

G oing Greek

Sarah Hull, WVPT

Overview

Topic: Greek Studies, Writing, Presentations. This lesson combines social studies and language arts to transport students to modern day Greece. Students will learn about the life of a young boy in Greece and the importance of his cultural heritage. Students will research and gather information regarding the history, culture, and influences the ancient Greeks had on modern day society. Students will also compare and contrast their culture and traditions with those of the young boy from Greece. For this lesson, students should have familiarity with Powerpoint; however Hyperstudio may be substituted.

Length of Lesson

2 to 4 50-minute class periods

Video/Technology Hardware & Software

I Love Music #3, Stravos and the Pontiakilira 📺

PowerPoint or Hyperstudio Software

One computer for each group of students

Websites used for research purposes:

www.pbs.org/empires/thegreeks/ — discover how much of our modern world can be traced back to ancient Greek culture. Explore the timeline of heroes and leaders, experience the Acropolis, and watch Quicktime clips from this PBS special.

www.princeton.edu/~markwoon/Myth/myth-maps.html — compare how the Greeks mapped their civilization with how it really looked.

www.richmond.edu/~ed344/webunits/greecerome/ — designed to introduce students in grades 3-5 to the civilizations of ancient Greece and Rome.

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to:

- identify and research contributions of ancient Greece to modern society
- describe one way in which the ancient Greeks helped establish our form of government
- provide an example of how the ancient Greeks influenced architecture
- explain the importance of preserving and passing on traditions and culture

(This lesson addresses Va. SOL History/Social Science 1995 and 2001 3.1; Computer/Technology C/T 5.3; English 3.10; Health 3.5)

Materials

Per student:

- piece of cardstock
- 1 research sheet to be distributed as a culminating activity

For the entire class:

- 1 large piece of PVC tubing to serve as a time capsule



Teacher Preparations

- Gather a variety of books on ancient Greece. Possible titles may include: *Hour of the Olympics* by Mary Pope Osborne; *Eyewitness: Ancient Greece* by Anne Pearson; *Art and Civilization Ancient Greece* (Art and Civilization) by Matilde Bardi; *Growing Up In Ancient Greece* (Growing Up In series) by Chris Chelepi; and *Ancient Greece* (Journey into Civilization) by Robert Nicholson.
- Bookmark websites so students may access them quickly and avoid distractions.
- Laminate the cardstock after students have completed the Introductory Activity.

Introductory Activity

To set the stage for this lesson, tell students they have the power to influence history by passing along traditions. Give each student a piece of cardstock paper. Instruct them to write one tradition they have in their family that they hope future generations will carry on. Examples may include putting up a Christmas tree, praying before meals, reading together each night, watching a favorite movie, etc. Tell students to include on this paper their name, address, age, grade and school.

Tell students that the cardstock will be laminated and put in a time capsule as one way to share with future generations important parts of our culture. Ask students to brainstorm other ways in which traditions are passed on. Ideas may include storytelling, writing, dancing, recipes, history books, or artifacts.

Focus for Media Interaction

Tell students that you would like to share someone else's story with them—someone who lives far away in Greece, and like them, wants to keep his family traditions and culture alive. Tell them that in hearing this boy's story, we will be learning about some of the traditions of the ancient Greeks. Who are the ancient Greeks? Why are they important to us today? How has their heritage affected this boy? And us?

Pause vs. Stop

When using a video interactively with students, teachers need to decide when to use **PAUSE** and when to use **STOP**. **PAUSE** the video when the anticipated discussion or activity will take less than two minutes. **STOP** for longer periods. Pausing for too long at one time can cause video heads on the VCR to become clogged which may require cleaning to correct.

Learning Activities

1. SAY: We are now going to watch a video of a young boy who practices diligently to keep his family traditions and culture alive. He is going to take us on a field trip of his community. Listen carefully. Why does he go to the community center every week? **START** the video when you see the title Stravos and the pontiakilira on the screen. **PAUSE** when you hear the narrator say, "Many Pontian children learn the music and dances which are hundreds, even thousands of years old." **FOLLOW UP:** Why does Stravos go to the community center? (to learn the music and culture of the Pontiakils) Why do you think the Pontians have kept these traditions for so long? (to pass along heritage, to share history)

2. FOCUS: Who are the Pontians; where do they live? **RESUME. PAUSE** when the narrator says, "Tonight we are having a special evening dedicated to our culture." **FOLLOW UP** on focus question. (Answer: Greek people who used to live by the Black Sea, but now live throughout Greece) Then, **ASK:** Why do you think the Pontians now live throughout Greece? (Possible answers may include ideas of war, goods and services, need for more land.)

3. FOCUS: Where do Stravos and his sister stop on the way home? What does he mention Greek people like? **RESUME. PAUSE** when the narrator says, "But first I have a lot to do." Review focus question. (The Bakery. Greek people like their pastries very sweet, so they use a lot of honey.) **FOLLOW UP:** Why do you suppose Greek people use honey instead of sugar to sweeten their pastries?

4. FOCUS: What typical Pontian food does Stravos enjoy for dinner? Is it similar to or different from food you eat at home? (**FAST FORWARD** until you see a the narrator turn down the volume on a stereo and he says, “Uh-oh, I think my parents are home?” **PLAY. PAUSE** when the narrator says, “I think my mom should open a Pontian restaurant.” **FOLLOW UP:** What does Stravos eat? (noodle fritters with cheeses and meat, potato dumplings) How are the foods Stravos eats similar to and different from what you eat?

5. FOCUS: What is the national symbol for Greece and why is Stravos’s costume for the celebration black and gold? **FAST FORWARD** until you see the narrator step outside holding a red clothes basket. **PAUSE** when the narrator says, “It’s getting late, I better hurry.” **FOLLOW UP:** (Answers: A golden eagle and his costume is black and gold to represent the national symbol) What colors would you where to represent our country? (Answers may include red, white and blue in recognition of our flag.)

6. FOCUS: Why does everyone dance in a circle at the beginning of the celebration? **FAST FORWARD** until you see the narrator on stage playing an instrument. **RESUME. PAUSE** when the narrator says, “...and now for the dance I’ve been working on all week.” (Answers to Focus Question: to represent that they are one community, who will stick together and support one another) **ASK:** Why do you think this dance is important to the Pontian community?

7. FOCUS: What does the dance Stravos performs represent? **RESUME. STOP** when the narrator says, “I am happy to take part.” **FOLLOW UP:** (Answer: a dance the ancient Greeks might have done before a battle) **ASK:** Why do you think Stravos is proud of his culture? What must he do to keep this culture alive?

Culminating Activities

Say: We are now going to further explore the culture and history of the ancient Greeks. You are going to become a time traveler. You are going to

go back in time to visit the ancestors of Stravos. Your job is to gather information about his culture to bring back and share with the modern world.

1. Distribute the research sheets to the students. Review with them the components of the project. Students may work in pairs or individually depending upon class size and computer availability.
2. Students spend 2-3 days researching at least three different sources to gather information for their Powerpoint presentation. (If Powerpoint is not available, students may use Hyperstudio. If neither program is available, students may create a travel brochure for ancient Greece based upon the requirements for the slide show.)
3. Monitor student progress as they research and gather information. Students must gather information from at least three different sources. This may include a website, encyclopedia, and book.

Assessment

The PowerPoint presentation will be evaluated based upon the requirements for the slide show. Students must have a slide for each of the following: Greek culture, the Olympics, architecture and Greek contributions to modern society. You may design a rubric to use as a basis for grading.

Community Connections

1. Take a field trip of your local community. Using a digital camera take pictures of examples of Greek architecture. Use the pictures to create a poster showing how the ancient Greeks have influenced modern culture.
2. Invite an architect in to speak about how he/she uses Greek influences to design or remodel buildings.
3. Write a letter to an Olympic athlete asking them how they feel the Olympics would be different if the Greeks had not influenced this event.

Cross-Curricular Extensions

Math: Students may research the form of mathematics ancient Greeks used.

Physical Education: Students may host their own Greek Olympic day, playing games that the ancient Olympians would have played.

About the Author

Sarah Hull

Sarah Hull is currently a third grade teacher at Dixon Elementary School in Staunton, Va. She has been an NTTI master teacher for 3 years. Previously she taught fourth, fifth and sixth grades. In her spare time she enjoys playing with her five month old daughter Jessalynne, her husband Brent and their yellow lab Honey.

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GOING GREEK RESEARCH SHEET

You are about to begin an exciting adventure! Just as Stravos led us in the sharing of his community and culture, you are going to travel to ancient Greece to gather more information. With a partner you will research a variety of sources to learn more about ancient Greece. Follow the steps below to begin your travels and prepare a Powerpoint presentation to tell about your journey.

1. Decide which sources you will use. You need to select three different ones. Here are some possibilities: books, encyclopedia, internet, atlas, magazines, dictionary, travel brochures, people.
2. You need to gather information on each of the following topics:
 - a. Greek government
 - b. Greek architecture
 - c. The Olympics
3. You will need to write three sentences on each of the topics in your own words.
4. You will prepare a PowerPoint presentation with 5 slides. The slides should be:
 1. Title
 2. Government
 3. Architecture
 4. Olympics
 5. Sources you used

Have fun and think about appropriate pictures you may also use in your presentation! Ready, Set, Go Greek!!