THE HOUSE OF ATREUS

ZEUS

TANTALUS

PELOPS

NIOLBE = AMPHION

14 CHILDREN

THYESTES

ATREUS

MENELAUS = HELEN

AGAMEMNON = CLYTEMNESTRA

2 CHILDREN

AEGISTHUS

IPHIGENIA

ORESTES

ELECTRA
TANTALUS WAS THE SON OF ZEUS AND HE SAT WITH THE GODS FOR AMBROSIA AND NECTAR. HE CUT UP HIS SON PELOPS AND FED HIM TO THE GODS TO PROVE THAT THEY COULD BE DECEIVED. THE GODS KNEW OF THIS AND THEY DIDN’T EAT FROM THE SOUP. HIS PUNISHMENT WAS TO FOREVER BE TANTALIZED AND TO LIVE HIS IMMORTALITY IN HUNGER.
PELOPS

- Pelops had his life restored when the gods pieced him together. He had to have his shoulder remade from ivory, the one part of his body that was inadvertently eaten by Thetis.

- He eventually married Hippodamia after challenging her father to a chariot race. If he won the race he would be given Hippodamia in marriage; if he lost he would be killed.

- Either he or Hippodamia sabotaged her father's chariot so that the wheels would come off as they raced. He won and received her as his wife.
NIOLBE AND LETO

- NIOBE’S STORY APPEARS IN OVID’S METAMORPHOSIS.
- SHE THOUGHT HERSELF GREATER THAN LETO BECAUSE OF HER MANY CHILDREN (14) AND SHE CURSED LETO.
- ARTEMIS AND APOLLO SHOT DOWN ALL OF HER CHILDREN. HER HUSBAND AMPHION COMMITS SUICIDE.
- SHE TURNS TO STONE FROM ALL HER GRIEF. HER HEART OF STONE CAUSES THE REST OF HER BODY TO TURN TO STONE.
ATREUS WAS MARRIED TO A WOMAN NAMED AEROPE AND HIS BROTHER THYESTES WAS ABLE TO CONVINCE AEROPE TO CHEAT ON HIM.

ATREUS IS SO MAD THAT HE CHOPS UP THYESTES TWO SONS AND MAKES CHILDREN SOUP. HE THEN FEEDS THEM TO THYESTES. (VERY SIMILAR TO WHAT TANTALUS HAD DONE)
WHAT WAS THE MISFORTUNE THAT MENELAUS HAD TO FACE?

IMAGINE YOUR WIFE IS STOLEN AWAY FROM YOU FOR TEN YEARS AND IN ORDER TO GET HER BACK YOU HAVE TO FIGHT A WAR FOR TEN YEARS JUST TO GET HER BACK. IS THIS BAD ENOUGH LUCK FOR YOU?

MENELAUS = HELEN

HERMIONE = PYRRHUS

ACHILLES
IN ORDER TO GET WINDS THAT WOULD ALLOW THE GREEKS TO SAIL FOR TROY, AGAMEMNON WAS TOLD THAT HE HAD TO SACRIFICE HIS DAUGHTER. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT WANT TO, HE FELT COMPELLED TO DO SO.

CLYTEMNESTRA, AGAMEMNON’S WIFE, IS UPSET BY THIS.
AGAMEMNON RETURNS FROM TROY...WITH CASSANDRA

- AGAMEMNON GETS OFF OF THE SHIP AND INTRODUCES CASSANDRA. HE SAYS THAT HIS WIFE CLYTEMNESTRA SHOULD TEND TO HER.
- WHAT AGAMEMNON DOESN’T KNOW IS THAT HIS WIFE HAS BEEN SEEING AESISTHUS, THE SON OF THYESTES. THEY PLAN ON KILLING HIM.
- AESISTHUS WANTS HIM DEAD. WHY?
- CLYTEMNESTRA WANTS HIM DEAD. WHY?
CLYTEMNESTRA RETURNS WITH HER HUSBAND’S BLOOD

- CASSANDRA PROPHESES THE DEATH OF AGAMEMNON.
- SHORTLY AFTER, AGAMEMNON IS HEARD SCREAMING. CLYTEMNESTRA HAS KILLED HIM.
- ORPHEUS FLEES FOR FEAR OF HIS OWN SAFETY. HE WILL NOT RETURN UNTIL ADULTHOOD.
- ELECTRA WILL SUFFER AS AEGISTHUS WILL TORTURE HER LIFE.
ORESTES AND ELECTRA

- Orestes returns as an adult and has a difficult decision to make. In order to avenge his father's death he has to murder his mother.
- He obeys the gods and kills his mother and Aegisthus.
- Suddenly he sees women with long black hair like snakes.
- For years the Furies followed him and tormented his life. It was not until Orestes pleaded his case before Athena that he was absolved of his guilt.
- He admitted guilt which no other member of the House of Atreus had ever done.
- The curse was over.
FILL IN THE BLANKS OF THE FAMILY TREE OF THE HOUSE OF ATREUS

1. **ZEU**S
2. **NIOBE** = ? CHILDREN
3. **ATREU**S
4. **IPHIGENIA** = ? CHILDREN

2 CHILDREN

THE HOUSE OF ATREUS