

The gods and goddesses of Greek Mythology

You may want to take NOTES (an oracle predicts a test in your future)



I Spy... every
time you see the
pencil on a slide-
take notes!



Where did Greek Mythology begin?



Long, long ago in ancient Greece, people told stories that explained the mysteries of life...



So What is Greek Mythology?

- Mythology is a collection of myths, or anonymous, traditional stories that attempt to explain beliefs and customs, the wonders of nature, and historical events.



- Myths usually deal with major issues such as the origin of humanity and the mysteries of life
- Remember that every culture has its own myths, i.e. American Indians, Mayans, Buddhists, Hindus, Africans, etc...

Why does mythology exist? What is its purpose?



To Explain the Unknown



The Greek mythology of today was the religion of yesterday...

**Long ago, the Greeks and Romans believed
in the stories we now call myths.**



**The gods and goddesses ruled the Greek
world and were believed to be directly
responsible for the success or failure of
human life.**

**(So the Greeks worshiped their gods and regularly
prayed,
gave offerings and built temples to please the gods)**

Three Important Words that Describe the Greeks

- **Anthropomorphism**: to give human form or qualities to beings or things not human, especially to gods
- **Polytheism**: the belief in many gods
- **Oral Traditions**: to pass down from generation to generation by word of mouth



The Unique Greeks

- The Greeks were distinctly different from all previous civilizations because they were the first to create gods in their own image



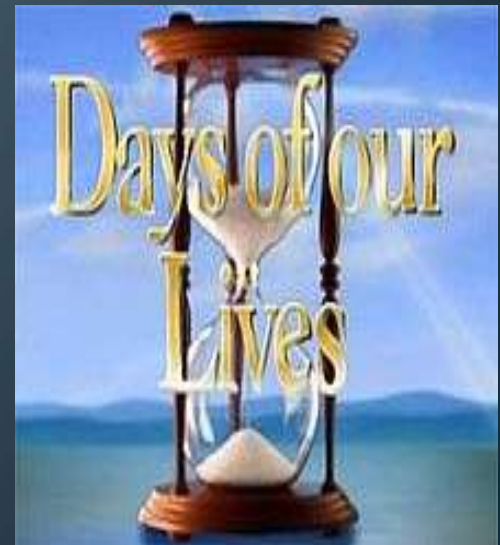
The Egyptian Sphinx was certainly not a very human-like god

The Immortal gods were also easier to relate to than previous gods

They...

- Married
- Loved
- Quarreled
- had love affairs (and children) with both gods and mortals

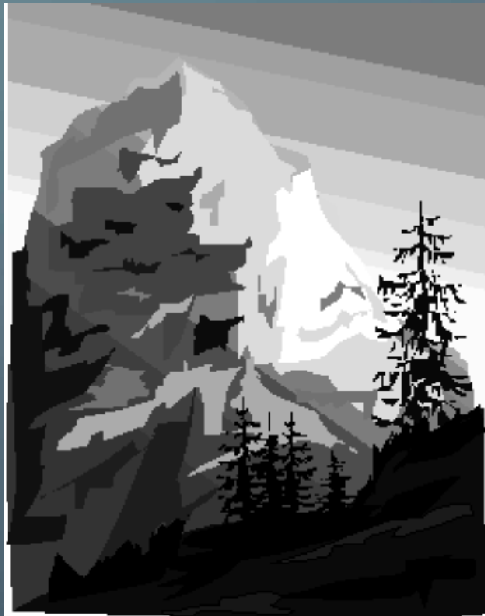
But the gods were immortal because *ichor*, not blood, ran in their veins



Mount Olympus

The gods and goddesses...

- lived at the top of Mt. Olympus in Greece behind a gate of clouds.
- ate only ambrosia and drank only nectar.
- kept an eye on the mortals down on earth, whom they could visit at any time.



Chaos

- To understand the most famous Greek gods, it's important to know where they came from. Their story begins at the beginning of time.



- At first there was only darkness, or **Chaos**..

the formless or void state preceding the creation of the universe or cosmos in the Greek creation myths, more specifically the initial "gap" created by the original separation of heaven and earth.

Then Gaea, the Earth, grew out of Chaos



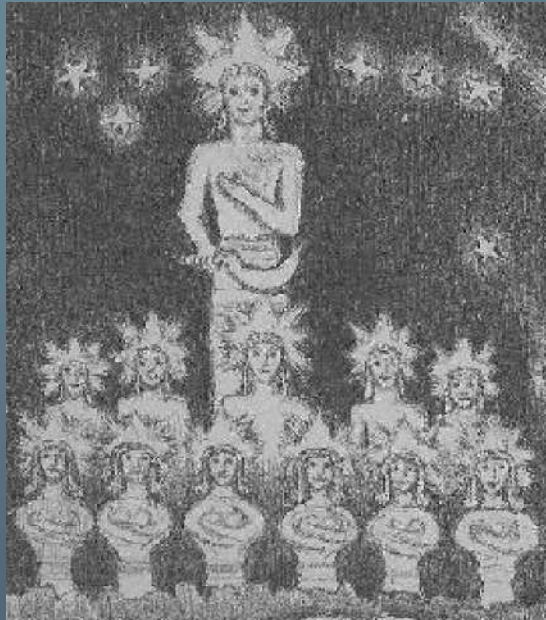
- Gaea gave birth to Oranos, the sky.
- When rain fell on Gaea, plants, animals and rivers were created.
- Gaea became Mother Earth, mother of all living things and mother of the first gods.



The Titans



- With Oranos, Gaea gave birth to 12 Titans, all powerful giants – 6 boys and 6 girls.



Atlas is the son of one of the Titans

Before the Titans were born, Gaea gave birth to...

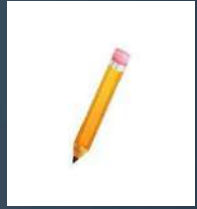
- Three huge one-eyed giants called Cyclopes



And three Hecatoncheires –
each of these monsters had
50 heads and 100 arms.



Oranos hated these ugly children and threw them away into the Underworld

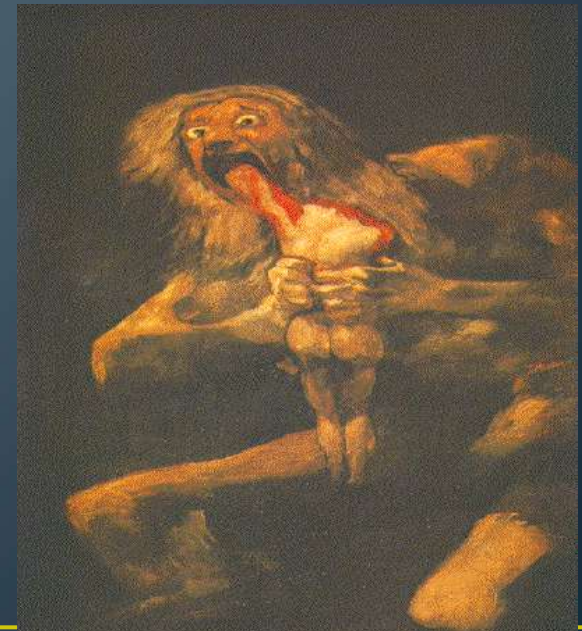


- This greatly angered Gaea and she convinced Cronus, one of the Titans, to overthrow Oranos.



Cronus succeeded in overthrowing Oranos and became the new Lord of the Universe

But Cronus worried that one of his sons would overthrow him just as he had overthrown his own father... so he swallowed each child as it was born.



This made Cronus' wife, Rhea, very angry

- Finally, she hid the youngest child, Zeus, and tricked Cronus with a rock wrapped in a blanket.



3 Steps to Victory...



1. Zeus overthrew Cronus by causing him to throw up his brothers and sisters (who had been living in the stomach of Cronus) These siblings were now fully grown.
2. Zeus also freed the imprisoned Hecatonchires and Cyclopes who were in the underworld. They were more than willing to help in the battle.
3. Two Titans – Prometheus and Epimetheus – also switched sides and helped the Olympians



The war between the old gods and the new gods lasted 10 years – but finally Cronus and the Titans were defeated.



- The rule of the Universe was divided between the 3 brothers (it is said that they rolled dice or drew straws to decide the division):



Zeus became the King of Gods & God of Heaven and Earth



Poseidon became the god of the sea



Hades became the god of the underworld

The Great Olympians

- The Cyclops built a palace on Mt. Olympus for Zeus with 12 thrones: one for each of Zeus' brothers, sisters, his children and Aphrodite, the Goddess of Love.
- The 12 great Olympians ruled from the top of Mt. Olympus forever after.



Important Mythological Figures To Know

(write these down, we may not cover all of them in class)



HeraHermesPoseidonErosAtlas
CerebusMedusaPandoraTitansZeus
HephaestusHadesDionysusOlympusPrometheus
HestiaRheaEpimetheusAresChaos
AphroditeDemeterArtemisAthenaPersephone

We will more closely
examine the family
tree of the Greek
gods and goddesses
in future classes 😊

