

Reading extract and questions:

Year 3-4

Ancient Greece

Set A/B

The earliest Greek civilisations date back nearly 4,000 years, to around 1,600 BC. The Ancient Greek Empire spread from Greece through Europe and started when the Mycenaeans from Crete fought and won the Trojan War, thanks to a clever ploy involving a wooden horse. A famous legend tells how the determined Greeks conquered the city of Troy – by hiding inside a giant wooden horse! The horse was left outside the city’s walls and, thinking it a gift, the people of Troy wheeled it inside... only for the devious Greek soldiers to creep out after dark and seize the city.



In 800 BC, the Greeks started to divide their land – which included the Greek mainland, islands and the countries we now call Bulgaria and Turkey – into city-states, each with its own laws, customs and rulers. Athens, Sparta and Corinth were the most powerful.

There are many myths and legends written about Greek Gods. The Greeks believed that a family of gods lived in a cloud palace above Mount Olympus (the highest mountain in Greece). These gods were thought to have special powers, and each had control over a different aspect of life. Find out about some of them in the table below...

POSEIDON	ZEUS	APOLLO AND ARTEMIS
Zeus’ brother, Poseidon, was in charge of the sea and horses. He showed his anger by striking the bottom of the sea to cause earthquakes!	Zeus was the king of all gods. He was also god of the sky, and when he was in a bad mood, he’d create huge storms and thunderbolts!	These were Zeus’ children. Apollo was the Sun god and in charge of music. His twin, Artemis, had the power to send deathly plagues, but she could heal people too.

The Greeks put statues of their gods inside temples, the most famous of which is the Parthenon. This temple in Athens was built for the goddess Athena, the protector of the city. When people needed help from the gods, they went to the temple to pray. They might go if they were feeling sick, going on a journey or worried about the harvest on the farm. To please the gods, people brought gifts of money, flowers, food and drink. They offered these gifts as sacrifices. Animals, like cattle, were sometimes killed as sacrifices. Then people feasted on the roasted meat.

The Ancient Greeks held many festivals in honour of their gods. To celebrate the god Zeus, for example, the first Greek Olympics were held in the city of Olympia in 776 BC and are thought to have inspired our own Olympic Games! The winners of each event were given a wreath of leaves, and when they returned home, they would be given free meals and the best seats in the theatre!

Events at the Greek’s Olympics included wrestling, boxing, long jump, javelin, discus and chariot racing. But those taking part in the wrestling event had to be the toughest, as there were hardly any rules – and they had to compete without any clothes on!

Questions for *Ancient Greece* Set A

Vocabulary:

1. In the first paragraph, look at the sentence beginning: '*Thanks to a clever ploy involving a wooden horse...*'.

Which word is closest in meaning to the word *ploy*?

Tick **one**.

leader

☐

plan

☐

army

☐

person

☐

2. **Find** and **copy one** word which suggests that the Greek soldiers were *crafty*.

3. Look at the section of text beginning: '*The Greeks put statues...*'

Find and **copy one** word which means *look after*.

Retrieval

4. When does the ancient Greek civilisation date back to?

5. What did the Mycenaeans conquer?

6. Write **two** Greek city-states.

1. _____

2. _____

Inference

7. Why did the Greek soldiers wait until dark to seize the city of Troy?

8. Complete the table below with **one** piece of evidence to support each statement.

	Evidence
How the gods punished the Greeks.	
How the gods helped the Greeks.	

9. How do you know the Gods were special to the Greeks? Write **two** ways.

1. _____

2. _____

Summarise

10. Here are some summaries of different paragraphs in the text. Number them from **1** to **4** to show the order in which they appear.

- ☐ Reasons for praying to the gods.
- ☐ Taking part in the Olympic games.
- ☐ The City of Troy was conquered.
- ☐ Parts of Greece were divided up.

Meaning as a whole

11. Tick **one** box in each row to show whether the statements are **true** or **false**.

	True	False
The Greek soldiers pushed the horse into the city of Troy.		
The Greeks turned to the gods in times of trouble.		
The earliest Greek civilisations date back to 4,000 BC		
Zeus created earthquakes when he was in a bad mood.		

Questions for *Ancient Greece* Set B

Vocabulary:

1. Look at the paragraph beginning: *The earliest Greek Civilisations...* Find and copy one word meaning *capture*.

2. Look at the paragraph beginning: *In 800 BC...* Which word is closest in meaning to the word *split*?

3. In the paragraph beginning: *The ancient Greeks held...*
Which word is closest in meaning to the word *honour*?

Tick **one**.

apologise

☐

feed

☐

inspire

☐

respect

☐

Retrieval

4. Complete the table below to show what each god controlled.

God	In charge of...
Poseidon	
Zeus	
Apollo	

5. Write **two** reasons why the Greeks may have gone to the temple to pray.

1. _____

2. _____

6. How did the Greeks celebrate the God Zeus?

Inference

7. Why would people have worked hard to win an event at the Olympics?

8. Which event at the Olympics was the most challenging? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

9. Why might the Greeks have been scared of upsetting the Gods? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Meaning as a whole

10. Draw lines to match each section to its main content.

Introduction

Events included long jump, javelin, discus and chariot racing.

Dividing their land.

A statue of Athena was put in the Parthenon.

Gods

Sparta was one of the most powerful city-states.

Olympics

The Ancient Greek Empire spread from Greece through Europe.

Compare

11. Which of the gods do you think the Greeks would have been most in fear of? Use evidence from the text to explain your answer.

Vocabulary

Write down what you think these words mean and then use them in a sentence.

- 1) Civilisations
- 2) Ploy
- 3) Devious
- 4) Seize
- 5) Inspired
- 6) Plagues
- 7) Myths
- 8) Feasted

Explain

Can you explain why the piece of writing has been set out in this way?

Summarise

- Can you summarise the text in 30-40 words?
- Can you summarise the text in less than 15 words?

Sequencing

Please rewrite my sentences but in the correct order.

- 1) Each Greek city had its own laws
- 2) Greece divided other countries like Bulgaria and Turkey into cities
- 3) Greece was known for conquering other areas.