“Pandora’s Box”, a Greek myth

Upper ES / ELA

Temptation, Punishment, Good and Evil, Hope

Pre-Seminar Content

Launch Activity:

Have the class break into groups, and assign each group one of the following ideas/values: temptation, punishment, hope. Each group should discuss why this particular idea or value is important in society and in the students’ lives. Then each group should share a brief summary of the discussion with the entire class.

Inspectional Read:

Distribute the text and ask participants to anticipate what they expect this reading to be like. Read the text together the first time aloud. Number the paragraphs 1-12. Have one student (or several students in turn) read the text aloud again.
Background Information:
Discuss Greek mythology as collection of myths and teachings from ancient Greece, about their gods, heroes, mythic creatures, the nature of the world and how it got to be the way it is. The stories were passed down in the oral tradition.

Vocabulary:
Discuss the meaning of any words students identify as difficult. Encourage students to note the definitions you provide on their copy of the text.

Analytical Read:
In small groups, children create panels depicting the story and the various major players. After the class has sketched the assigned panels, the students read aloud the segments/sentences from the story that are reflected in the panel designed by each group, and explain what the sketch represents.

Pre-Seminar Process
- Define and state purpose for Paideia Seminar.
- Describe the responsibilities of facilitator and participants.
- Have participants set a Personal Goal.
- Agree on a Group Goal.
Seminar Questions

Opening (Identify main ideas from the text.):

- What word or phrase would you choose as an alternate title for this story? (round-robin)
- Why? (spontaneous discussion)

Core (Analyze textual details.):

- Why did Zeus create Pandora in the first place and send her down to the world?
- Do Epimetheus and Prometheus deserve what happen to them? Why or why not?
- Why did Zeus give Pandora a beautiful box full of evil and tell her not to open it?
- In paragraph 3, Pandora was taught to be both charming and deceitful. Where is there evidence in the story of her charm? Where is there evidence of her deceit?
- Why did Zeus include hope in the box along with all the evils?

Closing (Personalize and apply the ideas.):

- In what ways are you and Pandora alike? How are you different? OR
- In what ways do you identify with Pandora?

Post-Seminar Process

- Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal participation goal.
Have students revisit their thoughts from the launch activity, and add to them the ways in which the ideas and values of punishment, temptation and hope are important to the characters in the story of Pandora’s Box.

With a partner, students think about a key event in the story, and about how the characters contribute to that event by asking themselves, “What character trait or motivation made this happen?” Together, they record their thinking on the graphic organizer. (attached on p.6)

Why do the characters in “Pandora’s Box” act the way they do? After reading and discussing “Pandora’s Box,” write a paragraph in which you explain why one of the characters in the story acts the way he or she does. Use several examples from the story to support why you think the way you do.

Discuss in pairs what the writing task is asking.
Structure the Writing:
Each student should make a list of details to include in the paragraph, beneath the name of the character selected. Pick the examples from the story that will be used. Plan how the paragraph will be organized.

First Draft:
Ask students to draft their paragraphs beginning with a clear topic sentence. Specify that they need to refer to the original text to provide examples of the points they are making.

Collaborative Revision:
Have participants work in pairs to read the first drafts aloud to each other. The listener should comment with one point he or she heard clearly expressed, and ask one question for clarification. Switch roles. Make revisions, resulting in a second draft.

Edit:
Once the second draft is complete, students should work in groups of 3-4, each reading one another’s drafts and marking (up to 5) errors of spelling, punctuation and usage. Provide grammar and spelling reference books. Reteach specific conventions lessons as needed. Provide time for students to rewrite and edit the third draft.

Publish:
Display the paragraphs in their final form, alongside the sequenced story board panels created in the Analytical Read.

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**Pandora's Box**

How do the characters' traits and motivations contribute to the sequence of events in the text, *Pandora's Box*?

**Objective:** In this lesson you will learn to describe how the characters' traits and motivations contribute to the sequence of events by asking, "What character trait or motivation made this event happen?"

**Steps:**
1. Recount a key event from the text.
2. Ask, "What character traits or motivations made this event happen?"
3. Record your thinking in a graphic organizer.

**Sequence of Events Graphic Organizer**

- **Character traits**
- **Key event**
- **Character motivations**
  (Ask yourself, "Why did the character do this?")

Adapted from a lesson at LearnZillion.com
Pandora’s Box
In ancient Greece there were two brothers named Epimetheus and Prometheus. They upset the gods and annoyed the most powerful of all Gods, Zeus, in particular. This was not the first time humans had upset Zeus, and once before, as punishment, he had taken from humans the ability to make fire. This meant they could no longer cook their meat and could not keep themselves warm.

However, Prometheus was clever and he knew that, on the Isle of Lemnos, lived Hephaestos, the blacksmith. He had a fire burning to keep his forge hot. Prometheus travelled to Lemnos and stole fire from the blacksmith. Zeus was furious and decided that humans had to be punished once and for all for their lack of respect.

Zeus came up with a very cunning plan to punish the two brothers. With the help of Hephaestos, he created a woman from clay. The goddess Athene then breathed life into the clay, Aphrodite made her very beautiful and Hermes taught her how to be both charming and deceitful. Zeus called her Pandora and sent her as a gift to Epimetheus.

His brother Prometheus had warned him not to accept any gifts from the gods but Epimetheus was completely charmed by the woman and thought Pandora was so beautiful that she could never cause any harm, so he agreed to marry her.

Zeus, pleased that his trap was working, gave Pandora a wedding gift of a beautiful box. There was one very, very important condition however, that she must never opened the box. Pandora was very curious about the contents of the box but she had promised that she would never open it.

All she could think about was; what could be in the box? She could not understand why someone would send her a box if she could not see what was in it. It seemed to make no sense at all to her and she could think of nothing else but of opening the box and unlocking its secrets. This was just what Zeus had planned.

Finally, Pandora could stand it no longer. When she knew Epimetheus was out of sight, she crept up to the box, took the huge key off the high shelf, fitted it carefully into the lock and turned it. But, at the last moment, she felt a pang of guilt, imagined how angry her husband would be and quickly locked the box again without opening the lid and put the key back where she had found it. Three more times she did this until, at last, she knew she had to look inside or she would go completely mad!

She took the key, slid it into the lock and turned it. She took a deep breath, closed her eyes and slowly lifted the lid of the box. She opened her eyes and looked into the box, expecting to see fine silks, gowns or gold bracelets and necklaces or even piles of gold coins.

But there was no gleam of gold or treasure. There were no shining bracelets and not one beautiful dress! The look of excitement on her face quickly turned to one of disappointment and then horror. For Zeus had packed the box full of all the terrible evils he could think of. Out of the box poured disease and poverty. Out came misery, out came death, out came sadness - all shaped like tiny buzzing moths.

The creatures stung Pandora over and over again and she slammed the lid shut. Epimetheus ran into the room to see why she was crying in pain. Pandora could still hear a voice calling to her from the box, pleading with her to be let out. Epimetheus agreed that nothing inside the box could be worse than the horrors that had already been released, so they opened the lid once more.

All that remained in the box was Hope. It fluttered from the box like a beautiful dragonfly, touching the wounds created by the evil creatures, and healing them. Even though Pandora had released pain and suffering upon the world, she had also allowed Hope to follow them.

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http://myths.e2bn.org/mythsandlegends/textonly562-pandoras-box.html