**Greek and Roman Myths**

**Lesson Prepared by:** Aryn Garfield

**Grade Level:** Third Grade

**Media:** construction paper, paint.

**Time:** One fifty minute lesson

**Lesson Theme:** Creating a Myth

**Artist:** numerous

**Book:** *Atticus: The Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths-* by Lucy Coates

**Relevant Virginia Standards of Learning:**

Visual Arts Standard 3.6- *The student will create a functional object that reflects the contributions of Greco-Roman civilizations, as found in artifacts.*

#### English Standard 3.10- The student will write stories, letters, simple explanations, and short reports across all content areas.

History Standard 3.4- *The student will develop map skills by*

*a) locating Greece, Rome and West Africa;*

*b) describing the physical and human characteristics of Greece, Rome, and West Africa;*

*c) explaining how the people of Greece, Rome, and West Africa adapted to and/or changed their environment to meet their needs.*

**Lesson Overview:** After having looked at and sorted a group of pictures of vases to their proper places on the map, the students will listen to the children’s story by Lucy Coates. Afterwards, students will discuss some well known myths and define what a myth is. Students will then observe closely a vase and discuss which well known myth is being portrayed on it. Afterwards, students will be instructed to create their own myth about daily life including heroes, animals or events with construction paper and paint. After completing this, the students will write a short description of their myth on a separate sheet of paper and volunteers will share them with the class.

**Lesson Objectives:**

The student will:

-Sort pictures of Greek and Roman Vases on to a map.

-Recognize myths as stories about imaginary heroes, animals or events.

-Discuss well known-myths of Roman and Greek culture.

-Analyze the image of a vase and the myth portrayed.

-Brainstorm a list of topics that they could use to create their own myth.

-Create a picture of the myth they created.

-Write a short story about the created myth on a separate sheet of paper.

**Visual Culture:** Students will discuss myth in the context of Greek and Roman culture as well as its effect on our day to day lives. For example, the “cupids” seen on Valentine’s day stem from the God Eros-of love. An owl is a symbol for wisdom now, as it was a symbol for Athena, goddess of war and wisdom. Other possibilities include Achilles heel, which stems from the myth that Achilles only had one weakness (in one heel). Perhaps discuss the fact that we use many of the same symbols as the ancient Greeks and Romans in contemporary art.

**Vocabulary:** *myth* a traditional or legendary story, usually concerning some being or hero or event, with or without a determinable basis of fact or a natural explanation

*Mythology*- a set of stories, traditions, or beliefs associated with a particular group

*Vase-* a vessel, as of glass, porcelain, earthenware, or metal, usually higher than it is wide

*Amphora*- a type of vessel often used by the ancient Romans or Greeks*.*

*Culture-* the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group

*Ancient-* of or in time long past

*Pottery-* ceramic ware, esp. earthenware and stoneware

**Artists Information:** Not much is known about the Nikon Painter, unfortunately. The style is a later version of the vase painting in which the designs are orange-red, and the background is black. In earlier versions of this ancient pottery technique, the ware overall was red-orange and the figures were painted with a substance which, when heated, turned black.

**Image Description:** *Athene* ***(****Athena)*

Ware: Attic Red Figure

Shape: Lekythos

Painter: Attributed to the Nikon Painter

Date: ca 470 BC

This particular work is a close-up of a vase depicting the Goddess of wisdom and war: Athena. In this work, she is holding the helmet and shield for which she is known to have sprung with from Zeus’s head when born.

**Questioning Strategies:** Throughout the lesson, the teacher will lead discussion with questions to enhance learning:

-Where do you think this vase came from? Point. Why?

-What do you think is going on in this picture?

-Do you see a myth that we talked about in this piece? Point to the aspects that you recognize.

-Why do you think the Greeks and Romans drew myths on their vases?

**Lesson Procedure:**

1. Before class, separate black and orange paper from the construction paper stack and set it out. Gather various images of Roman and Greek vases, and underneath write the city and myth (if available) which it depicts. Make sure a large map of Greece and Rome, with all of the cities on the pictures, is posted in the room. Gather brushes, paint, and white paper for students to write myths on. Set up for easy pick up.
2. Invite students into the room, and have them sit in their usual seats. Define what a vase is before instructing the students to sort the images based on geographical location with their tables.
3. Have the students place the images on the map in the room. Discuss, and correct if necessary.
4. Briefly discuss how the ancient Greeks and Romans made their vases, what types of vases were common, as well as what images were normally depicted on them. Discuss and define the meaning of the word “myth”.
5. Read *Atticus: The Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths-* by Lucy Coates to the students and discuss details or points of interest with the students.
6. Lead a discussion about famous Greek and Roman myths, as well as how those myths have influenced modern culture. (For example: Cupid in Valentine’s Day, artworks which deal with classical themes, etc.)
7. Post an image of a vase which deals with a myth already talked about on the overhead. Ask the students which myth is depicted, as well as to analyze visual aspects which point to their conclusions.
8. Discuss what myths could be created in modern culture. Create a list on the board. Introduce the project. Tell the students they are to think of their own myth to represent on construction paper. Demonstrate how to sketch out a scene and then use paint to fill it in
9. Instruct the students to gather the paper, paint and brushes and return to their seats. Remind them to create a myth to depict.
10. As the students are finishing working, have them clean their stations, put their work on the drying wrack and come to you. At this point you will hand out a pencil and paper to each student for them to write a short story about the myth they created.
11. When all students have completed both their vases and their stories, have the students come and retrieve their work from the drying wrack in an orderly fashion.
12. Take volunteers to present their work and their myths with the class.
13. Have the students turn in their work and dismiss class. Afterward, hang up student work with stories in the hall.

**Evaluation/Rubric:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Accomplished** | **Emerging** | **Not Yet Observed** |
| Sort pictures of Greek and Roman Vases on to a map |  |  |  |
| Recognize myths as stories about imaginary heroes, animals or events. |  |  |  |
| Discuss well known-myths of Roman and Greek culture |  |  |  |
| Analyze the image of a vase and the myth portrayed. |  |  |  |
| Brainstorm a list of topics that they could use to create their own myth |  |  |  |
| Create a picture of the myth they created. |  |  |  |
| Write a short story about the created myth on a separate sheet of paper |  |  |  |

**Materials:** Orange/Black Construction Paper, Paint, white paper, brushes.

**Resources:**

<http://www.theoi.com/image/K8.3Athena.jpg>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red-figure_pottery>

<http://www.theoi.com/GalleryK1.html>

*Atticus: The Storyteller's 100 Greek Myths-* by Lucy Coates

**Interdisciplinary Connections:**

The Visual Arts Standard 3.6 connects to the History Standard 3.4 through the use of visual association between artifacts of a culture with that culture’s geographic location. The Visual Arts Standard also connects to the English Standard 3.10 through the student’s creation of their own, individual myth.

**Special Populations:**

More time will be given to students with mental or physical disabilities. If needed, the teacher will also give further aid in the drawing of the outline of the vase.