of him.
 - 4 List all the problems Theseus faced.
 - 5 Explain how Theseus overcame each problem.
 - 6 How do you think Theseus felt when he entered the Labyrinth?
 - 7 What do you think of the ending? Give a reason for your answer.
 - 8 'This story shows how good usually triumphs over evil.' Do you agree with this statement? Say why or why not.
- 5
- 1 Find and write down three sentences from the passage which include commas.
 - 2 Explain how commas help us when we read.
 - 3 Punctuate these sentences correctly. Use capital letters, full stops, commas, question and exclamation marks where necessary.
 - a) princess ariadne the daughter of king minos felt sorry for the people
 - b) she sent theseus a brave warrior down to fight the minotaur
 - c) the minotaur was a fearsome monster it lived underground
 - d) do you want to know something horrible the minotaur fed on human flesh
 - e) holding his sword in his hand theseus went to fight the beast