

GRADE 6 Paired Texts

Demosthenes

by John Haaren

In the city of Athens about twenty-five years after the Peloponnesian War there lived a delicate boy named Demosthenes. His father was a manufacturer of swords and made a great deal of money. But when Demosthenes was only seven years old his father died. Guardians had charge of his property for ten years. They
5 robbed the boy of part of his fortune and managed the rest so badly that Demosthenes could not go to school to the best teachers in Athens because he had not money enough to pay them.

One day, when he was sixteen years old, a great trial was going on at Athens and he strolled into the court. There were fifteen hundred and one dicasts or, as we
10 call them, jurymen in their seats, and the court was crowded with citizens who, like Demosthenes, had gone in from curiosity. A lawyer named Callistratus was speaking. He did not finish his speech for nearly four hours. But no one left the court until he ceased to speak. Then hundreds of people went out and hurried home. Demosthenes waited to see the end. When each of the jurymen had thrown a voting
15 pebble into a basket the clerk of the court counted the pebbles and told the result. Callistratus had won the case.

Demosthenes went home determined to become a lawyer and public speaker. In one year from that time he brought suit against his guardians, delivered four orations against them and won his case. He recovered a large part of the
20 property which his father had left to his mother and himself.

After this he entered public life, but the first time he made a speech in the public assembly it was a complete failure. He stammered and could not speak loud enough, and in trying to do so he made odd faces.

People laughed at him, and even his friends told him that he never could be a
25 speaker, so he went home greatly cast down.

Then an actor who was a great friend of his family went to see him and encouraged him. He asked Demosthenes to read to him some passages of poetry. Then the actor recited the same passages. The verses now seemed to have new meaning and beauty. The actor pronounced the words as if he felt them. The tones of
30 his voice were clear and pleasant and his gestures were graceful. Demosthenes was charmed.

"You can learn to speak just as well as I do," said the actor, "if you are willing to work patiently. Do not be discouraged, but conquer your difficulties."

"I will," said Demosthenes. And he did.

35 It is said that to improve his voice he spoke with stones in his mouth, and to become accustomed to the noise amid confusion of the public assembly he went to

the seashore and recited there amid the roar of the waves. To overcome his habit of lifting one shoulder above the other he suspended a sword so that the point would prick his shoulder as he raised it.

40 He built an underground room in which he could study without interruption and practice speaking without disturbing anyone. He had one side of his head shaved so that he would be ashamed to leave this retreat. Then he remained there for months at a time engaged in study. One thing that he did while there was to copy eight times the speeches in the famous history of Thucydides. This was to teach him
45 to use the most fitting language. Besides all this he took lessons of an excellent speaker named Iosm'us who taught declamation. In this way the awkward boy who had been laughed out of the assembly became in time the greatest orator of Athens. Not only was Demosthenes a graceful orator, but he was wise and patriotic. He soon acquired great influence in Athens and became one of the ten official orators.

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Words that could be defined for students are in bold.

Icarus and Daedalus

by Josephine Preston Peabody

Among all those mortals who grew so wise that they learned the secrets of the gods, none was more cunning than Daedalus.

5 He once built, for King Minos of Crete, a wonderful Labyrinth of winding ways so cunningly tangled up and twisted around that, once inside, you could never find your way out again without a magic clue. But the king's favor veered with the wind, and one day he had his master architect imprisoned in a tower. Daedalus managed to escape from his cell; but it seemed impossible to leave the island, since every ship that came or went was well guarded by order of the king.

10 At length, watching the sea-gulls in the air—the only creatures that were sure of liberty—he thought of a plan for himself and his young son Icarus, who was captive with him.

15 Little by little, he gathered a store of feathers great and small. He fastened these together with thread, molded them in with wax, and so fashioned two great wings like those of a bird. When they were done, Daedalus fitted them to his own shoulders, and after one or two efforts, he found that by waving his arms he could **winnow** the air and **cleave** it, as a swimmer does the sea. He held himself aloft, wavered this way and that, with the wind, and at last, like a great fledgling, he learned to fly.

20 Without delay, he fell to work on a pair of wings for the boy Icarus, and taught him carefully how to use them, bidding him beware of rash adventures among the stars. "Remember," said the father, "never to fly very low or very high, for the fogs about the earth would weigh you down, but the blaze of the sun will surely melt your feathers apart if you go too near."

25 For Icarus, these cautions went in at one ear and out by the other. Who could remember to be careful when he was to fly for the first time? Are birds careful? Not they! And not an idea remained in the boy's head but the one joy of escape.

30 The day came, and the fair wind that was to set them free. The father bird put on his wings, and, while the light urged them to be gone, he waited to see that all was well with Icarus, for the two could not fly hand in hand. Up they rose, the boy after his father. The hateful ground of Crete sank beneath them; and the country folk, who caught a glimpse of them when they were high above the tree-tops, took it for a vision of the gods—Apollo, perhaps, with Cupid after him.

35 At first there was a terror in the joy. The wide vacancy of the air dazed them—a glance downward made their brains reel. But when a great wind filled their wings, and Icarus felt himself sustained, like a halcyon-bird in the hollow of a wave, like a child uplifted by his mother, he forgot everything in the world but joy. He forgot Crete and the other islands that he had passed over: he saw but vaguely that

winged thing in the distance before him that was his father Daedalus. He longed for one **draught** of flight to quench the thirst of his captivity: he stretched out his arms
40 to the sky and made towards the highest heavens.

Alas for him! Warmer and warmer grew the air. Those arms, that had seemed to uphold him, relaxed. His wings wavered, drooped. He fluttered his young hands vainly—he was falling—and in that terror he remembered. The heat of the sun had
45 melted the wax from his wings; the feathers were falling, one by one, like snowflakes; and there was none to help.

He fell like a leaf tossed down the wind, down, down, with one cry that overtook Daedalus far away. When he returned, and sought high and low for the poor boy, he saw nothing but the bird-like feathers afloat on the water, and he knew that Icarus was drowned.

50 The nearest island he named Icaria, in memory of the child; but he, in heavy grief, went to the temple of Apollo in Sicily, and there hung up his wings as an offering. Never again did he attempt to fly.

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Words that could be defined for students are in bold.

Multiple Choice Questions From "Demosthenes"

1a

Demosthenes can best be described as

- A) Wise
- B) Angry
- C) Persistent
- D) Responsible

2a

Read the following lines from the passage

People laughed at him, and even his friends told him that he never could be a speaker, so he went home greatly cast down. (Lines 24 and 25)

In this sentence, 'cast down' means

- A) Upbeat
- B) Encouraged
- C) Embarrassed
- D) Discouraged

Short Answer Constructed Response for "Demosthenes"

3a

What challenges did Demosthenes successfully overcome to become a good public speaker? Use details from the passage to support your response.

Extended Constructed Response Paired Passages

4a

In both the *Demosthenes* biography and the *Icarus and Daedalus* myth the main characters are given advice from other people. Do you respond to advice from other people more like Demosthenes or more like Icarus? Write an essay in which you explain who you are more like when it comes to taking advice and why. Use details from both articles to support your answer.

In your response, be sure to do the following:

- tell whether you are more like Demosthenes or Icarus
- explain why you are respond to advice similar to Demosthenes or Icarus
- use details from both passages in your response

Multiple Choice Questions From "Demosthenes"

1

Which lines from the text best explain the reason Demosthenes was able to be successful?

- A) "In one year from that time he brought suit against his guardians, delivered four orations against them and won his case."
- B) "He recovered a large part of the property which his father had left to his mother and himself."
- C) "You can learn to speak just as well as I do," said the actor, "if you are willing to work patiently. Do not be discouraged, but conquer your difficulties."
- D) "When each of the jurymen had thrown a voting pebble into a basket the clerk of the court counted the pebbles and told the result. Callistratus had won the case."

2

Read the following lines from the passage

People laughed at him, and even his friends told him that he never could be a speaker, so he went home greatly cast down. (Lines 24 and 25)

How does this sentence help to structure the passage?

- A) It sets up a contrast between what Demosthenes could accomplish individually and what he could do with the help of others.
- B) It shows the main reason Demosthenes sought the help of other more established public speakers
- C) It divides the periods of Demosthenes life between when he was unsuccessful and when he reached his goals
- D) It reveals Demosthenes key weakness, public speaking, and how it would hold him back.

Short Answer Constructed Response for "Demosthenes"

3

How does Demosthenes' experience observing a trial at age 16 affect his life choices, as described in the passage? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

Write your answer in complete sentences.

Extended Constructed Response Paired Passages

4

In both the *Demosthenes* biography and the *Icarus and Daedalus* myth the main characters exhibit determination in pursuit of their goals. Did determination help both main characters reach their goals, or did it lead them to tragedy? Write an argument for whether you believe determination helped or hurt the two main characters.

In your response, be sure to do the following:

- describe how determination affected the outcome in *Demosthenes*
- describe how determination affected the outcome in *Icarus and Daedalus*
- explain the similarities or differences that exist in the ways determination played into the outcome of both texts
- use details from both passages in your response