Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Hercules: A Greek Myth by Michael Souza, Jeremy Tugeau", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/825. Entry version as of November 10, 2026.

Michael Souza , Jeremy Tugeau

Hercules: A Greek Myth

Republic of Korea (2016)

TAGS: Hera Heracles Hercules Zeus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Hercules: A Greek Myth
Country of the First Edition	Republic of Korea
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2016
First Edition Details	Michael Souza, *Hercules: A Greek Myth*. E-future classic readers, 2016, 46 pp.
ISBN	9791156802211
Genre	Adaptations, Illustrated works, Myths
Target Audience	Children (Ages 5–7)
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Creators



Michael Souza (Author)



Jeremy Tugeau (Illustrator)

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Additional information

Summary

The book is an ELT (English language teaching) resource from a Korean company. On the company website, it is stated that: "e-future Classic Readers is a collection of classic stories carefully retold for English language learners. Each story has been specially written to preserve the voice of the original author while still keeping the stories accessible through controlled grammar and vocabulary leveling." (see here, accessed: August 14, 2019). The book is accompanied by a downloadable audio. There are also other downloadable resources on the website.

This book offers an adaptation of Hercules' life and three labors (the Nemean lion, the Hydra, Augean stables) for young readership. Hercules is sent to complete various "jobs" and the first three labours are described. However, there are no specific names mentioned in the story, with the Hydra being referred to as lake monster, and no mention of Nemea.

The second part of the book is devoted to Playlet. First, there is a short, two scene, play. The play reenacts Hercules' encounter with the spirit of the river who came to help him wash the stables. Next there is a glossary of specific words that were emphasized in bold in the text: nouns, adjectives and verbs (such as arrow, wrestle, brain, pierce, splash etc.).

Analysis

This book was produced by a Korean company that develops English teaching resources. It uses the classical myth of Hercules to teach vocabulary and reading skills.

As befitting the non-native readership, some difficult names are avoided. Similarly, in keeping with the age of the readers, the story does not explicate Hercules' murder of his family, and only mentions that, under Hera's spell, Hercules "did many bad things to a lot of people." (p. 9). Since no one liked him because of these actions and even Zeus was angry with him, Hercules was forced to leave his home and go to Mycenae, where he became Eurystheus' slave. It is a nice addition to mention Eurystheus' dwelling in Mycenae, which is ignored in many similar retellings of the Hercules myth. It is mentioned that the king was afraid of Hercules and therefore he

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allocated difficult tasks to him. The motives behind the king's decisions are emphasized, as the book explains that Eurystheus was afraid that Hercules might kill him, that he wished to humiliate him and so on.

It is interesting that the book refers to Hercules specifically as a slave, implying that Hercules had no choice but to become a slave, for there is no mention of him serving Eurystheus as an attempt to repent for his deeds. Rather, it is explained that Zeus learned the truth about Hera's spell and told Hercules that if he completed all the jobs the king gave him, he could return to his home country and become the greatest hero in the world. Thus the labours, or jobs as they are named here, appear to be a means for Hercules to gain recognition.

Hercules is described as using his strength but also his brain. He defeats the lake monster on his own in this retelling, using his wits. In the end, a mysterious woman appears to help Hercules with his third task. She appears to be the spirit of the river. Perhaps she replaces the goddess Athena who also assisted Hercules in the original myth. The moral is that it is important to have friends who can help you in times of need.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Hera Heracles Hercules Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Animals Emotions Family Heroism Journeys Punishment

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