

# Persephone

## Talking Points

These Talking Points are suggestions designed to allow exploration and discussion of the story. You may wish to select from the range at various points in the unit or explore other aspects of the story which interest your class.

### Getting the facts

- How many parts was the world divided into, and which of the gods was given which part?
- What is the Underworld? What happens there? Where is Paradise? Who lives there?
- What was Demeter goddess of?
- What happened after Persephone picked the white narcissus flower? What came out of the fissure in Mount Etna?
- How did Demeter find out that Hades had taken Persephone?
- How did Hermes persuade Hades to let Persephone go?
- What trick did Hades play on Persephone when he let her go to visit her mother? What was the end result? How does this link with our world today?

### Using the imagination

- Draw portraits of Persephone and Hades. What differences might there be in their expressions?
- Imagine you are one of Persephone's friends from Paradise. What do you remember happening on the day Hades took her?
- What was Persephone's life like in the underworld? How did she spend her time there?
- What was life like in the Underworld from Hades' point of view? How did he spend his days?
- What did Demeter think when she realised the trick Hades had played?

### Using the senses

- Imagine you are in Paradise, lying in a field with your eyes closed before Persephone was taken. What can you hear?
- If you had been on earth when Demeter was in the cave, what would you see?
- Describe what Hermes saw, smelt and felt as he went into the Underworld. What was he thinking?
- How did the pomegranate seeds feel in Persephone's mouth? What did they taste like?

### Using the emotions

- Describe how Persephone felt as she was snatched by Hades. What thoughts were going through her mind?
- And how did Demeter feel when Persephone didn't come home? What thoughts were going through her mind?
- At first, Zeus did not seem concerned that Hades had taken Persephone. Explain from Zeus' point of view how he felt at first and after Demeter had gone to the cave.
- Hades said he had taken Persephone because he was lonely. What does it feel like when you're lonely?

### Philosophical enquiry

- Hades had total control over Persephone. Is it ever right for one person to have control over another?
- Demeter took revenge on the earth for what had happened to her daughter. Is revenge ever right?
- Eventually, Hades compromised by keeping Persephone for half the year and letting her go for half. Is compromise a good thing?
- The Ancient Greeks would have believed this to be a story that explained the seasons. Were they right to have such beliefs?