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DOCUMENT-BASED ACTIVITIES ON ANCIENT GREECE

TEACHER INTRODUCTION

Description:

The study of ancient Greece lends itself especially well to the use of primary sources for two reasons: the Greeks were prolific writers, thinkers, and artists; and much of their material culture has survived to this day. The productivity of the Greeks, on the other hand, makes this civilization a challenge to cover comprehensively.

This unit contains lessons on several key topics, although this is by no means an exhaustive treatment of the ways in which primary sources can be used to study ancient Greece. The lessons here address daily life, characteristics of Athens and of Sparta, the Greek concept of citizenship, the ancient Olympics, and the values and beliefs of the ancient Greeks as evidenced through their myths and fables.

Unit Objectives:

Knowledge: students will

- describe aspects of daily life in ancient Greece
- compare and contrast the characteristics of Athens and Sparta
- describe the Athenian form of democracy
- paraphrase the Athenian concept of citizenship
- identify some of the sports included in the ancient Olympic games, and observe characteristics of the athletes
- paraphrase Greek myths and Aesop's fables

Skills: students will

- investigate, analyze and interpret primary sources
- communicate effectively the results of their analysis in spoken and written form
- use relevant and adequate evidence to draw conclusions
- imitate the structural elements of myths and fables by writing their own

Prior Knowledge Required:

Students should be familiar with the basic geography and climate of the Greek peninsula, including the location of the Aegean, Ionian, and Mediterranean Seas, and the major city-states. If you are approaching this unit chronologically rather than thematically, students will also need to know about the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations, since they are not covered here. In some cases, the lessons in this book require a basic introduction to the topic to set the stage before students focus on analyzing the primary sources. This is noted in the "Strategies" section of the lesson(s) to which it applies.

Lesson Format:

Each lesson consists of two parts: a teacher page containing an introduction, objectives, URL(s) used in the lesson, teaching strategies, wrap-up activity(ies), and extension activity(ies); and a reproducible student page with a brief introduction which sets the context for the lesson, URL(s) used, and questions to be answered about the source.

Assessment:

Based on the time available, you may want to select which answers you want to assess in each activity. Most questions require short answers. For most activities, students are asked to write a paragraph or short essay, or present their findings to the class in the form of a project or presentation. These assignments are ideal for assessment. Suggested rubrics are included in the Appendix.

Additional Resources:

The Appendix contains answer keys, evaluation rubrics, primary source documents, an annotated list of Web sites on ancient Greece, and supplementary materials available from www.socialstudies.com.

Life as a Greek Teacher Page

Overview:

When studying daily life in ancient Greece we refer to habits that hold true in places other than Sparta, where many of the daily activities revolved around military training and defense. It is important for students to be aware of this.

Ancient Greek families were, quite literally “ruled” by the man of the house. Women managed the household, including servants, slaves, and field workers, but men did the shopping and socializing in the “agora” (marketplace) and participated in politics. Women had no legal or political rights and spent the vast majority of their time at home providing for the needs of all in the household. Girls were trained at home, while boys went to school and exercised in the “gymnasium.”

Objectives:

Students will:

- examine period artifacts, writings, and illustrations
- draw conclusions about aspects of daily life in ancient Greece

Web Sites Used in this Lesson:

Clothing and Hair:

- clothing/hair fresco: http://DILOSImages.com/image/crete/fresco_blueladies.jpg
- temple fresco: http://www.ellada.net/general_information/mustemple.jpg
- fresco: <http://carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/gif-still/chiton.jpg>
- temple statue: <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/resources/image/large/k19329.jpg>

The Role of Men and Women:

- journal: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/landmarks/ancientgreece/resource/p6.shtml>
- vase, woman spinning:
<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/resources/image/large/k86369.jpg>
- Xenophon, document: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/xenophon-genderroles.html>
- Aristotle’s description of the family as the antecedent of the polis:
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/Aristotle-politics-polis.html>

Children

- Excerpt from *The Third Mime* (play): <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/herondas.html>
- Plutarch’s training of children: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/plutarch-education.html>
- Statue (play): <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/resources/image/large/k19329.jpg>
- Child’s grave cover (pets):
<http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/view1zoom.asp?dep=13&full=0&item=27%2E45&action=OUT&rectX1=0.24&rectX2=0.74&rectY1=0&rectY2=0.5>

Art and Music

- ancient tourbook: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/pausanias-bk1.html>

- vase: http://DILOSImages.com/image/crete/museum_zakros_cer.jpg
- Theatre of Dionysus: <http://www.indiana.edu/~kglowack/athens/southslope.html>
- vase with musician :
- hymn: <http://alexm.here.ru/mirrors/www.enteract.com/jwalz/Eliade/033.html>

Strategies:

If you're using this lesson in the early part of your unit on ancient Greece, you can show students the map at the BBC site (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/landmarks/ancientgreece/resource/p10.shtml>), which provides a nice overview of the entire region of ancient Greece, with major cities labeled. Make certain at the start that students understand that ancient Greece was not a country as we know it today, but a collection of city-states with a common language and culture. In this lesson, the sources have been selected to show daily life in general, rather than for any specific city.

Since some of the URLs for the sources used in this lesson are quite lengthy, we suggest you bookmark them in advance so that neither you nor your students need to worry about mistyping. For students working in a lab, you can either load a Word file with the URLs hotlinked for students to click on, or create a hotlist using Filamentality (<http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/fil/>).

First, ask students how we know about the ancient Greeks. If you have taught with primary sources, students may already know that historians learn about the past by studying what people have left behind, including buildings, tools, documents, art, and much more. Tell the class that they are going to see how much they can learn about the daily life of the ancient Greeks by studying the things they left behind.

Next, explain how this “jigsaw” activity will work. First the class will be divided into four groups. Students gather in these homogeneous task groups to become “experts” on a particular topic. In their “expert” groups, all members are working on the same task. When they are done, the class will re-divide into groups again, only this time each group will have only four members—one expert from each of the four previous task groups. Once in these heterogeneous groups, students will pool their information and produce a presentation or a skit.

Divide the class into four task groups. Assign one of the following topics to each group and direct them to the appropriate section on the student worksheet:

- Clothing and Hair
- Roles of Men & Women
- Children
- Art & Music

Review the instructions on the worksheet to be certain students understand what they are to do. Give the task groups an appropriate amount of time to research their sources. Make sure students understand that although they will work together each must take his/her own notes in order to be able to contribute as the only “expert” on his/her topic when he/she joins the second (heterogeneous) group.

If your students have the computer skills to create a slide show, they can utilize the sources they've studied. These could also be printed for an oral report. Creating a skit modeled after the excerpt from *The Third Mime* (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/herondas.html>) might be the most fun of all.

Wrap-Up:

Have the heterogeneous groups present their slide shows, oral reports or skits. Following each, have a discussion comparing the amount of information each group learned by studying the objects. Which group were the most productive historians?

Extension Activity:

Have students explore the Web sites at the British Museum

(<http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/ixbin/hixclient.exe?IXDB=compass&search-form=graphical/edu/search/graphical.html&submit-button=search>) and the Carlos Museum

(<http://carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/GREECE/daily.html>) to learn more about daily life in ancient Greece.

Life as a Greek Student Worksheet

Introduction:

Have you ever wondered how historians work? How can we know anything about people who lived long ago, before there were books or photographs? One of the ways we learn about ancient people is from objects. Today, you will look at many objects in order to learn about what daily life was like for an ancient Greek.

Note: All sites in this lesson can be found at <http://www.socialstudies.com/ancientlinks.html>.

Directions:

Your teacher has already explained that you are going to become an “expert” on a certain topic about daily life in ancient Greece. To do this, you will study the Web sites and gather as much information from them as you can. Then you will be rearranged into new groups and you will need to be the expert within that group on your particular topic. You and the other experts in the groups will use the information you have all collected to create an oral report, skit, or slide show presentation on daily life in ancient Greece.

Clothing and Hair Experts

- http://DILOSImages.com/image/crete/fresco_blueladies.jpg
- http://www.ellada.net/general_information/mustemple.jpg
- <http://carlos.emory.edu/ODYSSEY/gif-still/chiton.jpg>
- <http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/compass/resources/image/large/k19329.jpg>

Answer this question:

1. From what you have seen, describe as much as you can about everything you see the people wearing.

Art & Music Experts

- <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/pausanias-bk1.html>, use your browser “find” command to locate the following numbered paragraphs and read the sentences indicated:
 - 1.1.3, the first 2 sentences
 - 1.1.4, the first 2 sentences
 - 1.2.1, the first sentence
 - 1.2.4, the first sentence
 - 1.2.5, the sentence right before it and the first sentence of it
 - 1.5.1, the first 2 sentences
- http://DILOSimages.com/image/crete/museum_zakros_cer.jpg
- <http://www.indiana.edu/~kglowack/athens/southslope.html> (Look at the images of the Theater of Dionysos.)
- <http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/images/gr/images/gr56.171.38.L.jpg>
- <http://alexm.here.ru/mirrors/www.enteract.com/jwalz/Eliade/033.html>

Answer these questions:

1. What can you tell about ancient Greek art from the first and second Web sites, listed above? What types of materials did artists use? What did artists choose as subjects for their works?

2. For the third Web site listed, click on the third image (<http://www.indiana.edu/~archaeol/kglowack/athens/images2/17.008.JPG>). What is this a picture of? What do you think it was used for?

3. What information can you gather about art and music from the other Web sites?