

Mythological Reads by Olivia Martello, Kirkland Town Library staff

You can blame my love of mythology on Percy Jackson. Like many kids, I devoured Rick Riordan's series, and the love for the mythology I first learned about in those pages has never gone away. If you'd like to explore stories set in vivid worlds that bring myths to life, give one of these books a try!

One of my favorite books is Madeline Miller's *The Song of Achilles*. This novel is a retelling of the Trojan War through the eyes of Patroclus, lover of the warrior Achilles. If you know the *Iliad*, you know how this story ends, yet Miller makes you love the characters so much you hope for a different ending. If you want to learn more about the myths and characters featured in the novel, a great starting point is *Mythos: The Greek Myths Reimagined* by Stephen Fry, which gives a fresh, witty take on classic myths.

Inspired by Mexican folklore, *Gods of Jade and Shadow* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia tells the story of Casiopea, a woman who dreams of a new life for herself. After she accidentally frees the Maya god of death, who needs her help to reclaim his throne, she is drawn into an adventure that takes her across the country and into the Maya underworld. *The Storm Runner*, the first in a trilogy by J. C. Cervantes, also explores the Maya gods. The first book is about Zane, a teenager who enjoys the sleeping volcano in his backyard, which turns out to be a prison for the Maya god of death. Thrust into this new world, Zane finds himself struggling for survival amidst a war between the gods.

If you're interested in exploring Norse myths, check out Neil Gaiman's *Norse Mythology*. Gaiman's retellings of stories featuring Loki, Thor, and Freya are vivid and enjoyable, great for readers of all ages. You can also see the gods and goddesses in new ways with Rick Riordan's Magnus Chase series, about a teenager who discovers he's the son of a Norse god. *The Witch's Heart* by Genevieve Gornichec is also an excellent exploration of Norse mythology, telling the story of the witch Angrboda.

In the realm of African folklore, Kwame Mbalia's Tristan Strong series stars twelve-year-old Tristan, a boxer struggling after his friend's death. After traveling to Alabama, Tristan inadvertently rips a hole in the sky, releasing legends of African myths and folklore who pull Tristan into their world and all the dangers inside it.

Children of Blood and Bone, a novel by Tomi Adeyemi, also finds some basis in West African mythology. Set in the fictional world of Orisha, where magic has been switched off and those with magical powers have been unjustly killed, Zélie and her brother join forces with a princess on a quest to restore the country's magic.

Finally, the Aru Shah series takes readers on a journey through Hindu myths. Twelve-year-old Aru lives in a museum and often tells lies in response to her mother's distance. After unleashing a Hindu demon that freezes time, Aru is claimed by a Hindu deity and sent on a mission to stop the demon from awakening the Lord of Destruction.

Whether young or old, these books will take readers on exciting journeys through new worlds and are perfect for the cold days ahead!