

Passage 1: Narcissus Myth
retold by Edith Hamilton

***Narcissus* by Michelangelo Caravaggio**

1

The hero of it was a beautiful lad, whose name was Narcissus. His beauty was so great, all the girls who saw him longed to be his, but he would have none of them. He would pass the loveliest carelessly by, no matter how much she tried to make him look at her. Heartbroken maidens were nothing to him. Even the sad case of the fairest of the nymphs,¹ Echo, did not move him. She was a favorite of Artemis, the goddess of woods and wild creatures, but she came under the displeasure of a still mightier goddess, Hera herself, who was at her usual occupation of trying to discover what Zeus was about. She suspected that he was in love with one of the nymphs and she went to look them over to try to discover which. However, she was immediately diverted from her investigation by Echo's gay chatter. As she listened amused, the others silently stole away and Hera could come to no conclusion as to where Zeus's wandering fancy had alighted. With her usual injustice she turned against Echo. That nymph became yet another unhappy girl that Hera punished. The goddess condemned her never to use her tongue again except to repeat what was said to her. "You will always have the last word," Hera said, "but no power to speak first."

2

This was very hard, but hardest of all when Echo, too, with all the other lovelorn maidens, loved Narcissus. She could follow him, but she could not speak to him. How then could she make a youth who never looked at a girl pay attention to her? One day, however, it seemed her chance had come. He was calling his companions, "Is anyone here?" and she called back in rapture, "Here—Here." She was still hidden by the trees so that he did not see her, and he shouted, "Come!"—just what she longed to say to him. She answered joyfully, "Come!" and stepped forth from the woods with her arms outstretched. But he turned away in angry disgust. "Not so," he said; "I will die before I give you power over me." All she could say was, humbly, entreatingly, "I give you power over me," but he was gone. She hid her blushes and her shame in a lonely cave, and never could be comforted. Still she lived in places like that, and they say that she has so wasted away with longing that only her voice now is left to her.

So Narcissus went on his cruel way, a scorner of love. But at last one of those he wounded prayed a prayer and it was answered by the gods: “May he who loves not others love himself.” The great goddess Nemesis, which means righteous anger, undertook to bring this about. As Narcissus bent over a clear pool for a drink and saw there his own reflection, on the moment he fell in love with it. “Now I know,” he cried, “what others have suffered from me, for I burn with love of my own self—and yet how can I reach that loveliness I see mirrored in the water? But I cannot leave it. Only death can set me free.” And so it happened. He pined away, leaning perpetually over the pool, fixed in one long gaze. Echo was near him, but she could do nothing; only when, dying, he called to his image, “Farewell—farewell,” she could repeat the words as a last good-by to him.

¹nymphs: nature spirits

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Passage 2: The Disciple
by Oscar Wilde

4

When Narcissus died the pool of his pleasure changed from a cup of sweet waters into a cup of salt tears, and the Oreads¹ came weeping through the woodland that they might sing to the pool and give it comfort.

5

And when they saw that the pool had changed from a cup of sweet waters into a cup of salt tears, they loosened the green tresses of their hair and cried to the pool and said, “We do not wonder that you should mourn in this manner for Narcissus, so beautiful was he.”

6

“But was Narcissus beautiful?” said the pool.

7

“Who should know that better than you?” answered the Oreads. “Us did he ever pass by, but you he sought for, and would lie on your banks and look down at you, and in the mirror of your waters he would mirror his own beauty.”

8

And the pool answered, “But I loved Narcissus because, as he lay on my banks and looked down at me, in the mirror of his eyes I saw ever my own beauty mirrored.”

¹Oreads: nymphs of mountains or hills

10. Read the sentence from paragraph 1 of “Narcissus Myth.”
“However, she was immediately diverted from her investigation by Echo’s gay chatter.”
What does the word diverted mean as used in the sentence?
- To use for another purpose
 - To take attention away
 - To change in direction
 - To be given a break
11. In “Narcissus Myth,” what does Hera’s treatment of Echo reveal about Hera?
- She is upset with Zeus
 - She is an unfair goddess
 - She is an enemy of Artemis
 - She is friends with many nymphs
12. The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Read the sentence from paragraph 2 of “Narcissus Myth.”

“He was calling his companions, ‘Is anyone here?’ and she called back in rapture, ‘Here—Here.’”

What does the phrase in rapture mean as it is used in the sentence?

- With delight
- At a slow pace
- With confusion
- At a low volume

Part B

Select **two** phrases from paragraph 2 that support the answer in Part A.

- “called back”
 - “still hidden”
 - “did not see her”
 - “answered joyfully”
 - “from the woods”
 - “arms outstretched”
13. Select the sentence from paragraph 3 of “Narcissus Myth” that **best** explains what causes Narcissus to become obsessed with looking at himself.
- So Narcissus went on his cruel way, a scorner of love. But at last one of those he wounded prayed a prayer and it was answered by the gods: “May he who loves not others love himself.” The great goddess Nemesis, which means righteous anger, undertook to bring this about. As Narcissus bent over a clear pool for a drink and saw there his own reflection, on the moment he fell in love with it. “Now I know,” he cried, “what others have suffered from me, for I burn with love of my own self—and yet how can I reach that loveliness I see mirrored in the water? But I cannot leave it. Only death can set me free.” And so it happened. He pined away, leaning perpetually over the pool, fixed in one long

gaze. Echo was near him, but she could do nothing; only when, dying, he called to his image, “Farewell—farewell,” she could repeat the words as a last good-by to him.

14. Read the sentence from paragraph 1 of “Narcissus Myth.”
“As she listened amused, to others silently stole away and Hera could come to no conclusion as to where Zeus’s wandering fancy had alighted.”
What does the phrase stole away reveal about the nymphs?
- It suggests the other nymphs feel guilty around Hera.
 - It suggests the other nymphs behave strangely around Hera.
 - It shows the other nymphs are secretly taking things from Hera.
 - It shows the other nymphs move cautiously in order to avoid Hera.

15. The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

In “Narcissus Myth,” how is the reader’s understanding of Echo different from Narcissus’s understanding of Echo?

- The reader does not know that Echo admires the beauty of Narcissus, but Narcissus knows this.
- The reader knows the feelings that Echo wants to express, but Narcissus does not know this.
- The reader does not know Echo has a limited power to speak, but Narcissus knows this.
- The reader knows that Echo is a nymph, but Narcissus does not know this.

Part B

How does the difference described in Part A affect the tone of the passage?

- It creates a humorous tone because of Narcissus’s love of himself.
- It creates an inspiring tone because of Echo’s determination to speak.
- It creates an angry tone because of Narcissus’s negative attitude toward others.
- It created a hopeless tone because of Echo’s inability to speak in her own words.

16. In “Narcissus Myth,” how does the prayer Nemesis answers affect Narcissus?
- He reflects on the life he could have led.
 - He sees the reflection of Echo in the pool.
 - He looks to Echo in his final moments of life.
 - He understands how he is perceived by others.

17. The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What is the central idea of “The Disciple”?

- When we spend a lot of time with someone, we may not remember to show appreciation for that person.
- When we focus too much on ourselves, we may not be aware of the other people around us.

- c. When a major change happens in life, we should be open to new opportunities.
- d. When facing new challenges, we should be kind to those around us.

Part B

Select the sentence from the passage that **best** supports the answer in Part A.

- a. "...his pleasure changed from a cup of sweet waters into a cup of salt tears...." (paragraph 4)
 - b. "...the Oreads¹ came weeping through the woodland that they might sing to the pool and give it comfort." (paragraph 4)
 - c. "We do not wonder that you should mourn in this manner for Narcissus, so beautiful was he." (paragraph 5)
 - d. "But was Narcissus beautiful?" said the pool." (paragraph 6)
18. Which statement accurately explains why the Oreads are surprised by the pool's reaction to Narcissus's death in "The Disciple"?
- a. The Oreads had thought that the pool did not know that Narcissus dies, but the pool does know this.
 - b. The Oreads had thought that the pool was filled with Narcissus's tears, but the tears are not from Narcissus.
 - c. The Oreads had thought that the pool would need to be comforted because Narcissus died, but the pool does not know Narcissus.
 - d. The Oreads had thought that the pool was sad about losing Narcissus's beauty, but the pool is sad about losing the opportunity to view itself.