

A MONSTROUS MINI-UNIT

Mythological monsters are quite interesting to study. They stir the imaginations of children of all ages, and most have traveled through time in stories and classical allusions. The purpose of this mini-unit is to show how this most captivating topic can be utilized in the classroom as a cross-curricular launch pad. Sample lessons in Monstrous Mathematics, Monstrous Geography, Monstrous Science, Monstrous Poetry, Monstrous Vocabulary, Monstrous Art, and Monstrous Journalism are offered to generate other ideas.

All monsters mentioned in this unit can be found in D'Aulaires' *Book of Greek Myths* and are listed below with their page references for your convenience.

Argus (24, 26-27, 54)	Ladon (18, 95, 140)
Calydonian Boar (176-177, 179)	Marsyas (123-25)
Centaur (96-97, 156)	Medusa (116-18, 123, 128)
Cerberus (18, 56, 102, 140, 157)	Minotaur (149-50)
Charybdis (173)	Nemean Lion (18, 132, 134)
Chimaera (18, 129)	Nessus (145-46)
Chiron (97-99, 162, 180)	Pan (89-92, 94)
Cyclopes (12, 17, 20, 28, 48, 99)	Pegasus (118, 128-29)
Echidna (17-18, 24, 132-33)	Python (42)
Erymanthian Boar (135)	Satyrs (90-91)
Geryon (138)	Scylla (173)
Giants (146)	Sirens (172)
Gorgons (116-18)	Stymphalian Birds (135)
Gray Sisters (117-18)	Talos (108, 152-53)
Harpies (165-66, 172)	Triton (38)
Hydra (18, 134, 139, 146)	Typhon (17-18)

Other sources used in compiling this mini-unit include the following:

Dibbley, Dale Corey. *From Achilles' Heel to Zeus's Shield*. Fawcett Columbine: New York. 1993.

Morford, Mark P. O., and Lenardon, Robert J. *Classical Mythology*, Fourth Edition. Longman: New York. 1991.

Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary. Merriam-Webster Inc.: Springfield, MA. 1991.

MONSTROUS SCIENCE

❖ CLASSIFYING MONSTERS ❖

TEACHER'S KEY

Many of the monsters listed on the first page of this section defy scientific classification because they represent two or more different scientific classes. Look at each of the following monsters and determine the correct placement on the chart below. All of the monsters named on this page will be listed more than once.

Echidna	Pegasus	Medusa	Sirens
Triton	Chimaera	Harpies	Sphinx

CLASSES OF ANIMALS

<u>Osteichthyes</u> : bony fish	<u>Reptilia</u> : reptiles	<u>Aves</u> : birds	<u>Mammalia</u> : mammals
Triton	Echidna Chimaera Medusa	Pegasus Harpies Sirens Sphinx	Echidna Chimaera Triton Pegasus Medusa Harpies Sirens Sphinx

Even within the class Mammalia, there are monsters that fall into more than one order. Identify each of the Mammalia listed above as well as these four.

Nessus

Minotaur

Pan

Scylla

ORDERS OF MAMMALIA

<u>Ungulata</u> : hoofed / herbivores	<u>Carnivores</u> : flesh-eating	<u>Primates</u> : standing (humans)
<p>Nessus</p> <p>Minotaur</p> <p>Pan</p> <p>Chimaera</p> <p>Pegasus</p>	<p>Scylla</p> <p>Chimaera</p>	<p>Echnida</p> <p>Triton</p> <p>Medusa</p> <p>Harpies</p> <p>Sirens</p> <p>Sphinx</p> <p>Nessus</p> <p>Minotar</p> <p>Pan</p> <p>Scylla</p>

MONSTROUS POETRY

Concrete poems are written to create, by the placement of words and symbols, a picture of the subject. Seldom do they rhyme or contain any regular rhythm, and their shapes are generally unusual, connecting in some way with the subject. Look at the examples below:

SUMMERTIME SNAKE

slowly
 and slithers
 slowly
 in the
 summer sun.
 slowly
 and slithers
 slowly
 in the
 summer sun.

SUNRISE

S H I N E S
 S H I N E S
 S H I N E S
 S H I N E S
 S H I N E S
 THE MORNING SUN RISING OVER THE OCEAN

Select one of the monsters on the front page of this unit and create a concrete poem about him/her/it/them. Make the poem look as much as it can as the monster you have chosen. Try different size letters or different styles or colors of letters for additional emphasis. For more information about your monster, you can go to the pages listed along with each monster's name.