

**Read the next selection. Then choose the best answer to each question**

## **Jason and the Golden Fleece**

by Adelyn Doan

### Characters

<b>JASON</b>	<b>KING OF COLCHIS</b>
<b>ARGONAUTS</b>	<b>SOLDIERS</b>
<b>PELIAS</b>	<b>PRINCESS MEDEA</b>
<b>GUARDS</b>	<b>KING AESON</b>
<b>SHIPBUILDER</b>	<b>FIGUREHEAD</b>
<b>KING PHINEAS</b>	<b>HARPIES</b>

### **SCENE 1**

**1** *The city of Thebes. Throne room. King Pelias sits on a throne.*

**2 PELIAS** (*laughing*): Ha! I am now the king of Thebes! Nothing stands in my way.

**3** (*A guard enters.*)

**4 GUARD**: Jason, the son of Aeson, is here to see you, sire.

**5 PELIAS** (*scared*): Jason? (*to himself*) He must know I took the throne from his father and put him in prison. He will want revenge. What am I going to do? (*to Guard*) Send him in at once.

**6** (*Jason enters.*)

**7 PELIAS**: Jason! Good to see you again, nephew.

**8 JASON**: Thank you, uncle. I've come to speak to you about giving my father his throne back.

**9 PELIAS**: You want me to give up the throne? Never.

**10** (*Jason grips the handle of his sword.*)

**11 JASON**: I don't want to fight you, uncle. But I'm ready to take it back by force if I have to.

**12 PELIAS** (*to himself*): There's no way I can defeat him in battle. I must think. Aha! I have it. (*to Jason*) I'll give up the crown without a fight. But you must first prove you are worthy to take it from me.

**13 JASON**: Prove? What do I have to prove?

**14 PELIAS**: I dare you to go and find the famous Golden Fleece. If you can bring it to me, the crown goes back to your father.

**15 JASON** (*thinks about it*): I accept! I'll do it!

**16** (*Jason exits. King Pelias leaps back onto his throne.*)

**17 PELIAS**: The fool! Many have tried to take the fiercely guarded Golden Fleece from the King of Colchis. And they have all failed. Jason will fare no better! I shall rule Thebes forever!

## SCENE 2

**18** (*The docks. A shipbuilder stands near a ship. The ship has a figurehead.*)

**19 JASON**: Shipbuilder! Is my ship ready?

**20 SHIPBUILDER**: It is, sir. I've built you a ship finer than any that sailed the seas.

**21 JASON**: Good. I shall call it the Argo.

**22 SHIPBUILDER**: A fine name. But tell me, where are you going?

**23 JASON**: I'm going in search of the Golden Fleece.

**24 SHIPBUILDER** (*nervously*): Golden Fleece? But they say the Fleece is guarded by a dragon that never sleeps!

**25 JASON**: Then I must put that dragon to sleep forever!

**26** (*Jason turns. A group of men appear on the dock. They are all strong and heroic.*)

**27 JASON**: You heroes will be my crew. And I shall call you my Argonauts.

**28 ARGONAUTS** (*raising their swords*): Hail Jason!

**29** (*Jason and the Argonauts board the Argo.*)

**30 JASON** (*to himself*): I must find the Golden Fleece. But where do I start?

**31** (*The figurehead suddenly comes alive. It turns to look at Jason.*)

**32 FIGUREHEAD**: King Phineas will tell you where. Ask poor, poor Phineas.

**33 JASON**: Phineas? (*yelling*) Argonauts! Prepare to set sail!

### SCENE 3

**34** *(King Phineas's dining room. King Phineas, Jason, and the Argonauts sit at the table eating.)*

**35 PHINEAS:** Eat, eat! Everyone eat! Now, Jason, where did you say you were going?

**36** *(Suddenly, a flock of Harpies enter the dining room. They knock over chairs and tables.)*

**37 PHINEAS** *(yelling):* The Harpies! Shelter under the table, sirs! You'll be safer there!

**38 JASON** *(drawing sword):* Nonsense! Up, men, and fight!

**39** *(Jason and the Argonauts fight the Harpies. The Harpies run out of the room. Jason laughs and fills a plate with food. He sets the plate in front of King Phineas.)*

**40 JASON:** Eat, friend, then tell us how to find the Golden Fleece.

**41 PHINEAS** *(begging):* Don't try it! The Fleece hangs in the Land of Colchis, beyond the Clashing Cliffs. Think of that and tremble!

**42 JASON:** Tremble? I, tremble? Ha! *(to the Argonauts)* Come on, men! Set sail to the Clashing Cliffs!

### SCENE 4

**43** *(The Argo. Jason and the Argonauts are on deck. Just ahead, two walls of rock crash together like cymbals.)*

**44 ARGONAUTS:** Oh no! We shall be ground to dust! We're doomed!

**45 JASON:** Watch the seagulls, men! They know when the way is safe. Lean on your oars, and follow the gulls!

**46** *(The Argonauts row furiously through the Clashing Cliffs. Just as the Argo reaches the other side, the Clashing Cliffs collide with a crash. Jason and the Argonauts cheer.)*

**47 JASON:** Excellent job, men. I see the Land of Colchis just ahead.

**48 ARGONAUTS** *(pointing):* Look! It's the Golden Fleece!

**49** *(Jason and the Argonauts approach the garden. Jason is taken in by Princess Medea's beauty.)*

**50 MEDEA:** Who are you, brave one?

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**51 JASON:** I am Jason, and these are my Argonauts. Who are you?

**52 MEDEA:** My name is Princess Medea. I watched you fight the dragon-tooth warriors. You are a true hero, I can see that. But you'll need my magic if you are going to win the Golden Fleece from the dragon. Marry me and I'll help you.

**53 JASON:** You're so beautiful that I'll willingly marry you. But I must lift down the prize by my own strength. Otherwise, I would be cheating. Where is the dragon?

**54 MEDEA** (*points off-stage*): He is in there. Past all those bones.

**55** (*Jason walks off-stage. The Argonauts gather to look off-stage. Suddenly, the dragon roars*)

**56 ARGONAUT 1:** There it is! There's the dragon! It has no eyelids!

**57 ARGONAUT 2:** It has no name!

**58 ARGONAUT 3:** It has no pity!

**59 MEDEA** (*covering her eyes*): I can't look!

**60** (*The dragon roars again off-stage. Jason cries out.*)

**61 ARGONAUT 1:** Oh no! Jason's sword shattered like glass!

**62 ARGONAUT 2:** The dragon's teeth are tearing at his clothes!

**63 ARGONAUT 3:** The dragon's breath scorched his hair!

**64 MEDEA** (*covering her eyes*): Tell me when it's over! The dragon roars a third time.

**65 ARGONAUT 1:** Look! Jason has climbed a tree!

**66 ARGONAUT 2:** The dragon has opened its mouth!

**67 ARGONAUT 3:** Jason is raising his broken sword!

**68 All:** Jason has just defeated the dragon!

**69** (*Jason enters. His clothes are torn and burned. He walks over to the Golden Fleece and takes it off the tree. He takes Princess Medea's hand.*)

**70 JASON:** Come on, men. I've stolen the king's Golden Fleece and his daughter. It's time to sail back to Thebes.

**71 ARGONAUTS** (*cheer*): Yay! Hail Jason!

## SCENE 5

**72** *The city of Thebes. Jason and Princess Medea stand before Aeson, Jason's father. Aeson looks old and tired. King Pelias wears chains. The Argonauts stand in the background.*

**73 AESON:** Thank you for freeing me, my son. But I'm too tired to rule. You must be king.

**74 MEDEA:** Trust me, father-in-law. I have magic to make you strong and young again. (*pulls out **vial** from pocket*) Here, drink this.

**75 AESON** (*drinks vial*): Oh my! I feel like I have the body of a young man, and the wisdom of an old one. I have all the energy I need to rule Thebes.

**76 PELIAS:** What about me? Make me young again, Medea! I'd give anything for that!

**77 MEDEA** (*pulls out another vial*): I have a special potion for you too. Here, drink this.

**78** (*Pelias drinks the vial. Then he yawns and lies down on the floor. He snores loudly*)

**79 AESON:** Jason, thanks to you, the land of Thebes is saved! Let you and Medea live happily together as man and wife. Someday you, too, will wear my crown!

**80 ARGONAUTS:** Hail Jason!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Use “Jason and the Golden Fleece” to answer questions 1 through 10.**

1. The italicized words in parentheses are -
  - A. spoken with great emphasis
  - B. spoken by the actors
  - C. directions for the audience
  - D. nonverbal directions for the actors
  
2. What is the main conflict in the selection?
  - A. Jason must fight King Pelias
  - B. Jason must find the Argonauts
  - C. Jason must win the throne back for his father
  - D. Jason must defeat a dragon
  
3. In the selection, the playwright uses scene changes mainly to
  - A. provide the audience with new settings and imagery
  - B. introduce new characters to the audience
  - C. help the audience foreshadow events
  - D. build suspense for the audience

4. How does Scene 4 differ from Scene 5?
  - A. Scene 4 contains more characters than Scene 5
  - B. Scene 4 has more action than Scene 5
  - C. Scene 4 does not include props like Scene 5
  - D. Scene 4 has a more tranquil setting than Scene 5
  
5. What can the reader infer about Jason from the rising events in Scenes 2 and 3?
  - A. Jason is determined
  - B. Jason is nervous
  - C. Jason is panicked
  - D. Jason is hesitant
  
6. Which lines(s) from the selection best show King Pelias's attitude toward Jason?
  - A. *I dare you to go and find the famous Golden Fleece.*
  - B. *Jason will fare no better!*
  - C. *Jason! Good to see you again, nephew.*
  - D. *Many have tried to take the fiercely guarded Golden Fleece from the King of Colchis. And they have all failed.*
  
7. What is the theme of the play?
  - A. Family is more important than friendship
  - B. Trying to make something better might actually make it worse
  - C. Self-confidence is important when overcoming challenges
  - D. People should not always be trusted

8. In paragraphs 74-78, which word(s) help the reader understand the meaning of the word **vial**?

- A. magic
- B. yawns
- C. pulls out
- D. drink this

9. Read these lines from play ...

*(The dragon roars again off-stage. Jason cries out.)*

**ARGONAUT 1:** Look! Jason has climbed a tree!

**ARGONAUT 2:** The dragon has opened its mouth!

**ARGONAUT 3:** Jason is raising his broken sword!

The playwright uses the stage directions and dialogue in these lines to appeal to reader's sense of-

- A. sight
  - B. hearing
  - C. taste
  - D. touch
10. Which of the following characters are involved in the climax?
- A. Medea and King Pelias
  - B. Jason and King Phineas
  - C. Jason and The Argonauts
  - D. King Aeson and King Phineas

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

11. In the play, which element of drama best helps the reader understand where Jason's battle with the dragon is taking place?
- A. Additional props
  - B. Stage directions
  - C. Lighting cues
  - D. The Argonauts' dialogue