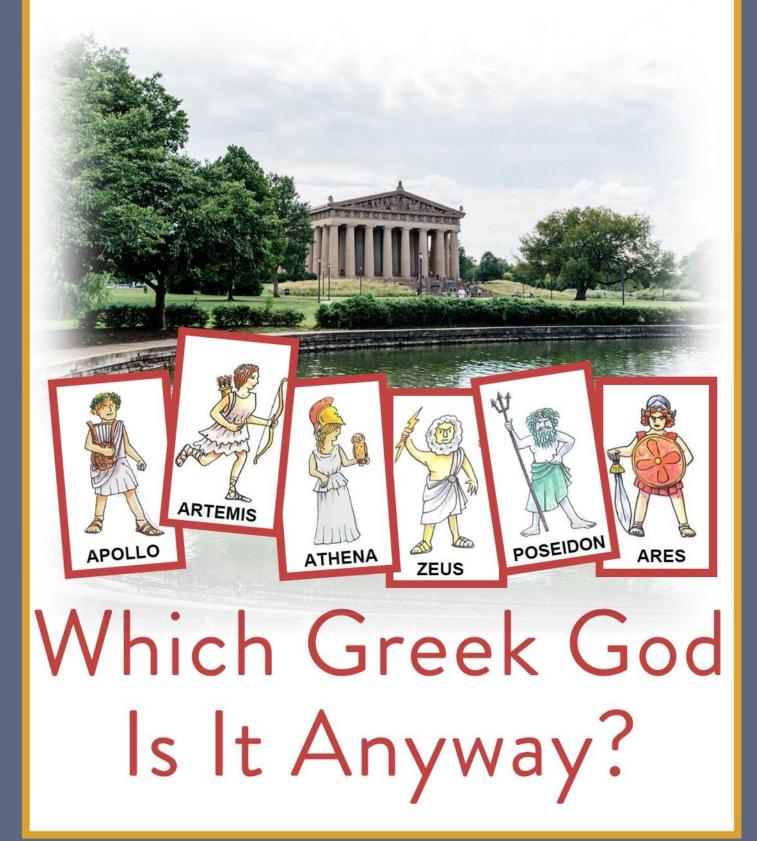


NASHVILLE PARTHENON EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES





Which Greek God Is It Anyway?

Mission: To educate the public concerning the Parthenon and the civilization that built it, both in Athens, Greece, in the fifth century BCE and in Nashville, Tennessee, from 1897 to the present. To exhibit, collect, and care for objects and information related to: fifth century BCE Athens, the Tennessee Centennial Exposition, and the rebuilding of the Nashville Parthenon. To exhibit, collect, and care for visual art and to educate the public concerning its various forms.

Program Title: Which Greek God is it anyway? Target Audience: All ages Exhibit/Gallery: Naos Author: Danielle Scudder, Public History Intern, Nashville Parthenon Updated By: Katie Petrole, Director of Education, Nashville Parthenon Activity Time: 5-10 minutes Implementation Date: Summer 2021 Staff/Docents Needed: 1

Overview: During this program visitors will use tiny models to physically arrange the available symbols to their Greek god. This program is designed to get visitors analyzing the Athena statue, thinking about symbols' roles in helping identify a Greek god, and giving information on various Gods and their patronage's.

Big Idea: Each Greek god has symbols that help us identify and recognize them.

Goals:

- Visitors will spend time looking closely at the Athena statue.
- Visitors will be able to identify Athena's symbols both on the statue and in general.

Objectives:

- Visitors will acquire information about Athena and other gods' symbols.
- Visitors will see symbols of Athena on her statue.

Family Learning Behaviors:

P. Family Members contribute information or ask a question during the program.

Example: "Who is the god of Sea?" "Then all the fish must go with Poseidon."

F. Family member compares something to himself, other family members, or objects.

Example: "That weapon looks like the one in Little Mermaid" "I think I've heard of that god before" M. Family members verbally and/or physically work on activity simultaneously to complete it.

Example: Families work together to remember facts about the gods and move the objects around.

Education Standards:

6th Grade Social Studies

Ancient Greece: c. 800-300 BCE

- 6.46 Explain the polytheistic religion of ancient Greece, with respect to beliefs about the human-like qualities of the deities, their importance in everyday life, and the emergence of the Olympic Games to honor Zeus
- 6.47 Explain the historical significance of ancient Greek literature, including how the Iliad and the Odyssey provide insight into the life of the ancient Greeks.
- 6.49 Describe the purposes of major Greek architecture, including the Parthenon and the Acropolis.

Grades 9-12 Social Studies

The Classic Civilizations of Greece and Rome: 1000-500 BCE

- AH.21 Describe early Greek society, with an emphasis on social classes, cultural traditions, and religious beliefs.
- AH.25 Identify the significant developments and contributions of Greece to the following: architecture, art/drama, history, language, law, literature/poetry, medicine, philosophy, religious institutions, science, and technology

Background Information:

Gods/deities

- Athena
 - Athena, the daughter of Zeus, is the Goddess of wisdom and battle strategy. She is the patron goddess for the city of Athens. You can see Athena's birth on the outside of the building on the East Pediment. Athena was born out of Zeus' head after Hephaestos split it open with an axe.
 - \circ $\;$ Symbols: owl, spear, shield, snake $\;$
 - The Snake represents the people of Athens whom she protects.
- Zeus
 - Zeus is the king of all the Gods and rules over the Earth and the Sky. He helped to defeat the Titans and initiated the gods rule over earth by saving his siblings from their father, Cronos. He did this by splitting open Cronos' stomach and releasing his siblings whom his dad had swallowed in hopes of preventing a prophecy.
 - Symbols: thunderbolt and an eagle
- Poseidon
 - Poseidon is the god of the Sea, earthquakes, and horses. He is the sibling of Zeus and the uncle of Athena.
 - Symbols: trident and horses
- Artemis
 - Artemis is the goddess of the hunt, the moon, and chastity. She is often depicted holding a bow and arrow and surrounded by wild animals. She is the twin of Apollo and the daughter of Zeus.
 - Symbols: bow and arrow, deer, and other wild animals
 - She is also often depicted in a short tunic, which is not normally worn by women. This shows her affiliation with the "man-like" activity of hunting as it allows her to move more freely than the floor length tunics.
- Apollo
 - Apollo is the god of music, civilization, and light (in the intellectual sense). He is the twin of Artemis and similarly is known to be a skilled archer.
 - Symbols: lyre, bow and arrow, and the laurel tree
 - The lye is a musical instrument which Apollo invented. On the other hand the laurel tree is symbolic of Apollo's love for Daphne, a nymph who while, running away from him, was turned into a laurel tree to help her escape.
- Hermes
 - Hermes is the messenger god, mainly to Zeus and wears winged boots to carry him over land and sea.
 - Symbols: caduceus and winged sandals and helmet
 - A caduceus is a staff entwined with 2 snakes
- Aphrodite
 - Aphrodite is the goddess of love and has no special attributes other than her beauty. She is
 often shown with flowers which may suggest an association with the fertility of nature. She is
 married to Hephaestos but as famously told in Homer's Odyssey had an affair with Ares.
 - Symbols: shells, doves, and fruits
 - One belief about Aphrodite's origin is that she washed ashore on a seashell after being born from the foam of the sea.
- Hera
 - Hera is the wife of Zeus and gave birth to some, but not all, of his children. She is the goddess of marriage, women, family, and childbirth. Her children are Ares, the god of war, and the lame-smith Hephaistos, as well as Hebe, goddess of youth, and Eileithyia, goddess of childbirth.

- Symbols: pomegranate, peacock, diadem, and a scepter
 - A pomegranate is a symbol of fertility while the peacock is a symbol of immortality and beauty. Both hail back to Hera's patronage of women and childbirth.
- Medusa
 - Medusa is the gorgon featured on Athena's shield and breastplate. Medusa was killed by Perseus with the help of Athena's shield and Hermes flying shoes. When Perseus returned Athena her shield, he also gave her the head of Medusa to show his appreciation for her help.
 Symbols:
 - Known for her hair made of snakes and the ability to turn people to stone with a look
 - Often depicted with her tongue out and fangs exposed
- Athena Statue
 - Created over an 8-year period by the Nashville sculptor Alan LeQuire, our Athena statue is the only
 full-scale recreation of Athena Parthenos. The statue stands at 41 feet 10 inches tall and weighs
 about 12 tons making it the largest indoor sculpture in the western world. Athena was cast out of
 gypsum cement in molds and assembled inside the Parthenon by attaching each section to a steel
 armature for support.
 - Helmet:
 - Each plume of the helmet is supported by a mythological beast: the Sphinx (half-woman and half-lion) in the center and Pegasus (winged horse) on either side. The earflaps of the helmet are folded up as an indication of peace. For battle, she would have worn them down. A griffin in carved on each; griffins also guard each corner of the Parthenon.
 - Attire:
 - Athena is dressed as a warrior goddess. Athena's peplos (clothing) is cinched with a serpent as a belt, and her gold bracelets are serpents. On Athena's earrings, there are tiny golden owls perched on the U-shaped piece right below the circle on her ear lobe. The edges of her sandals show the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs.
 - Aegis:
 - In the center of Athena's breastplate, also known as an aegis (<u>ee</u>-jis), is the head of Medusa, the gorgon who had snakes for hair. Athena gave Perseus the magic shield that he used like a mirror in order to cut off Medusa's head without being turned to stone. Perseus then gave Medusa's head to Athena in appreciation for the use of her shield.
 - Nike:
 - In Athena's outstretched right hand stands the 6'4" statue of Nike, goddess of victory. She holds a wreath of victory with which she is about to crown Athena in honor of Greek victory over the Persians.
 - Snakes:
 - 11 snakes appear on Athena These are symbols of renewal and rebirth relating to the fact that a snake sheds it skin every year. Additionally, snakes became a symbol for Athenians own origin story. The Athenians wondered about their origin and found an explanation through observing how snakes slither up and out from the rocks.
 - Shield:
 - The shield is decorated with the head of Medusa in the center surrounded by the battle of the Amazons. The inside of the shield is painted with the story of the battle between the Olympian Gods, led by Zeus, and the Titans, led by Zeus' father Kronos.
 - Weapons
 - The statue of Athena featured symbolism concerning wars in which the Athenians were involved. Athena stands on a marble base with her weight shifted to her right leg (contrapposto); she bears a spear leaning on her left shoulder and holds a shield to her left side.
 - Sandals:

- Athena's sandals are decorated with scenes from the Battle of the Lapiths and the Centaurs, a story that can also be seen on the metopes (part of the Doric frieze) on the outside of the Nashville Parthenon.
- Statue base:
 - The base depicts the birth of Pandora, who stands in the center on the box, who was the first mortal woman born in Greek mythology.

How does this program tie to your gallery content and the museum?

This program uses Playmobil toys to facilitate learning about specific gods and the importance of their symbols as a tool for identification. Through this discussion, the program has visitors learn about Athena's symbols while also facilitating a closer examination of the Athena statue.

Ideas for Initiating Interaction:

• This program will take place in the Naos in front of the Athena statue. Alternatively, it can be in the Treasury in front of the East Pediment maquette.

Props:

- Art Cart
- Stool
- Laminated sheet listing various Greek Gods (Appendix A)
- Metal mesh box of toys:
 - o Poseidon: Red fish, Blue fish, Seahorse, Clam shell, Trident, Seaweed, Altar
 - Zeus: Lightning, Throne, Staff, Eagle, Altar
 - Artemis: Bow and Arrow, Tree, 2 blue birds, Deer, Altar
 - Athena: Owl, Spear, Shield, Snake, Altar
 - Hermes: Bag, Caduceus, Altar
- Program tracking sheet with pencil
- Clicker counter

Advance Preparation:

- Gather props.
- Bring Art Cart to the Naos.
- Place laminated sheet with the gods on it on Cart.
- Set up the toys on the cart by standing up the gods in a row and separating them from their toy symbols. Place Athena toy closest to the Athena statue (left side) for easy comparisons.

Gathering: "Hello! Welcome to the Parthenon. Today at the Art Cart are talking about Greek gods and their symbols!"

Program Script:

Hello, come on up! Today we are talking about the Greek gods and their symbols, come join! When you look at our huge Athena statue (**gesture to Athena**) do you see any writing? (Allow for response.) No, right! So, the only way we know that this is Athena is because of all the symbols that are all over the statue. Here (**point to and touch some of the gods and their symbols on the cart**) we have some gods and their symbols, so the game is to match the symbols to the god. Feel free to pick up the toys and move them to their god!

Do you recognize any of the gods here? (Allow for response and read the situation.)

If they immediately begin naming Greek gods, sit back and use encouraging words:

- Yes, that is _____, which god do you think that would go with? Yes, _____ the god of the ___
- That's a good guess, but that's _____ so that means it would probably go with the god/goddess of _____. Do you remember who that is?
- Good job! You're great at this!

If they appear hesitant/don't know the gods:

- I'm here to help you figure out which gods we have here. We have this page (gesture to laminated sheet) with some of the gods on it if you want to look at it for some clues.
- The god on the end is Athena (gesture to toy Athena), she is the goddess of wisdom and battle strategies. For her, we can use our big Athena statue as a clue (gesture to Athena statue). What symbols can you find both on the cart and on the big Athena statue? (Allow for response.)
 - Example: **(If they notice the snake)** Yes! The snake represents the people of Athens. Athena is the main protector of Athens.
- Continue this strategy down the line of gods
 - Example: This is Poseidon, god of the Sea. What do you think the god of Sea would need?
 - (If they point to the fish) Yes! Poseidon is in charge of all of the sea creatures.
 - If you think about *The Little Mermaid*, what weapon does King Trident use? (Allow for response.) Yes! A trident!

Great work today. What I really love is that the way you identified all these Greek gods is exactly the same thing that people did over 2,000 years ago in ancient Greece. Each god has symbols that help us identify and recognize them. People used the symbols as clues to identify their gods and goddesses, just like we did today! Well done!

Conclusion:

- Wow! You did such a great job. If you go into the Treasury which is the next room (gesture to a doorway to the Treasury) you will see a bunch of statues. See if you can figure out which gods are there based on their symbols! Have fun exploring.
- I'll be here for another 5 minutes if you have any questions about Greek gods, our Athena statue, or the Parthenon. Thanks for joining me. Have fun!

Adaptation suggestions for different audiences:

One family/Small program

• Be sure to include both adults and children and encourage working together. Maybe prompt some by asking what god they think it is and making eye contact with everyone while asking the questions.

For younger/ preschool audiences

• Encourage parents to get involved with the game and help the younger kids. For younger audiences it's easier to discuss the gods one at a time and include who the god is and what they reign over at the beginning of each discussion.

Larger groups

• Suggest that they do it together. You may also ask broader questions like: What is Poseidon the god of? What are some of Athena's symbols? Do you notice any of those symbols on our huge Athena statue?

Adults only

- Affirm that the activity is for all ages. Here you can talk more about the meanings behind the symbols and different myths related to them.
 - Example: When pointing to the shield you can talk about the story of Medusa.

Following Up:

- Self-assessment: What went well? What is one thing that didn't go well? What is one thing you will try next time?
- Record number of visitors on the program clipboard. Return cart and materials; report any items that need repair or replacement.

Resources:

- "Tennessee Academic Standards for Fine Arts." Tennessee Department of Education. Summer 2018. P. 75-138.
 - o https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/standards/art/Fine Arts Standards.pdf
- "Curriculum and Standards." Metro Nashville Public Schools.

- o <u>https://www.mnps.org/curriculum-and-standards</u>
- "Greek Mythology." Britannica Encyclopedia. April 12, 2021.
 - <u>https://www.britannica.com/topic/Greek-mythology</u>

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Appendix A:

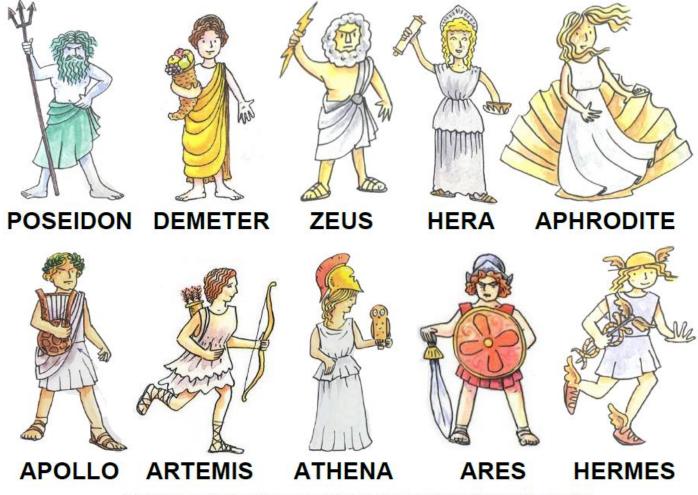


Illustration credit: Shoo Rayner. How to Draw Ancient Greek Stuff Real Easy. 2018.