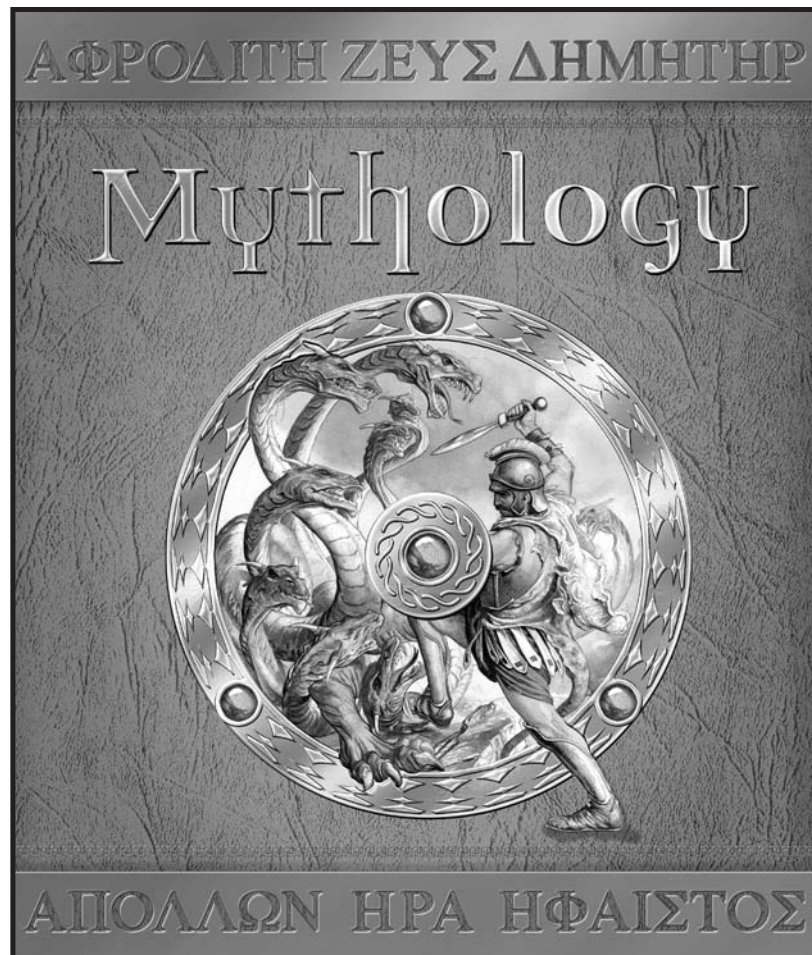


Μυθολογία

Teachers' Guide



ΜΥΘΟΛΟΓΙΑ: The Gods, Heroes, and Monsters of Ancient Greece

by Lady Hestia Evans • edited by Dugald A. Steer • illustrated by Nick Harris,
Nicki Palin, and David Wyatt • decorative friezes by Helen Ward

Age 8 and up • Grade 3 and up

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Mythology purports to be an early nineteenth-century primer on Greek myths written by Lady Hestia Evans. This particular edition is inscribed to Lady Hestia's friend John Oro, who was embarking on a tour of the sites of ancient Greece. Along his journey, Oro has added his own notes, comments, and drawings in the margins — including mention of his growing obsession with the story of King Midas and a visit to Olympus to make a daring request of Zeus himself. . . .

This guide to *Mythology* is designed to support a creative curriculum and provide opportunities to make links across subjects. The suggested activities help students make connections with and build on their existing knowledge, which may draw from film, computer games, and other popular media as well as books and more traditional sources. We hope that the menu of possibilities presented here will serve as a creative springboard and inspiration for you in your classroom.

For your ease of use, the guide is structured to follow the book in a chapter-by-chapter order. However, many of the activities allow teachers to draw on material from several chapters. For instance, the storytelling performance activity outlined in the section “An Introduction to Mythology” could also be used with stories from other chapters. Likewise, many of the activities focused on *The Odyssey* would apply equally well to the chapter on the Trojan War.



BEFORE READING

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Do students know the word *mythology*? In what context have they heard it? Encourage them to draw as widely as possible on their own cultural references. Students may, for instance, be familiar with stories, books, films, comic strips, or the computer game *Age of Mythology*. Invite them to share the myths they know with a partner or in a small group.
2. After discussing students' prior knowledge of the subject, ask them to propose a definition for *mythology*. Encourage them to use a range of dictionaries to check their suggestions. Write the dictionary definition on a large sheet of paper and display it in the classroom.
3. Explain that different cultures give rise to their own mythologies and that there are many similarities among them, such as creation stories and hero tales. Note that there are also clear differences among cultural mythologies. Ask students to point out clues from the cover of *Mythology* that suggest which culture it draws from.
4. Talk about the image in the center of the cover. What does it suggest? Some possibilities for discussion include heroes, monsters, action, and the forces of good and evil.
5. Discuss the word *ancient*. Have students provide a dictionary definition. Make a timeline and place the ancient Greek Empire on it. (Note that there are differences of opinion but that historians generally use the dates between 1000 BCE and the death of Alexander the Great, in 323 BCE. Make sure students understand the use of the terms BCE and CE.)

ACTIVITIES

ON DISPLAY

Involve the class in making a display or class "museum." It might include such elements as:

- books about ancient Greece and Greek mythology
- postcards, photographs, and travel posters showing Greek monuments
- travel souvenirs such as postcards, photos, and other materials collected by students who have visited Greece, who may wish to add informative labels
- maps and a globe
- dictionaries for identifying word origins

TRANSFORM YOUR CLASSROOM

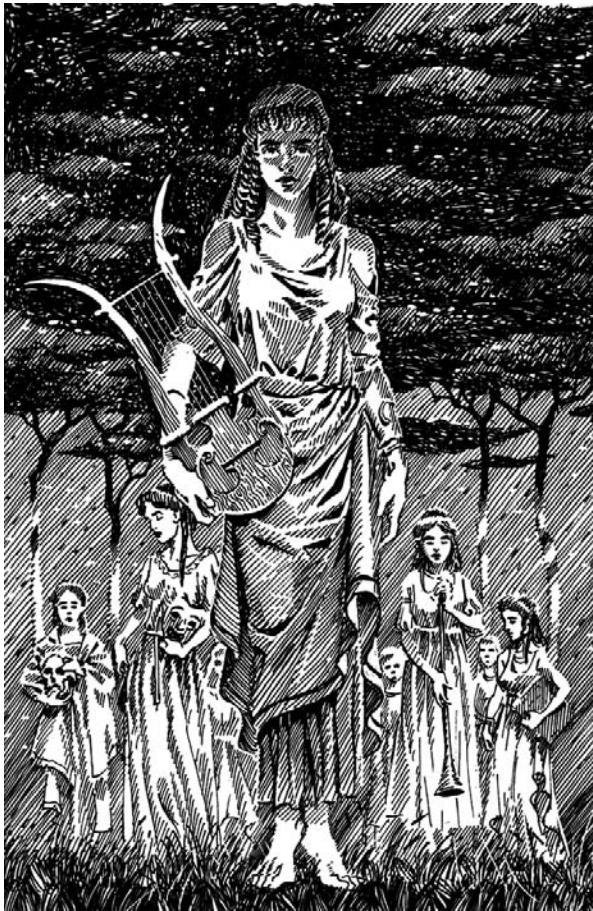
Consider transforming the entire classroom into a Greek temple. Run a frieze along the top of the wall, perhaps depicting the twelve labors of Heracles or the voyage of the *Argo* (see the page borders in *Mythology*). Invite students to help create Greek columns from paper and use them to designate display areas.



TITLE PAGE SPREAD

DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Encourage students to consider the story that is being set up. What image do they have of Lady Hestia Evans? What image do they have of John Oro?
2. What do the students think has happened to John Oro when he writes, "I feel I can no longer hold this pen"? Encourage them to predict how the story will unfold.
3. Work with students to create character profiles based on the information presented in this first spread and the inferences they can make.



ACTIVITIES

HOW A-MUSE-ING!

Have students read Lady Hestia Evans's poem "O Muses." Then have them research the Greek Muses and create a chart listing the Muses and their areas of influence. They might illustrate the chart with these or other works of art, located via the Internet or other sources:

- *Birth of the Muses*, by Jean-Dominique Ingres (Louvre)
- *Minerva Visiting the Muses*, by Jacques de Stella (Louvre)
- *The Reign of the Muses*, by Lorenzo Costa (Louvre)

BON VOYAGE

Have students imagine that they are preparing for a tour to Greece. Lead a role-play in which you take the part of tour leader and students respond as if they are fellow travelers. Ask students to reflect on their expectations for the voyage: What preparations would they make? How would they feel about leaving family behind? What means would they use to get there?

DEAR DIARY

Following the role-play above, invite students to write from the point of view of their character. For instance, they might write a diary entry in the voice of a traveler who is leaving for Greece the next day.

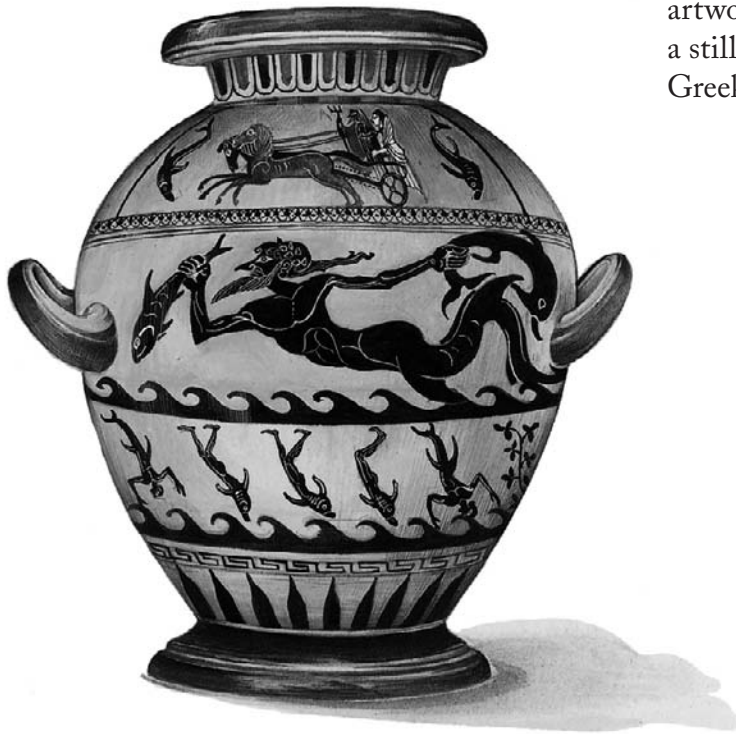
SPREAD 2: AN INTRODUCTION TO MYTHOLOGY

ACTIVITIES

IT'S GREEK TO US

The booklet titled *The Basics of Ancient Greek* may serve as a basis for the following activities:

- Ask students to decipher the names of the gods printed in the gold borders on the cover of *Mythology*.
- Have students write their own names in Greek characters. This could be done on a computer using an appropriate font.
- Invite students to research the modern Greek alphabet. Challenge them to find ways in which it differs from the ancient Greek alphabet.



ODE ON A GRECIAN URN

Ask students to find pictures of Greek pottery throughout *Mythology* and in other books, as well as Internet sources. Have them research the images and decorations they find on the pottery. Ask them to identify recurring pot shapes, including the following examples:

- *amphora*: a large, tall urn that often has two handles; used for storing wine, corn, oil, and honey
- *hydria*: a narrow-mouthed vessel with a lid for carrying
- *khyton*: a character-shaped vessel used for wine drinking
- *krater*: a large, wide-mouthed vessel used for mixing water and wine; often placed in the center of a room
- *kylix*: a two-handled flat drinking cup
- *oinochoe*: a tall, narrow-mouthed jug with a pouring spout

Pottery may also inspire students' own artwork. For instance, suggest that they make a still-life drawing of vases and urns based on Greek shapes.

SPREAD 2, *continued*

IT'S WONDER-FUL

Explain to the class that the statue of Zeus at Olympia was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Have students research this magnificent work in a homework assignment, using the following prompts. Before they begin, show them how to cite their sources and ask them to use more than one source to check their information.

- Describe what is known about the statue of Zeus, including its sculptor, dimensions, and what materials it was made of.
- Present a complete list of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, noting which are still in existence.



A CLASS ACT

Use the following steps to prepare for a storytelling performance:

- Provide small groups with copies of the stories mentioned in the Introduction. These include tales of Zeus's battle with his father, Cronus; Dionysus and the pirates; Midas and his golden touch; Atlas's punishment; and the twelve labors of Heracles.
- Ask each group to read the story aloud, then retell the story in a storytelling circle.
- Provide each group with a large sheet of paper on which they can storyboard their myth. (This will serve as a visual aid for the storytelling performance.) Ask students to draw six to eight key scenes, making sure to include the story's beginning, its developing conflict, and its resolution. Invite them to add dialogue in speech bubbles, if they wish, or sound effects (such as the sound of the sea or a battle). Explain that the drawing should be collaborative, involving the participation of everyone in the group.
- Ask the groups to decide how they will perform their stories. Invite them to use instruments or sound collage in addition to acting out sections of dialogue.
- Have the groups perform their stories for their own class, another class, or a school assembly.

SPREAD 3: THE OLYMPIANS AND THE WORLD

ACTIVITIES

THE JOURNEY

Make an enlarged copy of the map in this chapter and display it alongside a map of modern Greece. As students read each subsequent chapter of *Mythology*, ask a volunteer to chart the corresponding segment of John Oro's journey on the map of ancient Greece using yarn and pushpins.

THEN AND NOW

Encourage students to explore and compare the maps on display through questions and prompts such as the ones below.

- In which modern country is the city of Troy?
- Does the city of Sparta appear on the modern map?
- What do we call Macedonia today?
- Is Athens to the north or south of Heraklion?

Invite students to add their own questions in writing and submit them to you to be posed to the class.

WHAT A SITE

Collect copies of travel brochures, tourist information, and web pages that offer information about important sites of ancient Greece. Divide students into pairs and have each pair research one of the sites below to determine its significance in ancient times, whether it still exists now, and if so, how its status may have changed over time.

- Actium
- Athens
- Knossos
- Missolonghi
- Olympia
- Sparta
- Troy

Once students have completed their research, it may be used as a springboard to create one of the following:

- a travel brochure
- a short tourist information film
- a tourist information leaflet
- a web page for the city

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Create a wall display of a standard family tree. As students learn the names of the gods, heroes, and monsters of ancient Greece, add each name to the tree. Have students select one of the names on the tree to study further.

Ask students to create a profile for their character, listing attributes, functions, and associations. For example:

Zeus

Functions: sky god, king of the gods, also known as “wind-bearer” or “cloud-gatherer”

Attributes: eagle, lightning bolt

Associations: oak and olive trees

The ancient Greeks prayed to Zeus for rain, especially in times of drought.

Have students collect and present stories featuring their god, hero, or monster.

WORD OF THE WEEK

Challenge students to define *cartography* and *genealogy*. Have volunteers check the definitions in a dictionary and look up the etymology of each word. As you continue to read *Mythology*, choose one word in each chapter as the “word of the week” and involve students in creating a display focused on that word.

SPREAD 3, *continued*

STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

Display a map of the night sky that includes both the northern and southern hemispheres. Work with the class to identify which constellations are named after characters from Greek mythology. Divide the class into small groups, and have each group

create a presentation on an assigned Greek-mythology-themed constellation. The presentation should include an image of the constellation and a story associated with that constellation's namesake.

SPREAD 4: THE CREATION OF THE GODS

DISCUSSION POINT

Lead a discussion centered around the question "Whom did the ancient Greeks worship, and why?" Note that Greek gods often had some human characteristics and that stories about gods helped the Greeks to explain the world around them.



ACTIVITIES

ANCIENT PRACTICES

Have the class find images of Greek temples in books or on the Internet. Ask students to study the images they find and write what they can deduce about the religious practices that took place there. Some examples:

- Parthenon, Athens
- Temple of Hephaestus, Athens
- Temple complex, Selinus
- Valley of the Temples, Agrigento

Invite students to research the similarities and differences between the gods of ancient Greece and the theologies of other cultures.

THE ENDURING POWER OF MYTHS

Point out to the class that many of the Greek myths have been depicted in art. For example, the birth of Aphrodite is the subject of a famous painting by Botticelli, although the title of the painting refers to the goddess by her Roman name, Venus. Following are some works of art based on Greek mythology that you might invite students to study in detail:

- *Bacchus and Ariadne*, by Titian (National Gallery, London)
- *Cerberus*, by William Blake (Tate Collection)
- *Echo and Narcissus*, by Nicholas Poussin (Louvre)
- *Pandora*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool)
- *The Story of Cupid and Psyche*, by Jacopo del Sellaio (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England)
- *Prometheus*, by Paul Manship (Rockefeller Center, New York)

Lead a class discussion about why the Greek myths have been an enduring subject for artists through the ages.

If there is an art museum nearby, consider planning a class visit to explore classical subjects in works of art. You may be able to arrange a curator talk.

SPREAD 5: MONSTERS AND MYTHICAL BEASTS

ACTIVITIES

SHADOW-PUPPET THEATER

Materials needed:

- construction paper
- long sticks
- transparencies
- overhead projection marker
- overhead projector
- musical instruments
- found objects

Have students select a story on this spread to be told through shadow-puppet theater. This activity works on the principle that light will pass through the transparencies, which can be drawn on and colored, but will not pass through the construction paper. Pass along the following instructions to students:

- Use the transparencies to create a background for the story and construction paper to cut out silhouettes of the story's characters.
- Attach long sticks to the characters in order to move them across the overhead projector.
- Compose a narration to accompany the story, using different voices for dialogue and sound effects.
- Use musical instruments to create sound effects.
- Look for found objects to create shadows in front of the overhead projector.
- Practice and rehearse a shadow-puppet performance before presenting it to another class or at an assembly.

A BOOK OF BEASTS

Using the *Book of Serpents* as a guide, have students produce a similar book about various mythical beasts.

They can use information from this chapter as well as information from further research. Suggest that each page include an illustration, a description, and a story from mythology about the monster or beast.



THE RIDDLE OF THE SPHINX

Pose the riddle of the Sphinx to the class and see if anyone knows the answer.

- Ask students to share similar riddles they may know.
- Lead a discussion of different types of riddles.
- Ask students to write their own riddle, then exchange with a classmate to see if he or she can guess the answer.

SPREAD 5, *continued*

DESIGN A GAME

Engage the class in creating a board game based on stories of Greek monsters and beasts.

- Lead a class discussion of the range of board games available. Ask students what they think makes a good board game and why.
- Divide the class into small groups. Have each group devise, design, and construct a board game with a set of rules.
- Have groups switch games and test them out, then evaluate them against agreed criteria.
- Alternatively, students might devise a set of trading cards based on characters from Greek mythology.

MEDUSA: MONSTER OR VICTIM?

Have students research Medusa's story, then lead a class discussion reviewing major points, including why her hair was turned into a nest of snakes.

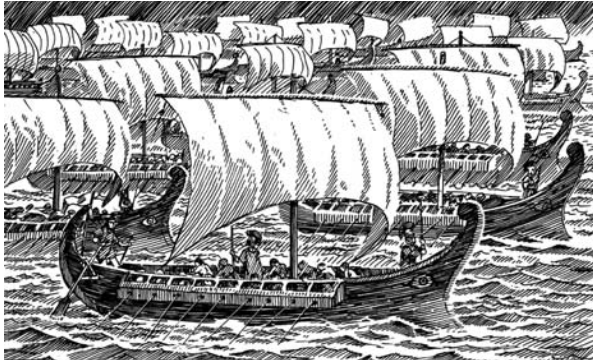
Display an enlarged copy of the painting of Medusa by Arnold Böcklin. Ask students to describe the expression on Böcklin's Medusa and make a list of the descriptive words used. Create and display a collage of these words. Then display a copy of Caravaggio's painting of Medusa and invite students to compare it to Böcklin's painting.

You might also have students watch the Disney film *Hercules* and discuss how it depicts Medusa.



SPREAD 6: THE ORIGINS OF MANKIND

DISCUSSION POINTS



FLOOD STORIES

Explain to students that flood stories are told in many cultures—including the Christian story of Noah, the Aztec story of Tata and Nene, the Babylonian epic of Gilgamesh, and the ancient Greek story of Deucalion. Note that their characters and motifs may vary but that most of these stories share some common ideas:

- Humans are guilty of transgression.
- A god creates a flood as a punishment.
- An individual is given instructions to build a craft.
- The flood destroys the old race.
- After the flood, a less sinful race emerges to repopulate the earth.

Lead a class discussion of flood stories from various cultures, exploring their common elements and their differences. Ask students to consider why similar stories emerge in different parts of the world. Note that there are competing theories: while some believe these stories emerged in cultures that were at similar points in their development, others believe the stories originated in one place and were transported around the world when people migrated from one region to another.

ACTIVITIES

THE LOST WORLD UNDER THE SEA

Lead a class discussion of the following questions:

- If Atlantis existed, what would it be like?
- What creatures would live there?
- What would the buildings be like?

Divide the class into small groups. Have students in each group draw collaboratively to create a map that shows their version of Atlantis. Students may use their maps as a stimulus for writing and storytelling.

Have students research lost civilizations, both real and imaginary. These might include El Dorado, Shangri-La, and Sumeria.

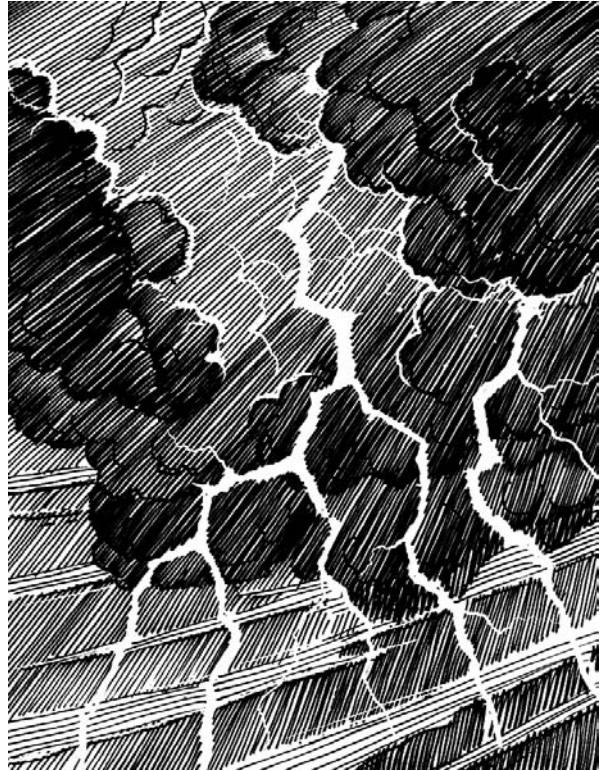


SPREAD 6, *continued*

A BOX OF WOE AND A GLIMMER OF HOPE

To help spur students' imaginations during this activity, you'll want to display an interesting box carved out of wood or fashioned in metal.

- Instruct students to imagine themselves as Pandora. Explain that they have been put on Earth with this intriguing box but given explicit instructions not to open it.
- Ask students to describe the box, as well as what might be going through Pandora's head.
- Encourage students to consider complex emotions as well as obvious ones. Ask, for example, whether they think Pandora can trust the gods, who don't always play fair.
- Have them make a list of pros and cons: reasons to encourage Pandora to open the box, and reasons why she should obey the instructions not to open it.
- Remind students of the story of what happens in the famous myth when Pandora opens the box.
- Now ask students to write that story in the first person from the point of view of Pandora.
- This activity could also be used to explore the story of Prometheus bringing fire to mankind.



A MODERN PANDORA'S BOX

Have students make their own versions of a "Pandora's Box," containing evils and a bit of hope. First have them decorate an old shoebox or jar in such a way that it looks like a desirable object that would stimulate curiosity.

Next, invite them to imagine what evils might be contained within the box, such as war, famine, and greed. Encourage them to think of how these evils relate to the modern world, and have them create images of these evils using their choice of art media. They might include collage materials such as newspaper photographs. Also have them create an image of hope.

Display students' boxes in the classroom along with their images of evils and hope. These works of art may serve as a springboard for individual or collaborative poetry writing.

SPREAD 7: ZEUS AND HERA, RULERS OF THE GODS

ACTIVITIES

GREAT GODS

Invite students to use a range of resources, including the Internet, to research Zeus, Odin (Norse mythology), and Horus (Egyptian mythology), exploring what these gods have in common and ways in which they differ.

THE GUIDING ORACLE

After reading about the oak oracle at Dodona, challenge students to construct their own system for asking questions and interpreting an oracle.

SPREAD 8: POSEIDON AND THE SEA

ACTIVITIES

AN ODYSSEY ART GALLERY

After reading the story of *The Odyssey*, involve students in creating a classroom art gallery depicting different stages of Odysseus's journey. Alternatively, you might use this exercise in conjunction with the story of the Trojan War (*The Iliad*), discussed on spread 14.

ODYSSEY TABLEAUX

Another way of representing the story is to tell it by using tableaux—“living paintings” in which people form a representation of a scene without dialogue and using little or no movement.

- Ask students to name the key incidents from *The Odyssey*. List them on a flipchart or whiteboard.
- Divide the class into small groups. Have each group choose one of the key incidents in *The Odyssey* to re-create through a tableau.
- Remind students to be sure viewers can identify what they are depicting in their tableau through participants' positions, gestures, groupings, and facial expressions.
- Tell students they can bring their tableau to life for just thirty seconds before refreezing the image.
- Have the groups perform their tableaux for another class or at a school assembly.
- Alternatively, students may work on a narrative linking the tableaux together and present them in sequence.



SPREAD 8, *continued*

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Tell students the story of the naming of Athens. According to tradition, the first ruler of the city held a contest between Poseidon and Athena to decide who would be better suited to be the city's patron—and so win the distinction of having the city named in their honor. Poseidon struck the earth with his trident, bringing forth a saltwater spring, representing the importance of sea-faring to the city. Athena then struck her spear in the ground and planted an olive tree, which could be cultivated for its wood, fruit, and oil; it was also a symbol of peace. The goddess of wisdom, as we know, won the honor.

- Announce that you are the new ruler of your school's town or city and that your citizens will be choosing a new patron—and name—for your kingdom.
- Divide the class into three groups, one representing Athena's case, one representing Poseidon's case, and a third representing your town or city's citizens. Have Athena's and Poseidon's groups consider the qualities and strengths of their assigned god and write up some persuasive talking points as to why their god would make the better patron.
- Have the groups representing Athena and Poseidon present their cases, based on their talking points, then have the citizens vote on their preference.
- Alternatively, you could open the contest to other gods as well, breaking the class into more than three groups.



GREEK WARSHIPS

Have students research the different types of sailing vessels used in ancient Greece. Some examples include the bireme, the trireme, and the quinquereme.



SPREAD 9: HADES AND THE UNDERWORLD

ACTIVITIES

FEUDING FAMILIES

Familiarize the class with the story of Persephone, noting that it is an allegory that explains the seasons.

Invite students to produce a TV talk show called *Feuding Families*, in which the main characters are interviewed by a host.

- Ask for volunteers to play these roles:
 - Hades, the husband, who argues that he doesn't see enough of his wife
 - Demeter, the mother, who is opposed to Persephone spending any time in the underworld, as she was tricked into having to return there
 - Persephone, who is caught in the middle between these feuding gods
- Some questions the host might ask Persephone: What do you think of the trick played on you? Are you annoyed that your mother kept you away from the other gods? Do you believe that your mother did what she thought was best?
- A question for Demeter: Would you like to spend more time with your husband?
- Possible questions for Hades: Why did you kidnap Persephone? Were you lonely in your underworld lair? Were you feeling vengeful because you were given the underworld as your kingdom?
- Encourage students to get into their roles and to think deeply about their characters.

WINTER CAME ACROSS THE LAND

Divide students into two groups; have one group research the myth of Persephone and the other research the Babylonian myth of Ishtar and Tammuz. Then have the groups present their findings to the class, followed by a discussion about the many ways in which the stories are similar.

You might then invite students to write their own myths that account for the seasonal cycle of winter coming to the land, followed by the rebirth of spring.

A NIGHT AT THE OPERA

Explain to students that the story of Orpheus—the most talented of all Greek musicians—inspired the nineteenth-century composer Jacques Offenbach to create an irreverent comic opera, *Orpheus in the Underworld*, which includes a famous can-can finale.

- Tell the class the story of Orpheus and Eurydice.
- Have students listen to Offenbach's finale movement, "Infernal Gallop." Ask them what tone the music creates at the end of the story. Ask if it is the tone they would have expected after hearing the story of Orpheus and Eurydice.
- Tell the class the story of Offenbach's opera.
- Note that the old stories of myth and legend are endlessly adaptable, with each generation adding new interpretations.



SPREAD 10: ARES, APHRODITE, AND HEPHAESTUS

DISCUSSION POINT

Lead a class discussion about Sparta. Ask, What do we know about the Spartans? How accurate is the depiction of them as a war-hungry, culturally barren society? Point out to students that Greek history has been filtered through an Athenian lens and that Athens was the sworn enemy of Sparta.



ACTIVITIES

WARFARE IN ANCIENT GREECE

Have the class look at a map of ancient Greece and note the expanse of coastline. Ask them to explain why a naval force was important to the Greeks.

- Invite volunteers to identify the major cities on the map and offer a theory as to why these cities were often warring with each other.
- Have the class research Greek armor and weaponry using a range of primary and secondary sources. Suggest that they look at images of Greek pottery with decorations depicting battles and armor.
- Ask students what they can deduce about Greek warfare from the evidence they have examined.

EYEWITNESS NEWS

Have students research the Battle of Marathon using a variety of sources. Direct them to find images of the weaponry and armor used by the Greeks and the Persians in this battle.

- Ask students to volunteer for the roles of:
 - an Athenian soldier
 - a Persian survivor
 - an onlooker
- Invite students to ask each of the “witnesses” questions about the Battle of Marathon. The witnesses must answer in character.
- If preferred, the teacher may take on these roles instead in order to supply factual information while answering the questions.
- Have students write a news report of the battle that includes eyewitness accounts from the “witnesses.” (If students have played these roles, be sure to vet their accounts for accuracy before they are committed to writing.)
- Alternatively, you might want to apply this activity to the Trojan War.



SPREAD 11: APOLLO, HERMES, AND DIONYSUS

ACTIVITIES

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

Explain to the class that Greek theater emerged from religious festivals celebrating Dionysus. Have students use the Internet and other sources to research ancient Greek theater, including the role of the chorus and the use of masks.

Then invite the class to adapt one of the Greek myths as a piece of theater. Have students create masks for the main characters, and involve the class in writing a narrative part for the chorus. After students have honed and practiced their play, have them perform it for another class or at a school assembly.



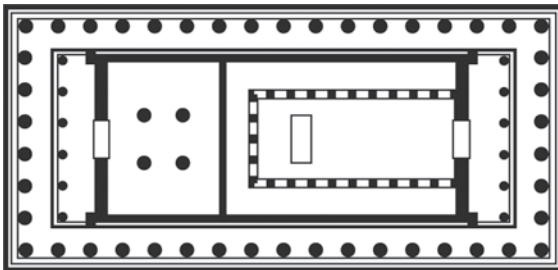
SPREAD 12: ATHENA, ARTEMIS, AND HESTIA

DISCUSSION POINTS

THE LEGACY OF THE GREEKS

Explain to the class that the Greeks were conquered by the Romans and that their myths became assimilated into Roman mythology. Note that many Greek gods have a Roman counterpart. Ask students:

- Which of the Roman gods' names are familiar as names of planets?
- Besides their mythology, what are some of the ways the ancient Greeks had a lasting impact? Some fields of influence to consider: architecture, democracy, stories, theater, philosophy, and mathematics.



ACTIVITIES

OLYMPUS MEETS MADISON AVENUE

Now that students have learned about gods and goddesses in ancient Greek mythology, invite them to invent a product associated with a specific Greek god. Some examples might be Hermes' courier service, Apollo's light bulbs, Poseidon's fish sticks, or Hera's rejuvenating cream. Ask students to:

- Write down the name and a description of the product they have invented.
- Think up a slogan for the product.
- Create a magazine advertisement for their product. Have them think about the type of magazine their product should be advertised in and design the ad so it appeals to readers of that magazine.

THE PARTHENON

Display enlarged images of the Parthenon. Ask students to describe what they see as the key features of the building.

- Ask for volunteers to identify and define the key features of Greek architecture:
 - column (noting the three main types: Doric, Ionic, Corinthian)
 - capital
 - pediment (triangle supported by columns)
 - frieze (decoration around the walls)
 - statue
 - caryatids (human figures as columns)
 - floor plans (usually rectangular)
- Ask students whether they have seen any modern buildings that look like ancient Greek buildings. If appropriate, consider organizing a local street walk to view structures built in the classical style.

SPREAD 13: HERACLES AND THE GREEK HEROES

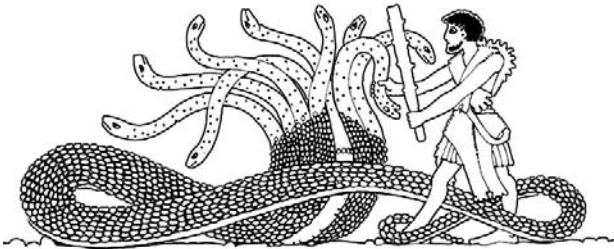
DISCUSSION POINTS

GREEK HEROES

Have the class research and compare the Greek heroes Perseus, Heracles, Jason, and Theseus. Some questions to consider:

- Which gods aid these heroes?
- Which gods try to foil their efforts?
- What qualities, talents, and strengths do the heroes possess?
- What heroic acts do these heroes perform?
- In what ways are these heroes' characters flawed?
- How do their stories end? Do any of them have a happy ending?

Discuss with the class what can be ascertained about the ancient Greek concept of heroism based on a reading of the Greek myths.



MODERN HEROES

Invite students to think about who today's heroes are. Some questions to consider:

- What qualities do we associate with a modern-day hero or heroine?
- Should we use the word *hero* to apply to both male and female heroes? Does the word *heroine* imply different qualities?
- Do the Greek heroes have any similarities to modern comic-book heroes?
- What does the phrase "look for the hero inside yourself" mean?

ACTIVITIES

WORD ORIGINS

Explain to students that *labyrinth* is just one example of a Greek word that has found a place in English vocabulary. Ask students to use a dictionary to locate the following words and phrases in order to discover their origins in the names of Greek gods, heroes, monsters, or places:

- *atlas*
- *marathon*
- *the Midas touch*
- *narcissistic*
- *panic*
- *Sisyphean*
- *Spartan*
- *tantalize*
- *titanic*

Make a chart of students' findings, with brief explanations.

MAKE A LABYRINTH

Invite students to draw their own labyrinths, then try to solve each other's puzzles.

CLASH OF THE TITANS

Present one episode from the voyage of Jason and the Argonauts to the class.

- Divide the class into small groups. Ask students to think about how they would film this episode.
- Discuss various film conventions, such as shots, camera angles, and so on. Ask students to keep these methods in mind while collaborating with their group to draw a storyboard of the episode.
- Invite each group to present its storyboard to the class.

SPREAD 14: THE WAR AGAINST TROY

ACTIVITIES

IN MEMORIAM

Have the class reflect on the heroes who were killed in the Trojan War. Ask students to:

- Assemble a collection of obituaries of famous people.
- Consider the importance of obituaries as historical evidence. Note that obituaries that include the details of who, what, where, when, and how are particularly useful to historians.
- Notice that different opinions may be expressed in obituaries written by different people about the same person.
- Write an obituary for one of the heroes killed in the Trojan War:
 - Achilles
 - Hector
 - Patroclus



FINAL SPREAD

DISCUSSION POINTS

Based on the “Letter from Greece” and the last few notes from John Oro, what can students deduce happened to him? Revisit the story of King Midas, which so enthralled Oro. Discuss the story’s use of metaphor to convey its theme. What warning does this story convey? Is this warning still relevant today?

FURTHER READING

Other Candlewick books that might be of interest include:

Dateline: Troy

by Paul Fleischman

HC: 978-0-7636-3083-6

PB: 978-0-7636-3084-3

History News: The Greek News

PB: 978-0-7636-0340-3

History News: The Roman News

PB: 978-0-7636-0341-0

Monsterology

by Dr. Ernest Drake

HC: 978-0-7636-3940-2

And coming in spring 2009:

The Mythology Handbook

by Lady Hestia Evans

HC: 978-0-7636-4291-4 (March)

Roman Diary

by Richard Platt, illustrated by David Parkins

HC: 978-0-7636-3480-3 (May)

This guide is based on teachers’ notes created by Nikki Gamble, a lecturer, writer, and teacher in the U.K. Illustrations copyright © 2007 by Nick Harris, Nicki Palin, David Wyatt, and Helen Ward.