

Name:

Date:

READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the questions below.

One day, a boy named Narcissus looked into the still water of a quiet stream, and saw a lovely water nymph gazing back up at him. He smiled at her, and she smiled back. He thought that she was so beautiful that he had to see her again, so he came back again the next day. Again he peered down into the water, saw her, and smiled. Again she smiled back.

"Come out of the water," he asked her. But she did not. Day after day he came to the stream to gaze at her lovely face. Over and over he asked her to join him on the land. Every day he believed that this would be the day that she would join him, because every day she smiled at him, and looked as pleased to see him as he was to see her. But then there were days when the sun hid behind the clouds. On those days the water was dark, and the wind blew ripples across its surface. On those days he could not see the water nymph's beautiful golden curls or sparkling blue eyes, and he would worry that she was angry with him.

What Narcissus never knew was that there was no water nymph; all he ever saw in the water was his own reflection. But he watched his reflection, and waited for the nymph to join him, and longed for her so much that he died of loneliness and disappointment. Out of pity for him, the gods changed him into a graceful and sweet-smelling flower, that we call the narcissus. The narcissus grows at the edges of streams, where to this day it bends down over the water to admire its own reflection.

What did Narcissus think he saw?

What was he really seeing?

Why did the gods turn Narcissus into a flower?

How is the flower like Narcissus?