

Reading Exercise - The Old Cruel Cronus

Cronus was just as power hungry, if not more so, as his father. Because of this, he did not make for a very good ruler. But the similarities between he and his father don't stop there. Cronus was also a horrible father. Apparently, Cronus was aware of a prophecy stating that one of his children would overthrow his power. Just like dear old dad, Cronus wouldn't hear of the possibility of his power being threatened. So, he thought about a plan to put his own children out of action.

He remembered that it was actually his mother's doing that ultimately brought about the ruin of his father. Therefore, he decided to make a serious decision to protect his future as the new Greek leader. He did not want that anybody knew his intentions.

Once a year for five years, his wife Rhea gave birth to a child. As soon as it was out of her womb, it was in the mouth of Cronus. You see, his grand plan consisted of his swallowing each

newborn child, therefore literally taking full responsibility upon himself.

Don't worry, he didn't chew them up, but rather swallowed them whole.

Naturally, as a mother, Rhea was getting full of grief and anger. She simply couldn't stand to have her children permanently taken away from her so soon after birth. This is where Cronus's plan backfired. He underestimated a mother's love and natural instincts toward her children, which became the driving force behind Rhea's own scheme of revenge.

When she conceived her sixth child, she asked her parents for help. They sent her to the island of Crete. There she gave birth to her youngest, Zeus. Rhea returned to Cronus following the birth, but left Zeus behind. She substituted a large stone wrapped in clothes for the baby Zeus and offered it to Cronus. Wasting no time, Cronus immediately swallowed what he thought was his sixth child.

Based on the previous story, decide if the statements below are TRUE or FALSE.

1. Cronus' father seems to have been a good father for him. _____
2. It was said that Cronus was condemned to lose his power. _____
3. Cronus asked for help to make his plan come true. _____
4. Rhea gave birth to babies every year for Cronus. _____
5. Rhea did not agree with Cronus' evil plan. _____
6. Cronus suspected that his plan was not going well. _____
7. Rhea's family cooperated to let Rhea have a baby in an island. _____
8. 30 years passed when Cronus' plan stopped working. _____
9. Cronus didn't realize that Zeus was not swallowed. _____

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Who was Nike?

Nike was the goddess of victory, _____. Nike probably did not originally have a separate cult at Athens. As an attribute of both Athena, the goddess of wisdom, and the chief god, Zeus, Nike was represented in art as a small figure carried in the hand by those divinities. Athena Nike was always wingless; Nike alone was winged. _____. Nike is also portrayed erecting a trophy, or, frequently, hovering with outspread wings over the victor in a competition; for her functions referred to success not only in war but in all other undertakings. Indeed, _____.

At Rome, where Nike was called Victoria, _____. She came to be regarded as the protecting goddess of the Senate, and her statue in the Curia Julia (originally set up by Augustus in memory of the Battle of Actium) was the cause of the final combat between Christianity and paganism toward the end of the 4th century.

Among artistic representations of Nike are the sculpture by Paeonius (c. 424BCE) and the Nike of Samothrace. The latter, discovered on Samothrace in 1863 and now in the Louvre Museum, Paris, was probably erected by Rhodians about 203BC to commemorate a sea battle. Excavations have shown that the sculpture was placed alighting on a flagship, _____.

Some sentences have been removed from the story of the goddess Nike. Decide which sentence goes in each blank. THERE ARE TWO EXTRA SENTENCES YOU DO NOT NEED TO USE.

- A She also appears carrying a palm branch, wreath, or Hermes staff as the messenger of victory
- B helped athletes and gave prizes to those who needed her help.
- C all politicians loved her, and soldiers felt stronger under her protection.
- D daughter of the giant Pallas and of the infernal River Styx
- E which was set in the ground in such a way that it appeared to float
- F Nike gradually came to be recognized as a sort of mediator of success between gods and men
- G she was worshipped from the earliest times.

