

ANCIENT

MONSTERS

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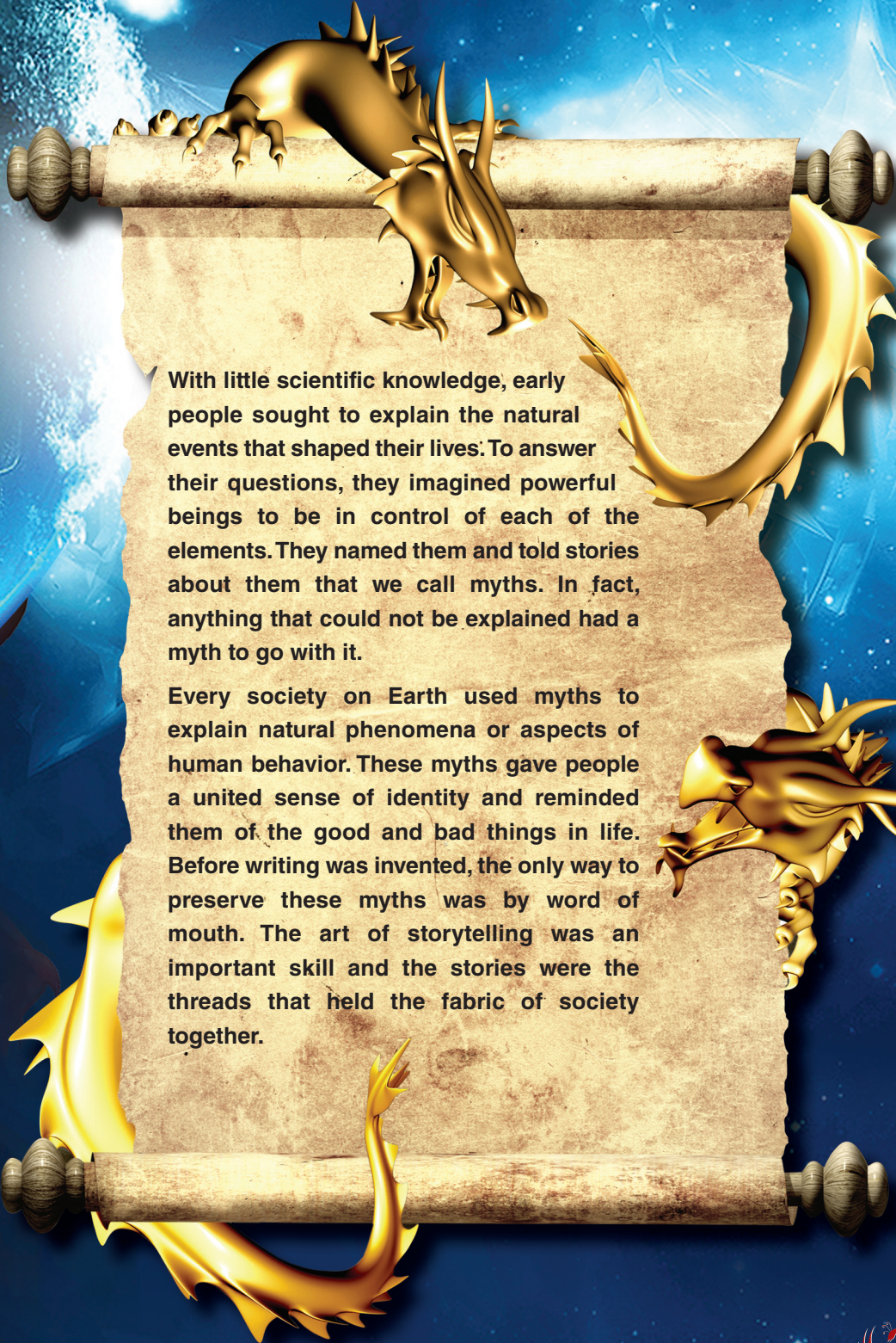
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Why we Needed Monsters

 ver since humans developed the capacity for higher thought, we have asked questions of the world around us. What makes things the way they are and what drives the forces of nature? The sun brings warmth and light as it travels across the sky. Night follows day and with it comes the moon and the stars. Winds blow, rains fall, seasons change, and the earth provides food. But sometimes, things go bad. Thunder, lightning, flooding, earthquakes, and other frightening phenomena bring death and destruction, but why? What have we done to deserve this?



One of the first written myths of the creation of the world belongs to ancient Egypt and dates back to the 4th millennium BCE.



With little scientific knowledge, early people sought to explain the natural events that shaped their lives. To answer their questions, they imagined powerful beings to be in control of each of the elements. They named them and told stories about them that we call myths. In fact, anything that could not be explained had a myth to go with it.

Every society on Earth used myths to explain natural phenomena or aspects of human behavior. These myths gave people a united sense of identity and reminded them of the good and bad things in life. Before writing was invented, the only way to preserve these myths was by word of mouth. The art of storytelling was an important skill and the stories were the threads that held the fabric of society together.

The Legend of the **Phoenix** & the **Sun**

 The Phoenix myth focuses on its power of rebirth, which is unique and represents immortality and renewal. In this myth, it is the sun god who gives the Phoenix its amazing power of rebirth.



A spectacular firebird is also featured in Slavic myths.



At the beginning of time, the sun looked down and saw the most beautiful bird on earth. It was the Phoenix, and it had brilliant feathers in all the colors of the rainbow. "Beautiful Phoenix," the sun called out, "you will live forever, and be an immortal symbol for the sun."

At first the Phoenix was very happy. But soon he began to hate the idea of living forever. Humans always chased him everywhere, trying to catch him and tear out his feathers. The Phoenix never had any peace or rest. Finally he decided that he needed to get away from people. So he flew east.

The Phoenix flew for a very long time. Eventually he found a place with no humans. It was a beautiful paradise, and he was happy there for hundreds of years. But, even though he was immortal, he still aged. After hundreds of years in paradise, he was old and tired. He started to become unhappy again.

Every morning, he awoke and begged the sun, "Please sun, make me young again." But the sun never answered.

One day, the Phoenix had an idea. Maybe the sun simply could not hear his request. After all, the sun was very large and far away. Perhaps if he traveled to the sun's home, then the sun could hear him. So he flew to Heliopolis. Because he was so old, he flew very slowly, but finally he arrived in the golden city. The Phoenix asked the sun once more, "Please make me young again!"

The sun, looking down on Heliopolis, heard the cry and granted the bird's request immediately. A bolt of fire shot out of the sun at the Phoenix and the bird burst into flames. It burned bright but then burned out quickly. Afterwards, a new Phoenix rose from the ashes, fit, healthy and full of youthful energy and strength.

Phoenix: Bird of Fire

Word Bank

(pp. 8-9)

the sun breaks (phr) = the sun rises (or appears)

shadow (n) = sth dark, without light

surface (n) = the upper part of an area

desert (n) = a dry area with little vegetation and water

majestic (adj) = grand

trail (n) = a long line of sth

spark (n) = a very small piece of burning material

reflect (v) = to shine off a surface

bright (adj) = shiny

plumage (n) = feathers

oasis (n) = an area with vegetation and fresh water within a desert

gleaming (adj) = sparkling

mighty (adj) = extremely strong

palm tree (n) = 

nest (n) = a home that birds make from leaves and other materials

lavender (n) = a plant with purple flowers and a pleasant, sweet smell

cinnamon (n) = a brown spice with a strong, sweet flavor and smell

seed (n) = a small grain from which a plant grows when put in soil

aromatic (adj) = having a pleasant scent

frankincense (n) = a gum resin with a very nice smell that comes from a type of tree growing in Africa and Asia

cry (n) = the loud call of an animal

drain (v) = to leave sth/sb empty

regal (adj) = worthy of admiration and honor like a king

stretch (v) = to extend

burst into (phr v) = to explode

spread (v) = to extend over a wider area

blaze (n) = a fire

go out (phr v) = to stop burning

pile (n) = a heap

ash (n) = the grey dust that fire leaves behind

underneath (adv) = below

squawk (n) = the loud, sharp call of a bird

vitality (n) = liveliness; the state of having energy and strength

youth (n) = the state of being young

reproduce (v) = to make offspring

cycle of life (phr) = the phases of life from birth to death

Pre-Reading activities

1 a) Choose the word that you think best completes each sentence.

- 1 The Phoenix is a very **rare/common** sight in the Arabian Desert.
- 2 It is a magnificent bird with very **dark/bright** feathers.
- 3 It looks like a ball of **fire/water** as it flies across the sky.
- 4 In ancient Egypt, the Phoenix represented the **end/beginning** of time.
- 5 When a new Phoenix is born, it is slightly **larger/smaller** than the old one.

b)  Listen, read, and check.

While-Reading activities

2 Read the text and choose the correct answer from A, B, C, or D.

- According to the text, the phoenix is
 - an oasis of gleaming water.
 - a long shadow that moves quickly in the sky.
 - the king of all birds.
 - a light reflected off bright red plumage.
- The Phoenix uses
 - frankincense to build its nest.
 - lavender and cinnamon to build its nest.
 - fruits and seeds to build its nest.
 - palm tree leaves to build its nest.
- The fire that surrounds the Phoenix
 - burns very quickly.
 - burns very slowly.
 - only happens in an oasis.
 - only happens in the desert.
- At any one time, there
 - is only one living Phoenix.
 - is only one king of the Phoenixes.
 - are only two Phoenixes.
 - are only a few Phoenixes.

3 Put the phrases in the correct order to show the life cycle of the Phoenix.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| A ☐ | flies across the sky |
| B ☐ | rises from the pile of ashes |
| C ☐ | bursts into flames |
| D ☐ | a pile of ash remains |
| E ☐ | lives for 500 years |
| F ☐ | stretches its neck and spreads its wings |
| G ☐ | restarts the cycle of life |
| H ☐ | moves underneath the pile |

4 Fill in: *blaze, vitality, cycle of life, cry, plumage*.

- The Phoenix has beautiful red and gold that reflects light.
- The of the *Benu* was believed to start the cycle of life.
- The bird bursts into flames, but the ends as quickly as it begins.
- A new Phoenix, full of youth and, is born from its ashes.
- In this way, the of the Phoenix never ends.

5 Replace the words/phrases in bold with their OPPOSITES. Use: *regal, underneath, shadow, bright, youth*.

- The plumage of the Phoenix is **dull** red and gold.
- The life of this **inferior** bird begins to drain away after its final meal.
- The **light** of the Phoenix moves across the surface of the desert below.
- The new Phoenix is a bit smaller with an appearance of **old age**.
- The young Phoenix emerges from **above** the pile of ash of the old phoenix.

After-Reading activities

6 Complete the fact file using information from the chapter.

The Phoenix	
Fact File	
Egyptians called it:	
Makes a nest from:	
Looks like:	
Eats:	
Reproduces by:	
Amazing facts:	

7 What four things in the chapter impressed you the most? Why? Discuss with a partner.

Review

Listening activities

- 1**  Listen to two friends talking about a mythical monster museum. For questions 1-4, choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D).

1 How does the man describe Magnus Crane?

- A scary
- B informative
- C entertaining
- D interactive

2 What was in the cages for holding monsters?

- A weapons
- B monster skins
- C monster heads
- D food dishes

3 Which room was Patrick's favorite?

- A the Room of the Undead
- B the Room of the Giants
- C the Room of the Dragons
- D the Room of the Dead

4 Which of these is NOT found in the Room of Little Things?

- A leprechauns
- B mermaids
- C gremlins
- D fairies

- 2**  Listen to the university professor on a lecture about monsters in mythology. For questions 1-4, choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D).

1 What is the lecture's subject?

- A Monsters and Human Society
- B Monsters and the Psychology of Fear
- C Monsters are Real Dangers
- D Monsters are the Cause of a Physical Response

2 What did early humans NOT hunt?

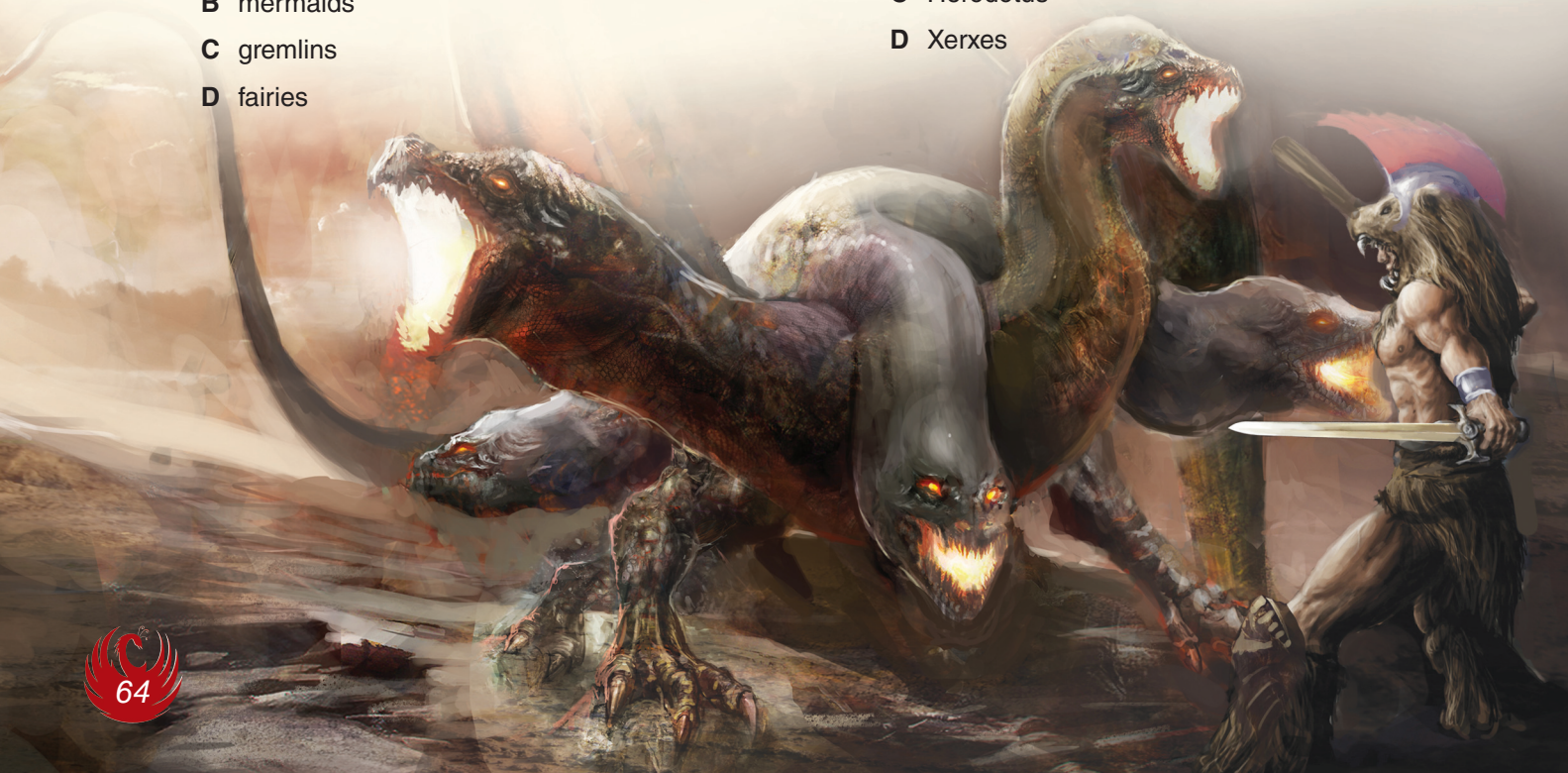
- A buffalo
- B deer
- C bears
- D wooly mammoths

3 Hercules killed the Nemean Lion with

- A his claws and fur.
- B his claws and sword.
- C his club and hands.
- D his club and teeth.

4 Who came with the Persian army through Macedonia?

- A Aristotle
- B Hercules
- C Herodotus
- D Xerxes



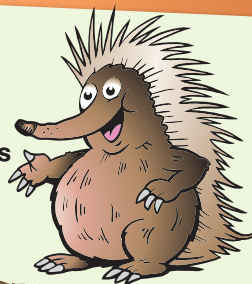
Amazing Facts

Did you know?



In China, the Phoenix bird *Fenghuang* was the **2)** of the Empress and only she could wear it. Fenghuang stands for virtue, grace, power, and prosperity.

This spiny anteater is called an echidna, perhaps because early naturalists thought it was part **1)** and part mammal.



After defeating Typhon, Zeus decided to leave Echidna alive so her children could challenge the future **5)** of men.



The Hieroglyphic symbol for Ammit is: , where the second owl **4)** death and the soul.

In Slavic mythology the firebird was of great value, but if you **3)** it, you would be doomed to terrible misfortune.

All cemeteries and tombs of ancient Egypt were located on the west **6)** of the Nile, called Amenti, where the sun sets and where Ammit lived.

Legend has it that a young Egyptian boy dug up the Great Sphinx at Giza after a dream he had which **7)** him becoming the Pharaoh Tutmosis.

In Hindu **8)**, one of the Avatars of Vishnu was the *Nara-simha* which means 'man-lion', and looks similar to the Sphinx.



1 a) Fill in the gaps. Use: bank, reptile, symbol, tradition, heroes, represents, prophesized, captured.

b)  Listen, read, and check.

2  In groups collect some more facts about the four mythic monsters of this book. Prepare a Yes/No quiz.

ANCIENT MONSTERS

When in the dark, what do we all fear most? Undoubtedly, the monsters that are hiding in the shadows...or are they? Humans have always feared and admired the unknown and yet they have the unique talent to give life and form to their worst fears. Monsters have survived in the timeless traditions of ancient cultures. What they left behind is monsters so enchanted and mystical that capture your imagination. Read about them in our vibrant illustrations, learn about their powers, and enter the realm of *Ancient Monsters*.

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