

Quiz A: RL.8.9

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Daedalus and Icarus, a Greek Myth

- 1 On the Island of Crete dwelt the wealthy and powerful King Minos. The wife of Minos angered the gods and so gave birth to a monstrous son, part bull and part man. This monster, the Minotaur, endangered Minos's kingdom. Something had to be done. So Minos called upon the inventor and architect Daedalus to build a labyrinth—a vast maze cleverly designed so that, once inside, no one could find a way out. To this maze, Minos banished the Minotaur. Later, Minos conquered the city of Athens, and then forced the city to send him young men and women who were driven into the Labyrinth to feed the beast. The king looked upon the wailing of those entering the labyrinth without pity; his heart was that of an olive, hard and dark and small.
- 2 Twice Athens paid this foul tribute until a hero came to the city's relief. The warrior Theseus made his way to Crete and wooed King Minos's daughter, Ariadne. Anxious to please the handsome hero, Ariadne spoke with Daedalus to learn the secret to escaping the maze. Impressed by Ariadne's curiosity, Daedalus explained how. The secret was child's play. All one had to do was to tie one end of a thread at the opening of the maze, spool out the thread as one went inside, and then follow the thread back again to the entrance. By this means, Theseus entered the Labyrinth, slayed the monster, and escaped.
- 3 Angered, Minos had Daedalus thrown into his own maze, along with Daedalus's innocent son, Icarus. Minos then stationed guards at the entrance to prevent them from escaping.
- 4 Of course, it was foolish of Minos to think the devious Labyrinth could outsmart the one who designed it. Daedalus could easily have found another way out. However, even if he and Icarus escaped from the maze, they would still have no way to get off the island. Minos had every ship that left the island thoroughly searched.
- 5 But Daedalus was the greatest master of techne—the art of making things—who ever lived. One day, as he gazed at the sky, watching birds fly free above him, he seized upon a solution to his plight. A flock of geese had taken up residence in the maze after the death of the Minotaur. Daedalus had long thought the geese a nuisance, but now they seemed a blessing in disguise. He started gathering their feathers.
- 6 Daedalus set to work. For a year he labored, carefully laying feathers one upon the other. Each row of feathers he tucked neatly beneath the previous row. The tip of each feather he secured with wax. He tied the middles of the feathers with thread.
- 7 Daedalus lifted one pair of the wings he had made to his back and strapped them to his arms. Icarus watched with amazement as his father flapped the wings, rose a few feet into the air, and then crashed back to the ground. "It will take some practice," his father said, grinning.
- 8 Daedalus practiced with the wings until he had mastered them. Then he taught his son. Finally, they were ready. "Tomorrow morning," Daedalus said. "Rest well. You will need your strength."

