

Theo and the Cuddly Cow-Man-Thing

"Oh, my goodness!" Mum said, pushing heavily to open Theo's door. "What a mess! It's like a labyrinth in here!"

Theo knocked over a few boxes so he could get a proper view of Mum. "Pardon?" he called, his voice echoing over piles of toys and clothes.

"This room is a disgrace!" Mum squealed. She was standing in the huge wooden doorway, not daring to go in. "I'm starting to think giving you the ballroom wasn't such a great idea after all, young man!"



Theo Aegeus's parents were rich. Really rich. They were experts in ancient Greek mythology and had made loads of money telling their stories on TV and online. They had become so rich, in fact, they didn't really know what to do with all the money. Then one day, Theo's dad came up with an idea. 'Let's buy a Greek castle,' he had said. Theo had to say goodbye to all his school friends as the family then moved out of their perfectly good, three-bedroomed house in England and into an historic castle over 2000 miles away on the Greek island of Crete!

Q1: Approximately how far is it in miles from England to Crete?



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Q2: **"***What a mess! It's like a labyrinth in here!"*
How else could the author have written this line?

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Q3: How do you think Theo felt when he moved to Crete? Explain your answer.



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There were over 20 rooms in the castle and Theo's bedroom, the ballroom, was the biggest. The ballroom was a vast space that would have held royal parties and fancy dances in the past. It had high ceilings, cinema screen-sized windows, wood-panelled walls and a fireplace larger than most people's kitchens. Despite it being absolutely humongous, Theo still managed to make a complete and utter mess of it. Most of his stuff was thrown all over the place and the room was filled with all sorts of ancient furniture anyway.



"Ariadne can't find her teddy," Mum groaned from the doorway; Ariadne was Theo's annoying little sister who was always losing things.

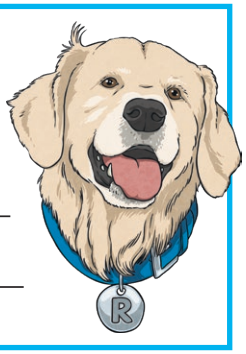
"Her cuddly cow-man-thing?" Theo shouted across the room.

"Yes, that's it," Mum replied. "She says it's in here somewhere but there's no way I'm taking another step until you've tidied, so you'll have to find it!"

"What?" Theo whined.

"Here," Mum said helpfully, throwing over a ball of string as she closed the ballroom door. "Use this so you don't get lost! Good luck!"

Q4: List three facts about the ballroom.



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- _____
- _____



Q5: Why do you think that Theo's room was 'filled with all sorts of ancient furniture'?

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Q6: How does Theo's bedroom compare to your bedroom at home?



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Q7: Find and copy three words that the author uses instead of 'said'.



_____ _____ _____

Theo had been wandering around his bedroom for hours. Mum was right, it really had become a labyrinth. His mess had made so many paths and alleyways that it was hard to know where he was. Wisely, he had taken Mum's advice and left a trail of string so he could find his way back. Theo turned another corner with his toy sword gripped firmly in his right hand, just in case. Still there was no sign of the stupid toy. This was taking forever.

Suddenly, from around a corner, Theo heard a strange noise. It was a growling, snarling coming from behind a box of old model cars. Cautiously, Theo peered round. It was Ariadne's weird cow-man-thing standing in the middle of the path. Its eyes were glowing red and it was making an odd noise. "Typical," Theo said, marching over to pick it up. "Doesn't she know leaving it on runs down the batteries?" As Theo approached the funny-looking toy, it seemed to peer up at him and growl. Theo froze. "Hold on," he muttered to himself. "Why would a soft toy need batteries?"

Theo gasped as the little toy charged! Remembering his parents' stories about ancient Greece, Theo raised his sword into the air. This was no ordinary cow-man-thing. This was a minotaur!

Q8: *'Theo had been wandering round his bedroom for hours.'*
Why do you think that this was the case?

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Q9: *"...his toy sword gripped firmly in his right hand, just in case.'*
Why might Theo need to carry his toy sword?



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Q10: What do you think Theo will do next?

Q11: Write a short blurb for this story.



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Theo and the Cuddly Cow-Man-Thing **Answers**

Q1: Approximately how far is it in miles from England to Crete?

Accept the answer, over 2000 miles.

Q2: *"What a mess! It's like a labyrinth in here!"*

How else could the author have written this line?

Accept any reasonable answer which conveys the same meaning, such as:

- **The mess in this room has made it like a maze!**
- **It's like a maze in here because it is so untidy.**
- **All of the toys and boxes in your room has turned it into a maze.**

Q3: How do you think Theo felt when he moved to Crete? Explain your answer.

Accept any reasonable answer regarding Theo's emotions, such as disappointed, sad, upset, lonely or downhearted, provided that a reasonable justification is provided in support, e.g.

- **Theo probably felt lonely when he moved because he had to leave all of his friends behind.**
- **Theo was upset that he had to leave his perfectly good house in England.**

Q4: List three facts about the ballroom.

Accept any three of the following facts:

- **It was a vast space.**
- **Royal parties and dances would have been held in it in the past.**
- **It had high ceilings.**
- **The windows were the size of cinema screens.**
- **The walls had wood panels.**
- **It had a large fireplace.**
- **The room was filled with ancient furniture.**
- **It was very untidy.**
- **The ballroom was now Theo's bedroom.**

Q5: Why do you think that Theo's room was 'filled with all sorts of ancient furniture'?

Accept any reasonable inference on one of the following:

- **The castle is very old.**
- **They would have been used in the past and may have just been left.**
- **Left over from previous residents of the castle.**
- **They fit in with the age of the house.**
- **Mum and Dad loved Greek history and may have chosen old looking furniture.**

Q6: How does Theo's bedroom compare to your bedroom at home?

Accept any reasonable similarity or difference given provided that it makes sense and is relevant, e.g.

- **My bedroom is messy but it is not as messy as Theo's.**
- **Theo has a really big bedroom and my bedroom is small.**
- **I share my bedroom with my brother but Theo has one to himself.**
- **My bedroom is tidy but Theo's is messy.**

Q7: Find and copy three words that the author uses instead of 'said'.

Accept any three of the following:

- **groaned**
- **shouted**
- **replied**
- **whined**

Q8: *'Theo had been wandering round his bedroom for hours.'*

Why do you think that this was the case?

Accept any answer which relates to the size or untidiness of his room:

- **His bedroom was so untidy that he kept getting lost.**
- **The ballroom was so big.**
- **His mess had made so many paths and alleyways that it was hard to find his way around.**

Q9: *'He also had his toy sword gripped firmly in his right hand, just in case.'*

Why might Theo need to carry his toy sword?

Accept answers which discuss that Theo was not sure what he might find amongst the mess in his bedroom and wanted to be prepared.

Q10: What do you think Theo will do next?

Accept any logical and reasonable prediction based on the events of the story so far, such as:

- **Theo will run away screaming.**
- **He will call for his mum and sister to come and help him.**
- **He may hide behind some of the mess.**
- **He could use what he knows about the minotaur to help him to defeat it.**
- **He might use the toy sword to defeat the toy.**

Q11: Write a short blurb for this story.

Accept any reasonable blurb which covers the main points of the story, such as:

- **When Theo is looking for his sister's toy in his messy labyrinth of a bedroom, he soon discovers something far more sinister...**