

Who Let the Gods Out?

by Maz Evans

 Printable text •  Modelling slides  Photocopiable text and questions • pages 34 to 37

The first extract is from a popular contemporary fiction text. *Who Let the Gods Out?* follows Elliot, a young boy who witnesses a shooting star containing the goddess Virgo crash-land on Earth. The relatable themes of this novel make it ideal for introducing readers to different gods and goddesses, and some children may wish to read the next books in the series. This text is linked to [Unit 2](#), a poem about Norse mythology.

1 Get ready

Discuss the **Key vocabulary** identified in the **Language toolkit** and then complete the vocabulary activities as desired. Please note that the selected vocabulary is a guide. Depending on the needs of your cohort, additional vocabulary discussion may be beneficial before, during and after reading. Next, display the text (pages 34 to 35) so the children can see the title and any illustrations, and encourage the children to discuss the following questions before reading.

1 The text is a story about gods and goddesses.

What are they? Can you name any?

Answers will vary here depending on the children's background knowledge, but they should be able to make links to Key Stage 2 history topics (e.g. Ancient Egypt, Greece or Rome). You may wish to explain that everyone's religious beliefs are different and in the ancient world there were many more religions with their own gods and goddesses.

2 The text mentions stars and constellations.

What do you know about this topic?

Answers will vary here depending on the children's background knowledge but should include references to the science curriculum in Year 5 (e.g. planets, stars, the universe).

3 The story begins just after something or someone has crash-landed on Earth. Can you think of any other stories where this happens?

Answers will vary here depending on the children's knowledge of different texts. You may wish to provide some prompts (e.g. meteors and asteroids; aliens; spacecraft) to support discussion.

4 The text focuses on two characters, who eventually work together. Can you name any other famous partnerships in fiction?

Answers will vary here depending on the children's prior reading, but they should be able to suggest suitable partnerships (e.g. Hansel and Gretel; Batman and Robin).

Language toolkit

Key vocabulary

atmosphere	constellation	defensively
feeble	immortal	matter-of-factly
oaths	obtain	pollution
solemnly	sophisticated	stove

Vocabulary discussion questions

- If a spy was able to **obtain** information, would this mean they were good or bad at their job?
- Is being **sophisticated** always a good thing?
- Is the **atmosphere** something you can see?
- If someone had a **feeble** body, would they be physically strong or weak?
- Are **oaths** the same as promises?

Vocabulary activities

- The word **immortal** is from the prefix 'im-' meaning 'not' and *mortalis* which comes from the Latin word *mors* meaning 'death'. How many other words can the children identify that share the prefix 'im-' or the root 'mor-'?
- The author uses a range of adverbs and adverbial phrases to describe how the characters talk to one another (e.g. **defensively**; **matter-of-factly**; **solemnly**). Encourage the children to role-play speaking in these tones with one another.
- The text also includes some subject-specific vocabulary (e.g. 'Elysium'; 'ambrosia'). It would be useful to spend some time discussing the meaning of these words with the children.
- Use your choice of the vocabulary activities on page 15 to investigate some of the key words above.