

Assignment Discovery Online Curriculum

Lesson title:

Reflections of Ancient Greece

Grade level:

5-6, with an adaptation for older students

Subject area:

Ancient History

Duration:

Two or three class periods

Objectives:

Students will

1. learn about key elements of ancient Greek civilization, including government, mythology, philosophy, sports, art, and architecture; and
2. understand the influence of ancient Greece in the world today.

Materials:

- A picture of the Lincoln Memorial [<http://sc94.ameslab.gov/TOUR/linmem.html>]
- One set for each group:
 - Classroom Activity Sheet: Art and Architecture in Ancient Greece
 - Classroom Activity Sheet: Government in Ancient Greece
 - Classroom Activity Sheet: Mythology in Ancient Greece
 - Classroom Activity Sheet: Philosophy in Ancient Greece
 - Classroom Activity Sheet: Sports in Ancient Greece
- Print and Internet references on ancient Greece

Procedures:

1. Ask students what they know about ancient Greece. Have them brainstorm ideas, and write their suggestions on the board. To spark conversation, you may want to show them a picture of the Lincoln Memorial. If students are familiar with this structure, explain that it was built to honor Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States. Ask students what this structure has to do with ancient Greece. (*Its style first appeared in ancient Greece.*)
2. Review facts about ancient Greece. Have students locate Greece on a world map. Explain that a great civilization thrived there between 500 and 323 B.C., during a time in history called the classical Greek period. The ancient Greeks developed new ideas for government, science, philosophy, religion, and art. The center of ancient Greek culture was the city-state of Athens. Although wars between Athens and the city-state Sparta would eventually weaken Greek civilization, its influence is visible today.
3. Explain that in this activity, students will be researching the following aspects of ancient Greek life:

- Art and architecture
- Government
- Mythology
- Philosophy
- Sports

Divide students into five research groups, and assign each group one aspect of Greek life to study. Hand out copies of the appropriate Classroom Activity Sheet to each group. (Note that there is an activity sheet for each research area.)

4. Have each group review the questions on their activity sheets together and add a question of their own. (If groups are large, students may want to work separately or in pairs.) Students should use print and online resources. The final task is to find examples of ancient Greek influence in modern culture.
5. When each group has completed its sheet, have it create a collage of modern-day examples of ancient Greek culture using magazines, newspapers, or pictures from the Internet.
6. Invite groups to present their collages to the class and explain how the examples reflect ancient Greek culture. Have groups hang their collages in the classroom.

Adaptation for older students:

Working in pairs, students can choose one of the five aspects of Greek life to research. Pairs will use their activity sheets to choose a specific area of interest to research further; for example, they may focus on the role of women in ancient Greek society, literature and drama, education, warfare, philosophers, the Parthenon, and so on. (Students in pairs should choose separate topics.) Have pairs create a list of little-known facts about their topics to share with the class. Individually, students can use their research to write essays on how ancient Greek life compares with, or has influenced, modern society.

Questions:

1. What do you think are the more important contributions the ancient Greeks made to the world today?
2. What are some subjects that interested the Greek philosophers? What ideas did they develop?
3. Was everyone eligible for citizenship in ancient Greece? If not, who was excluded? Would ancient Greece still be considered a democracy today? Why or why not?
4. Compare the myths of ancient Greece with other fables, folktales, or tall tales that you have studied. What are some common themes? How are Greek myths different?
5. Compare the modern Olympics to the Olympics in ancient Greece.

6. Find two buildings in your community, one in classical Greek style and another in a modern style. If such buildings are not available where you live, use those in your state capital or in Washington, D.C. Discuss and explain differences in style, structure, and appearance.

Evaluation:

You can evaluate students' work using the following three-point rubric:

Three points: actively participated in group project, researching important facts and working collaboratively with others; thoroughly completed activity sheet; presented information in a clear manner; demonstrated an understanding of the material researched.

Two points: participated in group project, researching facts and working with others; completed most of the activity sheet; presented information in a fairly clear manner; demonstrated an understanding of the material researched.

One point: took part in the group project, researching some facts and working with others; submitted an incomplete activity sheet; presented little or no information in group presentation; demonstrated little understanding of the material researched.

Related links:

History for Kids

<http://www.historyforkids.org/>

Written especially for middle school students by university professors, this site has an extensive section on ancient Greece.

Odyssey Online: Greece

<http://www.emory.edu/CARLOS/ODYSSEY/GREECE/homepg.html>

This site highlights modern connections with Greek culture and history.

Macaenas: Images of Ancient Greece and Rome

http://wings.buffalo.edu/AandL/Maecenas/general_contents.html#Greece

This link provides hundreds of photographs of ancient Greek sights.

The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization

<http://www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/>

With both a Flash version and an HTML version, this site explores individuals and events of ancient Greece that continue to shape our lives today.

Suggested Reading:

Alexander the Great and Ancient Greece

Miriam Greenblatt. Benchmark Books, 2000.

This volume is really two books in one. The story of Alexandria the Great is told starting with his early years as a handsome and talented young man (with the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle for his teacher!). Alexander's prowess as king of Macedonia and his military leadership resulted in conquering the largest territory in the world at that time, spreading Greek ideals throughout. The second part of this book describes the everyday life of ancient Greece and concludes with the words of famous Greeks like Homer, Aesop, and Diogenes.

Triumph of the Hero: Greek & Roman Myth

Duncan Baird Publishers/Time-Life, 1998.

This lavishly illustrated volume introduces the reader to the heroes of Greek mythology who were adopted into Roman mythology and whose stories continue to entertain and intrigue us. An introduction describes the culture that led to the development of these myths, and remaining chapters relate such tales as Jason and the Argonauts, the labors of Heracles (Hercules), the Trojan War, and the adventures of Odysseus. Boxed insets relate historical notes that add to the enjoyment of the stories.

Vocabulary:

ancient

Definition: Relating to the historic period beginning with the earliest known civilizations and extending to the fall of the Roman Empire in A.D. 476.

Context: The culture of **ancient** Greece had rich traditions, many of which exist today.

architecture

Definition: A particular style or fashion of building.

Context: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian are three styles of Greek **architecture** found in buildings around the world today.

classical

Definition: Relating to the ancient Greek and Roman world, especially to its literature, art, architecture, or ideals.

Context: The **classical** age of Greece began with the Persian War (490-479 B.C.) and ended with the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.

heritage

Definition: Something, such as culture, passed from generation to generation.

Context: Greek **heritage** included mythology, philosophy, government, and much more.

legacy

Definition: Something handed down or that remains from a previous generation or time.

Context: One **legacy** of Socrates was his dialogues, or using questions and answers as a teaching method.

mythology

Definition: A group of myths that belong to a particular people or culture that tells about their history, heroes, and gods.

Context: Ancient Greek **mythology** includes stories about powerful gods who look and act like humans, but who can control nature and are immortal.

philosophy

Definition: Academic study that is devoted to the examination of basic concepts, such as truth, beauty, freedom, and reality.

Context: Scholars study Aristotle's **philosophy**.

Academic standards:

Grade level:

5-6

Subject area:

World History

Standard:

Understands how Aegean civilization emerged and how interrelations developed among peoples of the eastern Mediterranean and Southwest Asia from 600 to 200 B.C.

Benchmark:

Understands the major cultural elements of Greek society (e.g., the major characteristics of Hellenic sculpture, architecture, and pottery and how they reflected or influenced social values and culture; characteristics of classical Greek art and architecture and how they are reflected in modern art and architecture; Socrates's values and ideas as reflected in his trial; how Greek gods and goddesses represent nonhuman entities; and how gods, goddesses, and humans interact in Greek myths).

Grade level:

7-8

Subject area:

World History

Standard:

Understands how Aegean civilization emerged and how interrelations developed among peoples of the eastern Mediterranean and southwest Asia from 600 to 200 B.C.

Benchmark:

Understands the role of art, literature, and mythology in Greek society (e.g., major works of Greek drama and mythology and how they reveal ancient moral values and civic culture; how the arts and literature reflect cultural traditions in ancient Greece).

Grade level:

7-8

Subject area:

World History

Standard:

Understands major global trends from 1000 B.C. to A.D. 300.

Benchmark:

Understands the concept and importance of “classical civilizations” (e.g., the enduring importance of ideas, institutions, and art forms that emerged in the classical periods; the significance of Greek or Hellenistic ideas and cultural styles in the history of the Mediterranean basin, Europe, Southwest Asia, and India).

Credit:

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Architecture in Ancient Greece

Directions: Research your topic and answer the questions below. (Be sure to add at least one question of your own.) When you are finished, create a collage that shows how ancient Greek culture is reflected in modern-day society.

1. What did buildings look like in ancient Greece? What were the different styles of architecture?
2. What types of art could be found ancient Greece?
3. How did temples play a part in Greek life? What did they look like?
4. Who were patrons of the arts in ancient Greece?
5. What did you learn about the artists of ancient Greece?
6. Add your own question here.
7. Write at least three ways that ancient Greek culture is reflected in today's society.

Government in Ancient Greece

Directions: Research your topic and answer the questions below. (Be sure to add at least one question of your own.) When you are finished, create a collage that shows how ancient Greek culture is reflected in modern-day society.

1. How did the government function in ancient Greece?
2. Who were the leaders, and what was expected of citizens?
3. How frequently did leaders change, and how were changes made?
4. Was there slavery in ancient Greece?
5. What wars occurred?
6. Add your own question here.
7. Write at least three ways that ancient Greek culture is reflected in today's society.

Mythology in Ancient Greece

Directions: Research your topic and answer the questions below. (Be sure to add at least one question of your own.) When you are finished, create a collage that shows how ancient Greek culture is reflected in modern-day society.

1. How did people in ancient Greece use storytelling to explain the world around them?
2. Who are some of the mythological heroes of ancient Greece?
3. Name at least 10 gods of ancient Greece. Explain what each god stood for.
4. Who wrote mythology?
5. According to the ancient Greeks, what happened to people when they died?
6. Add your own question here.
7. Write at least three ways that ancient Greek culture is reflected in today's society.

Philosophy in Ancient Greece

Directions: Research your topic and answer the questions below. (Be sure to add at least one question of your own.) When you are finished, create a collage that shows how ancient Greek culture is reflected in modern-day society.

1. Who were some philosophers in ancient Greece?
2. What were some ideas or beliefs of each one?
3. What did they write?
4. What important questions about life did the Greek philosophers try to answer?
5. How were the philosophers regarded and treated?
6. Add your own question here.
7. Write at least three ways that ancient Greek culture is reflected in today's society.

Sports in Ancient Greece

Directions: Research your topic and answer the questions below. (Be sure to add at least one question of your own.) When you are finished, create a collage that shows how ancient Greek culture is reflected in modern-day society.

1. Who played sports in ancient Greece?
2. What sports did they play?
3. Who watched sports in ancient Greece?
4. How did athletic competition develop in ancient Greece?
5. How did the ancient Greeks feel about athletes?
6. Add your own question here.
7. Write at least three ways that ancient Greek culture is reflected in today's society.