

ABOUT

the Author

SALLY POMME CLAYTON is an acclaimed performer, storyteller, and author. She has performed in England and across Europe, combining stories and music for audiences of all ages. She is the author of many books for young readers, including *Tales Told in Tents: Stories from Central Asia*; *Amazons! Women Warriors of the World* (both Frances Lincoln); and *The Girl with Golden Fingers* (Orchard Books). Sally says, "Telling tales is an essential part of every culture, and a way of bringing the voices of our ancestors into the future." Visit her website at sallypommeclayton.com. Sally lives in London, England.

the Illustrator

VIRGINIA LEE is an artist who draws, paints, and sculpts. She studied art, design, and illustration at Exeter College and Kingston University, in England. She illustrated *The Frog Bride*, by Antonia Barber (Frances Lincoln), and she worked as a sculptor on Peter Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings* film trilogy. Virginia lives in Brighton, England. Visit her website at virginialee.co.uk.

PERSEPHONE

Written by Sally Pomme Clayton
Illustrated by Virginia Lee

Hardcover ISBN: 978-0-8028-5349-3 ❖ \$18.00
9³/₈" x 10⁷/₈" ❖ 26 pages ❖ Ages 7-10

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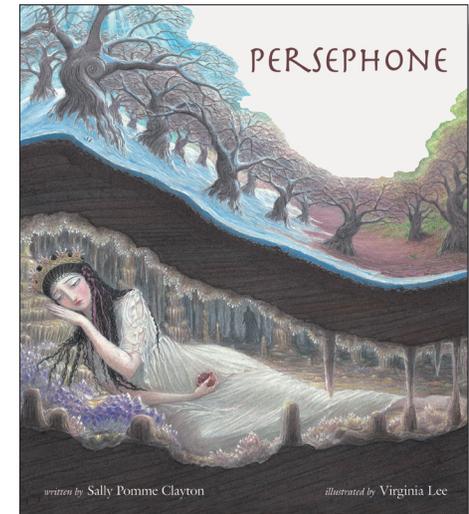
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If you have any suggestions for using *Persephone* with young readers, we would be happy to hear from you.

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PERSEPHONE

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With each step Persephone took, the grass grew, buds opened, flowers bloomed, and green shoots of barley pushed out of the earth. . . . Persephone had returned, and spring had come at last.

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

- ❖ Greek mythology
- ❖ Nature's cycles
- ❖ Mothers and daughters
- ❖ Respect for others
- ❖ Seasons
- ❖ Renewal

VOCABULARY

Look up the following terms in a reference book: barley, chariot, underworld, nymph, swift, pomegranate, mystery.



THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE READING THE BOOK

1. Read the title of the book and study the pictures on the cover. Where do you think this story takes place?

2. What do you know about how the seasons change? Imagine a time before people knew what caused the seasons to change. How do you think they would have explained the change from autumn to winter to spring?

3. Think about a time when you could not be with someone who was important to you. How did you feel? When you saw that person again, how did your feelings change?

4. Myths are stories from long ago that explain things that are difficult to understand. Have you ever heard or read myths from Ancient Greece, or from other cultures? If so, what do you remember about them? What kinds of characters and events are in myths?



QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON AFTER READING THE BOOK

1. Compare the scenes set on the Earth with those in the Underworld. How are the illustrations different? Tell what you like and dislike about each place.

2. When Persephone is separated from her family and friends in the Underworld, she is so sad that she does not eat or sleep. How would you feel if you were Persephone? Would you be as sad as she was?

3. Why does Demeter bring winter to the Earth? How do the cold wind and frozen ground show Demeter's feelings?

4. Why does Hades offer Persephone a plate of pomegranate seeds? Persephone is suddenly hungry when she sees the red seeds. What do you think causes her to feel hungry?

5. Read "A Journey from Death to Life—About the Story" at the end of the book. How does the myth of Persephone relate to the cycle of planting, growing, and harvesting? How does the myth relate to beliefs about life and death?



ACTIVITIES

1. The characters in this story—Persephone, Hades, Demeter, Father Zeus, and Hermes—are part of a large family of characters that appear

in many Greek myths. Use library or online sources to find out more about the characters in Greek myths. Then, create a family tree that shows who the characters in these stories are and how they are related to each other. Share your family tree with the class.

2. The myth of Persephone helps to explain why the seasons change. Think about the cycle of the seasons. Which season is your favorite? Why? How do you feel when one season changes to another? Write a poem about the seasons. In your poem, express what each season makes you think about and feel. You may want to illustrate your poem. Finally, read your poem aloud for the class.

3. When Persephone is in the Underworld, she eats three pomegranate seeds. When she returns, Demeter spreads the table with bread, cheese, olives, and barley water. Use library or online sources to research the foods people ate in Ancient Greece. What crops did farmers grow? What foods did people make from fruits, vegetables, and grains? What cheeses did people eat? Share what you learn with your class. You may want to make a poster with pictures of Ancient Greek foods.

