

Bellwork

- With your table answer this question.
- Are the Greek Gods real?
- Why or Why Not?



Objective

- I will be able to explain the different aspects of the Ancient Greek Religion by creating a poster and taking notes on the 4 aspects of Ancient Greek Religion.

Vocab

Impact

- o have a strong effect on someone or something.

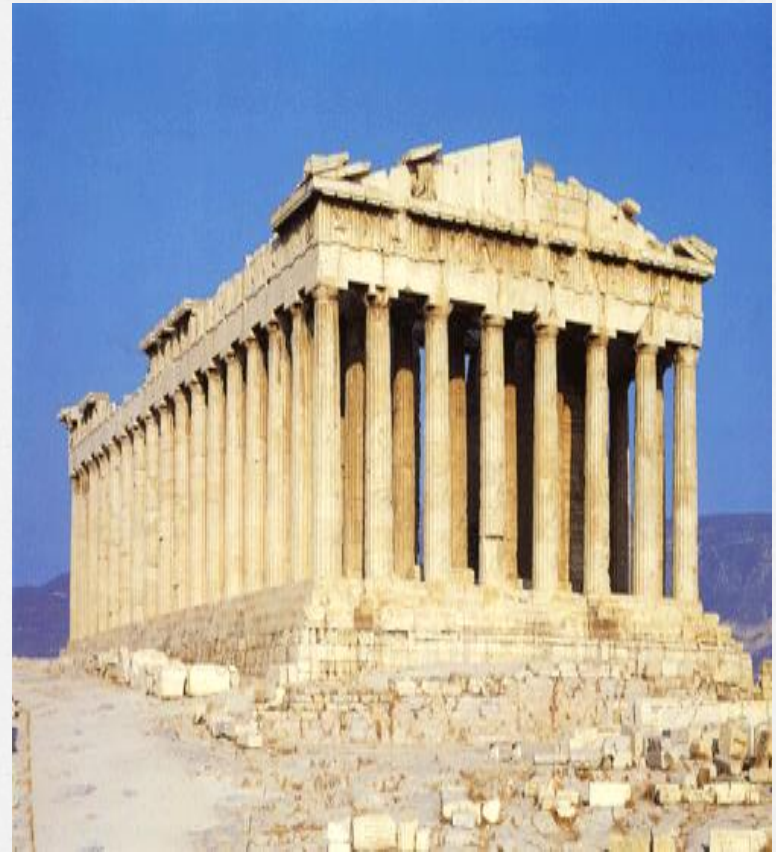


Sacred

- o connected with God (or the gods) or dedicated to a religious purpose



What are four ways Religion has impacted Ancient Greek life?



Ancient Greek Religion Text

- o In the ancient Greek world, religion was personal, direct, and present in all areas of life. With formal rituals which included animal sacrifices and myths to explain the how humans came to the Earth and give the gods a human face, temples which dominated the landscape, city festivals and national sporting and artistic competitions, religion was never far from the mind of an ancient Greek.
- o While the individual may have made up their own mind on of their religious belief and some may have not believed in religion at all, certain fundamentals must have been sufficiently widespread in order for Greek government and society to function: the gods existed, they could influence human affairs, and they welcomed and responded to acts of worship

PowerPoint Directions

- o Your PowerPoint will go over either Gods, Temples Rituals and Priests, Mysteries and Oracles, or Festivals and Games
- o PowerPoint will be no longer than 3 Slides
- o Must Include
- o 4 ways your part of Greek Religion impacted Greek Life
- o Pictures

Greek Gods



Greek Gods

- o Polytheistic Greek religion had a lot of gods, each representing a certain aspect of humans, and even ideas such as justice and wisdom could have their own personification. The most important gods, though, were the Olympian gods led by Zeus. These were Athena, Apollo, Poseidon, Hermes, Hera, Aphrodite, Demeter, Ares, Artemis, Hades, Hephaestus, and Dionysus. These gods were believed to live on Mt. Olympus and would have been recognized across Greece.
- o In the Greek imagination, literature, and art, the gods were given human bodies and characters - both good and bad - and just as ordinary men and women, they married, had children), fought, and in the stories of Greek mythology they directly interfered with humans. These traditions were first recounted only orally as there was no sacred text in Greek religion.
- o GODS WERE CALLED UPON FOR HELP IN PARTICULAR SITUATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARES DURING WAR AND HERA FOR WEDDINGS.
- o Gods became representatives of cities, for example, Aphrodite for Corinth and Helios for Rhodes, and were called upon for help in particular situations, for example, Ares during war and Hera for weddings.

Temple, Rituals, and Priests



Temples, Rituals, Priests

- o The temple (naos - meaning living place in reference to the belief that the god lived in that place, or at least temporarily visited during rituals) was the place where, on special occasions, religion took on a more formal tone. Gods were worshipped at sacred sites and temples in all major Greek communities in ceremonies carried out by priests and their attendants.
- o At first, sacred sites were merely a simple altar in a designated area, but over time massive temples came to be built in honor of a particular god and these usually housed statue of the god, most famously the huge statue of Athena in the Parthenon of Athens or Zeus at Olympia. In time, a whole complex of temples to lesser gods could spring up around the main temple, creating a large sacred complex, often built on an acropolis dominating a city or surrounding area. This sacred area (temenos) was separated from the rest of the community by a symbolic gate, and in fact it was believed that this area belonged to the particular god in question. Sacred sites also received donations of money and dedications of statues, fountains and even buildings from the faithful, often to celebrate a great military victory and give thanks to the gods, and larger sanctuaries also had permanent caretakers (neokoroi) who were responsible for the upkeep of the site.

Temples, Rituals, Priests Continued

- o The temple itself, though, was not used during religious practices as these were carried out at a designated altar outside the temple. Ancient authors often did not go into detail of religious ceremonies and rites as if these were too sacred to be shared in the written word. What we do know is that the most common religious practices were sacrifice, all to the use of prayers in honor of the god. The animals sacrificed were usually pigs, sheep, goats or cows. The meat was then either burnt completely or cooked, with part offered to the god and the rest eaten by some or all of the worshippers or taken away to be eaten later.
- o Priests then, gave the religious ceremonies and delivered prayers. Priests served a specific god but they were not necessarily religious experts. For questions, a citizen could ask a state official, who was knowledgeable in religious affairs. Women could also be priests, which is perhaps surprising given their lack of any other public role in Greek society.

Mysteries and Oracles



Mysteries and Oracles

- o In addition to the formal and public religious ceremonies there were also many rites which were open to and known only by the people that performed them, the most famous example being the Mysteries of Eleusis. In these closed groups, members believed that certain activities gave spiritual benefits, amongst them a better after-life.
- o Places could also acquire a divine connection; the great oracles such as that of Apollo at Delphi and Zeus at Dodona may well have begun as places considered particularly good to receive signs from the gods. Such places became hugely important centers with their priest oracles consulted by both individuals and city-states so that this advice could help them in the future.

Festivals and Games



Festivals and Games

- o Athletic Games and competitions in music (especially playing the kithara and lyre) and theatre (both tragedy and comedy) were held during festivals such as the City Dionysia of Athens and the PanHellenic games at the most important sacred sites of Olympia, Delphi, Nemea, and Isthmia to honor a particular god. These events were attended by visitors from all over Greece. Illustrating their sacred status, war was not allowed during these events and pilgrims were guaranteed free-passage across Greece.

Comparison

- Compare the Way Ancient Greeks practiced Religion to the Way you practice Religion today.