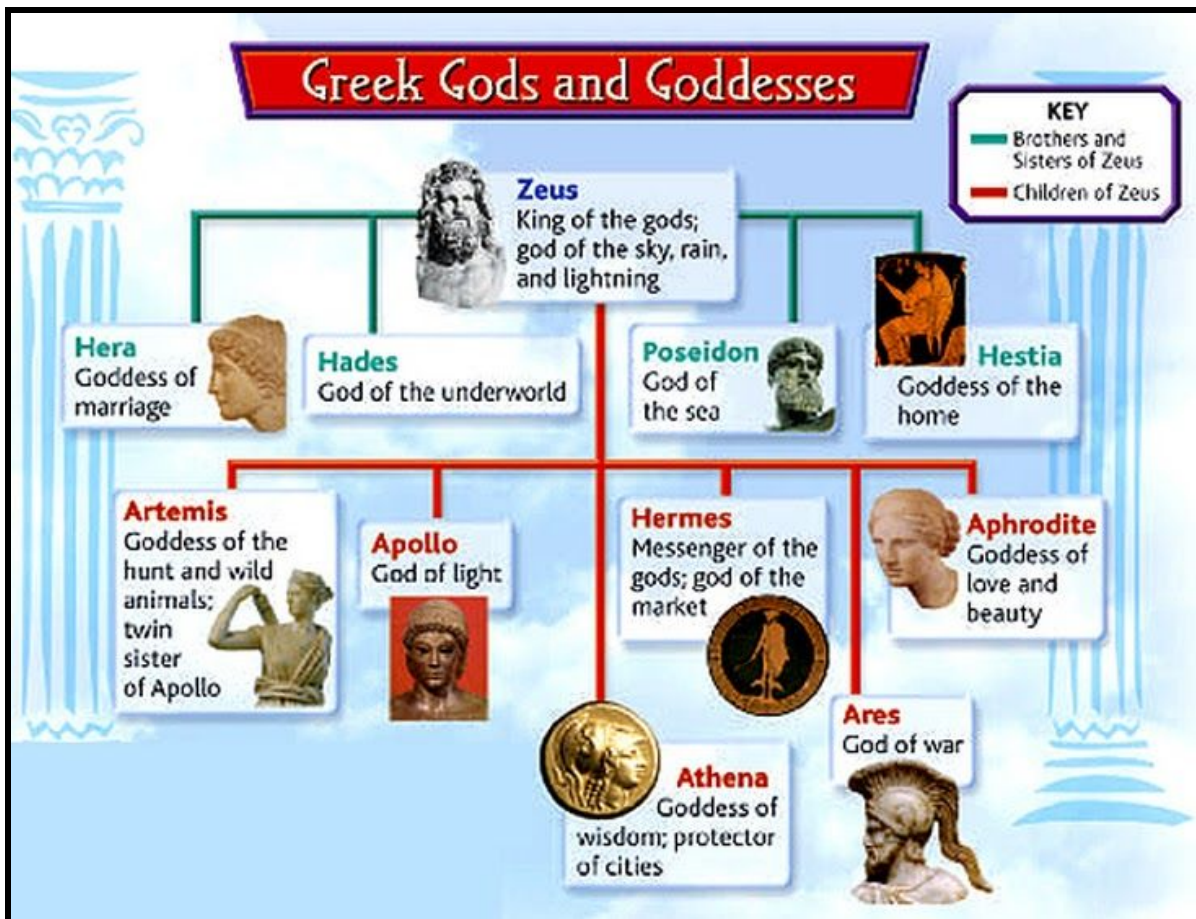


Introduction to the Greek Gods and Goddesses

Ancient Greeks believed gods and goddesses controlled nature and guided their lives. They built monuments, buildings, and statues to honor them. Stories of the gods and goddesses and their adventures were told in myths. The Greeks did not believe that gods and goddesses were all-powerful. They did have special powers, but they were just as flawed as humans. The gods and goddesses married humans, had children, fought wars, and argued with each other.



The 12 most important gods and goddesses lived on Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece. Zeus was the king of all the gods. Each god and goddess ruled over some aspect of life and was represented by certain objects or animals. To honor their gods and goddesses, ancient Greeks practiced rituals to please them and to ensure their good fortune. They built altars, prayed, presented gifts, and dedicated festivals to them. The Olympics was a festival created to honor the god Zeus, held in the city of Olympia.



The ancient Greeks also believed in fate and prophecy (predictions about the future). They went to oracles to find out about the future and advice about what to do. The most famous oracle was at the Temple of Apollo in the city of Delphi. Priests and priestesses spoke to the gods. The priestess received the message and it was translated by the priest. Answers were often given in riddles, which was sometimes misleading to the leaders and kings that went seeking advice.

Watch the brief video clip about the mysterious oracle Delphi:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=51&v=ilz8kYYjKwM&feature=emb_logo

Reflection Questions:

- Why do you think the ancient Greeks believed in so many gods and goddesses?
- Why did the ancient Greeks dedicate so many rituals, festivals, statues, and buildings to their gods?
- In what ways are the religious beliefs of the ancient Greeks like some religious beliefs practiced by people today?

Trading Card Activity:

1. Using the website below, explore the defining characteristics of the various Greek gods and goddesses. <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/discover/history/greece/greek-gods/>
2. Choose one of the Greek gods & goddesses to research more in depth. Explore additional websites, books from your home library, or books from the school or county library.
3. Research and review information and images for your god/goddess, taking notes on their unique characteristics as well as the myths they are involved in.
4. Using the information you've gathered, create a "trading card" on an **index card** (you can also use a sheet of white paper) for your god/goddess that includes the following:
 - a. BLANK SIDE: **Illustrated image** of your god/goddess on the blank side of the card including their **name**
 - b. LINED SIDE: Include information about the **role** of your god/goddess, their unique **characteristics**, **myths** they are a part of, etc.