

# Echo and Narcissus

Echo was a nymph who loved to talk. She would chat all day long. If there were no people to talk to, Echo would just talk to herself. She had a tendency to get into other people's business and gossip about it, as well.

One day, Hera, a goddess and Zeus's wife, left Mount Olympus and made a visit to the forest. She was searching for her husband. Hera suspected that Zeus had been spending time with the wood nymphs and she had become very jealous.

While searching for Zeus in the forest, Hera asked Echo about Zeus. Echo talked and talked and talked. She updated Hera on all of the latest gossip. While Echo chattered, Zeus was able to sneak away. Hera turned just in time to see her husband and realized that the wood nymph was trying to trick her.

Hera was furious with Echo, so she punished her with a curse. Hera said, "You love to talk, but from now on, you will never be able to start a conversation. You will only be able to answer when someone speaks to you and you will only be able to repeat the last words that others speak to you. Now you will always have the last word."

Echo wondered around the woods and spent her days alone. One day she saw the most handsome man she had ever laid eyes on and immediately fell in love with him. His name was Narcissus. Narcissus was so attractive that every girl and nymph fell in love with him at



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first sight. Unfortunately, Narcissus did not fall in love with any of them. Narcissus only loved himself.

Echo had to meet Narcissus, so she quickly ran up to him. Narcissus was annoyed that he was being followed by yet another girl.

"What do you want?" Narcissus called out.

"You want?" Echo repeated.

"I do not want anything, but I guess you are just one more girl who thinks she could love me," Narcissus stated.

"Love me!" Echo repeated again. At that moment, she wrapped her arms around Narcissus's neck. But Narcissus quickly pushed her away and screamed, "Get away! I do not love you, foolish girl!"

"Foolish girl!" repeated Echo. She turned and quickly ran away to hide her tears. She was completely devastated. First she had lost her voice, then her heart was shattered by Narcissus. Echo ran farther and farther into the woods. The more she ran, the more she began to fade. Eventually, there was nothing left of her, but her voice. From that day on, her voice could be heard in the woods, caves, and mountains, repeating the words of others- an echo.

Narcissus's behavior toward Echo made the gods very angry, so they sent down a pool of water that glistened and glimmered in the sunlight. Narcissus was immediately drawn to it. He bent down to take a drink of the shimmering water. As he bent over the water, he saw the most beautiful face he had ever seen.

Immediately he was mesmerized. Finally, he had discovered true love.

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Narcissus sat by the pool of water all day and all night. He was captivated by the face that reflected back at him. Narcissus tried to speak to the face, but when he spoke, only the lips of the reflection would move, and no voice could be heard. He reached down to touch the beautiful face, but the face would disappear with the rippling of the water. Once the water became perfectly still again, the face reappeared. Narcissus vowed he would wait there until his darling was ready to come out.

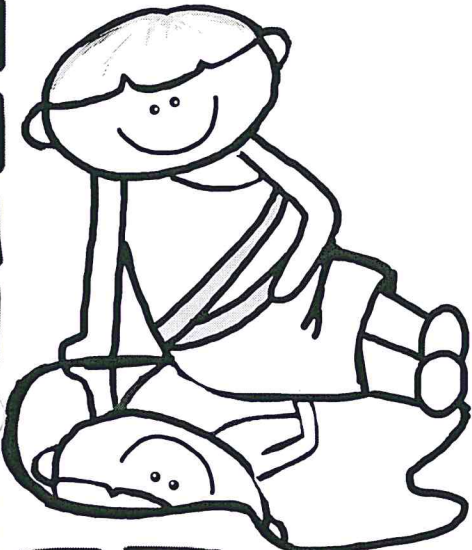
Narcissus stopped eating and sleeping. He eventually wasted away and died by the pool of water. He never realized that it was his own reflection that he loved. Eventually, a beautiful yellow flower bloomed at the very spot where Narcissus used to sit. The Greeks named the flower *narcissus*.

The common name for a Narcissus flower is Daffodil.

What is the theme of the story?

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If someone is said to be narcissistic, what does that mean?

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# Echo

What character traits would you use to describe Echo? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Character Trait

Evidence from the text



Character Trait

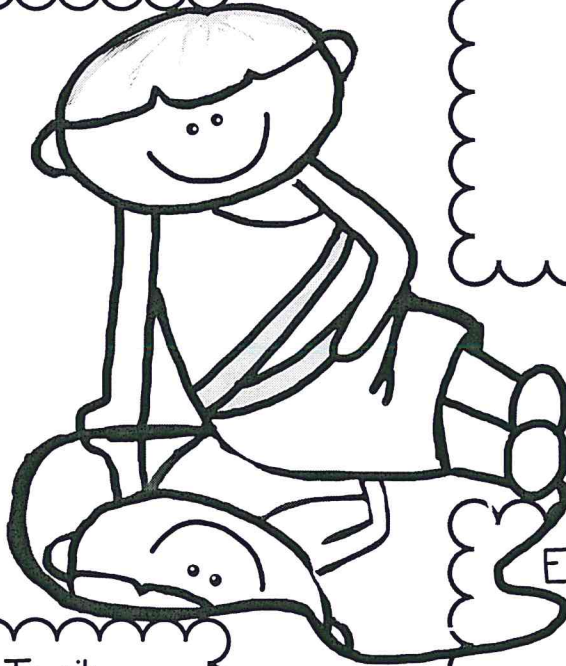
Evidence from the text

# Narcissus

What character traits would you use to describe Narcissus?  
Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Character Trait

Evidence from the text



Character Trait

Evidence from the text