

# I Am the Minotaur

I'm the Minotaur: half man, half bull.  
King Minos's pet, so strong and tall.  
With horns like daggers and piercing eyes,  
I've muscles of rock; I'm colossal in size.



I live in a maze on the island of Crete.  
While chained to a wall, I sleep and eat meat.  
The Athenians are our fierce enemies;  
huge battles have caused terrible memories.

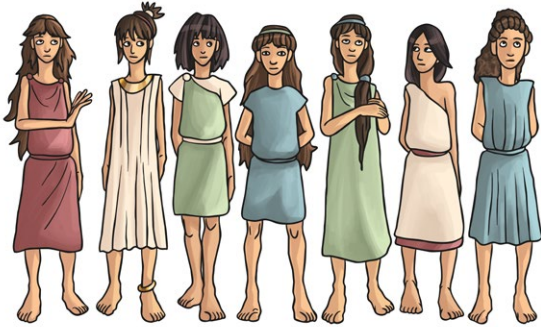
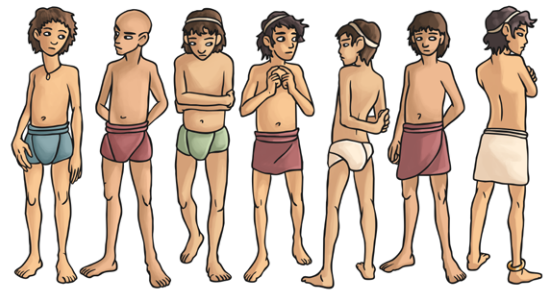


For peace, they made a deal one day.  
If they simply feed me, Minos will stay away.  
He promised he wouldn't attack any more  
if hosts of youths were sent to our shore.

It's every nine years, to be precise;  
seven boys, seven girls, just a roll of the dice.  
They nervously wait to hear if they're selected  
then enter my maze and look so dejected!

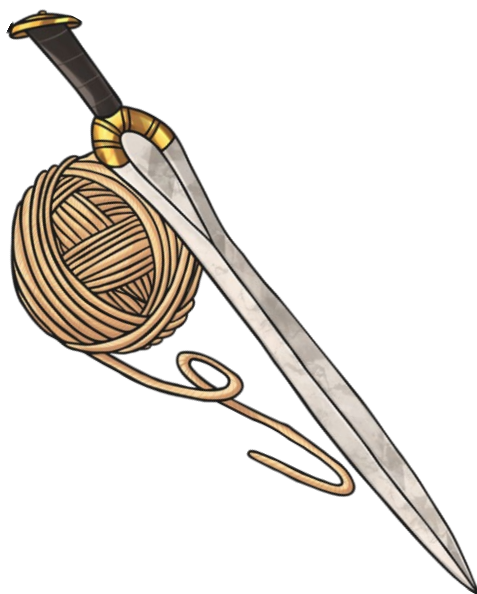
Lucky for me, they will soon be here.  
"They're on the horizon," comes Minos's cheer.  
I've waited so long to hear that noise:  
the Athenian boat full of girls and boys.

Waiting here hungry in this complex maze,  
fresh meals to feast on are just what I crave.  
Now they've arrived, I'm excited to see  
how breakfast will look and if they're scared of me!



Tomorrow morning, my treats will come in;  
this time, I'll put all the bones in the bin.  
Just as I start to relax for the night,  
there's a creak of the door; a surprising sight.

A handsome young man with a sword in his hand  
walks closer to me, which I don't understand!  
He tightly grips onto a long piece of string  
with a finger that carries a shiny, gold ring.



He then shouts to me, (he's brave, at least!)  
"It's the end for you, you nasty, old beast!"  
I laugh, I roar then I charge at my prey  
but he stands his ground; he does not run away.

I'm shocked at his strength, his movement and speed.

Frustrated, I pounce; I need my feed.

With a swish of his sword, I crash to the ground  
and the whole maze shakes with a thundering sound.

He then calmly says, with a foot on my chest,

"It looks like you've met your ultimate test.

I'm sorry poor beast but this battle is done.

Never again will you have your fun."

"I'll use this string to find my way out.

It's the end for you; there is no doubt.

Ariadne and my friends are safe and free;

I'll marry her soon – just wait and see."

"Oh no, of course, you won't be around;

you're lifelessly laying under the ground.

My boat's white sails will show we've succeeded.

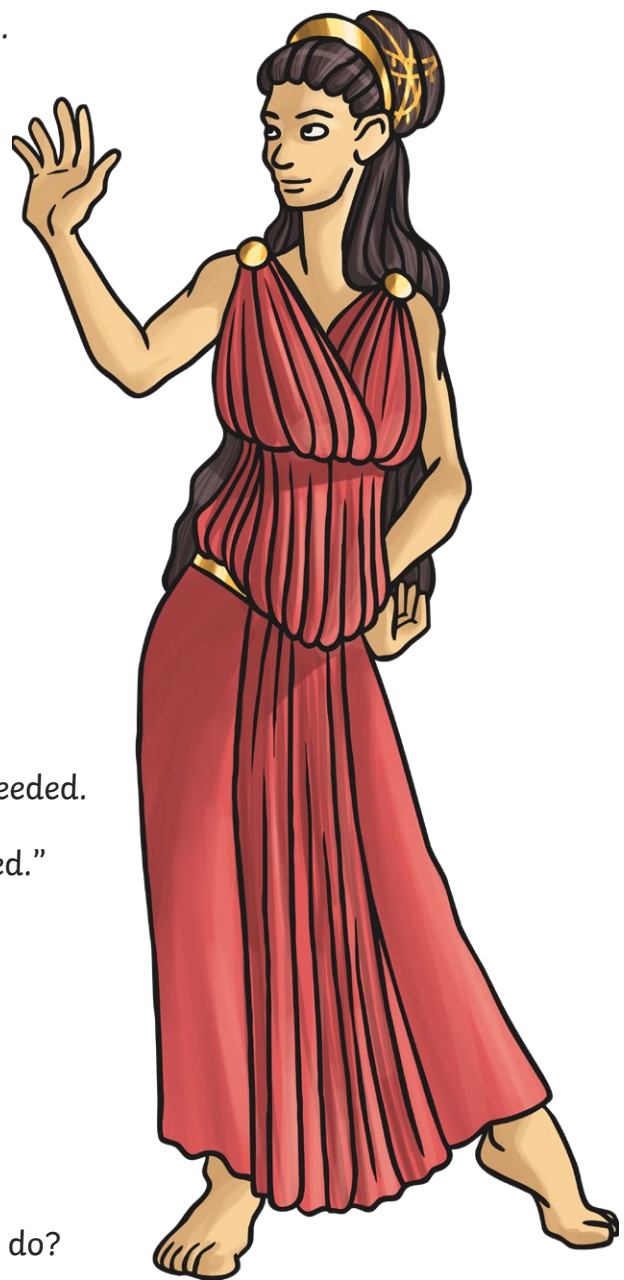
We'll all rejoice; it's what Athens has needed."

I look into his eyes and accept the defeat.

Someone so brave I never did meet.

The boy runs off, disappearing from view.

Now, I may as well sleep... what else can I do?



# Questions

1. What food does the Minotaur eat? Tick one.

- vegetables
- meat
- bread
- soup

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

- Theseus defeats the Minotaur.
- The Minotaur first sees Theseus.
- The boat from Athens is seen arriving.
- Theseus leaves the maze to return home.

3. How many boys and girls are sent to the shore?

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4. Which king does the Minotaur belong to?

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5. Find and copy one word that describes how the Minotaur jumped towards Theseus.

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6. Imagine that you are one of the youths who has been selected to go to Crete.

Describe the different feelings that you have.

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# Questions

7. Why do you think the Minotaur was confused when Theseus approached him in the maze? Explain your answer.

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8. **I've muscles of rock; I'm colossal in size.**

What is the poet trying to tell us about the Minotaur in this part of the text?

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# Answers

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- 3** Theseus defeats the Minotaur
- 2** The Minotaur first sees Theseus.
- 1** The boat from Athens is seen arriving.
- 4** Theseus leaves the maze to return home.

3. How many boys and girls are sent to the shore?

**Seven boys and seven girls are sent to the shore.**

4. Which king does the Minotaur belong to?

**The Minotaur belongs to King Minos.**

5. Find and copy one word that describes how the Minotaur jumped towards Theseus.

**pounce**

6. Imagine that you are one of the youths who has been selected to go to Crete.

Describe the different feelings that you have.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I feel devastated that I have been chosen to go to Crete because no previously selected person has ever returned. I don't want to leave my family.**

# Answers

7. Why do you think the Minotaur was confused when Theseus approached him in the maze? Explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the Minotaur was confused because usually the youths are petrified of him. They always try to run away and find a way out of the maze but Theseus was different; he bravely stood his ground.**

8. **I've muscles of rock; I'm colossal in size.**

What is the poet trying to tell us about the Minotaur in this part of the text?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the poet is using these words to help us to picture what a big, strong beast the Minotaur is.**

# Questions

1. Which word best describes the Minotaur? Tick one.

- sad
- weak
- fierce
- pleasant

2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

- King Minos spots the boat on the horizon.
- The Minotaur decides to sleep.
- The door creaks open and Theseus approaches the Minotaur.
- Youths are chosen by the King of Athens.

3. **We'll all rejoice; it's what Athens has needed.**

What does the word **rejoice** mean in this sentence?

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4. Find and copy **two** words that Theseus uses to describe the Minotaur before it charges at him.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name **three** things about Theseus that the Minotaur was shocked by.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

6. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what the Minotaur might have thought when Theseus didn't run away.

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# Questions

7. Compare how the Minotaur is feeling at the start of the poem to how the Minotaur is feeling at the end of the poem.

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8. **...and the whole maze shakes with a thundering sound.**

Why do you think that the poet chose these words to describe the end of the fight?  
Explain your answer.

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9. Do you think that the people of Athens were surprised when Theseus returned?  
Explain your answer fully.

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# Answers

1. Which word best describes the Minotaur? Tick one.

- sad  
 weak  
 **fierce**  
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2. Number the events from 1-4 to show the order that they happened in.

- 2 King Minos spots the boat on the horizon.  
 4 The Minotaur decides to sleep.  
 3 The door creaks open and Theseus approaches the Minotaur.  
 1 Youths are chosen by the King of Athens.

3. **We'll all rejoice; it's what Athens has needed.**

What does the word **rejoice** mean in this sentence?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: The word rejoice tells us that everyone will be happy and will celebrate.**

4. Find and copy **two** words that Theseus uses to describe the Minotaur before it charges at him.

**Accept any two of the following: nasty; old; beast.**

5. Name **three** things about Theseus that the Minotaur was shocked by.

**Accept all three of the following: his strength; his movement; his speed.**

6. Using 20 words or fewer, summarise what the Minotaur might have thought when Theseus didn't run away.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I am so surprised because the young people usually run away because they are so scared of me.**

7. Compare how the Minotaur is feeling at the start of the poem to how the Minotaur is feeling at the end of the poem.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: At the start of the poem, the Minotaur was aggressive and boastful about his strength and the food that he thought was coming. However, by the end of the poem, he was a humble and calm because he knew that he'd been beaten and there was nothing that he could do about it.**

# Answers

8. **...and the whole maze shakes with a thundering sound.**

Why do you think that the poet chose these words to describe the end of the fight?  
Explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the poet is using these words to help the reader to realise how big and heavy the Minotaur is when he crashes to the ground.**

9. Do you think that the people of Athens were surprised when Theseus returned? Explain your answer fully.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the people of Athens would have been very surprised when Theseus returned because none of the youths are usually able to escape from the Minotaur's maze but Theseus managed to.**

# Questions

1. Which of these descriptions from the poem is a simile? Tick one.

- piercing eyes
- colossal in size
- horns like daggers
- muscles of rock

2. Draw **four** lines and complete each sentence.

Theseus...	wore a shiny, gold ring.
King Minos...	is the island where the Minotaur lived in the Maze.
The Minotaur...	made a deal with the King of Athens.
Crete...	mainly slept and ate meat.

3. How often are the youths sent to Crete?

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4. What did the Minotaur say he was going to make sure he did this time?

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5. Look at the verse beginning **I'm shocked...**

Find and copy one word which means the same as **annoyed**.

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# Questions

6. **...with a finger that carries a shiny, gold ring.**

What do you think that the Minotaur thought about Theseus when he saw this?

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7. Predict what might happen if the Minotaur were to wake from his sleep. Explain your answer.

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8. Using 25 words or fewer, describe how the Minotaur felt about Theseus at the end of the poem.

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# Questions

9. Do you think that the Minotaur was bad? Tick one.

yes

no

both

Fully explain your answer.

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10. Compare the difference in the Minotaur's manner, words and attitude from the beginning of the poem to the end. Fully explain your answer.

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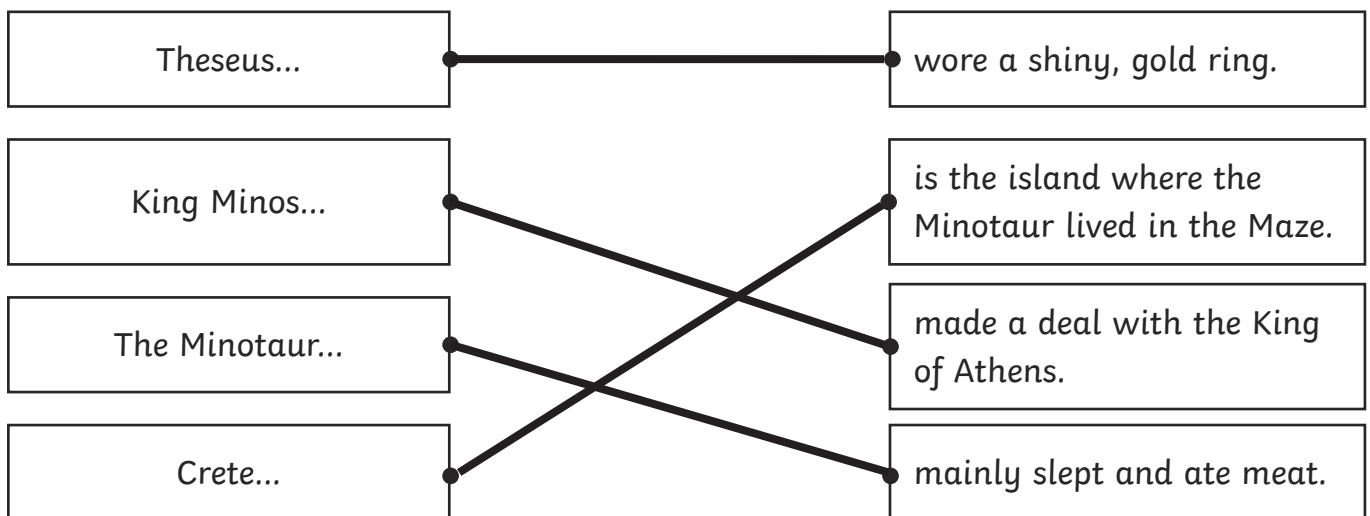
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# Answers

1. Which of these descriptions from the poem is a simile? Tick one.

- piercing eyes  
 colossal in size  
 **horns like daggers**  
 muscles of rock

2. Draw **four** lines and complete each sentence.



3. How often are the youths sent to Crete?

**The youths are sent to Crete every nine years.**

4. What did the Minotaur say he was going to make sure he did this time?

**This time, he was going to make sure that he put the bones in the bin.**

5. Look at the verse beginning **I'm shocked...**

Find and copy one word which means the same as **annoyed**.

**frustrated**

6. **...with a finger that carries a shiny, gold ring.**

What do you think that the Minotaur thought about Theseus when he saw this?

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the Minotaur might have thought that the young man came from a rich family. He may even have thought that he was part of the Athenian royalty with such an amazing piece of jewellery.**

# Answers

7. Predict what might happen if the Minotaur were to wake from his sleep.

Explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think the Minotaur would probably sneak out of the cave at night and steal one of the boats on the shore. Then, he'd find a deserted island where he could enjoy the freedom, peace and sunshine.**

8. Using 25 words or fewer, describe how the Minotaur felt about Theseus at the end of the poem.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that the Minotaur had a lot of respect for Theseus because he was the first person to stand up to him and defeat him.**

9. Do you think that the Minotaur was bad? Tick one.

**Accept 'yes', 'no' or 'both' provided that a full explanation also given, such as: I think that the Minotaur was both good and bad because, even though he sounded nasty and ate lots of Athenian people, he's always been locked in a cave and hasn't been allowed to lead a normal life with an opportunity to be happy and kind. Also, he was humble at the end when Theseus defeated him.**

10. Compare the differences in the Minotaur's manner, words and attitude from the beginning of the poem to the end. Fully explain your answer.

**Pupils' own responses, such as: At the beginning of the poem, the Minotaur was mean, aggressive and boastful. He said things like, "fresh meals to feast on are just what I crave" and "I laugh, I roar then I charge at my prey." Then, when Theseus arrives, the Minotaur is confused by his bravery. By the end of the poem, he realised that his opponent had defeated him and he becomes humble and quiet, calmly accepting the situation that he finds himself in.**