

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Myths and Legends: A Classics Competition 2026

TEACHER HANDBOOK

About the competition

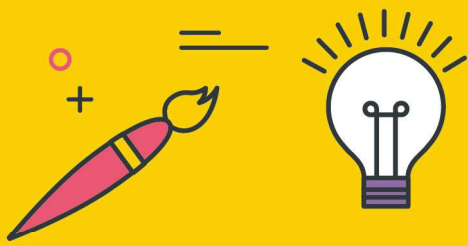
Myths and Legends is a **FREE** outreach classics competition which has run for over 70 years at the University of Leeds, and is a celebration of Classics, Reading and Performance. It's a great opportunity to introduce Classics to school students already familiar with English, History and Drama, highlighting the links to their current subjects and developing their oracy/public speaking skills in an exciting way.

Key Stage 3 (year 7 - 9) students are invited to choose one of our three competition categories, pick a myth or legend from that category's shortlist and prepare their written entries. Teachers are asked to submit written entries on behalf of their students by **23:59 on Monday 2nd March 2026**. You can find further details on how to submit entries below.

After the submission deadline has passed, the judges panel will decide upon the finalists of the competition. The student finalists will be invited to an online workshop based on public speaking and confidence building, to support students in turning their written scripts into an in-person presentation ready for the competition final.

All finalists, their teachers and their school peers will be invited to the **University of Leeds campus on the 30th April 2026** to speak/perform their entry in front of a panel of University of Leeds academic judges, who will make their decisions, announce our winners and hand out prizes!

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Competition timeline

Myths & Legends: A Classics Competition opens!	17 th November 2025
Entries must be submitted by	23:59pm 2nd March 2026
Finalists announced by	Thursday 12 th March 2026
Confidence building workshop for competition finalists	Tuesday 31st March 2026
Campus Final Event (Timings could be subject to change)	09:30 –15:00 30 th April 2026

Submitting to the competition:

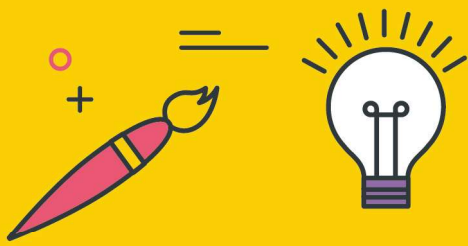
To submit to the competition, teachers need to complete the following 2 steps by **23:59 2nd March 2026**:

- 1) **Fill in this [competition entry form](#)**. Please note there is a data sharing section that needs to be read and agreed by the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher of your school.
- 2) **Email your students' written submissions** (scripts, poems & short stories) to the Arts Outreach Team artsoutreach@leeds.ac.uk.

Things to consider before submitting:

- **All entrants must be in KS3 (year 7-9)** and be a resident of the United Kingdom.
- At the point of submission, only written text entries are required. Should students get through to be a finalist(s), they are then required to perform a live reading / acting of their entry at the final campus day.
- Teachers can submit multiple entries from their class. And in multiple categories.
- At the campus final day, students can read from a script and will not be penalised by judges.

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The Categories

Category 1 – Group Acting Performance		
<p>Students to enter as a group of 3-5 members.</p> <p>Groups will select a short story from the options below, then write their own scripts re-telling the story and acting this out in their group. Each group member should have at least one speaking role within their script.</p> <p>Whilst only the written script is to be submitted at first, if selected, they would be required to perform the final piece on the Campus Final Day. Students will have 5 minutes maximum for their performance, please therefore consider length and timings of scripts.</p>		
Options	Characters	Online Resources
<p>1: Jason and Medea persuade the Colchian dragon(s) to give them the Golden Fleece.</p>	<p>Jason, Medea, at least one argumentative dragon; the Golden Fleece.</p>	<p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Fleece</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/ApolloniusRhodius4.html [Apollonius, Argonautica 4]</p>
<p>2: Atalanta will only marry a man who beats her in a footrace. Hippomenes thinks he can beat her.</p>	<p>Atalanta, Hippomenes, judge(s), fellow racers; apples</p>	<p>greeklegendsandmyths.com/atalanta.html</p> <p>https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Metamorph10.php#anchor_Toc64105575 [Ovid, Metamorphoses 10.560-637]</p>
<p>3: Aeneas tries to apologise to Dido in the Underworld, but she goes to her husband Sychaeus and complains about Aeneas.</p>	<p>Aeneas, Dido, Sychaeus, ghostly handmaiden(s) with opinions</p>	<p>https://adastrapermundum.com/2019/04/02/talking-through-dido-the-failure-of-forthright-tenderness-in-aeneid-6/</p> <p>https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/VirgilAeneidVI.php#anchor_Toc2242933 [Virgil, Aeneid 6.440-76]</p>



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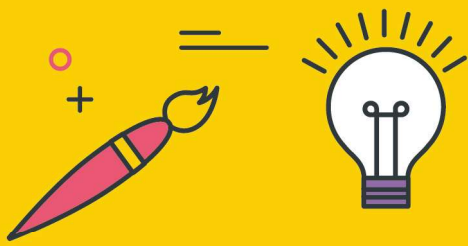
Category 2 – Individual Poems

Students to enter individually.

Their task is to select a Greek myth or a story from Roman history from the shortlist below, and to retell this in their own poem.

If selected as a finalist, the poem would need to be recited on the Campus Final Day. Students will have 5 minutes maximum for their performance, please therefore consider length and timings of poems.

Options	Online Resources
<p>1: Odysseus is recognised by his dog Argos</p>	<p>https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argos_(dog)</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/HomerOdyssey17.html [Homer, Odyssey 17.290-310]</p>
<p>2: Cupid and Psyche</p>	<p>https://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/TheGoldenAssV.php [Apuleius, The Golden Ass Book 5]</p> <p>https://massolit.io/courses/apuleius-cupid-and-psyche [Massolit talk by our very own Dr Regine May]</p>
<p>3: Boudicca and the Battle of Watling Street 61 CE</p>	<p>https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Watling-Street</p> <p>https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/warwickclassicsnetwork/romancoventry/resources/boudica/sources/tacitus/ [Tacitus, Annals 14.29-39]</p> <p>https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/warwickclassicsnetwork/romancoventry/resources/boudica/sources/cassiusdio/ [Cassius Dio 62.1-12]</p>



Category 3 – Individual Creative Writing

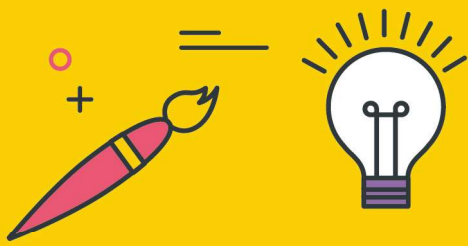
Students to enter individually.

Their task is to select a Greek myth or a story from Roman history from the shortlist below, and write their own short story inspired by the ancient characters and their exploits.

This short story would need to be retold on the Campus final day; emphasis in this category is on student's performance as a storyteller and their writing style. Storytelling is how myths and legends survive.

Students will have 5 minutes maximum for their performance, please therefore consider length and timings of stories.

Prompt Options	Online Resources
<p>1: Orpheus visits the Underworld in search of Eurydice</p>	<p>https://www.greeka.com/greece-myths/orpheus-eurydice/</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/VirgilGeorgics2.html#4 [Virgil's Georgics 4.453-527]</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidMetamorphoses10.html [Ovid, Metamorphoses 10.8-85]</p>
<p>2: Herakles is enslaved by the Lydian Queen Omphale.</p>	<p>greeklegendsandmyths.com/omphale.html</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidHeroides2.html [Ovid, Heroides 9.73-118]</p> <p>https://www.theoi.com/Text/OvidFasti2.html [Ovid, Fasti 2.303-58]</p>
<p>3: Cloelia leads an escape from Lars Porsenna in c.508 BCE.</p>	<p>https://www.encyclopedia.com/women/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/cloelia-c-508-bce</p> <p>https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0026:book=2:chapter=13&highlight=cloelia [Livy, History of Rome 2.13]</p>



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Campus Final Day Plan

Should your school be invited to our Campus Final Day on the 30th of April 2026, below is an outline of the plan of the day. This will give you an idea of the activities your students will have access to during our competition final. **Please note:** This plan may be still subject to change, and a more detailed programme will be sent to you/your school closer to the date.

30th April 2026: Timings	Activity
9:30 – 10:00	Arrival and welcome, refreshments provided
10:00 – 10:50	Latin Taster session and/or Ancient Greek Taster session
10:50 – 11:40	University Campus Tour led by our student ambassadors
11:40 – 12:30	Classic Civilisation Taster Session
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch will be provided for all attendees
13:30 – 14:30	Competition time – Finalists to make their performances
14:30 – 14:45	Judges give feedback to all finalists, announce the winners and give prizes.
14:45 - 15:00	Thank you, evaluations and goodbyes

For any further information on Myths & Legends: A Classics Competition [visit our website](#) or email us at ArtsOutreach@leeds.ac.uk.