

SOURCE #1

Name: _____ English 9R

Origins the King- Reading Comprehension Activity

Directions: Please read and annotate the article. Then, answer the multiple-choice questions that follow.

The old Greeks had a word for it: hubris. It was their explanation of why big shots—the rich, the famous, the powerful—do the unpredictable, threaten their competitors, and risk ruin on themselves by doing them.

unexplainable

Three thousand years later, it's still as good an explanation as any.

The press and TV have been using the words "hubris" and "hubristic" in reference to the alleged sexual goings on at the Clinton White House. The addition of Monica Lewinsky's name to those of Paula Jones and Gennifer Flowers on the list of the president's alleged indiscretions—and hints that there might be still others yet unnamed—led many Americans to disturbing suspicion.

In addition to an apparent abundance of testosterone, Mr. Clinton may be loaded with hubris as well.

"To the Greeks, hubris meant that someone who possessed considerable gifts presumed that, because he had those gifts, he could take advantage of other people. It's a kind of arrogance," says Dr. David Sweet, who teaches the Greek and Latin classics at the University of Dallas.

And, says Dr. Dan Garrison, professor of classics at Northwestern University, "if you're rich and powerful, human nature being what it is, you're likely sooner or later to commit an act of hubris."

"And one of the ways the gods can punish you for this hubris is to give you so much of it that you're in a state of Ate [pronounced Athay], a state of blindness or delusion. In that state of delusion you'll commit further acts of hubris."

"It's sort of like robbing banks. You rob one and get away with it, so you decide to rob another. And you get away with that one, so you rob another. It becomes a Bonnie-and-Clyde kind of thing."

"To the Greeks," says Dr. Deborah Modrak, who teaches ancient Greek philosophy at the University of Rochester, "to be guilty of hubris means going over the top in a way that oversteps moral bounds. It's not hubris to possess great power; hubris is using it in unacceptable ways. It's the inappropriate use of wealth and power. It has the connotation of being out of bounds."

In other words, a person who's guilty of hubris has gotten too big for his britches in a cosmic way. And Ate—a less familiar idea to us moderns—is what happens to a person who's guilty of the Bonnie-and-Clyde, you-can't-catch-me kind of hubris that's said to ensnare the president.

In ancient Greek poetry and drama, Ate is the goddess of foolish or misbegotten impulse. When a powerful person is loaded to the gills with hubris, Ate blinds his judgment. His bad judgment then leads him to an action that brings about his downfall.

"A person afflicted with Ate," says Dr. Sweet, "makes remarkable errors of judgment which people think would be uncharacteristic of an intelligent person. One of my colleagues said at lunch today that President Clinton seems incapable of not taking unacceptable risks. Especially when they have an ethical side to them, he can't seem to stay away from them."

The Greek tragedians liked the concept of Ate because the hero himself makes the choice that does him in. Blinded by Ate,

he thinks an unreasonable choice is reasonable, and it turns out to be fatal.

But an immoral act isn't necessarily an act of hubris, Dr. Modrak says. "The ancient Greeks didn't care much about morals. After all, the gods themselves were immoral."

Some famous or powerful people who bring humiliation or ruin upon themselves aren't guilty of hubris, but plain old stupidity, the scholars say.

Presidential candidate Gary Hart dares the press to catch him cheating on his wife. It does. "Stupidity," says Dr. Sweet.

Marion Barry, mayor of the nation's capital city, gets videotaped smoking crack in a hotel room with a woman who isn't his wife. "Stupidity," says Dr. Garrison.

These deeds were immoral, and in some cases illegal, but they didn't harm the community at large, so they weren't hubris, says Dr. Garrison.

On the other hand, remember Leona Helmsley, the New York hotel tycoon who went to jail for tax evasion because paying taxes is only for the "little people"?

"She was a hubristic person," says Dr. Garrison, "not only because she was abusing the body politic, but because of the way she managed her hotel: she abused her employees. She was more or less a compulsive abuser of people."

And Richard Nixon who resigned the presidency to avoid impeachment for illegally covering up a "third-rate burglary" at the Watergate? "A classic case of hubris," says Dr. Garrison.

"The Greeks were particularly sensitive to abuses of power," he says. "They were very touchy about such things. The concept of hubris grows out of their attitude toward such abuses."

"It's essentially a very abbreviated way of saying, 'Power corrupts.'"

Choose the best response for each of the following questions.

1. In the first paragraph, the word **unexplainable** most nearly means:

A. Cryptic
B. Succinct
C. Parsimonious
D. Positive

2. In the third paragraph, the word **indiscretions** most nearly means:

A. Advancements
B. Misjudgments
C. Carelessness
D. Righteousness

3. Which of the following aspects contribute to the display of hubris?

A. Humility
B. Altruism
C. Fear
D. Power

4. The reference to "Bonnie and Clyde" is **an** _____ used to _____.

A. Allusion / show how hubristic people are typically trying to do the right thing.
B. Irony / show how unlike President Clinton, people with hubris typically fear the authorities and punishment.
C. Allusion / show how hubristic people feel unstoppable and impervious.
D. Irony / show how like President Clinton, people with hubris often want to be caught.

5. A true display of hubris means:

A. Possessing wealth and power.
B. Using one's wealth and power in an unacceptable way.
C. Showing off to others who are less fortunate.
D. Extending the gods' power at every opportunity.

6. Ate involves all of the following except:

A. Delusional thinking.
B. Impulsivity.
C. Blindness to reality.
D. Pragmatism.

7. Primarily, Mayor Marion Barry's drug incident is NOT considered a hubristic act in that:

A. It did not hurt other people.
B. It was immoral.
C. It was illegal.
D. It involved a woman who wasn't his wife.

8. Which of the following issues was of the most importance to the Greeks?

A. Avoiding the gods at all costs.
B. Issues of morality and immorality.
C. Improving people suffering from stupidity.
D. The use and abuse of power.

9. Hubris is a _____ while hubristic is a _____.

A. Adjective / noun
B. Noun / adjective
C. Noun / verb
D. Adjective / adverb

10. Which of the following statements is most true?

A. The ancient Greeks always encouraged immoral behavior that led to hubristic abuses of power.
B. The ancient Greeks condemned immoral behavior and turned a blind eye to hubris.
C. The ancient Greeks supported hubris as a path to moral understanding.
D. The ancient Greeks were less concerned with immorality and hedonism and more concerned with abuses of political power.

Alex Rodriguez -- a victim of hubris in a modern-day Greek tragedy

By **Fay Vincent**
Published January 13, 2014
FoxNews.com

The ancient Greek tragedies involved the downfall of the hero being caused by what the classical scholars call "hubris." Because human nature remains constant, we know the Greeks were onto something.

Hubris causes many heroic figures to fall even in our time and no better example can be found than the Yankee slugger Alex Rodriguez.

If the definition of "hubris" is excessive pride or defiance of the gods leading to a tragic downfall, then A-Rod defines a tragic hero. The only remaining question is how tragic a fall will he endure?

Like Pete Rose, Alex Rodriguez will take a long time to confront the reality of the mess he has created for himself.

Some tragic figures behave so badly they turn the public against them. Others manage to take their fall and survive. Think of the defiant Bill Clinton who has remained so wildly popular he is cheered like a rock star whenever he gathers a crowd. The Chris Christie play is still in its first act and we cannot be sure it is a tragedy.

In baseball we have watched as Pete Rose managed his public affairs so badly he is reduced to sitting at a Las Vegas casino signing his name for those willing to pay the small fee he charges. Rose never understood the American public will forgive just about anyone for just about anything so long as the offender makes a truly credible act of contrition. One must appear to be sorry.

Up to now A-Rod has loudly proclaimed his innocence. The decision by the Baseball arbitrator this past weekend affirmed the suspension by Commissioner Bud Selig of Rodriguez while reducing the duration from 211 games to 162 games. Last night, CBS News ran a devastating segment on "50 Minutes" in which much of the case against Rodriguez was displayed. It was not pretty.

Commissioner Selig and his second in command Rob Manfred defended their case. Indeed, Manfred made a telling point when he explained there was nothing in the record before the arbitrator that reflected any denial by Rodriguez of the allegations made by the Commissioner. In a maneuver that sealed his fate, Rodriguez chose to stalk out of the arbitration proceeding without ever testifying. Talk about hubris and defiance of the gods.

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If Rodriguez chose to walk out of the hearing because he was told by some lawyer he would have a better chance with a federal judge to whose court Rodriguez now appears to be heading, the advice was absurdly wrong...

Legal experts give Rodriguez virtually no chance of overturning the decision of the arbitrator. Federal law in cases like this one gives great weight to the decision of an arbitrator where the arbitration is agreed upon by parties to a collective bargaining agreement.

The federal court will interfere only in the extremely rare case the arbitrator was corrupted or acted in total disregard of the applicable law. Imagine the lawyers for A-Rod having to explain why he walked out of the hearing and refused to assert any defenses? One who defies the gods will have to live with their angry reaction.

In the Greek tragedies, the hero has outsize talents. Rodriguez was a superb ball player but, like Rose, he cheated and fell victim to his own hubris in not seeing how his defiance of the baseball laws would bring him crashing down. Like Rose, he will take a long time to confront the reality of the mess he has created for himself.

I doubt he will ever play again in the big leagues.

My question is will he be able to hold onto enough of his millions to take care of himself and his family for the long years ahead. Perhaps he will be another Clinton and not another Rose. Yet the Greek tragedies are called tragedies for a reason.

Fay Vincent is a former CEO of Columbia Pictures Industries. He served as the Commissioner of Baseball from 1989-92.

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Lance Armstrong Let Pride and Hubris, Not Doping, Ruin His Legacy
By Dan Levy, National Lead Writer
Aug 24, 2012

Lance Armstrong never should have tried that last comeback.

In 2009, Armstrong felt compelled to return to the sport he dominated for a decade, nearly winning another Tour de France before retiring for good in early 2011. If it weren't for that comeback—that "see, I told you I was clean, and I told you I could still do it" moment of hubris—Armstrong would not be where he is now.

Armstrong was a hero; he still is to some. Now he is a pariah, at least in sports terms. After giving up his fight to defend himself against USADA's claims he cheated during his career, he has nothing left but to defend himself in the court of public opinion.

Armstrong's statement—calling the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency's crusade to clean up his sport an "unconstitutional witch hunt"—is the last time he will talk about this situation. "Today I turn the page," Armstrong wrote. "I will no longer address this issue, regardless of the circumstances."

This is not the ride off into the sunset Armstrong imagined it would be. He never should have tried that last comeback.

With rumors chasing him like a peloton tracking the lead pack, Armstrong always managed to stay ahead of his detractors, winning seven straight Tour de France titles amid a never-ending cycle of rumors, suspicions and accusations that were on no account supported by physical evidence.

For years, people suspected Armstrong of cheating. He was just too good to be clean, especially for a man whose body was ravaged by cancer. In a sport where cheating had become the new normal, it was easy to suspect Armstrong was breaking (or at the very least circumventing) the rules.

Through all that, he rode on, kept winning and became the most polarizing athlete the world has seen in almost half a century.

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On one side, we saw a cancer survivor who worked hard to become a great champion, then used his celebrity to raise hundreds of millions of dollars and a priceless amount of awareness for cancer research. No matter what people think of Armstrong himself, his Livestrong campaign has become one of the most generous benefactors the world has ever seen.

On the other side, we saw a typical professional athlete who let success get to his head, splitting up with his wife and becoming a professional celebrity, shacking up with rocker Sheryl Crow or being photographed shirtless with actor and fellow professional celebrity Matthew McConaughey.

Still, with all the celebrity that came from riding a bicycle faster than anyone else in the world, Armstrong used the notoriety mostly for good. The more famous he became, the more yellow rubber bracelets people would buy and the more money he could raise to fight the disease that almost killed him.

He just never should have tried that last comeback.

Armstrong never would be in the situation he finds himself in now had he not come back in 2009. There was no reason to prove anything to anyone. He was still raising millions of dollars for charity without that comeback. Livestrong was still one of the most popular charitable causes in the world without the boost of interest from a comeback.

Whatever advice he was given in 2009, someone had to be in his ear telling him there was nothing positive that could come from a return to competitive cycling.

Now, 18 months after his retirement, Armstrong has been stripped of everything. The banners have come down from the rafters, his name sullied forever in the history books of not just his sport, but American history. Armstrong tried to fight the United States Anti-Doping Agency and lost. History will not forget that, witch hunt or not.

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The peloton finally caught Armstrong, surrounded him, then left him for dead on the side of the road.

After the court dismissed his case against USADA, Armstrong had few options. In July, USADA CEO Travis Tygart made very strong statements against Armstrong, leaving little to no room for speculation: USADA only initiates matters supported by the evidence. We do not choose whether or not we do our job based on outside pressures, intimidation or for any reason other than the evidence.

As in every USADA case, all named individuals are presumed innocent of the allegations unless and until proven otherwise through the established legal process. If a hearing is ultimately held then it is an independent panel of arbitrators, not USADA that determines whether or not these individuals have committed anti-doping rule violations as alleged.

Armstrong may have decided to give up his fight two years too late, but given the circumstances of this month, he is finally getting some good advice. Rather than face that independent panel, Armstrong gave up, saying "enough is enough" in a strongly-worded defense of his career that puts the blame on Tygart and questions the motives of USADA, suggesting the governing body gave deals to dopers who were caught but willing to roll over on Armstrong.

This whole thing is just one big conspiracy, per Armstrong, who claimed for one last time that he played by the rules and won those championships fair and clean. I know who won those seven Tours, my teammates know who won those seven Tours, and everyone I competed against knows who won those seven Tours. We all raced together. For three weeks over the same roads, the same mountains, and against all the weather and elements that we had to confront.

There were no shortcuts, there was no special treatment. The same courses, the same rules. The toughest event in the world where the strongest man wins. Nobody can ever change that. Especially not Travis Tygart.

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If only Armstrong had been okay with just winning those seven Tours. If only he hadn't tried to come back, there would have been no more allegations. There would have been no testing in 2009 and 2010 that was "fully consistent" with blood doping.

Sure, people would have whispered. The rumors and suspicions would have always chased Armstrong wherever he rode had he not returned to the sport in 2009, but they never would have caught him. It never would have been like this.

Armstrong's fall didn't happen because he purportedly cheated and it didn't happen because he got caught. This fall—this ignominious end to a heroic journey—happened because he could never figure out when to give up the race.

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BY EARLY TO RISE LIFESTYLE, SELF-IMPROVEMENT, WEALTH

The Martha Stewart Recipe for Failure

Martha Stewart is an American legend. Born Martha Kostyra to a working-class Polish family in New Jersey, her sensational career was launched when she quit her job as a stockbroker in the mid 1970s to start a catering business in Connecticut. Over the next 10 years, with the help of her then-husband's publishing connections, she became famous as the result of a series of upscale cookbooks she wrote. She positioned herself as an expert in elegant home entertaining, and it took.

With the launching of her magazine, Martha Stewart Living, and a merchandising deal with Kmart, she became a household name. She appeared regularly on television, was featured in countless articles, and became the butt of a hundred comedy bits. Some of her achievement is due to good timing. Promoting herself as an entertainment guru came at a "tipping point" for the baby boomer market — people who were, in the late 70s and early 80s, just entering their affluent years.

But a great deal of her success must be attributed to hard work and good judgment. It seems outrageous that someone who had risen so high could be so quickly and thoroughly floored. And for what? Getting a little tip on a stock that was due to fall? And trying to cover up for the creeps who were trying to prosecute her? Most of the people I know think Martha was railroaded. And I think so too.

The story of what happened — how the government so aggressively attacked her . . . first on such a flimsy insider-trading violation (which hurt virtually no one while dozens, if not hundreds, of corporate Internet crooks stole billions from ordinary investors and got off scot-free) and then on such a convenient obstruction-of-justice violation . . . and then that she was finally convicted by a jury of "little guys" — should scare the hell out of you.

But putting aside the question of "What kind of country is this turning into, anyway?", let's ask: How did this happen in the first place? Was this a conspiracy carried out by people who don't like successful women? Or was it caused, at least in part, by something Martha Stewart did? Every tragic hero has an Achilles heel. And most successful people have — along with great strengths — at least one great weakness.

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For Martha Stewart, if you believe the popular press, it was the way she treated people — her partners and, perhaps more importantly, her subordinates. I have no personal experience with Martha Stewart, so I'm going to assume that 90% of the bad things that have been said about her are false. Still, there have been so many stories about her mistreatment of the "little" people that you have to wonder. Why would someone who has achieved so much — fame, fortune, and the admiration of millions — feel the need to treat anyone poorly?

There's only one answer: pride. That's what John Whitney, author of "Power Plays", attributes her downfall to. "Hubris is her fatal flaw," he said. "You're seeing the destruction of an icon . . . the destruction of a human being." I know a handful of people who do the same thing. They don't mistreat me. Nor are they rude or ill-tempered with others they consider their equals.

But their contempt for everyone who is not at their level is obvious. And they seem to feel they have the right to say and do pretty much whatever they want to these people and get away with it. What happens when you speak rudely to a new employee? Or chastise a bellhop? Or speak condescendingly to a waiter?

First, you show yourself to be psychologically weak and insecure to those who witness your behavior. Second, you create a mortal enemy — sometimes for life. Every time you mistreat a subordinate, you stock your world with one more person who wishes you evil. And if something should one day happen that puts your life and/or fortune in jeopardy, what do you think all those people will do? Will they rally around you to support you? Or will they turn on you the way just about everyone who knew Martha Stewart turned on her?

When you have power, fame, and fortune, people tend to flatter you. If you listen too much to this flattery, you may one day wake up believing it. If you internalize that arrogance by letting it seep into your daily behavior — and you end up treating those who have less as less—you shouldn't be surprised when, one day, a world full of animosity suddenly springs up and wrestles you to the ground.

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