

Ancient greeks and their astronomy essay

[Literature](#), [Mythology](#)



Considering the huge influence Greek's have had on today's society, we are fortunate enough to have been taught many things such as astronomy, and because of that we owe them (Greeks) immensely. Greek Astronomy, are those who wrote in Greek language, known as classical antiquity.

Greek astronomy is comprised of ancient Greek, Hellenistic, Greco-roman and late antiquity eras. The Hellenistic period is known as the phase of Greek astronomy, whereas Pre-Hellenistic is known as classical Greek Astronomy. In Western culture, a major phase was the development of astronomy by both the Greek and Hellenistic astronomers, who were influenced by Babylonian astronomy. Greek astronomy has been characterized from the start by seeking a rational physical explanation for celestial phenomena. We can examine more in depth the extent of how our universe started off, by looking back in history to the Greek mythology. In the beginning of it all, Chaos was the first to appear. Out of Chaos, sprung Gaia known as Earth, Uranus known as Sky and Heavens as well as Tartarus who was the god of the region beneath earth.

From Gaia, came the 12 titans, one of who was known the titan father and father of Zeus, Cronus. The 3rd generation followed when Cronus and his sister, Rhea produced 6 Olympian children; Hestia, Hera, Demeter, Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus. Followed by the Olympian's came the 4th generation (2nd generation Olympian Gods), who were fathered by Zeus. Our "planet" came from the Greek term "wanderer", and these planets eventually received their Greek mythological names (as learned about earlier) which is equivalent to their Roman mythology name that is the basis for the modern English

names of the planets. Seen from the naked eye, we can identify five planets with their Greek god name; Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn.

The sun and moon as well used to be considered as planets seen with the naked eye, hence making a total of 7 planets seen by the naked eye. This tradition continued when Uranus, Neptune, Pluto were discovered. The planets seen by our naked eye and their Greek god counter-part name go as followed: Mercury was represented by god, Hermes. Hermes was the Greek god of Thieves. He was well known as being the messenger of all gods, but mostly for performing duties for his father, Zeus. Venus, who was represented by Aphrodite the goddess of love and beauty. She is known as the most beautiful planet in the solar system.

Mars, who is represented by Ares, the god of war. The two moons of Mars are named after the two son's of Ares, Phobos and Deimos. Jupiter is represented by Zeus, the ruler of all Greek gods.

This planet is the most significant planet, with up to 16 moons, the 4 largest moons were named after all of Zeus' affairs, Io, Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto. The other 12 moons represent Zeus's other lovers as well as some of his children. The last planet seen with our naked eye is Saturn. Saturn represents Cronus, the father of Zeus with 18 moons surrounding the planet named after numerous Titans, Gods, Goddesses and other important figures in Greek mythology.

The other 3 planets discovered in modern day plus earth go as followed; Uranus who's represented by Uranus. Next is Neptune, who is represented

by Poseidon, god of the sea. Pluto the coldest and of all planets represented by the god of the dead and underworld, Hades. Lastly is our planet Earth, represented by Gaia. Followed by the discovery of our planets, come our constellations. There are different types of constellations, but the most common ones are the zodiac constellations. There are 12 astrological constellations of the zodiac that are rotated around the plane of the ecliptic, but 13 are astronomical zodiac constellations: Capricornus, Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpius, Sagittarius, and Ophiuchus.

All of these 13 constellations, just like the planets have their matching mythology name as followed; Capricornus the “ Sea Goat” is also known as Amalthea and comes from the broken horn of Capricorn. Aquarius is known as the “ Water Carrier” and the Greek god, Aquarius. Pisces is known as “ Two Fish” in Greek mythology the two fish are Aphrodite and Eros. Next is Taurus also known as “ the bull”. Followed by Taurus is Gemini, known as “ the twin brothers” the two brightest stars Castor and Pollux make up Gemini, they are also the protectors of ships and sailors. Next is Cancer also known as “ the crab” . Followed by this is Leo known as the “ Lion” in greek mythology Leo, represents the Nemean Lion which was killed by Hercules. Virgo is next known as “ the Virgin” Goddess of farms and harvest.

, Virgo represented Athena. Libra is next which is represented by “ Scales” the only non living object in the Zodiac. Scorpius is next, represented by the Scorpion sent by Gaia to kill Orion. Next is Sagittarius known as the Archer, who is half man half horse, sent to kill the scorpion. Lastly we have

Ophiuchus who is known as he “Serpent Holder” while not an astrological sign, in greek mythology Ophiuchus is a legendary physican who tried to become immortal to avoid death, but Zeus killed him with his bolt. All in all, we have learned that many things have been passed down to our society from the Greeks, one of those being astronomy, and the many fasinating concepts and themes that go with it, such as our planets and consteallations.

Our society has beenvery fortunate to have been passed down these teachings from the Greeks, and hopefully pass it on to those after us.