

# Books by the Stack



## *The Lightning Thief (Percy Jackson & The Olympians Bk 1)* by Rick Riordan

At first glance, Perseus Jackson seems like a loser, but he's really the son of Poseidon and a mortal woman. As he discovers his heritage, he also loses that mother and falls into mortal danger. The gods are about to go to war over a lost thunderbolt, so Percy and sidekicks Grover (a young satyr) and Annabeth (daughter of Athena) set out to retrieve it.

**Why you'll like it:** Entertaining. Action-Packed & Addictive.

**About the Author:** Rick Riordan started his career writing adult mystery novels, but began *The Lightning Thief* as a story for his son. He now writes full-time, and over 30 million copies of his books are in print in the United States.

### Questions for Discussion

1. Percy has been diagnosed with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder). The main traits of ADHD are inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. The ADHD child often has trouble keeping his mind on one thing and organizing a task. He feels restless and fidgety. He may blurt out comments or act without thinking. Does this profile fit Percy? Discuss how Percy does/does not seem like an ADHD child.
2. Percy says, "Mr. Brunner expected me to be as good as everybody else, despite the fact I had dyslexia and I had never made above a C- in my life. No – he didn't expect me to be as good. He expected me to be better." What do you think of Mr. Brunner as a teacher?
3. Percy gets exasperated with his mother because she puts up with Smelly Gabe, yet he is proud of her because "she did have a rebellious streak, like me." Do you find Sally Jackson a strong character? Does she stand up for herself? For her son?
4. Percy's first encounter with an Olympian god is Mr. D, Dionysus. Initially, Percy has a hard time believing Mr. D is immortal. What is your reaction to the way Dionysus is portrayed in the book? The Greek gods have very human traits – would this make them easier or harder to believe in?
5. When Percy finally learns the truth that he is the son of Poseidon, are you surprised? What hints are dropped before the revelation? How does Percy's personality fit/not fit the god Poseidon?
6. Medusa tempts Percy to stay with her as a statue. She warns him that he is simply a pawn of the Gods. Does Percy seem like a pawn? Why or why not? If you were given Percy's quest, would you undertake it or would you rebel?
7. Dreams play an important role in the narrative. At Montauk, Percy first dreams of a horse and eagle fighting on the beach. Later, he dreams of a voice from the pit. As he gets closer to Los Angeles, his dreams get scarier and more specific. What would the book be like without these dream episodes? Is there

information that Percy can only get from his dreams?

**8.** Percy's fight with Echidna and the Chimera is a low point for his morale. He begins to doubt that he is capable of being a hero. Why does he feel this way, and do you think his doubts are reasonable? What does this fight scene reveal about Percy's character?

**9.** As the book progresses, we learn more about Annabeth's family life, and her unhappy history with her father. How does this compare with Percy's own family? How does this help the two half-bloods overcome their mutual distrust?

**10.** Percy's trip to the Underworld does not turn out as he suspected. What do you think of Percy's decision to leave his mother behind? What does the scene in the throne room tell you about the three friends – Annabeth, Grover and Percy?

**11.** When Percy finally meets his father, Poseidon seems distant and hard to read. Percy says that he is actually glad about this. "If he'd tried to apologize, or told me he loved me, or even smiled – that would've felt fake. Like a human dad, making some lame excuse for not being around." Do you agree with Percy? Do you find yourself liking Poseidon or not?

**12.** How does the last line of the prophecy – *you shall fail to save what matters most in the end* – come true? What do you think of this ending? Did Percy make the right choice? What would you have done in his place?

**13.** In the end of the book, do you sympathize at all with Luke's feelings of betrayal? How does his story act as a foil (a counterpoint) to Percy's own?

*(Questions issued by publisher)*

