



DIY: Ancient Greece Teacher Notes

This DIY resource aims to support your teaching in the galleries. These ideas are a springboard and may need adapting. Each idea includes prompt questions in italics and information, and some extensions. Into Action sheets, which are linked to these teaching ideas, are available for pupils to use in the galleries.

Please be careful not to touch any artwork or object with waving arms when you are teaching, and be aware that sometimes it can be tricky to see paintings or all parts of an objects depending on where children are sitting.

We still have gallery capacities in place to help prevent the spread of coronavirus. Please respect the signage with capacities at the entrance and exit of each gallery, and if you are unsure just ask a visitor services attendant. If there is another group in the gallery, please avoid using it at the same time.

Due to these capacities, we have to divide classes and teach the session twice in the Greek and Roman gallery. The other half of the class cannot visit the Greek and Roman gallery at the same time as it will be over capacity. Thank you for understanding and for your help.

You will need to bring:

- A clipboard
- Paper and pencil for each pupil
- Into Action sheets

Galleries used: The portico entrance and Gallery 6.



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Teaching Ideas: Then, Then, and Now

Location: the portico entrance, inside and outside

Supporting Into Action Sheets: Then and Now, Strike A Pose

How is this museum going to help us learn about the Ancient Greeks?

Ask the children why they have come to the Fitzwilliam Museum. Don't assume that they know which objects are real Ancient Greek objects. The portico is full of casts of ancient Greek statues made by the Victorians, 200 years ago. Encourage the children to think about museums and first hand evidence.

Questions you could ask:

- *Where were these objects made?*
- *When were they made?*
- *Who made them?*
- *What are they made from?*
- *How were they used?*
- *Do they look the same now as they did when they were new?*
- *How have they changed?*
- *How did they get here to the museum?*

Think about colour – the real statues were once brightly painted. Discuss why some are broken or have bits missing.

Explain that these are copies, casts, put here by the Victorians that built the museum in the 1800s. Ask: *do they think the real stone statues are the only art that ancient Greeks made? Why did the Victorians choose to put these casts in the museum entrance? Why are they placed where they are?*

Objects give us information about the people who made, owned and used them.

What do the things in your bedroom tell us about you? Examples might be favourite sports, music, the kinds of books you like, which people are important to you, places you've visited. *Will these things be around in 2,500 years time?*

What can we learn about the ancient Greeks from these people? What is in their hands, what are they wearing – or not wearing!

Are these realistic representations of people?



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Teaching Ideas: the Story of Troy

Location: gallery 6, in front of *The Siege of Troy* by Biagio d'Antonio da Firenze

Supporting Into Action Sheets: The Story of Troy



Sit the children down in front of this painting and tell them the myth of the siege of Troy.

This entire battle here starts with two half-sisters, Aphrodite and Helen. They had the same father, the god Zeus, but different mothers. Both of Aphrodite's parents were gods, but Helen's mother was a mortal. Both daughters were clever and beautiful. One day, Aphrodite heard that the prince of Troy, a man called Paris, thought that Helen was the most beautiful woman in the land. Aphrodite was a bit annoyed. All the gods knew that Paris had a reputation for making good judgements about things.

Later, Aphrodite was at a wedding. All the Greek gods and goddesses were invited! Except one: Eris, the goddess of discord. Eris was so frustrated that she wasn't invited and decided to go anyway. She threw a golden apple of discord into the crowd, shouting, "This apple is for whoever is the most beautiful!". Eris was hoping to cause trouble.

Hera, the goddess of women and marriage, Athena the goddess of war, wisdom, craft, and Aphrodite, who was the goddess of love, all grabbed for the apple and fought over it. Zeus decided to step in. He felt a bit awkward about deciding between his wife and daughters, and so asked Paris to come and make a judgement.

When Paris arrived, each goddess offered him a reward. But Aphrodite's reward – of love - was the most appealing. After all, she knew who Paris had a bit of a crush on. Aphrodite promised to make Helen fall in love with Paris. She was so desperate for the apple that she didn't care that her half-sister Helen was married already – to the king of Sparta!



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both left Sparta and Greece behind, travelling to Paris' home in the city of Troy. When the king of Troy came back and found Helen missing, he was incredibly angry. He went after her, calling on the other kings of the states in Greece to help. They all joined him and set sail for Troy. This began the Trojan War – which you can see going on in this painting.

But the scene in this painting is from well after the start of the war. The war was going on for 10 years before this bit happened! As you can imagine, after 10 years, both sides were tired. The Greeks had one last idea: to make an enormous horse out of wood and hide some soldiers inside it, and then offer it as a gift to the Trojans.

Can you see the horse – and the men having a look out the top?

The Greeks set up the horse, and then sailed away. The Trojans thought they had given up and left, and pulled the horse through the city gates, claiming it as a trophy of their winning!

The Greeks waited for night to fall. The ships snuck back to shore in the darkness. The soldiers inside the horse crept out and opened the gates for the rest of the army to come in and attack the city.

What part of the story has the artist painted?

Is this the end of the story, with the Greeks winning? Or is this when the horse goes into Troy? How can they tell?