



INTRODUCTION: Enjoy The Show!

Hello and Welcome to The University of South Dakota's production of *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*! This packet will take you through some things to know about the theater, what to know before you see the show, and some questions to discuss in class after you've watched it! Theatre is a very special art that involves performance, design, and storytelling, and we all hope you enjoy the show and are maybe even inspired to create some theater yourself!



PART 1: Rules of the Theater

Before seeing a show in a theater, it's important to know how to behave in one. Here are some rules of theater *etiquette*¹

1. No talking!

Everyone onstage is telling a story, you are in the audience listening to that story. Like when your teacher reads a book out loud in class, it's important to stay quiet so everyone can hear what's going on and the actors can do their very best.

2. If you have electronics, turn them off!

A lot of adults have cell phones that they need to put on silent when they go see a show, so if you have anything like that, be sure they don't become a distraction for you or others.

¹ A code or set of rules among members of a group

3. Stay seated!

The chair is there for a reason. It's important to stay still and stay seated so you're not taking away from what's happening onstage. If you need to leave for any reason (and it's okay if you do!), please grab a teacher and do so as quietly as possible.

4. It's okay to laugh at jokes, clap after songs, and have fun!

Laughing after a funny line or getting excited after a musical number is okay! We want you to have a good time, and it actually encourages the actors since it lets them know you're having a good time!



Our cast of *The Lightning Thief* Photo Credit: Raimondo Genna

Part 2: What are we Watching?

The Lightning Thief is a stage *adaptation*², of the novel of the same name by Rick Riordan. The story follows Percy Jackson, a middle schooler with *ADHD*³ as he arrives at Camp Half Blood and finds out he is the son of a Greek god. He must go on a quest to retrieve Zeus' master bolt to prevent a war between the gods. With the help of his friends Grover, Annabeth, and many others along the way, Percy goes on a journey to save the world and finds out he can do much more than he believes.

The Characters

Percy: The *protagonist*⁴, loyal, brave, has no idea what he's doing in this new world

Annabeth: Athena's daughter, smart, wise, wants to prove herself

Grover: Percy's best friend, goofy and eager to help

Sally: Percy's mom, caring, loves blue food

Luke: Son of Hermes, helps Percy on his first day at Camp Half Blood

Mr. Brunner: Percy's latin teacher, a mentor figure

Mr. D: The god Dionysus, in charge of Camp Half Blood, dislikes his job

Clarisse: Daughter of Ares, a fighter, doesn't get along with Percy

Charon: The ferryman to the underworld (aka the afterlife in Greek mythology) super stylish

And many, many more characters in the *ensemble*⁵



² Adaptation: when a writer takes the themes, characters, and major plot points of a story and finds a new way to tell the story.

³ ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. It's a mental condition characterized by having trouble sitting still and difficulty focusing

⁴ Protagonist: The leading character in a story

⁵ Ensemble: A group of actors that play a bunch of minor characters

Part 3: Greek Mythology

The Lightning Thief takes elements from Greek *mythology*. Mythology is A collection of stories belonging to a culture or religion. Percy Jackson is the son of a Greek god. The gods are in charge of parts of the world (ex. the ocean, the sky) or human nature (ex. wisdom, love, music).

Poseidon: The god of the sea (shown in the statue)

Zeus: The god of the sky

Athena: The goddess of wisdom

Dionysus: The god of wine and theater

Hermes: The god of travel

Pan: The god of the wild

Hades: The god of the underworld

Demeter: The goddess of the harvest and plants

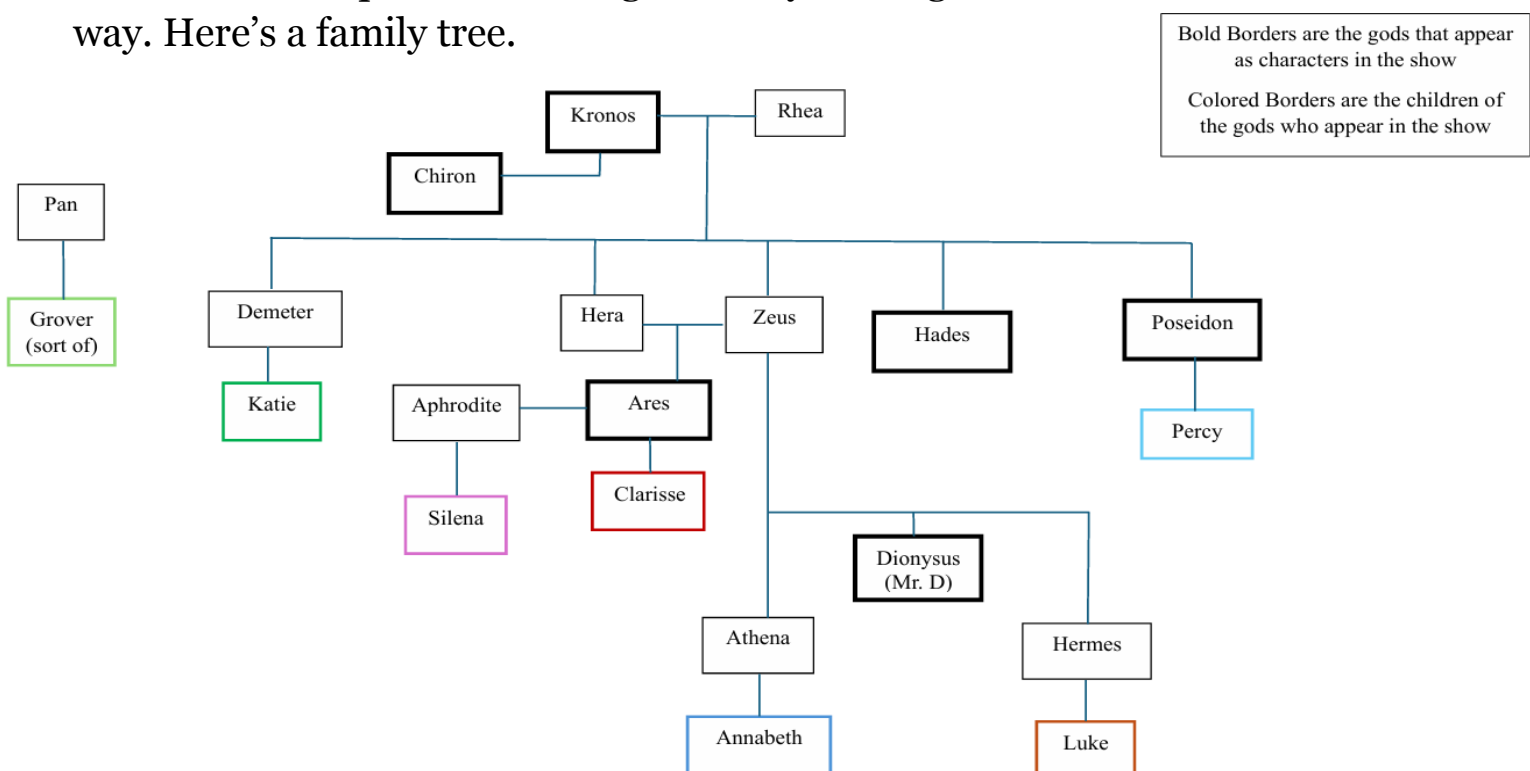
Ares: The god of war

Aphrodite: The goddess of love

Kronos: The father of the gods



The characters we meet at Camp Half Blood have one parent that's a human and one parent that's a god. Many of the gods are related in some way. Here's a family tree.



There are also some creatures and monsters that appear in the show that either help or want to hurt Percy. The ones in the show are:

Satyr: A creature with the head and torso of a human and the legs and horns of a goat (shown in the painting)

Chiron the Centaur: A mentor of many heroes, he has the upper body of a human and the lower body of a horse

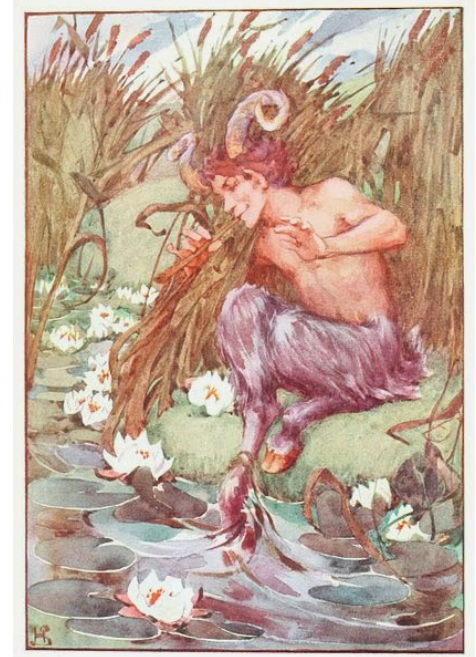
Fury: Monsters of anger, They are depicted as ugly women with bat-like wings

Minotaur: A monster with the body of a man and the head of a bull

Medusa: A woman who was cursed to have snakes for hair that turn people to stone at the sight

Chimera: A chimera is a monster with the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and a snake tail

Cerberus: the guardian of the underworld, he's a dog with three heads



PART 4: Taking the Stage

Theater is an art that takes teamwork. Making a show like this takes a lot of work from the actors, design team, and crew.

It take a lot of hands

There are so many people involved in a project like this. It's not only the actors on stage. There are people who design the lights, the set, the sounds, the props, and more. There are also people behind the scenes who put the pieces together. For example, there are people like the

*director*⁶, *stage manager*⁷, and *choreographer*⁸. These are just a few examples, there are so many people who take the time and energy to make what you see onstage look awesome!



Charlie Steele and Cameron Rhode in the shop welding metal to make part of the set Photo Credit: Raimondo Genna

⁶ Director: The one who's in charge of shaping the concept and action of a play

⁷ Stage Manager: The person responsible for making things work smoothly backstage and organizing information for the actors and design team.

⁸ Choreographer: The person in charge of creating the moves for a dance sequence.

Rehearsing

To practice the show, actors go to *rehearsal*⁹. They learn about their characters, the music, the lines, the dances, the fights, and where to go on stage. The director, stage manager, and other members of the team take their time to tell the actors what to do in detail so they can tell the story they want to tell. People can be in rehearsal for hours at a time and put in incredible amounts of hard work.

The Fights

In the show, you'll see a lot of fights. They look very real, but don't worry, nobody's getting hurt! The *fight choreographer*¹⁰ organizes the fights so it looks like actors are getting hit, but no one really is. With some clever staging and proper technique, the fights are safe and realistic looking!



The actors in one of their first rehearsals, learning to fight with a staff Photo Credit: Raimondo Genna

⁹ Rehearsal: A session where a team practices a show for a later performance

¹⁰ Fight Choreographer: The person in charge of creating the moves for a fight sequence.

Part 5: discussion questions

Now that you've seen the show, here's some questions to talk about in class!

1. What was the story about?
2. What did Percy learn about himself?
3. How did Percy's relationship with Annabeth change?
4. How did Annabeth learn to be more confident in herself?
5. How did Grover move on from his past and help Percy?
6. How did the trio complete their quest?
7. What was your favorite part of the show and why?
8. What was your favorite song and why?
9. Who was your favorite character and why?
10. Did seeing the show make you want to explore theater more?



The cast of *The Lightning Thief* singing "The Campfire Song"

Photo Credit: Raimondo Genna

Glossary

Etiquette: A code or set of rules among members of a group.

Adaptation: when a writer takes the themes, characters, and major plot points of a story and finds a new way to tell the story. *The Lightning Thief* takes a book and adapts it into a stage musical.

ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. It's a mental condition characterized by having trouble sitting still and difficulty focusing.

Protagonist: The leading character in a story.

Ensemble: A group of actors that play a bunch of minor characters.

Mythology: A collection of stories belonging to a culture or religion.

Director: The person who's in charge of shaping the concept and action of a play

Stage Manager: The person responsible for making things work smoothly backstage and organizing information for the actors and design team.

Choreographer: The person in charge of creating the moves for a dance sequence.

Rehearsal: A session where a team practices a show for a later performance

Fight Choreographer: The person in charge of creating the moves for a fight sequence.

