

# Introduction to Greek Mythology

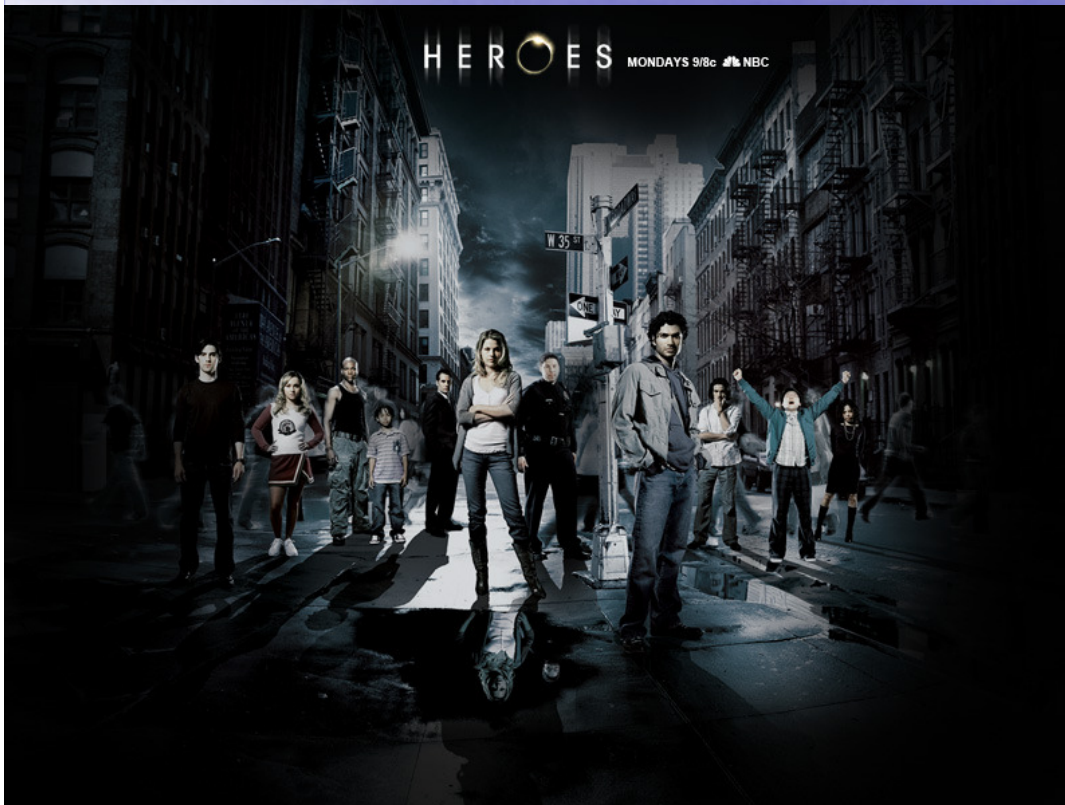
Sixth Grade Language Arts  
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# What is Greek Mythology?

- The people of ancient Greece shared stories called myths about the gods, goddesses, and heroes in which they believed.
- Each god or goddess was worshipped as a deity and ruled over certain areas of the Greeks' lives.
- These exciting stories explained natural phenomena that could not be explained by science in the ancient world.



# Why Should We Study Greek Mythology?



- The Ancient Greek culture has been kept alive by the oral and later written stories handed down through thousands of years.
- Modern plays, novels, television programs, movies and even advertisements refer to Greek gods, goddesses, heroes and their stories.
- Adventurous and exciting stories delight and entertain us.

# Who Were the Gods and Goddesses of the Pantheon on Mount Olympus?



# Zeus – Leader of the Olympian Gods



- He ruled the Olympians.
- He was the god of the sky, lightning and thunder carrying a thunderbolt as his symbol.
- He married Hera, his sister, which was a family habit.
- He fathered many children with various goddesses and mortals.

# Hera – Wife of Zeus



- She was the protector of marriage and the home.
- She was associated with the peacock, because of her great beauty.
- She and Zeus were always quarreling.
- She was called the queen of intriguers, a vindictive and jealous wife, who frequently outwitted her husband, Zeus.

# Poseidon – God of the Sea



- He built an underwater palace with a great pearl and coral throne.
- Although he chose Thetis, a beautiful water nymph, as his queen, he, like his brother Zeus, was a great wanderer fathering hundreds of children.
- He was a difficult god, changeful and quarrelsome, but created many curious forms for his sea creatures.
- He invented the horse for his sister Demeter, whom he loved.

# Hades – God of the Underworld



- He was the jealous brother to Zeus and Poseidon.
- He made Persephone his wife after stealing her from her mother, Demeter, who was his sister.
- Because he was a violent god, who was also very possessive of every new soul, he rarely left his underworld domain.

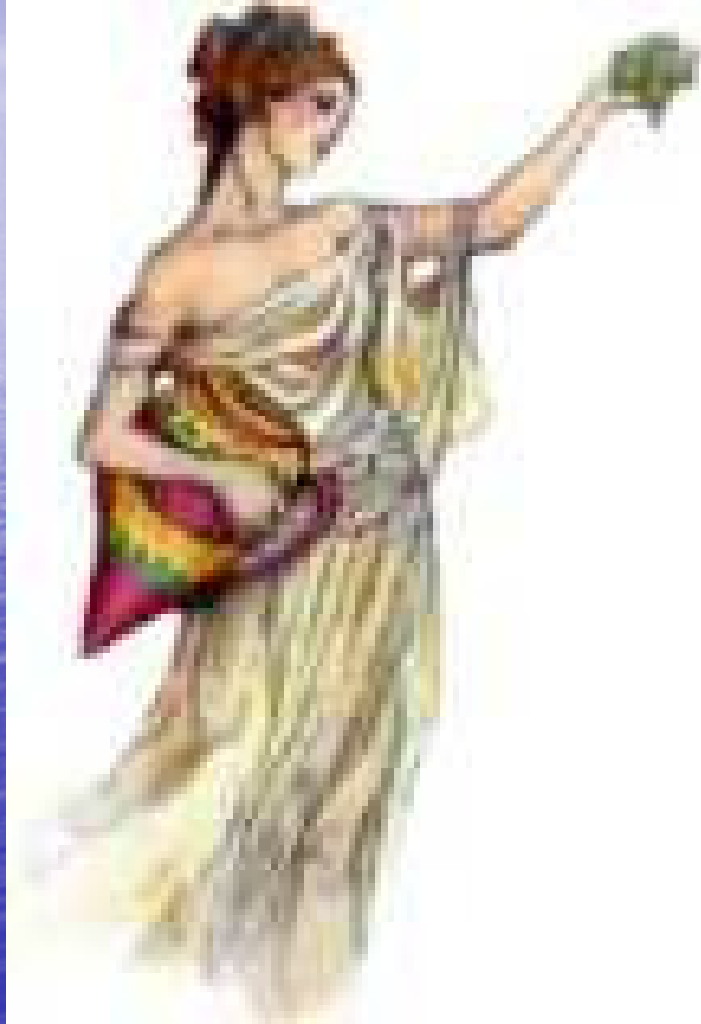


# Demeter-Goddess of Corn and the Harvest



- She was the goddess of growing things.
- She was the mother of Persephone, whose father was Zeus.
- Her daughter was kidnapped by Hades and taken to the Underworld for six months of the year causing the change of seasons.

# Hestia-Goddess of the Hearth



- She was the sister of Zeus and the daughter of Cronos and Rhea.
- She represented personal and communal security and happiness.
- She was thought of as the kindest and mildest of the goddesses.
- She was of little mythological importance, appearing in only a few stories.

# Athena-Goddess of Wisdom, Justice, War, Civilization and Peace



- She was born full grown out of the head of Zeus.
- She taught man to use tools and taught his wife to spin and weave.
- She was the best-loved goddess on Olympus.
- She hated Ares, god of war, often besting him in battle.
- The Greek city of Athens is named after her.
- She was said to have created the spider.

# Apollo-The Sun God; God of Music, Poetry, Wisdom, Light and Truth



- He was the twin brother of Artemis and the most handsome of the gods.
- He was also the god of the healing arts and of medicine.
- He drove his chariot across the sky to pull the sun each day.
- His son, Phaethon, drives Apollo's sun chariot with disastrous results.

# Artemis- Goddess of the Woods, Moon and the Hunt



- She was the twin sister of Apollo, whose mother was Leto and father was Zeus.
- She was a chaste huntress, who always carried a silver bow and arrows.
- She ruled over the untamed places of the earth.

# Dionysus-God of Revelry and the Vine



- He is said to be the only god on Olympus with a mortal parent.
- His creation of wine brings ecstasy and drunkenness to his revelers.
- Much of the ancient world's greatest poetry was created in his honor.

# Ares-Cruel God of War



- He was a ruthless and murderous god, who displayed the worst of humanity's traits.
- He, along with grief, strife, panic, and terror, roams the earth.
- Ironically, he was a coward, who fled the field of battle.

# Hephaestus-God of Fire, Volcanoes and the Forge



- He was the ugliest of the gods, who was rejected by his mother, Hera, when she hurled him off of Mount Olympus crippling him.
- He fashioned the armor and tools of the gods on a broken mountain near Mount Olympus.
- He made beautiful jewelry for the goddesses.



# Aphrodite-Goddess of Love and Beauty



- She is the goddess of desire born from sea foam. Another myth credits her mother as Dione and her father as Zeus.
- After all the gods on Mount Olympus courted her, she married Hephaestus, the ugliest of the gods.
- Because she was judged the most beautiful of all the goddesses on Mount Olympus by Paris, the other goddesses envied her.

# Hermes- God of Mischief and Messenger of the Gods



- He was the precocious son of Zeus and Maia, a Titaness.
- As a baby, he made a lyre and pipe for his half-brother, Apollo.
- He carried Apollo's golden staff and flew around the heavens and earth on winged sandals.