

12/14/2023

Dear Mr. Riordan,

Hello, my name is Caleb, and I'm a huge fan of your Percy Jackson series. I wanted to write to let you know that your stories have inspired me to read more and become the hero of my own story.

When I started reading *The Lightning Thief*, seeing a character with ADHD made me feel seen and understood. Percy's ADHD was not a bad thing; rather, it helped him in his adventures. Percy's ADHD was really his battle instincts, and it made me look at my own ADHD in a new light. More importantly, Percy isn't defined by his ADHD because he is so much more. Percy is a character who is brave, takes on challenges, and never gives up when things get hard. Even when facing down Kronos in the fifth book, he showed courage and perseverance. ADHD wasn't a character flaw for Percy; he was never portrayed as the kid who just couldn't sit still, who was annoying, loud, or unable to focus. Percy's ADHD was an asset to him throughout the series. Seeing a character, the main character at that, be successful and have ADHD made me feel like ADHD wasn't a bad thing; it's not my character flaw either. After reading the Percy Jackson series I have learned how much it matters to show characters with neurodivergence so that real children can be understood and feel like they can be heroes too

Seeing that Percy had superpowers along with his disabilities, which are similar to my own, made me want to read more because I have never read a story with a

character that was neurodivergent. Percy's adventures just made me want to read more and more books. I was never big into books, and it made me feel left out, like I was missing out on cool stuff in books, but I just couldn't get into it. But the first time I picked up a Percy Jackson book, I realized that maybe I hadn't given reading a real chance, that there were adventures and whole new worlds to explore, all in a book. The excitement is what drew me into the story with epic fights and quests right from the first chapter. Just reading the books made me want to learn and actually brought me back to the library to get even more books to learn more about Ancient Greek life and myths. I never wanted to research anything before but I found myself asking my mom all kinds of questions and looking things up online.

To sum it up, Percy Jackson is not only my favorite series but made me see myself in a whole new light. I now see myself as someone who likes to read and learn and can do it all because of my ADHD and not despite it.

Sincerely,

Caleb Bennett

