

Student Essay on Hercules' Personality

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Essay

In the Greek myths, Hercules is shown with mixed personality traits. He is a good hero over all, but he also has to struggle with his evil impulses. Hercules is known for his super human strength and bravery, but also for his wanton rages and excessive self-confidence.

Throughout the myths, Hercules demonstrates extreme wanton behavior. He often has sudden outbursts of anger that usually turn out to be fatal, even when the object of his wrath is innocent. Even when Hercules is young, he shows his wanton rages by braining his music teacher with a lyre. Hercules also deserts the Argo, and fails to tell anyone. The most reckless, wanton actions that Hercules commits by far, is killing his wife and children. Again, after that, he shows this behavior again by wanting to take his own life. Hercules' wanton behavior shows an evil side of him.

Another of Hercules' personality flaws is his self-confidence. Hercules thinks of himself as equal with the gods. He also thinks that he can beat anything that he fights. Hercules even opposes and challenges the gods. When Apollo gets angry with Hercules because he is threatening the priestess at Delphi, Hercules is more than ready to fight Apollo, and Zeus has to intervene. Hercules also challenges Achelous, the river god, because Achelous likes the woman that Hercules wants to marry. When Achelous tries to reason with Hercules so as to avoid a fight, it only makes him angrier and Hercules refuses. Hercules is so confident about his strength that he threatens to shoot the sun with an arrow because he is too hot, and tells the waters he will punish them if they do not calm. Since Hercules' self-confidence is so excessive, a personality trait that would in some cases be positive, turns out to be negative.

Hercules is still one of the greatest heroes in Greek mythology, despite the flaws in his personality. Even though most of the myths Hercules appears in show him to be brave and unusually strong, Hercules is also hampered with wanton rages and hubristic self-confidence.