Greek Myths Printables Free Sample

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A myth · questions · a colouring page · a myth-or-history sort

RETOLD IN OUR OWN WORDS

Pandora and the jar

From: Hesiod, Works and Days 42–105 (trans. H. G. Evelyn-White, 1914)

In Hesiod's Works and Days, Zeus is angry that Prometheus stole fire, and plans a trouble for people in return.

He tells Hephaestus to mix earth with water and to shape a lovely maiden.

The gods each give her something. Athene teaches her needlework and weaving, the Graces and Persuasion put golden necklaces on her, the Hours crown her with spring flowers, and Hermes gives her a crafty and deceitful heart.

She is named Pandora, which Hesiod's translator explains as 'All Endowed', because all the gods of Olympus gave her a gift.

Prometheus had told his brother Epimetheus never to take a gift from Zeus. But Epimetheus forgot, took the gift, and only understood his mistake afterwards.

Pandora took the great lid off the jar, and the troubles inside scattered among people.

Only Hope stayed inside, under the rim of the jar, because the lid went back on before she could fly out.

Picture: Pandora Gifted, plate 3 of Compositions from the Works, Days and Theogony of Hesiod, 1817, by John Flaxman (Public domain).

QUESTIONS

Pandora and the jar

Read the story again, then answer in full sentences

WORD BANK

mortal: a person who will die one day, unlike the gods

deceitful: likely to trick or lie

endowed: given a gift or a talent

rim: the top edge of a container

1. Why is Zeus angry with people?

2. Who shapes the maiden, and what from?

3. What does Athene teach her?

4. What had Prometheus told Epimetheus?

5. What stays inside the jar, and why?

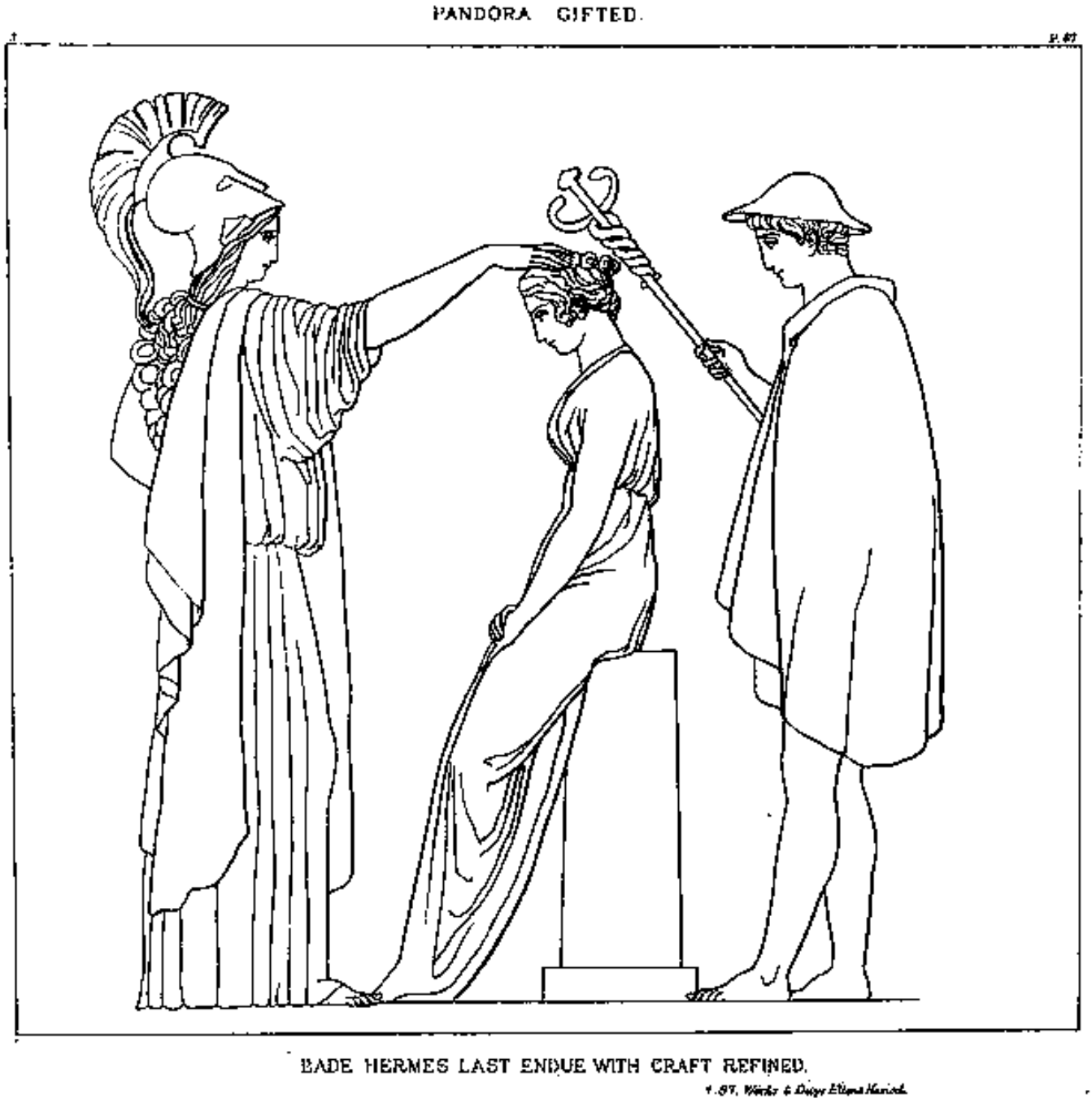
WHICH SOURCE IS IT?

Is this story **History** or **Literature**? Which writer tells it? How do you know?

COLOUR ME

Pandora gifted

Colour the line drawing



LITERATURE The gods each give her something. Athene teaches her needlework and weaving, the Graces and Persuasion put golden necklaces on her, the Hours crown her with spring flowers, and Hermes gives her a crafty and deceitful heart.

Drawing: Pandora Gifted, plate 3 of Compositions from the Works, Days and Theogony of Hesiod, 1817, by John Flaxman (public domain), turned to black and white.

SORT IT

Myth or history?

Read each statement. Tick the right label.

History: what historians, archaeologists, museums and reference works show. **Literature**: what a named poem, play or book says.

1. The jar became a box in the 16th century, when the scholar Erasmus either mistranslated the Greek word or confused it with the box in the story of Cupid and Psyche.	☐ History ☐ Literature
2. Only Hope stayed inside, under the rim of the jar, because the lid went back on before she could fly out.	☐ History ☐ Literature
3. Excavations at Knossos began under Sir Arthur Evans in 1900. They revealed a palace at the centre of a Bronze Age culture that dominated the Aegean between about 1600 and 1400 BCE.	☐ History ☐ Literature
4. Odysseus offers him the strong wine. The Cyclops asks his name, and Odysseus says it is ‘Noman’. The Cyclops promises to eat Noman last, as his gift to a guest.	☐ History ☐ Literature
5. His Metamorphoses is a poem in 15 books, written in Latin about 8 CE, collecting myths in which a transformation takes place. Many of its stories come from Greek sources.	☐ History ☐ Literature
6. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1851 retelling, The Golden Touch, gives Midas a little daughter, ‘whom nobody but myself ever heard of’, and Hawthorne says he chose to call her Marygold.	☐ History ☐ Literature

ANSWER KEY · FOR ADULTS

Pandora and the jar

1. Because Prometheus stole fire.
2. Hephaestus, mixing earth with water.
3. Needlework and weaving.
4. Never to take a gift from Zeus.
5. Hope, because the lid went back on before she could fly out.

Which source? Literature. It comes from Hesiod's poem Works and Days. In Hesiod it is a jar; it became a box in the 16th century, through the scholar Erasmus.

Sort it

1. History
2. Literature
3. History
4. Literature
5. History
6. Literature

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Six full packs (detective pack, reading worksheets, character cards, activity and colouring, posters, quiz and word puzzles) are available from the REALLYBYTE store: see greek-myths.folklore.im/shop/ for links. Free myths, a map and games: greek-myths.folklore.im

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The small print, kept short

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PICTURES

PICTURE	ARTIST	LICENCE	SOURCE PAGE (WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)
Pandora Gifted, plate 3 of Compositions from the Works, Days and Theogony of Hesiod, 1817	John Flaxman	Public domain	commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Flaxman_-_Pandora_Gifted.jpg

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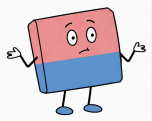
WHERE THE FACTS COME FROM

Every labelled fact in this pack was checked against the sources below on 30 Oct 2026. **History** means what historians, archaeologists, museums or reference works say. **Literature** means what a named ancient or later text says. Ancient texts were read in public-domain English translations on the Theoi Project, with book and line numbers. Retellings are in our own words and follow the events in the named text; where versions differ, we name each source.

Hesiod, Works and Days 42–105 (trans. H. G. Evelyn-White, 1914) · Theoi Project: www.theoi.com/Text/HesiodWorksDays.html
Britannica: Pandora: www.britannica.com/topic/Pandora-Greek-mythology
Britannica: Knossos: www.britannica.com/place/Knossos
Homer, Odyssey 9.105–566 (trans. A. T. Murray) · Theoi Project: www.theoi.com/Text/HomerOdyssey9.html
Britannica: Metamorphoses: www.britannica.com/topic/Metamorphoses-poem-by-Ovid
Nathaniel Hawthorne, A Wonder Book for Girls & Boys (1851; Walter Crane edition), Project Gutenberg: www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/32242



NEED HELP?

Useless can't help (he's an eraser, and he is busy keeping every version of every myth), but we can. Problems with your file, or spotted something we should fix? Email **info@reallybyte.com**.

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