

- Heracles (Hercules) was a Greek hero who accomplished twelve tasks and was rewarded with a throne on Mt. Olympus. Have the class make a list of twelve labors to complete. (Ex: Clean their room, complete all homework, memorize a poem, try a new food, have lunch with someone new, help out a family member, etc.) Reward those who completed all twelve labors with a treat.
- Heinrich Schliemann's determination to find the lost city of Troy from his boyhood readings of Homer is a great story. Read a biography of Schliemann or an account of his excavation at Troy. Have students draw a diagram of the many levels found at the site of the ruined city.
- Much of ancient mythology has been told and retold over the centuries. In the tradition of great oral histories, create a one-paragraph story and have students tell it to each other, one by one, over the course of several days until the whole class has heard the story. Have the last student who hears it retell the story to the class. Discuss how the story has changed. Relate this to what may have happened to myths like *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.mythweb.com/ — Mythweb. Heroes, gods and monsters of Greek mythology with lesson plans for teachers.
- www.carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/GREECE/myth.html
Emory University's "Odyssey Online" offers Greek mythology for young people.
- www.emory.edu/CARLOS/ODYSSEY/GREECE/homepg.html
Odyssey Online: Ancient Greece. Archaeology, mythology and daily life aimed at sixth grade students and teachers.
- members.aol.com/Donnclass/Greeklife.html — Mrs. Donn's Daily Life in Ancient Greece. A site for students and teachers.

Suggested Teacher Resources

- Andronik, Catherine. "Mycenae: Rich in Gold." *Calliope Magazine: World History for Young People*. May/June, 1991, p. 10. Back issues available from Cobblestone Publishing, Peterborough, NH.
- Basile, Joseph J. "Mysteries of Minoan Crete." *Calliope Magazine: World History for Young People*. May/June, 1992, p. 4. This issue also has articles on Atlantis and amateur archaeology. Back issues available from Cobblestone Publishing, Peterborough, NH.

(Continued)

- Breyer, Michelle. *Interdisciplinary Unit on Ancient Greece*. Teacher Created Materials, Huntington Beach, CA; 1996. Activities on Minoan pottery.
- Evslin, Bernard. *Heroes, Gods, and Monsters of the Greek Myths*. Scholastic Inc., New York, NY; 1966.

Suggested Student Resources

- Colum, Padraic. *The Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy*. Aladdin Paperbacks, New York, NY; 2004.
- Merrill, Yvonne Y. *Hands on Ancient People, Vol. 2*. Kits Publishing, Salt Lake City, UT; 2002.
- Oberman, Sheldon. *Island of the Minotaur: The Greek Myths of Ancient Crete*. Crocodile Books, New York, NY; 2004.
- Osborne, Mary Pope. *Sirens and Sea Monsters*. Hyperion Books for Children, New York, NY; 2003.

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TITLES

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ANCIENT AEGEAN

Grades 3-7

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting this program. The guide provides you with a summary of the program, pre-viewing and follow-up questions, activities, vocabulary and resources.

Before Viewing: Give students an overview of the program. Use the program summary to help provide this introduction. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary and discuss what students learned. Use follow-up questions and activities, and encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.



Historical Overview

The Aegean Sea, which surrounds the islands and mainland of Greece, was home to Europe's first civilization, that of the Minoans on the island of Crete. Borrowing from the ancient Egyptians and other peoples of the Mediterranean, the Minoans developed a prosperous trading empire and a rich artistic tradition. Before the Minoan civilization was destroyed by fire, a mystery which archaeologists are still trying to solve, they passed their culture on to the second great Aegean civilization, the Mycenaeans. Named for the city of Mycenae on the Greek mainland, the Mycenaeans dominated the early Greek city-states until the invasion of the Dorians plunged the Aegean into its Dark Ages.

Vocabulary

archaeologist — A scientist who studies past cultures by analyzing their remains.

mythology — Stories that explain the origins of creation and the nature of the world, people and culture.

Aegean Sea — A section of the Mediterranean Sea which surrounds the islands and mainland of Greece.

Minoan — An Aegean civilization whose homeland was the island of Crete.

Mycenae — An Aegean civilization named for the city-state of Mycenae on the Greek mainland.

Atlantis — A mythical island civilization whose disappearance is the subject of both fantasy and serious archaeological investigation.

Thera — Island in the Aegean Sea now known as Santorini.

pumice — Porous, lightweight volcanic rock.

fresco — A mural created by painting on fresh plaster.

Linear A — The Minoan writing system.

Knossos — Ancient palace of the Minoan king located on the island of Crete.

Minotaur — A mythical beast, half man and half bull, who lived in the labyrinth built by King Minos of Crete.

labyrinth — A maze.

Homer — According to legend, a blind poet of ancient Greece who told the stories of *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*.

The Iliad and The Odyssey — Two books of epic poetry recounting the stories of the Trojan War and the wanderings of the hero Odysseus.

Trojan horse — The hollow wooden horse in which the Greeks hid and gained entrance to Troy, later opening the gates to their army.

Heinrich Schliemann — The archaeologist who discovered the ruins of Troy and ancient Mycenae.

Cyclops — A mythical one-eyed giant.

Linear B — The Mycenaean writing system.

Timeline

3500 – 2000 BC Early Bronze Age

c. 3000 – 1400 BC Minoan civilization

c. 1600 – 1140 BC Mycenaean civilization

Pre-viewing Discussion

- One way to introduce the civilizations of the Aegean is through their marvelous stories. Have students read myths from the Minoans such as Theseus and the Minotaur or Daedalus and Icarus, the first people to fly. Homer's stories of the Trojan War and the voyage of Odysseus (Ulysses) will establish both setting and mood for this program.
- After reading the myths, discuss how historians know whether or not stories from the past are true. History is based upon written records which we generally accept as more or less true. Should we always believe what we read? How about stories like myths which are handed down in the oral tradition? Do students think that they are as reliable as those in writing?
- Inform students that these stories come from an area of the world known as the Aegean. Locate the Aegean Sea, the island of Crete and the ancient city of Mycenae on a map of Greece. Although the people of the Aegean left few written records, they were great storytellers. As they watch the program, ask students to notice what archaeologists are learning about the truth behind ancient stories. Scientists are digging up some surprising answers in the Aegean today.

Focus Questions

The Minoans:

1. What natural disaster occurred on the island of Santorini (ancient Thera) that provides archaeologists with a theory for the legend of the lost city of Atlantis?
2. How did the Minoans use the sea to become prosperous?
3. Why did the Minoans develop the world's first navy?
4. Give a brief account of the story of King Minos and the Minotaur. How was the Minoan palace at Knossos on Crete similar to the Minotaur's labyrinth?
5. Describe some of the amazing discoveries made at Knossos by archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans.
6. What have archaeologists learned about the lifestyle of the Minoans from their colorful frescoes?
7. The bull was sacred to the Minoans. Describe a Minoan "bull fight."
8. What freedoms did Minoan women have that most women in ancient cultures lacked?
9. What do scholars believe happened to cause the fall of the Minoan civilization?

(Continued)

The Mycenaeans:

10. Briefly relate the story of the Trojan horse from Homer's *Iliad*.
11. What inspired archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann to search for the ancient city of Troy? Describe his excavations there.
12. Describe Schliemann's famous discoveries at Mycenae.
13. What do the skeletons found at Mycenae tell archaeologists about the ancient Mycenaeans' lifestyle?
14. What are some theories for the sudden decline of the Mycenaean cities?
15. Why do historians call certain periods in history "dark ages"?

Follow-up Discussion

- Compare and contrast the civilizations of the Minoans to the Mycenaeans. Have students use a Venn diagram to organize information about the history, location, culture, art, mythology and mysterious decline of the two Aegean civilizations.
- Discuss different sources archaeologists use to study past cultures, especially those that have left no written records. Which sources do students think are the most reliable and why?
- Early archaeologists, like Heinrich Schliemann who worked in the 19th century, used crude techniques compared to today's scientists in the field. How would the excavation of Troy be conducted differently today? What kind of damage can be done if excavations are carried out hastily?

Follow-up Activities

- Have students create a mythical beast and name it. Then ask them to design and maze for their creature and challenge their classmates to solve it!
- A long and eventful journey is known as an "odyssey," named for Odysseus, the Greek hero in Homer's *Iliad*. Have students research and trace Odysseus' ten-year voyage on a map of the Mediterranean Sea as he tried to find his way home to Greece after the Trojan War had ended. Use symbols or a color-coded key to mark the places where Odysseus encountered the one-eyed Cyclops and a dozen other perils.
- The stories of the ancient Aegean were filled with heroic figures who slew monsters and solved riddles. Have students discuss some modern day heroes, male and female, and their accomplishments. Write a heroic myth with a hero or heroine who has the same traits as a contemporary hero.

(Continued on Page 5)