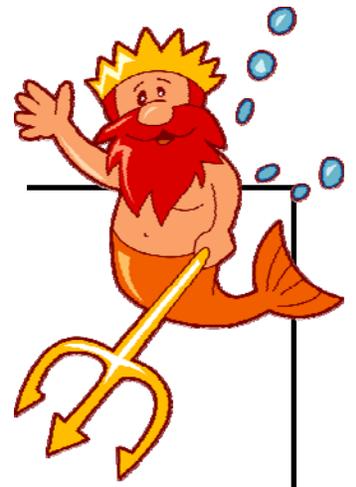


Name _____

Citing Textual Evidence



The Lost City of Atlantis

DIRECTIONS: Read the passage. Then answer the questions. Use textual evidence to support your answers.

People have long wondered about the alleged “lost” city of Atlantis, but in fact Atlantis has never been lost at all. Its story was first told in two Platonic dialogues, the “Timaeus” and the “Critias” (330 B.C.). According to professor of archeology Ken Feder’s book, *Frauds, Myths and Mysteries, Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology*, Plato’s Atlantis was “a technologically sophisticated but morally bankrupt evil empire. . . Atlantis . . . attempts world domination by force. The only thing standing in its way is a relatively small group of spiritually pure, morally principled and incorruptible people — the ancient Athenians. Overcoming overwhelming odds . . . the Athenians are able to defeat their far more powerful adversary simply through the force of their spirit.”

Plato’s story of Atlantis is less about a “lost” civilization than it is about the virtue of the Athenians, and scholars believe that Atlantis never in fact existed, but was a literary creation on the part of Plato. Atlantis has never been mentioned in any other Greek literature that has ever been found. In fact, for most of history people have believed that Atlantis was a fictional place, until the late 1800s when a writer named Ignatius Donnelly proposed that significant achievements of the ancient world, like metallurgy, agriculture, religion and language — must have originated in Atlantis. His argument was that the known ancient civilizations weren’t sophisticated enough to have developed these things on their own, rather they were given to them by some more intelligent civilization. Donnelly’s ideas captured enough of the imaginations of others for later writers to add their own speculations. Mystics and psychics well known at the time jumped on the bandwagon, helping to popularize the idea of there having been a real Atlantis.

Interest in Atlantis was furthered by a book published in 1969 by Charles Berlitz called *The Mystery of Atlantis* because Berlitz claimed that Atlantis was both real and the reason behind the mystery of The Bermuda Triangle. Since then, thousands of books, magazine and websites have been devoted to the topic of Atlantis.

Name _____ **Citing Textual Evidence**

1. Why do scholars believe that Atlantis was a fictional place created by Plato?

2. If people understood that Atlantis was a fictional creation for thousands of years, what made people start to think that it had once really existed?

3. What was the role of Ignatius Donnelly in popularizing the idea of a “lost” Atlantis?

4. What was the role of Charles Berlitz in popularizing the idea of a “lost” Atlantis?
