Amphitryon: "What mortal hath not heard of him who shared a wife with Zeus, Amphitryon of Argos, whom on a day Alcaeus, son of Perseus begat, Amphitryon the father of Heracles? He it was dwelt here in Thebes, where from the sowing of the dragon's teeth grew up a crop of earth-bron giants; for of these Ares saved a scanty band, and their children's children people the city of Cadmus. Hence sprung Creon, son of Menoeceus, king of this land; and Creon became the father of this lady Megara, whom once all Cadmus' race escorted with the glad music of lutes at her wedding, in the day that Heracles, illustrious chief, led her to my halls."

Summary: Amphityron identifies himself as the mortal father of Heracles who shared his wife with Zeus. He also identifies Megara as the daughter of Creon and the wife of Heracles.

Comprehension Question: How is Heracles related to Amphitryon and Megara?

Vocabulary Question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word "scanty"?
A) Meager, small, scarce  
B) enormous, large, huge  
C) musical, talented, gifted  
D) misled, deluded, deceived

Based on how Amphitryon is setting the scene and telling his story so far, what do you predict he will inform us of next?

Do you think that Zeus is someone that the anybody should worship based on what you know about him from other stories, such as Helen, in which he sleeps with other men's wives? Is it ethical of him to go off with mortal women when he has a wife, Hera, already? Does this show that humans worship out of fear rather than respect?
Amphitryon: "Now he, my son, left Thebes where I was settled, left his wife Megara and her kin, eager to make his home in Argolis, in that walled town which the Cyclopes built, whence I am exiled for the slaying of Electryon; so he, wishing to lighten my affliction and to find a home in his own land, did offer Eurystheus a mighty price for my recall, even to free the world of savage monsters, whether it was that Hera goaded him to submit to this, or that fate was leagued against him. Divers are the toils he hath accomplished, and last of all hath he passed through the mouth of Taenarus into the halls of Hades to drag to the light that hound with bodies three, and thence is he never returned."

Summary: Heracles has left Thebes to make his home in the land of Argolis and to repeal Amphitryon's exile. To accomplish this, he made a deal with Eurystheus to free the world of savage monsters. As a part of his deal, Heracles was on his way to complete his last task of bringing the three-headed dog of Hades to the earth's surface, but he has yet to return.

Comprehension question: According Amphitryon, where was Heracles, and what was he doing?

Vocabulary question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word *affliction*?
A) blessing, gift, good fortune  
B) pain, suffering, distress  
C) duty, obligation, responsibility  
D) possession, belonging, prize

Was it ethical of Heracles to leave his family to rid the world of savage monsters? Would it have been better for him to have stayed home?

Compared to other stories about Hera and her revenges, such as the story about Io, when Amphitryon says, "whether it was that Hera goaded him to submit to this, or that fate was leagued against him", for what reasons would Hera try to goad Heracles into doing something as dangerous as his challenges?
Amphitryon: "Now there is an ancient legend amongst the race of Cadmus, that one Lycus in days gone by was husband to Dirce being king of this city with its seven towers, before that Amphion and Zethus, sons of Zeus, lords of the milk-white steeds, became rulers in the land. His son, called by the same name as his father, albeit no Theban but a stranger from Euboea, slew Creon, and after that seized the government, having fallen on this city when weakened by dissension."

Summary: Amphitryon is retelling the tale or legend about how Lycus killed Creon and took over the throne of Thebes, the city with seven towers. Lycus is now the unlawful, illegitimate king of the land.

Comprehension question: How did Lycus become the king of Thebes?

Vocabulary question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word dissension?
A) accord, agreement, harmony
B) decline, incline, plunge
C) abandonment, betrayal, withdrawal
D) dispute, disagreement, conflict

Compared to the Iliad, in which shirking from a fight would have been dishonorable and cowardly, would Lycus' actions have been looked down upon? Would he be considered a coward?
What do you predict will happen to Lycus in the future? Will he be able to remain king and retain the throne or will things change to disrupt his rule?
Amphitryon: "So this connection with Creon is likely to prove to us a serious evil; for now that my son is in the bowels of the earth, this illustrious monarch Lycus is bent on extirpating the children of Heracles, to quench one bloody feud with another, likewise his wife and me, if useless age like mine is to rank amongst men, that the boys may never grow up to exact a blood-penalty of their uncle's family."

Summary: Because of their connection with Creon, who is Megara's father, Lycus has a reason to kill them off while Heracles is in the underworld. By killing them off, Lycus is making sure that Heracles’ children won't have a chance to take revenge.

Comprehension Question: What is the connection between Creon and Heracles’ family?

Vocabulary Question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word *extirpate*?
A) help, preserve, save
B) block, hinder, impede
C) exterminate, annihilate, kill
D) alleviate, assist, benefact

Under the current circumstances, such as Heracles’ being in the underworld, do you think that Lycus will succeed in getting rid of Heracle's family? What about Megara and Amphitryon? Will they be able to do anything about Lycus?
Is it ethical of Lycus to want to kill Heracles’ defenseless family? Is he a coward to attempt to kill them?
Megara: "We can never steal beyond the boundaries of the land unseen, for there is too strict a watch set on us at every outlet, nor have we any longer hopes of safety in our friends."

Amphitryon: "'Tis by no means easy, my daughter, to give one's earnest advice on such matters easily, without weary thought."

Megara: "Dost need a further taste of grief, or cling so fast to life?"

Amphitryon: "Yes, I love this life, and cling to its hopes."

Megara: "So do I; but it boots not to expect the unexpected, old friend."

Amphitryon: "In these delays is left the only cure for our evils."

Megara: "'Tis the pain of that interval I feel so."

Amphitryon: "Daughter, there may yet be a happy escape from present troubles for me and thee; my son, thy husband, may yet arrive. So calm thyself, and wipe those tears from thy children's eyes, and soothe them with soft words, inventing a tale to delude them, piteous though such fraud be."

Summary: Throughout this dialogue between Megara and Amphitryon, Megara is expressing how hopeless she feels and how their doom was upon them because they can't escape. Amphitryon counters every
single one of her pessimistic comments by telling her to keep faith and that there was still some hope of Heracles returning to save them.

Comprehension question: What is stopping Megara, Amphitryon and Heracle's children from escaping?

Vocabulary question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word interval?  
A) message, news, note  
B) junction, intercross, coalition  
C) interlude, break, space between  
D) preoccupation, attraction, engrossment

Compared to the women in the Iliad, Trojan Women, Helen, and other Euripides' plays, how is Megara's reaction or state of mind different or alike that of other characters’?

How does Euripides use the one-lined conversation between Megara and Amphitryon, called stichomythia, to convey their distress?
Lycus: "How long do ye seek to prolong your lives? What hope, what succour do ye see to save you from death? Do you trust that these children's father, who lies dead in the halls of Hades, will return? After all, what was the fine exploit thy husband achieved, if he did kill a hydra in a marsh or that monster of Nemea? which he caught in a snare, for all he says he strangled it to death in his arms. Are these your weapons for the hard struggle? Is it for this then that Heracles' children should be spared? a man who has won a reputation for valour in his contests with beasts, in all else a weakling; who ne'er buckled shield to arm nor faced the spear, but with a bow, that coward's weapon, was ever ready to run away."

Summary: After Lycus has entered the scene, he taunts Megara and Amphitryon by asking them how long do they expect to put off their inevitable deaths and what hope is there for them when Heracles is dead. He goes on to insult Heracles by calling him a weakling whose reputation had been won through petty accomplishments of fighting against animals. He also calls Heracles a coward who fights with a bow, ready to run from a battle, instead of fighting like a man.

Comprehension question: What were the reasons that Lycus gave when he called Heracles a coward and a weakling?

Vocabulary question: What is the best definition or meaning of the word *exploit*?
A) achievement, accomplishment, feat
B) defeat, failure, debacle
C) ambition, intention, purpose
D) property, assets, goods
Compared to the ways that Heracles or Hercules is portrayed in mythology, especially about his twelve labors, what is different about the way he is portrayed here by Lycus?

What do you predict Lycus will say next? Why did he come to the altar of Zeus?
As for Zeus, let Zeus defend his son’s case; but as for me, Heracles, I am only anxious on thy behalf to prove by what I say this Tyrant’s ignorance, for I cannot allow thee to be ill spoken of.

Summary: Amphitryon is just replying to all the questions Lycus asked him by telling him that Zeus can defend his own son but he could defend his own.

What is Amphitryon anxious for?

In the quote above the word *anxious* most closely means
a. thrilled
b. hot
c. worried
d. eager

Why would Amphitryon be giving an example about Zeus?
Amphitryon

This is completely off the point.

These arguments are completely opposite to thine with regard to the point at issue. Next, why art thou desirous to slaying these children? What have they done to others?

Summary: Amphitryon is just saying that the discussion him and Lycus are having aren’t anywhere near to the point he is trying to make. Then he gives an example of one question that is out-of-subject.

Why does he insult Lycus?

What does the word *desirous* most closely mean
a. wishing, wanting
b. doubtful, shoved
c. unknown, mysterious
d. requested, barked

Do you think Amphitryon is getting angry?
Summary: The leader is saying that there is a bunch of strong and smart people here, so can anyone give a good speech?

What is the question that the leader is asking?

What does \textit{fair} most closely mean
a. chiefly, policed
b. judged, snarled
c. beautiful, nice
d. dirty, slime-covered

Do you think the leader meant his question in a good way or a bad way? If the leader is mad that no one will give a speech, why doesn’t he do it himself?
Say what thou wilt of thee in thy exalted phrase, but I by deeds will make thee rue those words.

Summary: Lycus is telling the Leader that he will make him regret the words that he spoke of him.

Who is Lycus getting mad at?

Exalted means
a. dignified, fancy
b. frightened, scary
c. strong, pushy
d. bad, biting

Why would Lycus want him to regret those words?
As for you old men, since ye thwart my views, not for the children of Heracles alone shall ye lament but likewise for every blow that strikes his house, and ye shall ne’er forget ye are slaves and I your prince.

Summary: Lycus is just telling the chorus angrily that don’t forget who is the boss around here and who are the slaves.

Who is Lycus telling this to?

*Thwart* means
a. anger, cause fear  
b. outwit, steal  
c. block, disrupt  
d. vomit, sneeze

Do you think it is right for Lycus to be saying he is the prince?
*Quote:
Megara: Children, follow footsteps of your hapless mother to your father’s hall, where others possess his substance, though his name is still ours.

*Summary:
Megara was entering into the palace with her children.

*Comprehension:
Who was entering into the palace?

*Predictive:
What do you think would happen if the children ran away?

*Associative:
Can Megara and her children following her be related to families during war?

*Ethical:
Is it right that the children follow Megara?
Scene 3/ Heracles
Cell #2

*Quote:
“AMPHITRYON: O Zeus, in vain it seems, did I get thee to share my bride with me; in vain used we to call thee father of my son. After all thou art less our friend than thou didst pretend. Great god as thou art, I, a mere mortal, surpass thee in true worth. For I did not betray the children of Heracles; but thou by stealth didst find thy way to my couch, taking another's wife without leave given, while to save thy own friends thou hast no skill. Either thou art a god of little sense, or else naturally unjust.”

*Summary:
Amphitryon is praying to Zeus and is saying that he did not betray Heracles’ children.

*Comprehension:
What is Amphitryon praying about?

*Associative:
How can Amphitryon’s prayer relate to Christian praying?

*Ethical:
Is it right for Amphitryon to be angrily praying to Zeus?
*Quote:*
Phoebus is singing a plaintive dirge to drown his happier strains, striking with key of gold his sweet-tongued lyre; so too am I fain to sing a song of praise, a crown to all his toil, concerning him who is gone to the gloom beneath the nether world, whether I am to call him son of Zeus or of Amphitryon. For the praise of noble toils accomplished is a glory to the dead. First he cleared the grove of Zeus of a lion, and put its skin upon his back, hiding his auburn hair in its fearful gaping jaws;

*Summary:*
Amphitryon is singing proudly about his stepson’s twelve labors even though he’s unhappy about the impending doom.

*Comprehension:*
Who is singing a plaintive dirge? Why is he singing?

*Predictive:*
What would happen if Pheobus’ song of happier sorrows were no more?

*Associative:*
How can Pheobus’ song relate to what’s happening today?

*Ethical:
Is it right for Amphitryon to compare himself to Phoebus?
*Quote:
Then he went through the waves of heaving Euxine against the mounted host of Amazons dwelling round Maeotis, the lake that is fed by many a stream, having gathered to his standard all his friends from Hellas, to fetch the gold-embroidered raiment of the warrior queen, a deadly quest for a girdle. And Hellas won those glorious spoils of the barbarian maid, and safe in Mycenae are they now. On Lerna's murderous hound, the many-headed hydra, he set his branding-iron, and smeared its venom on his darts, wherewith he slew the shepherd of Erytheia, a monster with three bodies;

*Summary:
Heracles went through the waves of Euxine; as he went on a quest for a girdle, with his friends he gathered from Hellas.

*Comprehension:
Who was Lerna? Where did she live?

*Associative:
How can Heracles’ quest relate to a famous quest in history?

*Ethical:
Was it right he took his friends along on a quest?
Scene 3/Heracles
Cell #5

*Quote:
Megara
What am I saying? What visions do these anxious eyes behold? Old man, this is none other than thy own son. Come hither, my children, cling to your father's robe, make haste to come, never loose your hold, for here is one to help you, nowise behind our saviour Zeus.

*Summary:
Megara was seeing an old man who was his son. She then urged her children to go to their father's robe. She told them not to lose hope because there was someone that was going to help them.

*Comprehension:
Who was the old man?

*Associative:
How can Megara’s plea to her children not to lose hope relate to what’s happening today?

*Predictive:
What would happen if Megara did not see her husband Heracles?
*Ethical:
Was it right for Megara to urge her children not to lose hope?
Quote: HERACLES
“All hail! my house, and portals of my home, how glad am I to emerge to the light and see thee. Ha! what is this? I see my children before the house in the garb of death, with chaplets on their heads, my wife amid a throng of men, and my father weeping o'er some mischance. Let me draw near to them and inquire; lady, what strange stroke of fate hath fallen on the house?”

Summary: Heracles is glad to see his family, but his family has gone through a lot while he was gone. He sees his children in burial clothes, and his wife among a bunch of men, and his father weeping.

Questions:
1.) Do things seem happy at Heracles' house?
2.) What do you think will happen to his family? Why?
3.) Is it right that Heracles was gone while his family was in pain and doomed to a bad fate?
4.) How can Heracles’ return to see his family in a bad fate relate to what’s happening today?
Part 4/ Heracles' Family Fate Cell #2

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<th>Heracles</th>
<th>Megara</th>
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We are to die!

Quote: MEGARA
“We are being ruined; forgive me, old friend, if I have anticipated that which thou hadst a right to tell him; for woman's nature is perhaps more prone than man's to grief, and they are my children that were being led to death, which was my own lot too.”

Summary: Heracles’ wife, Megara, is telling Heracles that his children’s fate is to die, and her fate is the same.

Questions:

1.) In Heracles’ home, whose fate is to die?

2.) What would happen if none of Heracles’ family were fated to be killed soon?

3.) Do you think it is right that Heracles’ family are going to die?

4.) How can Heracles’ family fate relate to Iraqi families today?

5.) Will Heracles be able to save his family?
Quote: “MEGARA
Lycus, our splendid monarch, slew him.
HERACLES
Did he meet him in fair fight, or was the land sick and weak?
MEGARA
Aye, from faction; now is he master of the city of Cadmus with
its seven gates.
HERACLES
Why hath panic fallen on thee and my aged sire?
MEGARA
He meant to kill thy father, me, and my children.
HERACLES
Why, what had he to fear from my orphan babes?
MEGARA
He was afraid they might some day avenge Creon's death.”

Summary: Megara and her husband, Heracles, are having a discussion on what has happened while Heracles was away. Heracles finds out that the king, Lycos, is the one who is to kill his family. The king’s reason to kill Heracles’ children is that the king feared that one-day Heracles’ children would avenge Creon by murdering him.

Question:
1.) Who is to kill Heracles’ family?
2.) Was Lycus' reason to kill Heracles' children right or wrong?
3.) How does Lycus’ reason to kill Heracles’ family relate to what is happening in the world today?
4.) What would happen if Heracles’ children avenged Lycos before Lycos could kill them?
Heracles is telling his family that he is here for them. He tells them to take their burial clothes off and that he is here to defend them. He says that he will throw the man who is to kill his family, Lycos, to the dogs. The end will know him as Heracles the victor. He also comes to say that he ought to die in his families defense.

Questions:
1.) What will Heracles do?

2.) Would it be right for Heracles to die defending his family?

3.) How does Heracles personality/behavior relate to his personality/behavior in the cartoon movie?

4.) What would happen if Heracles did die in his family's defense?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heracles</th>
<th>Amphitryon</th>
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<td></td>
<td>He will drag away your children and wife.</td>
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**Quote:** “For thy lucky coming hither, go salute thy household altar, and let thy father’s halls behold thy face. For soon will the king be here in person to drag away thy wife and children and murder them, and to add me to the bloody list. But if thou remain on the spot all will go well, and thou wilt profit by this security; but do not rouse thy city ere thou hast these matters well in train, my son.”

**Summary:** Amphitryon is telling Heracles that soon the king will come and drag away his family and murder them, his being one of them also. If Heracles remains, all will go well and they will profit from his security.

**Questions:**
1. What will happen if Heracles remains where he is?
2. Would it be right if Heracles left his children and wife?
3. What would happen if Heracles left his family?
4. How can Heracles security relate to the security of the airports?
Heracles: I was in the underworld getting the three-headed monster.

Amphitryon: Why, didst thou in very deed go to the house of Hades, my son?

Heracles: Aye, and brought to the light that three-headed monster.

Amphitryon: Didst worst him in fight, or receive him from the goddess?

Heracles: In fair fight; for I had been lucky enough to witness the rites of the initiated.

Amphitryon: Is the monster really lodged in the house of Eurystheus?

Heracles: The grove of Demeter and the city of Hermione are his prison.

Amphitryon: Does not Eurystheus know that thou hast returned to the upper world?

Heracles: He knows not; I came hither first to learn your news.

Amphitryon: How is it thou wert so long beneath the earth?

Heracles: I stayed awhile attempting to bring back Theseus from Hades, father."

Summary: Heracles agrees to accept his mortal father. He tells him of his trip to the underworld. The reason of him going to the underworld is to get the three-headed monster to the earth to Eurystheus. He did
indeed get the three-headed monster by a fair fight, but Eurystheus
does not know that Heracles has returned from Hades because
Heracles wanted to know of his mortal father’s news.
Questions:
1.) Why did Heracles go to Hades?
2.) What would have happened if Heracles was unable to get the
three-headed monster?
3.) Was it right for Heracles to “steal” the three-headed monster
from Hades?
5.) What is the name of the three-headed monster?
   a) Amphitryon
   b) Cerberus
   c) Eurydice
   d) Fluffy
5.) How can Hades’ monster relate to Harry Potter and the
Sorcerers Stone?
Quote:” He set out for Athens right glad to have escaped from the lower world. Come, children, attend your father to the house. My entering in is fairer in your eyes, I trow, than my going out. Take heart, and no more let the tears stream from your eyes; thou too, dear wife, collect thy courage, cease from fear; let go my robe; for I cannot fly away, nor have I any wish to flee from those I love. Ah! they do not loose their hold, but cling to my garments all the more; were ye in such jeopardy? Well, I must lead them, taking them by the hand to draw them after me, like a ship when towing; for I too do not reject the care of my children; here all mankind are equal; all love their children, both those of high estate and those; who are naught; ’tis wealth that makes distinctions among them; some have, others want; but all the human race loves its offspring.”

Summary: Heracles first answers Amphitryon question of where Theseus has gone; Theseus has escaped from Hades and he has set out for Athens. Then Heracles came to say that him and his family should now enter the house. Heracles tries to encourage his family and tries to remove their fear by encouraging them by telling them how much he loves them. He then begins to speak of the natural love a human being has for his children, no matter if that child is rich or is in poverty.

Questions:

1.) Where is Theseus?

2.) The quote states that all mankind is equal, was mankind equal? If not what exactly is that quote saying?

3.) What would happen if Heracles did not encourage his family to be brave?
4.) How can Heracles relate to fathers today?
SECTION 5 - Cell 1: Hercules reunites with his family.
Illustration:

Quote: 
“HERACLES: He set out for Athens right glad to have escaped from the lower world. Come, children, attend your father to the house. My entering in is fairer in your eyes, I trow, than my going out. Take heart, and no more let the tears stream from your eyes; thou too, dear wife, collect thy courage, cease from fear; let go my robe; for I cannot fly away, nor have I any wish to flee from those I love. Ah! they do not loose their hold, but cling to my garments all the more; were ye in such jeopardy? Well, I must lead them, taking them by the hand to draw them after me, like a ship when towing; for I too do not reject the care of my children; here all mankind are equal; all love their children, both those of high estate and those; who are naught; 'tis wealth that makes distinctions among them; some have, others want; but all the human race loves its offspring.”

Summary: Heracles ends his conversation with Amphitryon by saying that Theseus has set out for Athens. Heracles then unites with his [three?] sons and wife, who are all glad he is home, and comforts them by telling them that he is here now and not going to leave them. They all enter the palace.

Questions: 
1.) In the quote about the word “trow” most likely means:  
a) to throw or heave   b) to truly think or suppose   
c) to cruelly escape   d) to tow with a rope or chain

2.) Why were Heracles’ children so happy to see their father?
3.) Literal: When Heracles’ kids cling on to him as if they don’t want him to, “fly away,” this shows that they don’t want him to do what?

4.) Now that Heracles is back from the underworld, how do you think his family’s future will change?
Cell 2: Lycus arrives at the palace with his servants, who are met by Amphitryon.

Illustration:

Quote:
“LYCUS: Ha! Amphitryon, 'tis high time thou camest forth from the palace; ye have been too long arraying yourselves in the robes and trappings of the dead. Come, bid the wife and children of Heracles show themselves outside the house, to die on the conditions you yourselves offered.”

Summary: The snooty king, Lycus, arrives at the palace of Heracles family to kill them, but he doesn’t yet know that Heracles has already arrived from the underworld. Lycus is first met by Amphitryon outside the palace and they have a short conversation in which Amphitryon acts as if Heracles is dead.

Questions:
1.) In the quote above, the word “arraying” most closely means:
a) dressing in finery  b) crying or weeping  c)laughing

2.) Does Lycus know that Heracles has already arrived from Hades?

3.) Is it a good thing that Amphitryon says that Heracles is dead?
4.) Do you think that Lycus will find out about Heracles before he sees him or will he blindly walk into the palace?
Cell 3: Lycus falls for the trick and enters the palace.

Illustration:

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Quote:
“LYCUS: Since thou hast this scruple, I, who have left fear behind, will myself bring out the mother and her children. Follow me, servants, that we may put an end to this delay of our work to our joy. Lycus and his servants enter the palace.”

Summary: Amphitryon refuses to bring out Megara and her children. So Lycus falls for the trick and enters the palace himself, still not knowing that Hercules is waiting for him on the inside.

Questions:
1.) In the quote above, the word “scruple” means:
   a) to have a bucket of refuse   b) to have a large quantity of arrogance
   c) to have a small quantity of morals     d) to have a pocket full of rocks

2.) Does Lycus fall for the trick that Heracles is dead?

3.) Was it right of Amphitryon to refuse to bring Heracles’ family out of the palace?
4.) What will happen to Lycus?
Cell 4: Amphitryon is eager to see Lycus get what he deserves and follows closely after him.

Illustration:

Quote: "AMPHITRYON: Then go thy way along the path of fate; for what remains, maybe another will provide. Expect for thy evil deeds to find some ill thyself. Ah! my aged friends, he is marching fairly to his doom; soon will he be entangled in the snare of the sword, thinking to slay his neighbours, the villain! I will hence, to see him fall dead; for the sight of a foe being slain and paying the penalty of his misdeeds gives pleasure. AMPHITRYON follows Lycus into the palace."

Summary: Amphitryon is eager to see Lycus get what’s coming to him and says to himself that Lycus is walking to his own death and he doesn’t want to miss it because seeing an evil person paying the penalty for his crimes gives him joy.

Questions:
1.) In the quote above, the word *snare* most closely means:
   a) to cut        b) to kill        c) a trap        d) revenge

2.) Why does Amphitryon want to see what will happen to Lycus?

3.) Is Amphitryon right in that Lycus should be punished?

4.) Do you think Lycus has any chance to escape from Heracles?
**Cell 5:** Lycus gets what he deserves.

**Illustration:**

![Illustration of Lycus crying]

**Quote:**

“**LYCUS:** within
Ah me! ah me!
**CHORUS:** singing
Ha! how sweet to hear that opening note of his within the house; death is not far off him now.
Hark! the prince cries out in his agony; that preludes death.
**LYCUS:** within
O kingdom of Cadmus, by treachery I am perishing!”

**Summary:** Everyone finally enters the palace and then the cries of Lycus are heard from the inside. Everyone in the town of Thebes now celebrates and dances.

**Questions:**

1. Lycus acts as if he is unafraid of Heracles and even insults him before they meet, but when he sees him he cries out. What does this show about him?

2. How does everyone in the town of Thebes feel about the Lycus not being the king anymore?
3.) Do you think the town of Thebes is better off without Lycus?

4.) Would Heracles’ life be different if he came too late from the underworld?
IRIS Courage, old men! she, whom you see, is Madness, daughter of Night, and I am Iris, the handmaid of the gods. We have not come to do your city any hurt, but against the house of one man only is our warfare, even against him whom they call the son of Zeus and Alcmena.

Reading Comprehension Question:
Madness is the daughter of what?

Why does Iris say that they didn’t come and do any harm, but against the house of one man only is our warfare?

Vocabulary Question:

What does warfare likely mean in the quote above?
1) start a war
2) armed combat
3) warrior
4) ward

Discussion Question:
Why do you think Iris was telling them they didn’t come to do any harm to the city but only against one man and his family?
IRIS: Spare us thy advice on Hera’s and my schemes.

What was Iris asking for?

Vocabulary Question:
The word *schemes* in the quote above likely means
  1) plans
  2) punishments
  3) cars
  4) ancestors

Discussion Questions:
Why do you think Iris was asking to spare thy advice on Hera’s and her schemes?
Quote:

MADNESS: “through his roof will I burst my way and swoop upon his house, after first slaying his children; nor shall their murderer know that he is killing his own-begotten babes, till he is released from my madness.”

Reading Comprehension Question;
Who is Madness planning to attack? Why?
What do you think she is trying to say, “nor shall their murderer know that he is killing his own begotten babies?”

Vocabulary Question:
What does *swoop* likely mean in the quote above
1) spin with a dizzy mind
2) dance with a clown
3) to move with a swift action
4) eat with crumbs falling from the mouth
Quote:
A tempest rocks the house; the roof is falling with it.

Vocabulary Question:
The word *tempest* most likely means:
1) violent storm
2) hard rock
3) soft smile
4) dancing sickness
*Quote:
No words can utter more than we have suffered.

*Reading Comprehension: Why was the messenger sad?

*Vocabulary:
What does *utter* most likely mean from the quote above:
1) touch, jab
2) smell, snort
3) feel, grab
4) express, say

Discussion Question:
Why do you think the messenger is telling the chorus that no words can utter more than we have suffered?
Messenger: "Father, why should I sacrifice before I have slain Eurystheus, why kindle the purifying flame and have the toil twice over, when I might at one stroke so fairly end it all? Soon as I have brought the head of Eurystheus hither, I will cleanse my hands for those already slain. Spill the water, cast the baskets from your hands. Ho! give me now my bow and club! To famed Mycenae will I go; crowbars and pick-axes must I take, for I will heave from their very base with iron levers those city-walls which the Cyclopes squared with red plumb-line and mason's tools."

Summary: The messenger is repeating how Heracles will come back and pray for those he has already killed, so he is asking for his weapons to finish his duty.

Reading Question: Who brought Eurystheus' head?

Vocabulary Question: In the quote above, what does "slain" mean?  
a) beheaded  
b) killed  
c) charged!!!  
d) cut
Discussion Question: Why do you think he wants cleanse his hands for these he has already killed? Explain.
"O Father, what art thou doing? Dost mean to slay thy children?"

Summary: He is talking to his father about what have the children done in order for them to be killed.

Reading Question: What have the children done in order for their father to think that they should die?

Vocabulary Question: In the quote above what does *dost* mean?
   a) remains of a body
   b) dust
   c) do
   b) all of the above

Discussion Question: Do you think it right for the father to kill his children for his own wrong doing or for his own existence? Explain.
"Here lies one of Eurystheus’ brood dead at my feet, atoning for his father’s hate."

Summary: Heracles thinks that in front of him lies Eurystheus’ son dead by his feet making up his for Eurystheus’ hatred, but Heracles is crazy and has really killed his own son.

Reading Question: What was Eurystheus’ misdeed?

Vocabulary Question: In the quote above what does atoning mean?
   a) making up for his misdeed
   b) thinking of
   c) taking blame
   d) all of the above

Discussion Question: Do you think Eurystheus’ deed was wrong or right? Explain.
“My son, what meanest thou hereby? What strange doings are these? Can it be that the blood of thy late victims has driven thee frantic?”

Summary: There a lot of dead bodies lying around. They are wondering what kind of people would do this and for a reason which they think is strange.

Reading Question: Who were the people that were found lying around dead?

Vocabulary Question: In the quote above what does frantic mean?
   a) out of control
   b) confused
   c) hurried
   d) all of the above

Discussion Question: What do you think the reason was for the people to have driven the out of control? Explain.
“Oh! Slay me not, dear father mine! I am thy child, thine own; ‘tis no son of Eurystheus thou wilt slay.”

Summary: He is telling his father not to slay him.

Reading Question: Which son does Heracles want to slay?

Vocabulary Question: In the quote above what does wilt mean?
   a) droop
   b) shrivel
   c) a and b
   d) none of the above

Discussion Question: Why does he want to slay his son? Explain
HERACLES (waking) Aha! my breath returns; I am alive; and my eyes see, opening on the sky and earth and yon sun's darting beam; but how my senses reel! in what strange turmoil am I plunged! my fevered breath in quick spasmodic gasps escapes my lungs. How now? why am I lying here, made fast with cables like a ship, my brawny chest and arms tied to a shattered piece of masonry, with corpses for my neighbours; while o'er the floor my bow and arrows are scattered, that erst like trusty squires to my arm both kept me safe and were kept safe of me? Surely I am not come a second time to Hades' halls, having just returned from thence for Eurystheus? No, I do not see Sisyphus with his stone, or Pluto, or his queen, Demeter's child. Surely I am distraught; I cannot remember where I am. Ho, there! which of my friends is near or far to help me in my ignorance? For I have no clear knowledge of things once familiar.

Summary:
Heracles wakes but doesn’t know where he is. He’s talking to himself, looking around he is not aware of how he got there.
Reading Comprehension:
Why doesn’t Heracles have knowledge for things once familiar?

In the quote above *Reel* most closely means...

a) Bring in a fish  
b) To roll down the stairs  
c) Spin off balance  
d) Fake a test

Discussion:
Why did Amphitryon say, “hush” when Heracles was waking?
Quote
AMPHITRYON My aged friends, shall I approach the scene of my sorrow?

LEADER OF THE CHORUS Yes, and let me go with thee, nor desert thee in thy trouble.

Summary:
AMPHITRYON is talking to the LEADER OF THE CHORUS, and Amphitryon is saying that he is entering his time of sorrow and the Leader will not desert him when he is in trouble.

Reading Comprehension:
Who does he mean by aged friends?

In the quote above desert most closely means...
 a) ice cream
 b) abandon
 c) sandy place
 d) sandy hot place

Discussion:
Do you think the leader will leave when now that Amphitryon’s in trouble and is simply planning to avoid Amphitryon?
HERACLES I am undone; what mischance wilt thou unfold?

AMPHITRYON See here the corpses of thy children.

HERACLES O horror! what hideous sight is here? Ah me!

AMPHITRYON My son, against thy children hast thou waged unnatural War.

HERACLES War! what meanst thou? who killed these?

AMPHITRYON Thou and thy bow and some god, whoso he be that is to blame.

Summary:
Heracles is talking to Amphitryon, and he’s asking what terrible thing has happened, and Amphitryon shows him the corpses of his children. Heracles is shocked to see what Amphitryon showed him, and Amphitryon says that the god they both bow to is the one to blame.
Reading Comprehension
Who’s children are they?

In the quote above *Mischance* most closely means...
a) Unlucky disaster
b) Lucky gamble
c) Incomplete score
d) Accidental chewing

Discussion:
Why were they killed?
HERACLES Ah me! why do I spare my own life when I have taken that of my dear children? Shall I not hasten to leap from some sheer rock, or aim the sword against my heart and avenge my children's blood, or burn my body in the fire and so avert from my life the infamy which now awaits me?

Summary:
Heracles, in despair, wonders why he should spare his life when he took his children's. He talks about killing himself jumping off into a sheer rock or aim the sword to his heart.

Reading Comprehension:
Why does he want to kill himself?

In the quote above *sheer* most closely means...
a) steep and tall
b) clean and shiny
c) sheep and goats
d) shoes for children

Discussion:
How does Heracles feel?
THESEUS I am come, and others with me, young warriors from the land of Athens, encamped by the streams of Asopus, to help thy son, old friend. For a rumour reached the city of the Erechtheidae, that Lycus had usurped the sceptre of this land and was become your enemy even to battle. Wherefore I came making recompense for the former kindness of Heracles in saving me from the world below, if haply ye have any need of such aid as I or my allies can give, old prince.

Summary:
Theseus is saying that Heracles has his alliance, and he will give him help if he needs it.

Reading Comprehension
Why does he call Amphitryon old prince?

In the quote above Allies most closely means...

a) Enemies, politicians
b) Friends, comrades
c) Gangsters, ballet dancers
d) None of the above
Discussion:
Do you think Theseus’ offering his alliance is strong and trustworthy, or will he abandon Heracles when he learns what has happened? Should Theseus remain loyal to a man who has killed his own family?
AMPITRYON: Slain them in a wild fit of frenzy with arrows dipped in venom of the hundred-headed hydra.
THESEUS: This is Hera’s work; but who lies there among the dead, old man?

Summary: Heracles killed his wife and children with arrows dipped in the venom of a hundred-headed hydra.

Comprehension: From what creature was the venom on Heracles arrows drawn?

Ethical: Was it right for Heracles to kill his family?

Predictive: Do you think Theseus was right in believing that this was Hera’s work?

Literary: What example of alliteration do you find in this quote?
Heracles has got it bad.

THESEUS: Ah, woe for him! whose fortune was e’er so curst as his?
AMPHITRYON: Never wilt thou find another that hath borne a larger share of suffering or been more fatally deceived.

Summary: Theseus and Amphitryon are discussing how bad of a situation Heracles has.

Comprehension: Why does Heracles have a bad situation?

Ethical: Was it just that Heracles had to go through all of this suffering?

Predictive: What do you think will happen next for Heracles?

Literary: Do you think it is fortune, unfair treatment, bad luck, or destiny that is hurting Heracles?
I’m going to hell.

THESEUS: What wilt thou do? whither is thy fury drifting thee? HERACLES: I will die and return to that world below whence I have just come.

Summary: Theseus is asking where Heracles’s anger is taking him. Heracles says he’s going back to hell.

Comprehension: Where will Heracles go when he dies?

Ethical: Is it right that Heracles feels nothing will be good for him?

Predictive: What do you think Theseus is going to do to help Heracles? Will some god interfere and raise Heracles’ family from the dead? Will Heracles simply go back to Hades and bring them back?

Literary: What does Heracles mean by “whence I have just come”??
HERACLES: First I am the son of a man who incurred the guilt of blood, before he married my mother Alcmena, by slaying her aged sire.

Summary: Heracles is the son of Zeus. But Zeus killed Alcmena’s love before Zeus married her.

Comprehension: Who is Heracles' father?

Ethical: Do you think it was right that Alcmena produced Heracles with Zeus? Does it make any difference that Zeus shifted his shape to appear as Amphitryon?

Predictive: Will Heracles try to kill Zeus?

Literary: What does the guilt of blood mean? What is wergeld or blood penalty?
HERACLES: Then whilst I was yet being suckled, that bride of Zeus did foist into my cradle fearsome snakes to compass my death.

Summary: Hera sent snakes to kill Heracles when he was a baby.

Comprehension: What did Hera send to kill Heracles as a baby?

Ethical: Was it right for Hera to attack Heracles as a baby?

Predictive: Will Hera attempt to kill Heracles again?

Literary: Why doesn’t Heracles blame Hera instead of bad fortune?
Theseus offers his friendship

**Quote:** LEADER OF THE CHORUS: This is the work of none other of the gods than the wife of Zeus; thou art right in that surmise.

THOSEUS: I cannot counsel you to die rather than to go on suffering. There is not a man alive that hath wholly 'scape misfortune's taint, nor any god either, if what poets sing is true. Have they not intermarried in ways that law forbids? Have they not thrown fathers into ignominious chains to gain the sovereign power? Still they inhabit Olympus and brave the issue of their crimes. And yet what shalt thou say in thy defence, if thou, child of man, dost kick against the pricks of fate, while they do not? Nay, then, leave Thebes in compliance with the law, and come with me to the city of Pallas. There, when I have purified thee of thy pollution, will I give thee temples and the half of all I have. Yea, I will give thee all those presents I received from the citizens for saving their children, seven sons and daughters seven, on the day I slew the bull of Crete; for I have plots of land assigned me throughout the country; these shall henceforth be called after thee by men, whilst thou livest; and at thy death, when thou art gone to Hades' halls, the city of Athens shall unite in exalting thy honour with sacrifices and a monument of stone. For 'tis a noble crown for citizens to win from Hellas, even a reputation fair, by helping a man of worth. This is the return that I will make thee for saving me, for now art thou in need of friends. But when heaven delights to honour a man, he has no need of friends; for the god's aid, when he chooses to give it, is enough.
Summary: The Leader of the Chorus says that all that has happened was the doing of Hera. Theseus says that Heracles doesn’t deserve all this misery. He also says that he will give him all the presents given to him by the citizens. Then he says that he will be his friend because Heracles had saved him before. So it is like a debt that he is paying.

1) Did Theseus like Heracles?

2) Do you think it was right for Theseus to repay Heracles with gifts for what he did in the past for him?

3) Do you think that Heracles will accept the gifts from Theseus?

4) Are there any people who repay others in the *Iliad*?
Cell #2  Heracles reflects upon the situation

**Quote:** HERACLES: But I, for all my piteous plight, reflected whether I should let myself be branded as a coward for giving up my life. For whoso schooleth not his frail mortal nature to bear fate's buffets as he ought, will never be able to withstand even a man's weapon. I will harden my heart against death and seek thy city, with grateful thanks for all thou offerest me. (He weeps.) Of countless troubles have I tasted, God knows, but never yet did faint at any or shed a single tear; nay, nor ever dreamt that I should come to this, to let the tear-drop fall. But now, it seems, I must be fortune's slave. Well, let it pass; old father mine, thou seest me go forth to exile, and in me beholdest my own children's murderer. Give them burial and lay them out in death with the tribute of a tear, for the law forbids my doing so. Rest their heads upon their mother's bosom and fold them in her arms, sad pledges of our union, whom I, alas! unwittingly did slay. And when thou hast buried these dead, live on here still, in bitternes maybe, but still constrain thy soul to share my sorrows. O children! he who begat you, your own father, hath been your destroyer, and ye have had no profit of my triumphs, all my restless toil to win you a fair name in life, a glorious guerdon from a sire. I am not sure whether to keep or let them go; dangling at my side they thus will say, "With us didst thou destroy children and wife; we are thy children's slayers, and thou keepest us
Summary: Heracles scorns himself in a way because he contemplated suicide and he decides just to give thanks for all he had offered him. He says how miserable he is feeling and says that he killed his own children. He also gives instructions to his father on how to prepare his family for burial.

Is Heracles happy that his children are finally dead?

Do you think it is right that Heracles isn’t going to bury his own children and wife?

Who in Roman history killed his own family member?

What do you think will happen to Heracles for killing his family?
**Quote:** HERACLES: Ah! would I could grow into a stone upon this spot, oblivious of trouble!
THESEUS Peace! give thy hand to a friend and helper.
HERACLES Reft of my own sons, I find thee as a son to me.
THESEUS Throw thy arm about my neck; I will be thy guide.
HERACLES A pair of friends in sooth are we, but one a man of sorrows. Ah! aged sire, this is the kind of man to make a friend.
AMPHITRYON Blest in her sons, the country that gave him birth!

**Summary:** Heracles wishes he could become a stone and forget about all his misery. Theseus tells him to give him his hand so that he may help him up. Heracles says that he sees Theseus as a son. Heracles and Amphitryon say that Theseus is a very good man and blesses his native country.

What does Heracles wish would happen to him?

Do you think by the actions of Theseus that Heracles should consider him a son?

Do you think that they will act as father and son for the rest of their lives?

What does, "would I could grow into a stone upon this spot" mean?
Cell#4  Heracles wants to hug his father before leaving

**Quote:** HERACLES: O Theseus, turn me back again to see my babes. THESEUS: What charm dost think to find in this to soothe thy soul? HERACLES: I long to do so, and would fain embrace my sire. AMPHITRYON: Here am I, my son; thy wish is no less dear to me. THESEUS: Hast thou so short a memory for thy troubles? HERACLES: All that I endured of yore was easier to bear than this.

Summary: Heracles asks to be turned around to see his children again. Theseus asks what comfort he seeks from doing this. Heracles responds that he really wants to and that he wants to hug his father, too. Amphitryon says that he wants to hug him, too. Heracles says that all he has gone through in the past has been easier to bear than what he is going through right now.

What does Heracles ask for?

Do you think that Theseus was right in letting Heracles see his dead children again?

What do you think would have happened to Heracles if Theseus hadn’t come along?
THESEUS: Forward!
HERACLES: Farewell, my aged sire!
AMPHITRYON: Farewell to thee, my son!
HERACLES: Bury my children as I said.
AMPHITRYON: But who will bury me, my son?
HERACLES: I will.
AMPHITRYON: When wilt thou come?
HERACLES: After thou hast buried my children.
CHORUS (chanting): With grief and many a bitter tear we go our way, robbed of all we prized most dearly.

Summary: Theseus tells his servants to start leading them out. Heracles and his father say good-bye. Heracles reminds Amphitryon to bury his children. And he asks who will bury him. Heracles says he will once he has buried his children and wife. The chorus says that everything ends in grief.

What does Heracles want his father to do?

Do you think it’s right that Heracles left without burying his own family?
Is there any abandoning of loved ones in the play *Trojan Women*?

What do you think will happen to Heracles and his father now?