

Ancient Greek Literature

Explanatory Notes for Teachers

Level: S1

Topic: Ancient Greek Literature

Supporting Teaching Materials: Students' worksheet

Students' Prior Knowledge

Before this ELA unit, students have learnt about ancient Greek literature and Aesop's Fables. They should have learnt about ancient Greek literature through the medium of Chinese.

Aims and Objectives

I. Content Objectives

After the ELA activities, students should be able to use English to:

1. state some key facts about some ancient Greek writers and their works;
2. collect and share information from one another related to Greek literature; and
3. talk about other examples of ancient literature that are still known today.

II. Language Objectives

After the ELA activities, students should be able to

1. understand and use the English terms related to this topic (e.g., *Iliad*, *Homer*, *Sparta*, *Troy*, *Greek gods*, *Athena*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Aesop*, *animals*, *tortoises*, *ants and wolves*, *lively*, *educational*, *Odyssey*, *Homer*, *Poseidon*, *the God of Sea*, *Histories*, *Herodotus*, *Persian Wars*, *historians*, *Father of History*);
2. understand and use the English expressions for discussing the name, writer and content of *Iliad*, *Aesop's Fables*, *Odyssey* and *Histories*, e.g.,
 - *'The Iliad' was written by Homer.*
 - *Helen fell in love with Prince Paris. He took Helen back to Troy. In the book, many Greek gods helped to fight the war, for example, Hera and Athena.*
 - *'Aesop's Fables' was written by Aesop.*
 - *Aesop's Fables are about animals, like tortoises, ants and wolves, etc.*
 - *These stories are lively and educational. Many of them are still very popular today.*
 - *'The Odyssey' was written by Homer.*
 - *Odysseus was a hero who left his home for many years. Poseidon, the God of Sea did not like him and sent many monsters to hurt him. Luckily, he could return home at last.*
 - *'The Histories' was written by Herodotus.*
 - *It is about the Persian Wars. Many historians like to read this book to study the Persian Wars. So, Herodotus is called the "Father of History".*

3. understand the content of an English video clip of a story from ‘Aesop’s Fables’ – ‘Ants and Grasshoppers’ – and discuss the key ideas of the story.
4. use the connectives ‘first’, ‘second’, and ‘third’ in giving reasons.

Procedure:

1. **Before the lesson**, the teacher should assign students to groups A, B, C, and D and give each student in the group a different set of information.
2. For **Activity 1 Think-Share** students work in their groups. They are given a **Student Activity Sheet** which is a chart with incomplete information. Each student should be asked to read aloud the information he/she has been given and make sure others are listening for the missing information in the chart. Students complete the chart with the information they hear. This activity gives students experience of cooperative learning.
3. In **Activity 2**, students watch a YouTube video of one of Aesop’s Fables. The teacher should first remind students of some fables they may be familiar with. The teacher should select an Aesop’s Fable videoclip from Youtube or other online available video database which student have heard before and the can ask them what the story is about. Then the teacher should show the class the story “Ants and Grasshoppers” or other selected stories that suit their class and invite students to discuss what they have learned from the story.
4. The teacher should then move on to **Activity Three** in which students are asked to consider the nature and importance of Aesop’s Fables. The teacher should ask students why Aesop’s stories have lasted for such a long time and why children nowadays still enjoy reading them. Students can discuss their answers and then use the gap-filling task to formulate a response. The activity also leads students to relate Greek literature to similar literature they have in their own culture, i.e. for Chinese students, they may find ancient chinese stories with lessons similar to those of Aesop’s Fables.

Activity 1

Form into a group of 4. Every group member has different information about ancient Greek literature. Read and share the information among the group mates so that every one has completed information.

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Student A

This book was the Iliad. It was written by Homer.

Helen fell in love with Prince Paris. He took Helen back to Troy. In the book, many Greek gods helped to fight the war, for example, Hera and Athena.

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Student B

This book was Aesop's Fables. It was written by Aesop.

There were a lot of lively and educational stories. Many are still very popular today. The stories were about animals, like tortoises, ants and wolves, etc.

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Student C

This book was the Odyssey. It was written by Homer.

Odysseus was a hero and left his home for many years. Poseidon, the God of the Sea did not like him and sent many monsters to hurt him. Luckily, he could return home at last.

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Student D

This book was the Histories. It was written by Herodotus.

The book was about the Persian Wars. It told us a lot of information about the wars. Many historians like to read this book to study the Persian Wars. So, Herodotus is called the "Father of History".

Student Activity Sheet

Ancient Greek Literature

Ask the other group members to help to complete the chart.

Name of the masterpieces	Writers	Content
A. _____ 	_____ 	1. It was about the _____ War. 2. H_____ fell in love with Prince _____. 3. Many Greek gods helped to fight the war, like _____ and _____.
B. _____ 	_____ 	1. It contained a lot of lively and e_____ stories. 2. The stories were about animals, like tortoises, _____ and _____ etc.
C. _____ 	_____ 	1. Odysseus was a _____ who left from _____ for many years. 2. The Greek God _____ (God of the Sea) did not like him. 3. Poseidon sent a lot of _____ to hurt him.
D. _____ 	_____ 	1. The book was about the _____ Wars. 2. The writer was also known as "Father of _____".

Activity 2

Before watching the Aesop's Fables, can you name some of the fables you know?

You are about to watch one of the famous fables "Ants and Grasshoppers".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMime5ZMDfo&feature=related>

What can you learn from the story "Ants and Grasshoppers"?

Did you know that fables have originated from many other ancient cultures?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmGk8JAMhBw&feature=related>

Activity 3

Can you explain why Aesop's Fables became a classic and is still popular with children today?

Aesop's Fables is a very p_____ book for the following reasons:

First, many stories are very s_____ and e____ for people to read.

S_____, many stories are about the a_____ world, so they are i_____ for people to read.

T_____, _____
_____.

(Clue: what can you learn from reading Aesop's Fables?)

Therefore, people like reading _____.

For discussion: Did you know that fables have originated from many other ancient cultures?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmGk8JAMhBw&feature=related>

Can you prepare a story to share?

Student Activity Sheet

Ancient Greek Literature

Ask the other group members to help to complete the chart.

Name of the masterpieces	Writers	Content
<p>A.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Iliad</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Homer</u></p>	<p>1. It was about the <u>Trojan</u> War.</p> <p>2. <u>Helen</u> fell in love with Prince <u>Paris</u>.</p> <p>3. Many Greek gods helped to fight the war, like <u>Hera</u> and <u>Athena</u>.</p>
<p>B.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Aesop's Fables</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Aesop</u></p>	<p>1. It contained a lot of lively and <u>educational</u> stories.</p> <p>2. The stories were about animals, like tortoises, <u>ants</u> and <u>wolves</u> etc.</p>
<p>C.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Odyssey</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Homer</u></p>	<p>1. Odysseus was a <u>hero</u> who left his <u>home</u> for many years.</p> <p>2. The Greek God <u>Poseidon</u> (God of the Sea) did not like him.</p> <p>3. Poseidon sent a lot of <u>monsters</u> to hurt him.</p>
<p>D.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Histories</u></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Herodotus</u></p>	<p>1. The book was about the <u>Persian</u> Wars.</p> <p>2. The writer was also known as "Father of <u>History</u>".</p>

Activity 2

Before watching the Aesop's Fables, can you name some of the fables you know?

You are about to watch one of the famous fables "Ants and Grasshoppers".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMime5ZMDfo&feature=related>

What can you learn from the story "Ants and Grasshoppers"?

(students' free responses)

Did you know that fables have originated from many other ancient cultures?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmGk8JAMhBw&feature=related>

Activity 3

Can you explain why Aesop's Fables became a classic and is still popular with children today?

Aesop's Fables is a very popular book for the following reasons:

First, many stories are very simple and easy for people to read.

Secondly, many stories are about the animal world, so they are interesting for people to read.

Thirdly, each story has a moral (a meaningful message).

(Clue: what can you learn from reading Aesop's Fables?)

Therefore, people like reading Aesop's Fables.

For discussion: Did you know that fables have originated from many other ancient cultures?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmGk8JAMhBw&feature=related>

Can you prepare a story to share?