Note on Standards: The standards (as written) are a combination of the Common Core 6-12 Reading Standards for Literature. The parts of the standards not applicable to mythology (i.e. requirements related to Shakespeare, American dramatists, 18th-19th century literature, etc. are omitted.)

Note on Recommended Texts: Materials below refer to script-stories (Reader's Theater plays) found in the volumes of the *Reaching Olympus* series. In some cases other versions of the same myths could be substituted. In others cases (such as examples for RL 2 and RL 4), the use of particular script-stories from the *Reaching Olympus* series is required for analysis.

ELA RL 1. Cite textual evidence in order to analyze what the text says explicitly and support inferences drawn from the text. Analyze what piece of evidence gives the *most* support to a particular claim.

   a. Use the discussion questions that follow each script-story from the *Reaching Olympus* series to stimulate student writing and/or discussion. Ask students to provide evidence from the play to back up their arguments. (Engaging students in organized, well-conducted discussions also addresses standards for Speaking and Listening 6-12.) Encourage them to refute the statements of other classmates using evidence from the script-story.

   b. After reading a myth, students will give a verbal or written description of an inference they made about events or characters within the story.

      o "Circe the Witch" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*—Although Odysseus has a chance for freedom, he chooses to stay with Circe for nearly a year. Why does he do this? Answers will vary. Students may infer that Odysseus is a selfish person or that he temporarily loses sight of his priorities.

ELA RL 2. Determine the central theme of a text: How does the theme emerge? How is the theme refined? Are there multiple themes? Provide an objective summary of the text.

   a. "Daedalus and Icarus" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. I)*—Daedalus tries to teach Icarus that life is fragile. As they snare birds and harvest their feathers for use on their wings, they speak about the objectivity of nature. Icarus learns the hard way that there are no second chances. He also learns that heeding sound advice can prevent disaster. How does this theme emerge through the story? How do the two themes complement one another?

   b. "Searching for Odysseus" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*—Telemachus is dealing with conflicting emotions surrounding his long-lost father. Eventually, he must come to grips with the fact that he truly desires to know his father, whom he has

resented for his absence. How does this theme emerge throughout Telemachus's portion of the *Odyssey*?

ELA RL 3. **Analyze how complicated characters (with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of the text, interact with other characters, advance the plot, and develop the theme. What lines of dialogue propel the action, reveal aspects of character, or provoke a decision?**

a. "War at Troy" "The Rage of Achilles" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*—Helen of Troy is a complicated character. What motivates her to elope to Troy with Prince Paris? How do her choices affect the lives of other characters? Why does she decide to return home with Menelaus after the war? What does all of this have to say about the purpose and nature of war? What does it have to say about love?

b. "War at Troy""The Rage of Achilles" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*—The events of the *Iliad* center around the rage of Achilles. How is his rage important to the story? How is his rage mollified or transformed by the end of the story arc? Is Achilles the same person that he was at the beginning of the story?

ELA RL 4. **Determine the meaning of words and phrases in the text including figurative and connotative meanings. Analyze the impact of word choice. How does language evoke a sense of time and place? How does it set a formal or informal tone?**

a. All script-stories in the *Reaching Olympus* series feature "Teachable Terms" that analyze alliteration, metaphor, jargon, simile, ambiguity, puns, and other forms of wordplay within the script-story.

b. "Orpheus and Eurydice" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. I)*— How is figurative language used in this myth to enhance the story? At times within this story the characters speak in both formal language (indicating an ancient setting) and informal language (providing modern flair). How does this build a contrast between the weighty and lighthearted moments? How does this choice of language affect our perceptions of the characters?

ELA RL 5. **Analyze the plot structure of a text. Analyze the order of events and how the author manipulates time. Analyze parallel plots, pacing, flashbacks. etc. Does the plot structure create mystery, tension, or suspense? How does this structure affect the text's meaning?**

a. The *Odyssey* storyline *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*—The *Odyssey* is told non-sequentially. Why does Homer decide to begin his story as he does? Why are Odysseus's adventures with Circe, the Cyclops, and others told in flashback? Is Odysseus a reliable narrator? How does the broken chronology of the story create mystery? (For example, we learn that Poseidon is angry with Odysseus for blinding his son *before* the reader sees this happen. Odysseus washes up on

Calypso's island alone, and only later do we learn what happened to his ship and the rest of his crew.)

b. "War at Troy""The Rage of Achilles" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. II)* —The events of the *Iliad* presented in these two plays cover only a short period of time—a few months near the end of the Trojan War. Why does Homer choose to tell only this short, but important, section of the story? What is he trying to say by this choice? His artistic choice requires that the reader have knowledge of what happened before and after the *Iliad*. What connections does Homer expect his readers to make concerning these events?

c. "Loves of the Gods" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. III)*—This script-story tells three stories within one—similar to the way stories appear in Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* The myth begins with a frame story and features two stories-within-a-story ("Zeus and Io" and "Hades and Persephone"). How does this choice affect how the stories unfold? What effect is achieved by multiple stories being told within one? How do the stories complement one another? Do they have common themes?

ELA RL 6. Analyze a P.O.V. or cultural experience in a work of literature from outside the U.S.

a. Analyze any ancient Greek myth in its original form. What did the ancient Greeks value? How are their values different from our own? What are some of the fundamental differences between ancient Greek culture and our own?

b. Analyze the ancient Greek concepts of *hubris* (excessive pride) and *xenia* (hospitality).
   i. *Hubris* "Oedipus Rex: The Cursed King" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. I)*
   ii. *Xenia* "In the Cave of the Cycloops" and other portions of the *Odyssey (Reaching Olympus Vol. II)*

ELA RL 7. Analyze the representation of a subject in two mediums: What is emphasized? What is absent?

a. "Daedalus and Icarus" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. I)*—Read the script-story and analyze its themes. Then read the account from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (viii.183– 235). Finally, view the painting *Landscape with the Fall of Icarus* by Bruegel. What was emphasized in each version? What was absent? (For further analysis listen to the song "Dust in the Wind." Does the theme of the song connect with the theme of Icarus's fall?)

b. "Mighty Aphrodite" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. III)* —Read the script-story and analyze the details concerning Aphrodite's birth. Then read the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, which also tells of her birth. Finally, analyze *The Birth of Venus* a

famed painting by Sandro Botticelli. What is different from version to version? What is emphasized or absent?

ELA RL 8. Not applicable to literature

ELA RL 9. Analyze how the author harnesses and transforms source material

    a. "Prometheus the Firebringer" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. III)*—Read the script-story version of the Prometheus story. Next read selections from Aeschylus's tragedy *Prometheus Bound*. How has the author of "Prometheus the Firebringer" changed the source material? (For further analysis, examine portions of Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*.) Analyze whether *Frankenstein: The Modern Prometheus* by Mary Shelley is an adaptation of the Prometheus myth. Are there similar themes and/or motifs?

    b. "Oedipus Rex: The Cursed King" *(Reaching Olympus Vol. I)*—Read the script-story version of the Oedipus story. Next read selections from the original *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles. How has the author of "Oedipus Rex: The Cursed King" transformed the source material?

ELA RL 10. Read and comprehend grade-level appropriate literature.

    a. For information on determining Lexile scores for non-dramatic texts visit www.lexile.com

    b. Lexile scores cannot be determined for the script-stories available in the *Reaching Olympus* series. According to the information presented on www.lexile.com, The Professional Lexile Analyzer should not be used for plays or drama.