

Dear Mr. Riordan,

December 22, 2011

I was six years old when I read your book, *The Lightning Thief*. I lived in a world revolving around Barbies and Disney princesses. I hated school, and spent my free time in dress-up clothes. Then I was introduced to your book, and everything changed. Honestly, I didn't like it at first. I was expecting a re-telling of the traditional myths I'd read (under duress, of course). Due to peer pressure, I attempted to like it by re-reading it, and in the process, fell in love with it. I finally understood the ingenuity involved in re-working old myths and placing them in modern times. I loved Percy's sense of humor, Grover's loyalty, and Annabeth's frankness, and my imagination began to be shaped by them.

The more engrossed I became in your books, the more I wanted to learn. I began to take a deeper interest in mythology, and became curious about its foundations. As a result, I developed a passion for history and archeology. In order to feed my learning frenzy, my mom signed me up for a Greek and Latin class. My obsession with your characters led me to do every scrap of extra credit in order to be like them—learning the Greek alphabet, reading Bullfinch's mythology, even memorizing Greek vocabulary words (previously not a favorite subject).

While your book did inspire me to be a better student, it ultimately inspired me to begin writing myself. My stories began on little scraps of paper, and petered out after a page or two, but my sudden burst of creativity didn't stop. My ideas became mini-novels, and my computer bogged down with short stories, as I continued Percy and Annabeth's story. My friends and I were swept up into the world of writing, and spent hours poring over our fledgling stories—a much worthier occupation than watching TV!

It has been six years since I first read *The Lightning Thief*, but the impact it had on me has remained. The way you transformed dusty old stories into the sparkling twenty-first century led me to love the original myths in all their cob-webbed glory. I feel truly excited when I read history, and am considering studying archeology in college. My copy of *The Lightning Thief* is battered and old, and has been dragged to lots of classes and Percy-themed sleepovers. The positive impact your awesome book has had on my young life will never grow old.

With Sincerest Thanks,  
Emma Casey