

# Theseus and the Minotaur

Ancient Greek

The Minotaur was a terrible monster, half man, half bull, which lived in a maze of tunnels, known as the Labyrinth, underneath the King of Crete's palace. Each year, the King of Crete, the enemy of the Athenians, commanded that seven Athenian boys and seven Athenian girls were fed to the Minotaur.

Theseus, an Athenian prince, decided to kill the Minotaur. He sailed to Crete and volunteered to be sent into the Labyrinth. When he arrived, Ariadne fell in love with him and offered to help him. She gave him a dagger and a ball of string to help him in his quest to kill the beast.

Holding the string in one hand and the sword in the other, Theseus found his way through the maze of tunnels to the very centre, where he discovered the Minotaur lying in wait for him.

A terrible fight followed, in which Theseus killed the Minotaur. Following the string through the tunnels, he made his way back to the entrance, where he found Ariadne waiting for him. Together, they escaped from Crete and the fury of the Cretan King, whom Theseus had tricked.

1. Why would the Minotaur have made a terrifying enemy?


2. Where did the Minotaur live, what did it eat and why was it given this unusual food?


3. Why did Theseus volunteer to go into the Labyrinth and why did Ariadne offer to help him?


4. How did Ariadne help Theseus and why did they have to escape straight away?
