

Orpheus and Eurydice - Answers

Read the story carefully, then answer the following questions in as much detail as you can:

1. How do we know that Orpheus' music was so powerful?

Orpheus' music could enchant all who heard it. It could turn bad men good and tame wild beasts.

2. How did Eurydice die?

Eurydice was bitten by a poisonous snake, which was venomous enough to kill her.

3. Where did Orpheus go to try and get Eurydice back?

Orpheus travelled to the underworld, to beg Hades to bring her back.

4. Orpheus faced three problems on his journey. What were they?

The first obstacle was a huge wooden door chained shut. The next was a dark, smelly room with Cerberus (Hades three headed hound) guarding it. The final obstacle was "slick black hands and arms" formed from the inky waters of the river Styx and attacking him.

5. Draw and label a picture of Cerberus.

Students are asked to draw a picture of the "enormous three headed dog". They may have taken cues from its description as "Hades' grotesque hound" and "beastly dog" with monstrous paws.

6. Orpheus was scared when he saw Cerberus. Find a sentence in the story that tells us this.

Either the sentence; "Orpheus' heart pounded in his chest and his ears rang" or "Orpheus grabbed his instrument with trembling hands and began to play some music."

7. Why did Orpheus look back across the river for Eurydice?

Orpheus looked back because he could no longer hear Eurydice's boat, and he was worried the hands had taken her.

8. Orpheus thought his quest would be easy. Why did he fail?

Orpheus failed because he was anxious to see Eurydice again. He was scared for her safety.

Challenge:

Can you think of another problem for Orpheus in the story?