

THE LEGEND OF THE MINOTAUR

The Minotaur in Greek Legend had the head of a bull and the body of a man. The Minotaur lived on the island of Crete. Legend has it that every nine years King Aegeus had to send seven young men and women to be devoured by the Minotaur. Theseus was the king's son.

Theseus: *Father, why do you look so sad?*

King Aegeus: *The time has come again to send seven young men and women to be slaughtered by the evil Minotaur.*

Theseus: *That's unfair. Send me. I will go as one of the young men.*

Theseus sets sail with thirteen others to the island of Crete. When they arrive they are dressed in the finest robes and a feast is prepared before they are sent to the gated maze where the Minotaur lived.

Theseus: *I do not recognise your beautiful face. Who are you?*

Ariadne: *My name is Princess Ariadne. You are a very handsome stranger, what is the purpose of this visit?*

Theseus: *I am to be fed to the horrible Minotaur.*

Ariadne: *Are you not afraid?*

Theseus: *No. I will do what I have to do for my father the King of Athens.*

Ariadne: *If you will marry me and take me back to Athens then I will help you escape from the Minotaur.*

Theseus: *How can you help me?*

Ariadne: *Take this ball of silken thread. When you enter the maze in search of the Minotaur, tie the thread to the inside of the door and carefully unravel it as you go along. That way, you will easily find your way out of the maze if you survive. Good luck.*

The next day the maze is unlocked and Theseus is the first to be put inside. Everyone stands outside and listens carefully.

Theseus: *Right, I'll take the thread and tie it to the inside of the door. Now, where did I hide my sword?*

Theseus explores the maze holding his sword ready in one hand and unravelling the silk thread carefully with the other.

Theseus: *I can hear heavy breathing, is it coming from down here?*

Theseus enters a large cave and sees the terrifying Minotaur, which is half man and half bull.

Theseus: *Take that, and that and that, arh and that! Look at my sword, it is covered in blood. Where is the silk thread? I'll follow it back to the door.*

Outside the door Theseus finds Ariadne waiting for him.

Ariadne: *Are you hurt?*

Theseus: *Just a little.*

Ariadne: *Then take me back to Athens and we shall be married as soon as possible.*



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Section A

Choose the best word or group of words to fit the passage and put a ring around your choice.

The Minotaur had the head of a bull and the body of a

- 1 **woman.** **girl.** **boy.** **man.**

The Minotaur lived on the island of

- 2 **Creek.** **Crack.** **Crete.** **Crunch.**

Seven men and seven women were sent every

- 3 **seven** **eight** **nine** **ten**

years to be eaten by the Minotaur.

- 4 **Theseus** **King Aegeus** **Ariadne** **Minotaur**

offered to be sent to Crete. He met

- 5 **Theseus** **King Aegeus** **Ariadne** **Minotaur**

the night of the feast. She offered to help him escape from the Minotaur if he

- 6 **took a ball of thread.** **would marry her.**
found his way out. **took a sword.**

Section B

- 1 Why was the Minotaur frightening to look at?

- 2 What does the word 'devoured' mean?

- 3 Who sent young men and woman to be devoured?

- 4 How do you think King Aegeus felt about sending his own son?

- 5 Which phrases suggests Theseus and Ariadne liked each other?

- 6 What did Ariadne want Theseus to do for her?

- 7 Which sentences suggest Theseus was very brave?

Section C