Pandora's Box

When the world was first created, people were content with no troubles or concerns. It was idyllic. The people of Earth had been moulded out of clay by the giant Prometheus and the King of the Gods, Zeus, breathed life into them. Prometheus was the teacher of mankind and the most important lesson he imparted was that man must always respect the gods.

The Earth was harmonious until one day when Prometheus tricked Zeus. Zeus was so enraged at being duped that in revenge he extinguished every heat source on Earth leaving mankind both cold and hungry. With no fire, Zeus' special gift, humans truly suffered, shivering in the dark and eating raw meat.

Prometheus was deeply troubled and upset by the way his creation struggled every day and so, furtively, crept up to Mount Olympus and broke off a blazing beam of the sun for his people. This would allow man to cook again, keep warm and make metal tools to cultivate the land.

To Zeus, this was the final straw and, enraged, he shackled Prometheus to a rock with unbreakable chains and ordered a vulture to claw and rip at his liver. Because the giant was immortal, Prometheus' liver regrew every night and he endured continual pain with the vulture returning at the crack of dawn every day.

But Zeus had not finished there. He punished mankind too for accepting the Gift of Fire from Prometheus. He asked the God Hephaestos, the blacksmith, to forge a beautiful woman into which the King of the Gods breathed life. Her name was Pandora - the most inquisitive woman ever.

"What's this? Why's that? Who's this? How do you …..?" On and on and on she went - her curiosity knew no bounds.

She was sent to Earth and to Prometheus' brother, Epimetheus. With Pandora, Zeus gave her a beautiful locked pithos, a jar, which she was expressly asked not to open.

"Take this box and keep it safe. Be warned, you must NEVER open it otherwise grievous things will occur."

Pandora's eyes twinkled and her fingers twitched.

Prometheus had forewarned his brother never to accept anything from Zeus. However, the day when Pandora knocked on Epimetheus' door and he opened it, his brother's words floated from his mind. Captivated by her beauty, he asked her name.

"My name is Pandora," she replied. "The God Zeus has sent me here to look after you. I bring a beautiful box too."

Fearful of Zeus and allured by her ways, Epimetheus married Pandora. This he would deeply regret as her outer beauty did not replicate within her. He soon learnt that his wife was vain and self-centred. She would constantly berate, annoy and tease her husband. She was demanding, bossy and so, so curious. And every day she would pester her husband to open the locked jar.

"No Pandora! It is forbidden."

"What's the point in having a beautiful jar full of wonderful things if you can't appreciate what's inside?" Pandora sulked.

Epimetheus went as white as a sheet.

Her husband's stubbornness made Pandora even more determined, so convinced was she that the jar contained a bountiful treasure of jewels.

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Every day, she would gently stroke the jar and play around with the lock. She was convinced she could hear little voices inside calling, "Set us free! Set us free!"

One day, as Epimetheus slept, curiosity finally got the better of Pandora.

She would open it.

"Just one little peek won't harm anybody," she convinced herself.

Hardly able to breathe, heart beating with excitement, Pandora broke the lock and slowly lifted the lid. Before she could peek inside, there was a terrible wailing noise from within. Jumping back in terror, Pandora watched with horror as, out of the box streamed all sorts of horrendous creatures which buzzed and hissed and moaned.

Hate, greed, envy, anger, jealousy, cruelty, hunger, poverty, pain, sickness.

Pandora desperately tried to slam the lid down but to no avail. The creatures spread and flew everywhere, stinging and pricking humankind forever more.

But as the last destructive creature left the box, a dismayed Pandora noticed a tiny flicker of light from within which fluttered and flew upwards and away.

HOPE.

By Jenny Turner

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box Teacher Questions

What does Prometheus tell humans they must do? (AF2) That they must always obey and respect the gods.

Describe in your own words how the Earth was for Man at the beginning. (AF3) It was a place of peace and harmony. People lived happily with no worries. It was perfect.

Why did Zeus decide to take fire from Man? (AF2) He was cross with Man because they had accepted the gift of fire from the giant Prometheus, who had stolen it from the Gods - the beams of the sun.

Why was fire so important to humans? (AF3) It is important to humans because it is a heat source and allows them to cook and therefore eat, is a source of warmth and allows them to mould and make tools made of metal which are used to cultivate the fields and grow crops.

What do you think "the final straw" means? (AF5) When a series of unacceptable or bad events continue to occur and which finally means you can no longer continue to accept.

What does immortal mean? Why did this prove to be a problem for Prometheus? (AF2/AF3) Everlasting, will never die. He endures continual suffering. Every day, chained to a rock, Prometheus' liver was clawed out by a vulture and he was in constant pain. He did not die due to his immortality so the process would repeat itself every day.

"Her curiosity knew no bounds." What does this mean? (AF5) She would stop at nothing to find out what was inside the jar. Her inquisitiveness was unstoppable.

Find the simile in this text. What do you think it means? (AF4) "As white as a sheet." Go very pale due to shock, fear or illness.

Why do you think the word NEVER is in capital letters? (AF5) To add emphasis and importance to the statement being said. It is relevant to the story.

Why do Pandora's eyes twinkle and her fingers twitch? (AF3) She is tempted and has a strong desire to open the box. The urge to see what's inside makes her eyes sparkle with delight at the thought of what the box contains. Her fingers twitch as she finds it hard to restrain herself from opening the box.

From what you have read about Epimetheus, how would you describe his personality? (AF3) He is foolish and is easily persuaded. He lacks foresight in that he falls for Pandora's superficial beauty and is not a good judge of character. He is weak and allows Pandora to control and boss him.

Epimetheus is captivated by Pandora. What does this mean? (AF2) He is spellbound and attracted by her beauty. He is overwhelmingly attracted to her.

"She would open it." Why do you think this line stands alone? (AF5) The author writes this on one line to emphasis the importance of these words and the outcome of opening the box. With Pandora opening the box this has major consequences for all of Earth.

Why do you think the author uses the words, "buzzed, hissed and moaned" to describe what comes out of the jar? Think of some other words to describe the sounds that are made when the lid is lifted. (AF6)
It makes the bad things that are discharged have a "personality" and are like living things, creating distressing and troubling noises.
Shrill, piercing, squawking, tormented, groaning, wailing.

Why does the story end with one word, on one line, in capital letters? (AF4) It is to emphasise that out of the misery and horror at what Pandora has done by releasing evil and suffering into the world, there is a glimmer of light. All is not lost and this is very important. There is some positive to come out of a dreadful action/situation.

What is the moral of this story? (AF7) That you should listen to warnings.
Do not be tempted by something or be greedy as this may have consequences.
It explains why there can be evil, suffering and bad things in the world but out of this despair there is always hope and faith.

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Follow up 1

What does Prometheus tell humans they must do? (AF2)

Describe in your own words how the Earth was for Man at the beginning. (AF3)

Why did Zeus decide to take fire from Man? (AF2)

Why was fire so important to humans? (AF3)

What do you think "the final straw" means? (AF5)

What does immortal mean? Why did this prove to be a problem for Prometheus? (AF2/AF3)

"Her curiosity knew no bounds." What does this mean? (AF5)

Find the simile in this text. What do you think it means? (AF4)

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Follow up 2

Why do you think the word NEVER is in capital letters? (AF5)

Why do Pandora's eyes twinkle and her fingers twitch? (AF3)

From what you have read about Epimetheus, how would you describe his personality? (AF3)

Epimetheus is captivated by Pandora. What does this mean? (AF2)

"She would open it." Why do you think this line stands alone? (AF5)

Why do you think the author uses the words, "buzzed, hissed and moaned" to describe what comes out of the jar? Think of some other words to describe the sounds that are made when the lid is lifted. (AF6)

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Follow up 3

Why does the story end with one word, on one line, in capital letters? (AF4)

What is the moral of this story? (AF7)

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Vocabulary 1

Find the dictionary definition for the following words and then place these words into your own sentence. (Use the passage to help you!)

idyllic
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

bountiful
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

harmonious
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

allured
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

inquisitive
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

berate
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

furtively
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

cultivate
Definition: _____

Sentence: _____

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Vocabulary 1

Find the dictionary definition for the following words and then place these words into your own sentence. (Use the passage to help you!)

idyllic
Definition: perfect, tranquil, serene, picturesque

bountiful
Definition: plentiful, to produce a lot

harmonious
Definition: pleasing, friendly, peaceable

allured
Definition: attracted, enticed

inquisitive
Definition: curious, inquiring

berate
Definition: criticize angrily, scold

furtively
Definition: to act slyly, suspiciously, surreptitiously

cultivate
Definition: to prepare and grow (for example: crops)

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Vocabulary 2

Using the Pandora's Box text:

Think of synonyms to replace each word:

extinguished _____

pester _____

appreciate _____

forge _____

grievous _____

Now think of an antonym for each of these words and place this word into a sentence.

extinguished ANTONYM: _____

_____

pester ANTONYM: _____

_____

appreciate ANTONYM: _____

_____

forge ANTONYM: _____

_____

grievous ANTONYM: _____

_____

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - Vocabulary 2

Using the Pandora's Box text:

Think of synonyms to replace each word:

extinguished douse, smother, put out, quench

pester annoy, badger, nag, irk, hassle

appreciate enjoy, admire, cherish

forge make, create, produce

grievous dreadful, appalling, calamitous, atrocious

Now think of an antonym for each of these words and place this word into a sentence.

extinguished ANTONYM: start, create

pester ANTONYM: delight, appease, assist, aid

appreciate ANTONYM: hate, detest, dislike, despise

forge ANTONYM: destroy, ruin, stop

grievous ANTONYM: blessed, comforting, delightful

Pandora's Box - SPAG

Read this passage describing the box that Pandora opens.
Rewrite the text again carefully with the correct punctuation. There are capital letters, full stops, apostrophes, commas and a question mark to put in.

There are also 8 spelling errors to identify.

Where a word is underlined, you should replace this word with a synonym.

The box was the most beautiful thing pandora had ever seen. such was its beauty she couldnt take her eyes of it The box glistend with jewels of evry color: diamonds
emeralds rubys and sapphires. Pandoras excitment grew and grew. she new zeus had told her that she shouldnt open the box but the brilliance of the precious stones was so tempting. It surely was the most spectacular thing in all of greece What suprises lay inside

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015

Pandora's Box - SPAG

Read this passage describing the box that Pandora opens.
Rewrite the text again carefully with the correct punctuation. There are capital letters, full stops, apostrophes, commas and a question mark to put in.

There are also 8 spelling errors to identify.
Where a word is underlined, you should replace this word with a synonym.

The box was the most beautiful thing Pandora had ever seen. Such was its beauty she couldn't take her eyes off it. The box glistened with jewels of every colour: diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires. Pandora's excitement grew and grew. She knew Zeus had told her that she shouldn't open the box but the brilliance of the precious stones was so tempting. It surely was the most spectacular thing in all of Greece. What surprises lay inside?

Suitable synonyms

beautiful: stunning, glorious, magnificent, spectacular, wonderful, enchanting, deligtful
told: instructed, advised, explained to, informed
tempting: alluring, appealing, inviting, enticing

Spellings:

off (of)
glistened (glistend)
every (evry)
colour (color)
rubies (rubys)
excitement (excitment)
knew (new)
surprises (suprises)

© Classroom Secrets Limited 2015