

# Teacher's Guide for *CALLIOPE: Zeus and His Olympians.*

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This guide provides practical classroom activities teachers may wish to use to supplement the reading passages appearing in this issue. Discussion questions and other activities and projects that address a range of learning styles and integrate other curriculum areas are suggested. Many of these are suitable for independent or group work and can also be used for homework.

Objective:

To supplement the reading and discussion of this magazine, students will:

- Become familiar with many essential Greek (and Roman) deities and the mythology of their origin, adventure, and purpose. (Comprehend).
- Recognize the contributions, influences, and legacy of Zeus and the Olympians on the ancient Greeks and Romans and on other world civilizations, past and present. (Analysis & Synthesis).
- Interpret primary documents including artwork, sculptures, and temples and other monuments as a way to enhance their understanding of the diverse contributions of the Greek and Roman cultures (Inferencing).

**Introduction** – Encourage students to activate their prior knowledge by brainstorming what they know about the ancient Greeks and Romans. You might wish to create a KWL Chart or keep your discussions informal. Topics to initiate ideas could include: mythology/stories of the Gods; ancient Heroes and warriors; ancient monsters; Symbols associated with Gods and Heroes; constellations; and architecture. Review “Then and Now” for current connections and the Table of Contents to generate further discussion or ideas. Students can clarify some of their ideas by referring to the “Greek Names of the Ancient Deities” chart on page 2 (and relationships on pages 12-13) and “The Ancient Greek & Roman World” map on page 3. To conclude this activity, inform students they will be building their knowledge on the Greek and Roman deities and also on the remarkable, worldwide influence of these ancient cultures.

**“The End of Chaos” (page 4 – 5):** Out of Chaos developed the Earth, named Gaia, and the heavens, named Uranos. There would be more mythological characters to follow – the Titans, Giants and monsters, and others – to explain other worldly happenings.

This mythological story of creation could be compared with others from different cultures, such as the Native Americans. Also, students could identify the elements of the fantastic, supernatural, mystical, and menacing found in much Greek mythology and even make connections to popular culture such as books and film. This can be charted and developed using other feature articles in this issue.

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the conflict in the story “The End of Chaos.”
2. What role did Kronos play in this conflict?
3. What was the curse Uranos planced on Kronos? Make a prediction about the curse.

4. Support your opinion: Should Kronos have been concerned about the curse?
5. What character traits can you identify for Gaia, Uranos, and Kronos?

**“Kronos Dethroned” (page 6 – 7):** Kronos is tricked and fails to destroy his son, Zeus. A ten-year battle between the two ensues and ends as Kronos is dethroned by Zeus. Zeus, together with his freed siblings, begins his rule of the universe.

Have students review the artwork included in this article which depicts the different struggles between Kronos and Zeus. Explain the idea that artwork often establishes a mood or tone. Have students discuss the tone of the 17<sup>th</sup> century painting on page 7.

Another activity to engage students is to hold a mock court of law where students present arguments in defense of Atlas and the Titans and/or in support of stronger penalties for Prometheus and Epimetheus. Consider what arguments might appeal to Zeus, based on his character.

Review how symbols soon came to be identified with particular Gods. Have students work in pairs to identify the symbols described in this article and discuss their significance. Have students design their own symbol and write a description of its significance.

Discussion Questions:

1. Explain the conflict in the story “Kronos Dethroned.”
2. In what ways is the physical environment affected in this story?
3. How did Zeus’ actions toward Amaltheia show his appreciation?
4. In your opinion are the right symbols matched to the right Gods? Should there be changes?
5. Make a prediction about Zeus’ destiny.

**“The Giants” and “The Monstrous Typhon” (pages 10, 11):** Peace did not last long as the Giants rivaled the Olympians and tested their power and supremacy. The Typhon, a fearsome creature, also joined in battle. In the end, the Olympians proved their power and ruled the universe.

Have students work in pairs to consider why the issues of power and supremacy often appear in Greek and Roman mythology. What, if anything, does this suggest about these ancient cultures? What types of challenges would a test of power include today? Students may wish to use *Off the Shelf*, *Cobblestone*, or *On the Net* resources listed on page 39.

Discussion Questions:

1. In what ways were the Olympians tested for power?
2. Explain Gaia’s need for revenge?
3. What obstacles interfered with the Olympians’ defeat of the Giants and Typhon?
4. In what ways is the physical environment affected in this story?
5. Describe the weapons used in battle.

**“The Divine King” (page 16):** Zeus’ power and influence was known throughout the Greek and Roman world. Temples were dedicated to him and magnificent sculptures were created in his honor.

Have students select a deity (either discussed in the articles or from the chart on page 2) and research the symbols that are most often depicted with the deity. Based on their research, students could add two or three additional symbols that represent that deity’s strengths, challenges, and/or powers.

Discussion Questions:

1. Describe the mood or tone in this picture of Zeus taken from a wall painting uncovered in Pompeii and compare it to the picture of Kronos on page 7.

**“Children of the Olympians” (pages 17 – 33):** Athena, Ares, Hermes, Apollo, and Artemis, the Muses, Dionysos, Hera, and Hephaestus, all considered to be the beloved Gods and Goddess of the ancients, are introduced to readers through colorful stories of adventure.

Students can complete a chart describing for each of the Gods and Goddesses the following: their domain (what they ruled), character traits, symbols associated with them, strengths, weaknesses, conflicts, and/or challenges.

Through independent research students can write and illustrate a children’s picture book about the Gods and Goddesses or create trading cards featuring illustrations and interesting facts about the deities. Students may wish to use *Off the Shelf*, *Cobblestone*, or *On the Net* resources listed on page 39.

Review the pictures throughout this section and design an outfit that is historically accurate. Compare the fashion of ancient times to today’s popular fashion trends.

Create a Reader’s Theater story time and encourage groups of students to add dialogue and narrative to the stories in the article and perform them.

Discussion Questions: which deity ...

1. had the most significant purpose?
2. provided the greatest contributions to the Greeks, the Romans, and mankind?
3. is most likable and/or memorable?
4. showed the greatest display human of emotion?
5. is most like a contemporary superhero?

(Students may wish to debate these discussion questions. Another variation would be to have students assume the character of a God and respond to the questions which could be modified for general interview).

**“A Bull Takes His Prize” (pages 34 – 36):** Europa is tricked as Zeus masquerades as a snow white bull and dashes off with her on his back, skimming beyond the waters of the Aegean and Mediterranean seas.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the importance of Europa’s dream in this story?
2. What symbolism is evident in the dream?
3. What causes Zeus to disguise his true identity?
4. Compare and contrast the relationship between Zeus and Europa in this story to the relationship between Zeus and Semele on page 27.
5. What might have been the purpose of this story to the ancient Greeks and Romans?

**“A Place of Worship” (pages 42-44):** Temples have been used as a special place of worship to honor deities, yet they have undergone many changes over time.

Ask students to consider the variety of design characteristics in today's places of worship (church, synagogues, temples, and others) and to note similarities and differences among them as well as in relation to the ancient Greek and Roman temple designs.

Encourage students to think about other buildings in their area (on a national, state, and local level) that make use of the architectural designs that originated with the Greeks and Romans.

Make a blueprint diagram or picture of an ancient temple and label the components used in their construction.

Discussion Questions:

1. According to the beliefs of the ancients Greeks, what was the purpose of a temple?
2. What changes were made to their temples over time?
3. What limitations did the Romans recognize in the Greek temples?
4. What unique element did the Romans add to their architectural designs?
5. Compare the materials used in construction during ancient times to those used today.

**“What’s the Difference?” (pages 45 – 47):** Distinct characteristics set apart the Greek and Roman temples and architectural styles.

Have students complete a Venn Diagram or a T-Chart comparing and contrasting the differences and similarities between Greek and Roman architecture.

Host a design contest in which students are encouraged to create a place of learning using elements of Greek and Roman architecture. In addition to their design, have them formally present their idea to classmates and discuss the significance and benefits of the design elements they have chosen.

You might wish to have students experiment with the “Optical Illusions” activity (page 48-49) to determine the affects of light on the ancient architectural design.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is meant by the statement that the Greek temples were *architectural masterpieces*?
2. Support your opinion: Do you agree or disagree with the above statement?
3. In what way did the Romans revolutionize the art of building?
4. In what ways was the ancient Greeks’ preference for simplicity demonstrated in their architectural design?
5. What design characteristics are evident in the pictures of the Greek Parthenon (page 46) and the Roman Pantheon (page 47)?

**To conclude your instructional activities,** you might wish to return to your KWL Chart or reference the topics from your informal discussions and wrap-up your thoughts on students’ new knowledge on the Greek and Roman deities and also on what they have learned about the worldwide influence of these ancient cultures.