Pandora's Box

Read the myth and then answer the questions.

Once up a time, a long time ago, there were two brothers named Epimetheus and Prometheus. They were good gods. They had good hearts. They were good friends. One day, Prometheus got in trouble with Zeus. Because he had a kind heart, and he knew how much man needed fire for food and warmth, Prometheus gave man the secret of fire even though Zeus had told all the gods not to do that. Zeus was furious that his order had been ignored. As punishment, Zeus chained Prometheus to a rock for many years.

But that was not enough punishment, not for Zeus. Once Prometheus was chained to a rock, Zeus went after Prometheus' brother, the gentle, kind-hearted Epimetheus. Zeus did not chain Epimetheus to a rock. Zeus had a more sneaky punishment in mind. First, Zeus ordered the gods' handyman, the maker of things - Hephaestus - to make Zeus a daughter. Hephaestus made a woman out of clay, a beautiful woman. He brought her to life, and then brought her to Zeus. Zeus named his lovely new daughter Pandora.

Zeus knew that Epimetheus was lonely. Zeus told Epimetheus that his brother had to be punished and that's why he was chained to a rock, but he felt sorry that this punishment left Epimetheus without the company of his brother. That's why Zeus had decided to give Pandora in marriage to Epimetheus. Epimetheus was kind-hearted and gentle and thoughtful, but he was no fool. He knew Zeus was up to something. But he loved Pandora at first sight.

Zeus gave the newlyweds a gift. Some say it was a jar. Some say it was a box. Whatever it was, it was locked. It came with a note. The note said: "DO NOT OPEN." Attached to the note was a key. It was all very curious. You can guess what happened next. It was Pandora whose curiosity got the better of her. One day, she used the key to open the box. As she raised the lid, out flew all the bad things in the world today - envy, sickness, hate, disease. Pandora slammed the lid closed, but it was too late.

Epimetheus heard her weeping. He came running. Pandora opened the lid to show him it was empty. Quickly, before she could slam the lid shut, one tiny bug flew out. He gave Pandora a big buggy smile in thanks for his freedom and flew away. That tiny bug was named Hope. And Hope made all the difference in the world.

1. Why did Zeus chain Prometheus to a rock? _____

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2. How did Epimetheus feel when he saw Pandora? _____

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3. What happened when Pandora opened the box? _____

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4. What was the last thing to leave the box and why did it make all of the difference?

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