



**Cambridge Assessment  
International Education**

**AICE English  
General Paper  
Summer Assignment:**

**The Hero's Journey  
2025-2026**

**IMPORTANT: ALL WORK MUST BE COMPLETED AND BROUGHT TO CLASS ON THE  
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. CONTENT WILL BE TESTED.**



**Suncoast Community High School**



## AICE English General Paper: Overview

### Aims

In this course you will:

- develop understanding and use of English language in the context of contemporary topics
- explore a broad range of topics
- develop a wider awareness and knowledge of contemporary issues
- develop independent reasoning skills
- develop the skills of interpretation, analysis, evaluation and persuasion
- learn to write structured and developed arguments, and to present reasoned explanations
- develop the ability to present a point of view clearly, and consider and reflect upon those of others.

### Topics and skills overview

This course counts as an English class, but we will explore a range of topics from different subjects. The idea is to make connections, communicate ideas clearly through language (especially writing), and gain an understanding of the world around you.

Specifically, you'll have the opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of issues in these three broad topic areas:

- Economic, historical, moral, political and social
- Science, including its history, philosophy, ethics, general principles and applications; environmental issues; technology and mathematics
- Literature, language, the arts, crafts, and the media.

Through the study of these broad topic areas, you'll develop effective reading and writing skills in English as you work with information, ideas, and opinions. You'll analyze and evaluate opinions and ideas. You'll also learn how to build an argument. These skills are all highly transferable and will help you in other subjects you are studying, and prepare you for college and beyond.

### Assessment Objectives (AOs)

There are three main assessment objectives for this course:

1. Selection and application of information
2. Analysis and Evaluation
3. Communication using written English

This means you need to understand and interpret various texts and really think about what they mean. We are not looking for you to repeat what your teacher says; rather, we want you to develop skills to evaluate what you've learned so that you can form your own arguments. You'll also need to communicate your ideas clearly and competently, which is why good writing skills will be essential for success.

–Adapted from [The Cambridge English General Paper Syllabus](#)

# Summer Assignment Overview and Instructions

Welcome to Suncoast! This summer assignment is designed to give you a sense of how AICE EGP works and the type of connections you'll make between topics and subject areas. **It has THREE parts and should take you about four hours total.** Your individual responses to questions, unless otherwise specified, will be about 3 - 5 sentences each and will be recorded in a composition notebook you provide and that you will use throughout the school year. You will also be expected to share this knowledge upon your return in the form of quizzes and other assessments/assignments. Begin your high school career on the right foot (and set yourself up for success!) by doing the following:



- 1) Before beginning to work, read the assignment carefully and completely.
- 2) Obtain a **composition style notebook** (we will also use this in class, so you already will have one ready for the first day).
- 3) With your personal summer schedule in mind, make yourself a reasonable work schedule, in which you complete portions at regular intervals, rather than waiting till the last minute. Problems and setbacks occur, so get ahead of them and allow yourself enough time to do your best work!
- 4) Set up a quiet space with no distractions, where you can stay organized.
- 5) Make sure you label each part clearly in the composition book when asked. Not all parts will require an entry.
- 6) Read actively, make notes, write down questions for your teacher, and stay engaged with the material, keeping in mind that this information and these assignments are designed to introduce you to the topics, skills, perspectives, goals, and knowledge of AICE English General Paper, as well as the expectations and rigor of Suncoast in general.
- 7) Give yourself time to really think and reflect on what you're doing so that when you begin class in August, you're already in the Suncoast mindset of active learning and responsible scholarship!
- 8) Be ready to discuss and to have work/quizzes associated with the material upon return

## General Directions and Important Notes



On the first day of your AICE General Paper class, your teacher will invite you to join the AICE GP Google Classroom for your section. We will be completing assignments and quizzes within the first week related to your summer work; thus, you should come to class on the first day with your composition book and work complete.



### Some Important Notes

Your responses should be all your own work; academic dishonesty will be penalized. **Please understand using AI of any kind to generate work you submit as your own is not acceptable.** For this assignment (as well as for everything else you do at Suncoast), you will be more successful – and less stressed! – if you are **resourceful** and **proactive**. This means

- making use of all the resources at your disposal
- looking up words you don't know and clicking on *all* links provided
- seeking help when you need it, rather than waiting until the last minute or until an assignment is already due
- ensuring you carefully read and understand assignment directions and requirements before beginning

NOTE: For this summer assignment, you do not need to cite sources, but for everything else you are assigned at Suncoast, assume that you *do* need to cite sources.

## The Importance of Writing and Proper Mechanics (REVIEW)

When you write or create something, it should reflect you in the best way. When you are not present, your work speaks for you: it should present you as credible, trustworthy, and intelligent; it should be clean, clear, grammatically correct, and free of misspellings and typos. As a Suncoast student, everything you submit, whether it's a quick bell-ringer, a homework assignment, a worksheet, a lab report, a presentation, or an essay, should be your best work. Sloppiness and errors make your reader – and your teacher – less inclined to value your work.

Take note of the accuracy and neatness of these materials; the work you submit on the first day should be equally clear and correct. You are expected to follow the basic rules found in this [grammar reference sheet](#). If you struggle with proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, or mechanics, use free resources online this summer– [Khan Academy](#) is a great place to start. We will continue to work on these skills in AICE General Paper, but make sure that what you submit on Day 1 gives your teacher the best first impression of you!

## Part ONE: Think and Reflect - The IB Learner Profile

### IB learner profile

**The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.**

**As IB learners we strive to be:**

#### **INQUIRERS**

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

#### **KNOWLEDGEABLE**

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

#### **THINKERS**

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

#### **COMMUNICATORS**

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

#### **PRINCIPLED**

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

#### **OPEN-MINDED**

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

#### **CARING**

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

#### **RISK-TAKERS**

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

#### **BALANCED**

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

#### **REFLECTIVE**

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

**The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.**



Suncoast Community High School is an IB World School, which means that here at Suncoast we **all** strive to embody the International Baccalaureate Program's LEARNER PROFILE, regardless of our program of study (IB, CS, MSE, or IIT). The Learner Profile includes "a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success." These traits "imply a commitment to help all members of the school community learn to respect themselves, others and the world around them."<sup>1</sup> They can even help you to be the "hero" in your own life's journey.



1. Before you officially begin your high school journey, it is important to take some time to **reflect on who you are**, as well as on your areas of strength and your areas for growth. Choose **THREE** of the **Learner Profile traits** that you feel you embody or reflect well. (The traits are in the infographic above, in light blue, and their definitions are below each word: **inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, caring, communicators, principled, open-minded, risk-takers, balanced, and reflective**). **Explain your choices in your Composition Notebook, labeled as Part One IB profile, using specific examples from your life.**

## PART TWO: Greek Mythology and Why It Matters

Many of you are very familiar with Greek myths and mythology, while some of you may never have encountered them. Perhaps you're a big [Percy Jackson](#) fan and thus know Rick Riordan's reimagining of the characters and stories, or you may remember that [Wonder Woman is part of the race of warrior women called the Amazons](#) and [battles Ares, the Greek god of War](#). Others of you may have encountered Greek myths in different novels, movies, short stories, or poetry. There are many tellings, retellings, and versions of these myths. These stories are integral to the foundations of Western civilization; thus, knowing them will help you make connections and gain deeper knowledge in the courses you will take at Suncoast and beyond: from literature to social studies, psychology, science, mathematics, and world languages.

To begin, and to ensure that everyone has the same, general understanding of Greek myths and their importance, **watch this brief [overview](#) of Greek Mythology and why it matters. Read the information on [this page](#) and watch the video embedded there. You may also find this interactive [family tree](#) helpful to keep track!** Once you have refreshed yourself on mythology in general, it's time to learn about the following stories from Greek mythology. **Be prepared for assignments and quiz/tests on this material upon your return. You may consider creating a Kahoot or similar style review guide.**

### 10 Stories from Greek Mythology

In this section, you will explore 10 famous Greek myths and the characters within them. You'll learn how these stories not only entertain us but how they teach us about the past, about human nature at its best and worst, about our own desires and fears. Mythology is an ideal entry point into academic study: these old stories are foundational; reading them helps unlock knowledge about ourselves and the world in which we live. AICE English General Paper encourages us to inquire, to think critically about various perspectives, so that we can become independent thinkers and increase our awareness of our place in this global society.


Some of the myths below are presented as stories to read, while others are videos to watch. You will **begin by reading or watching the story; next, you will learn a bit more about why this story matters; finally, you will reflect** on your own story – one that is still very much in progress. Make sure to click on *all* links provided!

## MYTH 1: Prometheus and the Theft of Fire

READ: [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** One of the reasons that the Prometheus myth is so popular is that it deals with someone “stealing” knowledge and power from the gods and giving it to humans. If you read Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* in middle school, you may remember that Dr. Frankenstein is called a “modern Prometheus” because he seeks to seize the divine power of granting life and – as always in tellings of this story – is punished for it. Whether or not you’ve read *Frankenstein* or seen any of the movie adaptations, check out this [video](#) for the basic story in the original novel. Prometheus is credited with giving humans both fire and civilization in general. As you see, *Frankenstein* connects such Promethean power to human knowledge and raises important ethical questions about science and technology. We see this idea [again](#) in the *Jurassic Park* series. So while we as humans love and value science and progress, clearly we also fear the unintended consequences of technology and innovation.




 **Reflect:** Think of another, real-world example of this tension between desiring to be “like God” or to exploit scientific knowledge *and* the fear of unintended outcomes..

## MYTH 2: Narcissus and Echo

WATCH: [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** The story of Narcissus has given us the term “narcissism.” As a term, narcissism is kinda overused these days; technically, it’s a psychological disorder, but many of us use it in a more general sense to describe people who seem to have an overinflated sense of their own importance. We see a lot of narcissism on – and as a result of – social media. Read [this article](#) which discusses the effects of social media on political debate, particularly the way that social media encourages narcissistic behavior (remember to look up words you don’t know or understand!).




 **REFLECT:** : What do *you* think? Has social media made civil political discourse impossible? Is social media “the narcissist’s playground”? Be as specific as possible, using both the article’s information and your own knowledge and experience.

## MYTH 3: Sisyphus' Punishment

READ: [The Story](#)



**LEARN:** The idea of Sisyphean labor comes from the myth of Sisyphus – the idea of being forced to do something, over and over, without change and with no progress. Read [this article](#) about college students at Harvard who often feel like Sisyphus; you may hear this kind of talk by any student who feels she is under a lot of pressure, has to keep doing lots of work, never feels like she’s getting anywhere, etc. In fact, you may find *yourself* feeling this way during your time at Suncoast, because you’re beginning a challenging – but ultimately very rewarding – program of study, in order to (like the article’s author) “pursue meaningful personal, intellectual, and professional goals” during and after high school!


 **REFLECT:** : Have there been times when you have felt like Sisyphus? Whether or not you have, you probably *will* feel this way at some point in your life. When you or someone you know starts to feel like poor Sisyphus, what’s some advice you might offer on how – and why – to keep going? To what extent do you agree with the perspective of the article’s author on this issue?

## MYTH 4: Perseus' Slaying of Medusa

**READ:** [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** Perhaps one of the most interesting and misunderstood figures in Greek mythology is Medusa: for a long time, she was considered just a “monster,” but she has increasingly come to be seen as more of a victim. Check out [this article](#) about the fashion label Versace and their choice of Medusa’s head as their logo.




 **REFLECT:** Why else do you think people might “rall[y] around Medusa”? At the same time, what might make her monstrous, according to the article? Where do *you* fall? Do you think she is a misunderstood victim or a threatening seductress? Why?

## MYTH 5: King Midas

**WATCH:** [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** Greek myths expose us to human flaws. Like the overreachers Prometheus and Icarus, King Midas’ selfish actions – this time in the form of greed for wealth – led to his demise. King Midas’ golden touch has been referenced in nearly every subject. Read the article [“What do you know about the real King Midas”](#) to learn about the man behind the myth and then William Pfaff’s article [“Blame the Midas Touch”](#) to see how this myth relates to the world of economics. Lastly, view [this video](#) from a Muppet song that transforms the myth into comedic theater for 20th-century viewers.



 **REFLECT::** What did you learn about the Midas myth from the initial video? What does the myth suggest about power? About human nature? Do you think some individuals are born greedy or is this behavior learned? Why?

Consider the links to history, economics, and the arts in this section. What is the effect of learning about this myth through different subject lenses? Which link appealed to you most? Explain.



## MYTH 6: Icarus' Flight

**READ:** [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** We live in a world that is largely built on the discoveries and inventions of others. Our species owes much of human progress to risk-takers who have pushed themselves to achieve seemingly impossible feats. But there are times when people “overreach” and pay a heavy price for their excessive arrogance or pride (remember Prometheus?). Such is the case with the myth of Icarus and Daedalus. After reading the story in the link above, answer the questions below which encourage you to consider this myth through literary, historical, and personal perspectives.



**REFLECT: :**


-  1) In the context of this story, what can we learn from tragedy? How did people respond to tragedy during ancient times and what can it teach us today?
-  2) Icarus ignores his father’s advice, and his youthful foolishness is eventually his downfall. In the context of this myth, what does it mean to be grown-up? Was Icarus’ downfall a result of his youth? Would an older, wiser person have perished in the same way?

## MYTH 7: Oedipus

**READ:** [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** The myth of Oedipus has been retold for centuries, perhaps most famously through Sophocles’ Greek play, *Oedipus Rex*, which was composed in 430 BCE. In the 20th century, psychologist Sigmund Freud borrowed ideas from this myth to give a name to a dysfunctional family dynamic that he called the “Oedipus Complex.” Watch this [CRASH COURSE VIDEO](#) by John Green to learn about this connection between literature and psychology and answer the questions that follow.



 **REFLECT::** Crash Course videos are popular because they make really old ideas historically relevant by adding in references to pop culture and asking viewers to consider timeless questions. Toward the beginning of the video John Green says, “It’s hard to imagine a more tragic, dysfunctional family than the Theban clan that Sophocles writes about in *Oedipus the King*. I mean, except for the Kardashians.” What is the effect of referencing the Kardashians?



More toward the end of the video, Green asks some relevant questions inspired by the Oedipus myth: "How much control do we have over our lives? How much do we owe to genetics, to privilege, to upbringing, to accidents, to the choices that we do or don't make?" What do YOU think? Consider what you've learned from this myth and your own personal experiences..

## MYTH 8: The Trojan War, the Trojan Horse & Helen of Troy

READ: [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** As you saw in the History.com article, the Trojan War was a long one and stories about it have fascinated people for millennia. It involves important ideas such as war and diplomacy; friendship, loyalty, and heroism; love and the treatment of women; prophecies; and the involvement of the gods in human affairs. Paris, prince of Troy, is largely blamed for the war because of his desire to have the most beautiful woman in the world as his own, his self-interest and cowardice, and – interestingly – his violation of the trust his host, Menelaus, placed in him. Hospitality was a really big deal to people in ancient times, as were promises of alliance and aid amongst kingdoms. Read [this article](#) which explains the concept of *xenia*, or hospitality.



 **REFLECT:** To what extent do you think hospitality remains an important custom in our modern world? What are some examples of hospitality being extended, and/or of the trust involved in hospitality being violated? (Remember that hospitality can be at the national or global level, as well as at the domestic level, or even in terms of the hospitality and travel industries.)

(If you like Greek mythology and want a fuller account of the Trojan War, we recommend reading [this story](#). It references a lot more key moments and figures in the Trojan War which are helpful to know!)

## MYTH 9: Persephone


READ: [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** By the time you entered grade school you likely understood that the change of seasons – from fall to winter to spring to summer – could be explained by science. The tilt of the earth's axis causes different parts of the earth to receive the sun's most direct rays, thus creating the shifts in our seasons. Early civilizations, however, explained this phenomenon through story-telling. As anthropologist Krystal D'Costa points out in her blog "[The Return of Persephone and Other Rites of Transition](#)," published in *Scientific American*, "The key elements of seasonal death and rebirth in Persephone's story are old themes that human populations around the globe have

observed." Read the original tale of Persephone and D'Costa's blog (linked above) before completing the reflection below.







 **REFLECT:** According to D’Costa, how do mythologies from other cultures explain the seasons? She mentions that such stories “ultimately suggest a way to reconcile changes that touch everyone.” Consider D’Costa’s question at the end of the blog and think about how you “mark periods of transition” between seasons. Right now, for example, you are reading this in the summer. For you personally, what marks the shift from summer to fall, fall to winter, winter to spring, and so on? Why do you think it’s important to reflect on how we make seasonal transitions? What does such reflection reveal?

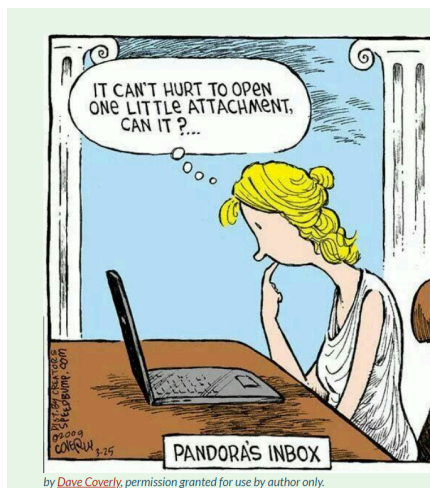
## MYTH 10: Pandora

**WATCH:** [The Story](#)

**LEARN:** The Pandora myth continues to fascinate individuals from subject areas across the globe. Artists render the [myth in images](#), scholars reference historical and [biblical connections](#), and directors such as James Cameron create imagined, forbidden worlds such as Pandora in the film [Avatar](#). Commercially, the name Pandora is connected to products such as [jewelry](#) and [music streaming services](#).

**REFLECT:**

-  1) After watching the video about Pandora’s myth, consider its connections to ancient and modern culture. Choose one of the references above and comment on how it helps us better understand the ideas presented in the myth.
-  2) Next, think about how these cartoons connect Pandora’s myth to modern topics. What is the effect of using ancient myths to open up discussions of current global issues?



by Dave Coverly, permission granted for use by author only.

Pandora checks her DNA test results.



by Nick K. © 1 1 1

## PART THREE: The Hero’s Journey: The Monomyth



When you think of a hero, you might think of someone with superpowers who wears a cape, or perhaps you think of ordinary humans who perform extraordinary feats. Greek mythology also has heroes, some of which you read about earlier and some of which you will learn about in class. For the conclusion of our learning on mythology, consider what it means to be a “hero.”

You will look at Joseph Campbell's work by previewing this video: [Crash Course 25: World Mythology The Hero's Journey](#)

As you watch the video, **reflect on the following questions and respond in your composition notebook. Label this section Hero's Journey Part 3.**

### Overview of the Hero's Journey

1. Who developed the concept of the Hero's Journey?
2. What is the "monomyth," and why is it important in mythology?

### The Three Major Phases

#### a. Departure:

- What usually initiates the hero's journey?
- What is the role of the "Call to Adventure"?
- How do "Threshold Guardians" affect the hero's path?

#### b. Initiation:

- What challenges and trials does the hero typically face?
- What is the importance of a mentor or supernatural aid?
- How does the hero experience transformation?

#### c. Return:

- What does "Atonement" mean in the context of the Hero's Journey?
- What does "Returning with the Elixir" symbolize?

### Examples from Mythology and Pop Culture

1. Name at least two examples of stories or characters that follow the Hero's Journey.
2. In a **short answer response of 4-8 sentences**, think about yourself or someone you know. Discuss how you (or they) have undertaken your/their own Hero's Journey.

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Warm regards,

The 9th Grade Suncoast AICE EGP Team

NOTE: If you have any questions about this assignment, please contact either teacher listed below:

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