

# Benefits of greek and roman mythology essays examples

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



## **IN THE PRIMARY AND INTERMEDIATE GRADES**

### **Absract**

The paper studies the benefits of using Greek and Roman mythology in the primary and intermediate grades. It gives examples of popular Greek and Roman mythology. It discusses six benefits derived from using Greek and Roman mythology in the classroom setting. First, Greek and Roman myths make learning more interesting and appealing to students. This is through relevance with human daily lives. Second, they teach important values and universal truths. This makes them appropriate in intermediate school due to the maturity required. Third, they can be integrated in arts-based education. Fourth, collaborative learning activities used in teaching mythology enhances social and communication skills. Fifth, Greek and Roman myths carry a part of history and culture of the world. It is the springboard of humanity. Lastly, Greek and Roman mythology promotes the creating skill (from Anderson and Kratwohl's taxonomy) in learning language and literature.

### **Introduction**

Greek and Roman Mythology hold certain universal truths applicable to daily lives of men including children. Popular themes of Greek and Roman mythology include heroes, gods and goddesses. Stories of their adventures and journeys are very well documented by the Greeks, and then by the Romans through written literature and art. At present, the Greek and Roman mythologies have been recontructed by modern fiction writers to bring an appeal to their literature masterpieces. It is proof, that the modern world is

immersed in Greek and Roman mythology. They are entertaining, and at the same time educational. This paper attempts to establish the benefits of using mythology particularly that of Greeks and Romans in teaching students from grade 6 to 8. It discusses the importance of using Greek and Roman mythology in the classroom setting.

## **Discussion**

One particular reason why they are used in education is their appeal to young and old people. People find them interesting. Greek and Roman myths have been the central theme for popular movies such as Percy Jackson, Hercules, 300, and Clash of the Titans. Greek mythology was written between 1000 to 323 BC (Evans, 2007). The stories generally revolved around human themes of heroism, love, courage, and even jealousy. There were great heroes such as Hercules and Odysseus and powerful Olympian gods such as Zeus, Poseidon and Hades. There were also powerful monsters such as the Hydra, Menotaur, Sphinx, and the Cyclops. The legends of their characters are widely accepted today. Some of the stars and star constellations in the skies are named after them such as the stars Castor and Pollux in the constellation Gemini and the constellations Cassiopeia, Orion, and Pegasus.

Later, the Greeks were conquered by the Romans. With this, the Romans assimilated characteristics of Greek mythology in their literature and art. The Romans had equivalents of Greek gods and goddesses in their mythology too. Zeus, the Greek god of thunder had the Roman god, Jupiter. Poseidon, the god of the seas has Neptune. Ares, the god of war has Mars. Hermes, the

messenger god has Mercury. Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty has Venus. Hades, the god of the underworld has Pluto. It is compelling legacy that Roman mythology has also influenced us today since some planets of the solar system were named after the Roman gods.

Aside from being interesting, Greek and Roman myths teach lessons on values. Garcia (2014) discusses this through the famous hero, Hercules. He was the son of the Olympian chief god, Zeus and the human, Alcmene. Hercules accomplished 12 astonishing feats in the pursuit of the golden apples of Hesperides, such as killing the hydra and also tricking Atlas to put the sky back to his shoulders. This has made him one of the greatest Greek heroes along Odysseus, Achilles and Perseus (Ward, 2009). Hercules major attribute is his courage in facing challenges. This has been the major value ascribed to heroes in contemporary context. Aside from courage, other values integrated in myths include discipline (Spartans), love (Psyche and Cupid), and passion for music (Apollo's lyre). Also, Greek and Roman stories portray some universal realities such as jealousy (Venus and Psyche), greed (King Midas), and vanity (Narcissus). Garcia (2014) also explained that "many aspects of mythology are manifested in our daily lives". This connection between mythology and reality has captivated readers and students from past to present. However, stories have to be aligned with the maturity of students. That is why Greek and Roman myths are introduced mainly in the intermediate grades.

Another importance is the use of mythology in art education. Tara Kohl (2006) in her study, concluded that incorporating mythology in arts education results in greater artistic literacy of Grade 7 students. The arts-

based experience allows student to express themselves creatively. The grade 7 students were allowed to research on their selected topic on Greek and Roman myths, and were tasked to create an artifact based on the story. Kohl added “ many of the students turned in quality projects that showed a lot of patience and teamwork with other students.” In Kohl’s study, arts education has been a venue for integrating patience and teamwork among students. Furthermore, Morford and Lenardon (2003) discussed in their book that Greek and Roman mythology has been the inspiration for arts in the Late Antiquity, Renaissance, 17th to 19th Century, and even today. It has evolved from paintings, sculptures, architecture, and urns into digital arts and film. Stories are reconstructed through literature and film. Percy Jackson as son of Poseidon was introduced; centaurs and Cerberus appear in the Harry Potter films.

Another benefit of using Greek and Roman mythology is the collaborative learning approach. Debate, play, and film are popular activities for students. Students develop their social and communication skills. Several lesson plans of using Greek and Roman mythology are available through the internet. One of these is that of Core Knowledge Foundation (2013) which emphasizes activities on think-pair-share and collaborative conversations with different partners. Working in groups through such activities enable some students to come out of their shells and express themselves. Of these activities, the role play has been widely adapted. Simulating the same setting and culture, students take on roles as heroes and heroines, gods and goddesses, and even mythical creatures.

Aside from that Greek and Roman mythology is considered springboard of

humanity. It brings the Greek and Roman culture to a whole new level. Great Greek thinkers such as Plato and Socrates and even the Roman poet Ovid have enriched the culture revolving on these myths. Modern students can benefit studying Greek and Roman myths to understand politics, human nature, heroism, military training, and even marital affairs. The themes are very many, and one could take a clear grasp of how humans act. They carry a part of history which eternal students can always remember.

Greek and Roman myths have been used in the teaching of language and literature. Introduction of new words become easy as they are incorporated into tales and legends. Arranging sequence of events chronologically and public speaking are some of the cognitive skills that can be enhanced in this approach. The art of debating and role playing pushes students to higher levels of understanding through creative process. Creating is considered a higher order thinking skill in the revised Bloom's taxonomy by Anderson and Krathwol. Heather Kulick (2010) shares some of her approaches in using Greek and Roman mythology in the Grades 9-12. Some of the strategies mentioned are graphic organizers, journals, research paper, maps, essays, and oral reports. Core Knowledge Foundation (2013) discusses some of the creative approaches utilized at present. There is the creation of Gods, Mortals, and Creatures Chart which is a large mind map of the connections between legendary characters in Greek and Roman myths. Students can also create their own myths. Their planning, drafting, and editing skills will be tested in this task. Thus, students develop their language and literature skills further with these fun activities.

## Conclusion

In summary, Greek and Roman mythology as applied to primary and intermediate education benefit students in six ways. First, Greek and Roman myths make learning more interesting and appealing to students. Second, they teach some values and universal truths. Third, they can be integrated in arts-based education. Fourth, collaborative learning activities used in teaching mythology enhances social and communication skills. Fifth, Greek and Roman myths carry a part of history and culture of the world. Lastly, Greek and Roman mythology promotes the creating skill (from Anderson and Kratwohl's taxonomy) in learning language and literature.

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