

The Lightning Thief

Rick Riordan

Reviewed by: Hannah Yang, age 11

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I will start out by saying that this book is *amazing*. I picked up this book when I was bored and I didn't know what else to read, but quickly became hooked. The quirky chapter titles, fun dialogue, and nicely-paced action never got me tired of this novel. I've read this quite a few times by now, and would highly recommend it to grades 5 and up, especially those who love action-filled novels.

The *Lightning Thief* is the first book of the *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* series. It is about a 12 year old boy called Percy Jackson, who is dyslexic and has ADHD. He gets kicked out of school often, because he does 'strange' things- sometimes things he can't explain himself. His father is absent, but becomes known later in the book (I'm not giving any spoilers for now), and his mother, Sally Jackson, is married to Gabe Ugliano (known to Percy as 'Smelly Gabe'). Basically, he finds out that he's a half-blood, and he goes to camp, where he trains for battle. Then he's accused of stealing Zeus's master bolt, and has to go on a quest to find and return it. This book is mainly based around Greek mythology.

I wouldn't have noticed the similarities between Harry Potter and Percy Jackson, but I wouldn't make too much of a deal on this. Riordan has changed Harry Potter into a quickly paced book with action at every turn. I love the Greek mythology base, and how Riordan has transformed the world of mythology into our modern time. The creativity and originality of how Riordan has changed the United States by hiding mythology (Mt. Olympus on the 600th floor of the Empire State Building, the Underworld in Los Angeles, etc.) in places that make sense and seem believable is stunning.

I would like to say I'm slightly disappointed in how easily Percy gets away with everything. He battled Medusa, escaped the Furies, fought Echidna, dueled Ares, and got out alive after a pit scorpion bite... it seems unlikely a 6th grader could do all that. I will agree it gives Percy's heroic edge a little more sparkle. The book would have more action, though, if there was less jumping into pools of water.

One of my favorite parts of this book is how Percy let his mom decide whether to get rid of Smelly Gabe or not. Usually, I've noticed, it's the boy hero kicking all the butt. But now, what do you know, Percy's mom steps in the spotlight and gets rid of Smelly Gabe. I *like* that. It shows that girls are strong, too.

This book demonstrates detailed descriptions (I am picky about descriptions, but this book fully satisfied me) and fun dialogue. I love how sharp and blunt Percy is. Similar to me... I think what I want to think and say what I want to say. Percy's not afraid to do what he wants- a strong, honest main character. I will applaud Riordan for that. This book made me laugh- I don't usually laugh out loud when I read books, but that's exactly what I did here.

Amazing job- you will love this if you read it! Suitable for all ages, with not too much violence, and never too little action. Great write, Riordan!