

Ancient Greece

Discover the secrets of this great civilisation

These Teachers' Notes should be used in conjunction with Project Pull-out no. 43: Ancient Greece, which is found in issue 96 of DMAG. These notes will inspire students to learn about ancient Greece.



This supplement encourages students to:

- Read and become interested in maps
- Appreciate a different culture and see similarities in all cultures
- Realise that ancient civilisations have shaped modern day society
- Have a go at making a model of an ancient Greek warship
- Investigate a Mediterranean diet

Maps – Maths, Geography, HSIE
What can you tell from a map?

For this exercise you will need a globe or atlas of the world and DMAG.

Look at the map showing Greece on page 47 of DMAG. Ask students to find Greece on the globe.

Tell the students that they can learn a lot about a country just by looking at maps – and by doing some critical thinking.

Find the Equator. Ask students what the Equator is. [Ans: It's an imaginary line around the centre of the globe that is equidistant from each Pole.] Talk about the two hemispheres in relation to the Equator. In which hemisphere is Greece?

Discuss the climate of countries

close to the Equator, how does this compare to countries close to the North or South Poles? Test the class's understanding by asking them if Norway would be hotter than Greece? What about somewhere like Turkey, which is the same distance from the Equator, would their climate be hotter, colder or similar to Greece's?

Have a look at the picture on page 55 of the Greek soldier - does it look like he's dressed for cold weather?

Can the class make an educated guess about the climate in Greece?

Explain that another factor that affects climate is the elevation, that is, the height above sea level. The higher a place is, the colder it is. So even places that are close to the Equator can be cold if they're high up. Find examples of this on the globe.

Now discuss oceans and seas – locate examples on the globe. What is the difference between an ocean and a sea? What seas surround Greece?

Have a look at Greece paying attention to all the islands. What sort of educated guesses can be made about the people in this area? For instance, would they eat a lot of seafood do you think? Or be good sailors? If there

were a lot of fisherman, where would lots of towns and cities be?

Locate the capital of Greece – Athens, is it near the sea? If another group were to attack one of the islands, how would they get there? What if an island became too overcrowded and land became scarce, what might the inhabitants do – look for land elsewhere? What places could they easily get to by boat?

Tell the class that although Greece today has these boundaries, almost 3000 years ago, the Greeks spread across the Mediterranean and around the Baltic Sea.

Discuss how countries and borders change over time. Explain that when you were young many countries were different e.g. Yugoslavia, which no longer exists. So although this is Greece today, in 200 years time the borders might be slightly different.

Main exercise: Ask students to complete the mapping activity on the Student Activity Sheets.

Extension exercise: Ask gifted/ talented students to produce a map of ancient Greece showing the extent of Greek settlements at their peak.

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Science: Sailing, Sinking and Soaring

Tell the students that the Greeks were great seafarers. Ask the class to brainstorm ideas as to why this was and make a list of reasons.

Break the class into pairs and ask each pair to produce a drawing showing an ancient Greek warship. Each drawing is to have labels pointing to various parts of the ship describing its function.

As a class, discuss how the ships were propelled. How would the oarsmen keep in time? Did they use sails? Warships were specially designed for sea battles. How did they differ from other ships (for instance the wooden prow was designed to ram other warships).

Extension exercise: Make a model of a Greek warship and see if it floats.

Art and English: Myths and Legends

Talk about the Greek gods discussed in *DMAG*. Have the students heard some of their names before? Explain that the Greek gods are so well known that they are often referred to in today's society even though it's thousands of years since they were venerated.

Ask each student to find a legend about a Greek god and to retell it in their own words. They should accompany their story with a picture of a scene from the tale.

As a class, look at some of the art that has survived thousands of years. What subjects are common in the art?

Are gods and heroes often featured? How do you know which god is which?

If possible, ask students to read *Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief*, a modern tale involving the Greek gods. As a creative writing exercise, ask students to write their own tale involving gods in the present day. Students can read their stories to the class.

History: Famous people

There are many famous ancient Greeks who shaped our modern world. Ask students to choose one of the following people and to do a project on them. The emphasis of their project should be what they're

famous for, but it should also include an overview of their life, the times they lived in etcetera.

- Homer
- Alexander the Great
- Aristotle
- Plato
- Socrates
- Archimedes
- Pythagoras

Science: Food for the Tucker Box

Discuss the foods the ancient Greeks might have eaten, would they be similar to today? What foods weren't in Europe at that time e.g. potatoes?

Ask the class to break into pairs and find out what the ancient Greeks ate. How was food prepared and stored? How did they preserve food? Did they import/export food or spices? Where would food have been bought? What would a common person eat? What would a rich person eat at a banquet?

Main exercise: Ask students to bring in a dish that people in ancient Greece might have eaten. Ask the class to dress up like ancient Greeks, and to decorate the classroom like a Greek temple or villa. The class can also host a sporting event similar to the ancient Olympics and at the end, celebrate with the feast.

Extension exercise: Ask gifted/ talented students to find out the key elements of the "Mediterranean Diet." Why is it supposed to be healthy? What evidence is there to support this? What essential nutrients are obtained from these diets? How can our diets be modified to include more Mediterranean foods?



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