

Guided reading session 3

Jason and the Argonauts.

Phineus directed Jason to the Symplegades. These were two cliffs bordering a narrow channel of water. It was the shortcut to Colchis, but there was one problem. Whenever a ship tried to pass, the cliffs crashed together, crushing the vessel to splinters. Luckily, Phineus knew the secret to sailing through safely, which he explained to Jason.

As the Argo approached the channel, Jason let a dove loose.

The dove entered the channel and the cliffs began to rumble, but it flew so fast that by the time the cliffs crashed, it had zipped through. The Argonauts quickly rowed the ship forwards as the cliffs drew back. As they approached the channel's end, the cliffs began to rumble again and the men raced to the exit. CRASH! They had made it, but only just-they lost the wooden statue at the stern of the ship.

When Jason and his crew finally landed on the coast of Colchis they went straight to the palace. As soon as they arrived, Jason asked for an audience with the king and found himself standing in front of Aeetes and his family.

The mischievous god of love, Eros was watching. He decided to play a trick.

Eros made Aeetes' daughter Medea fall passionately in love with Jason. She hung on Jason's every word when he spoke to her father. "Aeetes," said Jason, "I have been sent here to ask for the golden fleece. I cannot return home without it. I will do anything you ask of me in exchange for it."

At this, Aeetes laughed nastily. "Fine," he said snidely. "Tomorrow you will have a chance to win the fleece. I want you to harness the fire-breathing bulls I keep. Then you must plough a field outside my palace and sow this bag of dragon's teeth." Jason accepted Aeetes' challenge, but Medea was very worried.

Luckily, Medea was no ordinary princess.

She was also a witch and skilled in magic. That night, She went to find Jason. "I wish to help you," she said, "but you must make me a promise first. My father will be furious I aided you, so you must take me home with you and make me your wife."

"Of course!" said Jason, glad of the clever Medea's assistance.

What is going to happen? How do you think she is going to help? Remember what we have learnt about her.
