



Ancient Greece



Vocabulary

Aesop	A Greek author of fables
Acropolis	A fortified area of an Ancient Greek town or city.
citizen	A person who lives in a country.
Demigod	A person who is the child of a god and a human.
democracy	A political system in which power lies in a body of citizens.
Homer	A Greek poet who wrote the Odyssey.
hoplite	A soldier from the Ancient Greek states.
Labyrinth	A maze where the Minotaur lives.
Marathon	A town in Greece and the site of the Battle of Marathon in 490 BC.
Minotaur	A creature with the head and tail of a bull and the body of a man.
myth	A traditional story normally involving supernatural beings or events.
Olympus	A mountain peak in Greece believed to be the home of the gods.
oracle or seer	A person who can see into the future.
Parthenon	A temple in Athens dedicated to the Goddess Athena.
Spartan	People from Sparta, famous for their military and fighting skills.
titans	The first Greek gods. They were overthrown by their children, the Olympians.
trireme	A type of boat used by the Ancient Greeks.
tyrant	A ruler who has unfairly gained power or who treats their citizens poorly.



The Olympic Games

The Olympic Games began over 2,700 years ago in Olympia, Greece, as a religious festival in honour of Zeus. The games included sacrifices, with 100 oxen burnt on the Altar of Zeus, made entirely of ash from past sacrifices.

Only men competed. They had to perform without clothes. Only men, boys, and unmarried girls could attend. Married women were strictly barred, facing severe punishment if caught sneaking in.

There were no medals; winners received a wreath of leaves, a hero's welcome, and were seen as divinely favoured. Athletes competed for their city's honour and personal glory.

Messengers announced a truce before the games to halt wars, ensuring safe travel to Olympia for the 50,000 attendees who came from across the Greek world.

Dear Parents,

Our next Humanities topic is a History unit called '**Ancient Greece**'. Please help your children to prepare for this topic by learning some of the key words and the facts on this sheet.

There are some homework activities on the back of this sheet. Your child can complete these at any time. Your child's teacher would love to see what they have created.

Thank you for your support,
Kind regards,
Year 5 Teachers



Ancient Greek Pottery

This is recognisable from its black and orange colouring and its repeating patterns. These often show images of gods, battles or scenes from myths.



The Greek Gods



Artemis
God of medicine and healing.



Apollo
God of medicine and healing.



Athena
Goddess of wisdom and strategy.



Zeus
The king of the gods and the god of the sky and thunder.



Ares
God of war.



Hades
God of the underworld.



Poseidon
God of the sea, earthquakes and horses.



Hera
Wife of Zeus and the goddess of women, marriage, family and child birth.



Aphrodite
Goddess of love, beauty and pleasure.



Hermes
Messenger of the gods.

Marathon

A marathon today is a race. The name **marathon** comes from Greek history and commemorates the run of the soldier called Pheidippides from a battlefield near the town of **Marathon**, in Greece, to Athens in 490 B.C. According to legend, Pheidippides ran the approximately 25 miles to announce to some scared Athenians that they had defeated the Persians.

Homework Ideas:

- Some Ancient Greek characters were made up two or more animals. Create your own character made up of two or more animals. Remember to give it a name.
- Create a model of the Parthenon.
- Create a monster mask for an Ancient Greek monster such as Medusa, a minotaur or a cyclops.
- Read or watch the story of the Minotaur. Write it in your own words or draw some scenes from it.
- Write a description of Medusa or another character.
- Create and decorate your own Ancient Greek pot or plate.



The Trojan Horse

To break the stalemate of the long and bloody Trojan War, wily Odysseus comes up with a sneaky plan. Most of the Greeks will pretend to sail away, while a few hide inside of a giant wooden horse. Despite the arguments of the priest Laocoön and the seer Cassandra, the Trojans drag the horse inside the city thanks to the lies of a Greek named Sinon. That night, Odysseus and the rest of the Greeks inside the horse sneak out, open the gates for their buddies, and finally lay waste to the city of Troy.

Hercules/Heracles

Hercules (known in Greek as Heracles) is one of the best-known heroes in both Greek and Roman mythology. His life was not easy - He endured many trials and completed many tasks, but the reward for his suffering was a promise that he would live forever among the gods at Mount Olympus.

He was a demigod, with Zeus as his father and a mortal human mother. Hera (the queen of the gods and Zeus' wife) was furious when she heard that he had been born and she tried many times to kill him.