**Poseidon:**

Poseidon is the violent and ill-tempered god of the sea. One of the Twelve Olympians, he was also feared as the provoker of earthquakes and worshipped as the creator of the horse. A hot-blooded deity, Poseidon had many disputes with both gods and men, most famously with Athena and Odysseus.

Poseidon had deep blue eyes and streaming green hair. He had a roaring laugh. He was moody and restless and powerful. He could magically make an island appear, or a tidal wave cover the shoreline, or send a wave to suck you right off the beach. All it took was a wave of his hand!

People who lived inland were not that worried about Poseidon. But the ancient Greeks who lived along the coastline were terrified of him. They build temples to honour him. They brought gifts every day. Sometimes the gifts made Poseidon happy, and the water was calm and sparkling. Sometimes the gifts did not make him happy, and a terrible storm would break over the land. The people tried very hard to keep Poseidon happy.

Like most of the gods, Poseidon had many wives. He especially loved his main wife, who was not jealous of the other women in his world. That was unusual, and Poseidon was grateful for it. His main wife was the only wife who lived under the sea and made her home in their fabulous underwater palace.

1. What sort of personality does Poseidon have?
2. How are Poseidon’s looks described?
3. What are some of Poseidon’s powers?
4. What did the Greeks who lived along the coast think of Poseidon and why?
5. Where does Poseidon live?

**Zeus:**

Zeus was the king of all the gods. Zeus ruled the entire universe - no one was mightier than the mighty Zeus. Zeus was not afraid of anything except possibly his wife, the horrible Hera.

Magically, Zeus was the only god who could throw lightning bolts. He could shape shift and look like anybody. He could throw his voice and sound like anybody.

As king, he had powers that came from being king of all the gods. These were powers of government. He could give other gods titles and jobs. He could take those titles and jobs away. He could direct other gods, like any leader. His was an elected position. There were 12 gods on the council. They could have voted someone else king. But they never did. And Zeus never retired.

There are many myths, of course, about the king of all the Greek gods.

1. What role does Zeus have amongst the Gods?
2. What are some of Zeus’s powers?
3. What three facts do you learn about Zeus?

**Hades:**

Hades ruled the Underworld. The Underworld was the place the ancient Greeks believed you went after you died. The Underworld was a big place. Some parts were beautiful. One especially beautiful place was the Elysian Fields. That's where heroes went after they died. Some parts were not nice at all! You can guess who went there!

Hades was not in charge of death. He did not decide who lived and who died up on earth. He was in charge of assigning the dead a place to live in the Underworld. You could not argue with Hades. He was the only decision maker in the Underworld. It was not wise to anger Hades whether you were alive or dead, or you might end up someplace you really did not want to be for eternity!

Hades had a faithful and deeply loved companion, his three-headed dog, Cerberus. To give his dog a sniff at a new place, Hades came up to the surface now and then. If it was important enough, Hades even attended council meetings of the gods on Mount Olympus. But he never thought of Mount Olympus as his home. To Hades, home was the Underworld. His family visited him now and then. Zeus popped down whenever he felt like it. His nephew, Hermes, the deal maker for the gods, dropped in whenever he needed his uncle's help to smooth over or fix something.

Hades had two powerful brothers (and three sisters) - the mighty Zeus, king of the gods, and Poseidon, lord of the sea. He also had several nieces and nephews. His family, when they thought about him at all, thought Hades must be lonely down there in the Underworld, all by himself. But Hades was content. His family thought Hades rarely took time to play, but they were mistaken. Hades loved to play. One of his favourite belongings was his invisible helmet. He had a lot of fun with that.

More than anything, except for his beloved dog, Cerberus, Hades loved his golden chariot. It was his pride and joy. His chariot used to belong to a god named Helios. But Helios had retired and no longer pulled out the sun each day. (Zeus had reassigned that job to Apollo.) Hades and his beloved dog Cerberus would climb aboard his golden chariot and tear across the Underworld. The souls of the dead scattered left and right to get out of their way.

1. What was the place Hades ruled called? What was it like there?
2. What was Hades role? What job did he do?
3. Who was Hades’ faithful companion? What was he like?
4. Who is Hades related to ?
5. What was Hades’ pride and joy and what did he do with it?