

Echo and Narcissus

by Ross Montgomery

Vocabulary

Grammar

Punctuation

Composition

Some information about the myth is explained before the story begins.

Ancient Greeks loved telling ‘myths’, or made up stories. Here’s a famous one about Echo and Narcissus - a sad love story that’s given us some famous words!

This Greek myth explains the phenomenon of echoes. This retelling of Echo and Narcissus is written in the past tense and uses the third person. Characters are described using expanded noun phrases and also through dialogue.

Apostrophes are used to show singular (‘Zeus’s’) and plural (‘Nymphs’) possession.

Zeus, the king of the gods and goddesses, was always running away to spend time with the Nymphs. They were beautiful, magical creatures who lived in rivers and streams. Hera, Zeus’s wife, became very jealous of Zeus spending so much time with them – so one day, she decided that enough was enough. She stormed to the Nymphs’ home to drag her husband back!

Past tense verb forms are used throughout.

Direct speech is correctly punctuated with inverted commas and other speech punctuation. A new line is started when a new character speaks.

Along the way, she bumped into a beautiful Nymph named Echo. Echo knew how much trouble Zeus would be in if he were caught, so she tried to distract Hera by talking.

“Er... hi!” she said. “Lovely day, isn’t it? Would you like to hear a story?”



“No,” Hera answered, sternly.

“Yep, who doesn’t love stories?” Echo continued.
“Here’s a good one: er, so, once upon a time,
there was...”

A fronted adverbial
is used to
sequence events.

Hera wasn’t stupid, and knew exactly what Echo
was up to. Finally, she’d had enough.

Reporting clauses
are used to show
how characters
speak, adding
information about
the characters and
their feelings.

“Seeing as you love lying so much,” she cried, her
voice rising to its highest pitch, “I’ll twist your
tongue so you never tell a story again!”

Echo tried to answer – but all that came out was,
“Again... again... again...”

Echo gasped. Hera had stolen her voice so she
could only repeat the end of the last sentence said
to her! Hera pushed past, and Echo was forced to
live in silence. Distraught, she cut herself off from
the Nymphs and ran away to live alone beside a
lonely pool in an empty forest. Without speech, she
wilted like a flower without light.

Prepositions
are used to
show place.

A fronted adverbial is
used at the beginning
of a paragraph to
link ideas.

Nouns are
expanded to create
expanded noun
phrases to describe
characters.

One day, a handsome young man called Narcissus
became lost in the forest. Narcissus wasn’t just
handsome - he was the most handsome man
in the world! In fact, a prophet had warned
Narcissus’s mother that he should never see his

A simile is used to
add description.

Apostrophes
continue to be
used to show
singular possession
(‘Narcissus’s’) and
also contracted
words (‘wasn’t’).



Tier two and tier 3 vocabulary is used throughout the model text.

own reflection. Narcissus was so handsome that everyone who saw him **instantly** fell in love with him – what would happen if he saw himself?

Echo was no **different**. The moment Narcissus stumbled out from the trees and found her pool, he stole her **heart completely**.

“Oh – hi,” said Narcissus, when he saw Echo gawping at him. “Who are you?”

Dialogue is used to give information about characters.

Of course, there was nothing Echo could say but, “Who are you? Who are you?”

The noun (‘water’) is modified with a determiner (‘some’) and a prepositional phrase (‘from this pool’).

Narcissus frowned. “That’s rude. Can you bring me **some water from this pool**? I’m really thirsty, but my mum says I should never go anywhere near water – I don’t know why.”

Echo wanted to tell **Narcissus** that **she** loved **him**. **She** wanted to explain her curse and how **she** would do anything for **him**. But the only **vibrations** that could leave her throat and pass through the air were, “Why.. why.. why..”

Nouns and pronouns are used to avoid repetition and provide clarity. NOTE: the word ‘her’ is used as a possessive determiner (‘her curse’, ‘her throat’).

Narcissus finally lost his temper. “I just told you why! Oh, forget it - I’m too thirsty for this. I’ll get some water myself if you’re not going to help me!”



The reporting clause shows Echo's feelings.

"Help me... help me..." came the Nymph's heartbroken echo.

She was too late. Narcissus bent down to the pool to drink, and the moment he saw his reflection he fell head over heels in love with himself. From that moment on, he was cursed. He couldn't eat, he couldn't sleep... he couldn't even drink from the pool, in case he broke his beautiful reflection. All he could do was gaze into his own reflected eyes, forever and ever.

Further examples of adverbials are used to show time, some are fronted.

"I love you," he whispered to himself.

The myth explains how and why echoes were first created.

And all Echo could do was repeat his words, the volume growing fainter and fainter as her tears fell into the pool beside him.

"I love you... I love you... I love you..."

