Myths in Motion

Analyze how a musical retells an ancient myth.

7.T.PM.1.a "Read and comprehend to analyze myths and stories (fictional or historical) that modern writers have adapted into their own works and identify key features of style and theme. (I)"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two plot details that Hadestown keeps from the ancient myth, circle two details it changes, and box one phrase that describes each work's style or theme.

Orpheus Sings Again

1 An ancient Greek myth tells of Orpheus, a gifted musician whose wife, Eurydice, dies after a snakebite. Grief drives him to the Underworld, where he sings so beautifully that Hades agrees to release her. Orpheus may lead Eurydice home only if he does not look back until they reach the world above. Near the exit, fear defeats him. He turns, and Eurydice disappears into the Underworld again. The myth uses a serious, tragic style to explore love, loss, and human doubt.

2 Writer Anaïs Mitchell adapted this myth in Hadestown, a folk and jazz musical that first appeared as a concept album in 2010 and reached Broadway in 2019. Her version keeps the journey below, Hades, the rule against looking back, and Orpheus's final turn. Yet Mitchell changes important details. Her Eurydice goes to Hadestown because hunger and cold make Hades's offer tempting. This choice gives Eurydice more control over her path. Instead of sounding like an ancient legend, the musical uses songs, repeated lines, and lively dialogue to tell the story.

3 These changes shape the musical's themes. The old myth warns that even deep love cannot always overcome death or uncertainty. Hadestown also asks why people make painful choices when they lack food, warmth, or safety. Its repeated storytelling has another purpose: the narrator invites the audience to hear the tale again, even though the ending is known. That hopeful, questioning style contrasts with the myth's finality. By retelling a tragic myth in a modern musical form, Mitchell connects an old story about doubt to unfair conditions that still affect people.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Name two plot details from the ancient myth that Hadestown keeps.

2. What change in Hadestown gives Eurydice more control over her path?

3. How does the style of Hadestown differ from the style of the ancient myth? Use one detail about each work.

4. What modern concern does Hadestown add to the old myth, and what detail from the passage supports your answer?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose a myth or traditional story not discussed in the passage. In two sentences, describe a modern adaptation that keeps two original details, changes one detail, uses one style feature, and develops a theme.

ANSWER KEY

Myths in Motion

GRADE 7 · 7.T.PM.1.a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two plot details that Hadestown keeps from the ancient myth, circle two details it changes, and box one phrase that describes each work's style or theme. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Name two plot details from the ancient myth that Hadestown keeps.	**Any two: the journey to the Underworld, Hades, the rule against looking back, or Orpheus's final turn.**
2	What change in Hadestown gives Eurydice more control over her path?	**Eurydice chooses to go to Hadestown because hunger and cold make Hades's offer tempting.**
3	How does the style of Hadestown differ from the style of the ancient myth? Use one detail about each work.	**The myth has a serious, tragic style, while Hadestown uses songs, repeated lines, lively dialogue, and a hopeful, questioning style.**
4	What modern concern does Hadestown add to the old myth, and what detail from the passage supports your answer?	**It adds concern about how poverty and unsafe conditions can force painful choices. Eurydice is tempted by Hades's offer because she is hungry and cold.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would adapt the myth of Icarus as a graphic novel set at a drone-building contest. It would keep Daedalus's warning and Icarus's risky flight, but Icarus would crash a drone rather than die; bright panels and short captions would create a tense style while developing the theme that ambition needs judgment.

Accept accurate comparisons that identify preserved elements, meaningful changes, and evidence-based style or theme claims. For Part 3, accept varied myths and formats if the response includes two retained details, one change, a style feature, and a fitting theme.