

Introduction to Classical Mythology

<p style="text-align: center;">Note E Reason to study Greek mythology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way human race thought and felt ages ago • Man's relationship with nature (hence archetype of 'nature is good') • Vivid imaginations unchecked by reason
<p style="text-align: center;">Note G Role of imagination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not an ideal world of perfection • Horrors, magic, human sacrifice • Pain and grief • Reflects life, not really an escape
<p style="text-align: center;">Note D Appearance of myths (first telling)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primitive life left behind – attempt at order and explanation • Creation of great poets
<p style="text-align: center;">Note C Homer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First written record of Greece is the <i>Iliad</i> by Homer • Not earlier than 1000 B.C. • <i>Iliad</i> contains oldest Greek literature • Rich, subtle, beautiful language • Homer reflected on a different time, not his own time. He lived in a civilized world.
<p style="text-align: center;">Note B Greek miracle</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New birth of the world with awakening of Greece • "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians
<p style="text-align: center;">Note K New point of view</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revolution in thought • Mankind as the center of the universe

<p>Note P Greek gods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made their gods in their own image (anthropomorphic) • Before this, gods had no semblance of reality • Universe became rational – everything is explained
<p>Note J Egyptian images</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Towering and colossal in size • Human-animal hybrids (woman w/cat head) • Mysterious (sphinx)
<p>Note X Mesopotamia images</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bestial shapes • Mixture of types of animals
<p>Note R Saint Paul's Message</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The invisible must be understood by the visible." • This idea came from Greeks (God as man)
<p>Note L Perceptions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sculptor modeled statues after athletes • Storytellers saw gods as everyday people • All art and thought centered on human beings • Human gods made heaven a pleasantly familiar place
<p>Note N Daily life of gods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greeks knew where gods lived, what they ate, and how they were amused • They feared their gods for the gods were powerful and dangerous when angry • Greeks enjoyed their gods and liked them (entertainment) • Gods were exceedingly and humanly attractive

<p>Note A Miracle of Greek Mythology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a humanized world where man was free from the paralyzing fear of an omnipotent Unknown
<p>Note Q Departure From the Irrational</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disliked irrational; had a love for facts • Even the most nonsensical takes place in a world which is essential rational and matter-of-fact • A familiar local habitation gave reality to all the mythical beings • Magic is within definable limits as specific powers assigned to Gods • Ghosts never appear in Greek stories; spirits have a realistic realm in the Underworld
<p>Note T Darker Aspects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gods were only a slight improvement over worshippers – still flawed • Lovelier, more powerful, and immortal – superior to humans • Acted in ways no decent man/woman would
<p>Note V Beast Gods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few exist in Greek mythology • Satyrs are goat men • Centaurs are half man, half horse
<p>Note F Mythical Monsters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only there to give hero the glory • Gorgons (Medusa) • Hydras (serpent water beast) • Chimeras (fire breathing)

<p style="text-align: center;">Note I Definitions of myths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made up of stories about gods and goddesses • It is NOT a Greek holy book (religious text) • Real myth has almost nothing in common with religion • It is an explanation of something in nature; how, for instance, any and everything in the universe came into existence • Myths are early science; result of men trying to explain what they saw around them • Some myths are pure entertainment • Religion is only in the realization of what humans need and must have in their gods
<p style="text-align: center;">Note M Views of Zeus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thunderer, once a rain-god supreme over the sun • Standard of right and wrong • Punishes men who lie and break their oaths • Angered by ill treatment of the dead • Justice became Zeus's companion • Amorous Zeus, Cowardly Zeus, Ridiculous Zeus (human aspects) • Giver of every good gift; common father and savior and guardian of mankind

<p>Note H Role of Justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zeus's companion • new idea • the poor must have a just god • great and bitter needs of the helpless were reaching up to heaven and changing the god of the strong into the protector of the weak
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Greek and Roman Writers

<p>Note O Ovid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Latin poet • Wrote during reign of Augustus • Told all the stories at great length
<p>Note S Homer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approx 1000 BC • Wrote the <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i> (epic poems) • oldest Greek writings • <i>Iliad</i> is epic of war (older of the two poems) • <i>Odyssey</i> is epic of journey
<p>Note W Homeric Hymns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poems written to honor various gods, 33 in all, (not written by Homer)
<p>Note U Virgil</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roman • Found human nature in myths • Brought mythological personages to life