

Scheme of Learning: Heracles (The Universal Hero)

Topic Sequence:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gods and Goddesses	Heracles: Universal Hero	Religion in the City	Myth and the City	Festivals	Myths and Symbols of Power	Death and Burial	Journey to the Underworld

Topic Overview:

This is the second topic of the GCSE Classical Civilisations course, and the main aim is to provide a thorough understanding of the life of Heracles. This is a key topic because it requires knowledge about key gods and goddesses from the first topic, but also is pupils first introduction to Greek heroes in the form of Heracles. Pupils need to have an understanding of what defines a hero, of Heracles' early life, his famous labours or trials, and his death. The topic explores Heracles' connection to Rome through the second half of his life: his visit to Italy during his tenth labour, and his death. It is the first topic to have Prescribed Sources and pupils will be introduced to these. What is also important is how pupils will need to use the skills they developed in the first topic about identifying gods in art to identify Heracles' labours from the metopes from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.

Lesson Sequence:

The lessons have been sequenced to build pupils' understanding and knowledge of a key aspect of Ancient Greek, and to a lesser extent Roman, mythology and that is the world of the Hero. Throughout the course, pupils will encounter Greek and Roman heroes, from Theseus to Aeneas to Romulus, and will need to understand their stories, but also their meaning to the Greeks and Romans. This is a good point in the course to introduce the most memorable of heroes, Heracles, as it builds on the knowledge pupils now have of the Gods and Goddesses and their involvement in human life.

The topic starts, as all further topics will do, with an overview lesson built around a key document that will be used throughout the topic, the knowledge map on Heracles. It is important to have this initial lesson that gives pupils the outline of what they will be studying in this topic. By having this overview, pupils will then be able to place their further learning in context of the whole thing, giving them greater understanding. This is simply done through reading and comprehension questions.

The first series of lessons explore Heracles' birth, early-life, and relationship to the gods, particularly Zeus and Hera. This enables the pupils to grasp quickly that Heracles life is often very much out of his control, and that events lead him to taking on his famous twelve labours. An understanding of this journey is critical if pupils are to understand *why* Heracles must take on the labours.

The next sequence of lessons explores the twelve labours in detail. Pupils have to build up a knowledge of each labour, and must be able to recall key information about each one. The next few lessons are about deepening pupil's understanding by using the labours in a variety of different ways through getting them to discuss them in terms of challenge and danger, identifying them in art, and in the key prescribed sources of the metopes from the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.

The final sequence of lessons sees the story of Heracles shift from the Greek perspective to the Roman one, and explore his connection to Rome. This is done through exploring some key stories around Cacus and Nessus, and how both of these had an influence on Roman culture. Much of the stories will be explored through the Prescribed Sources. The death of Hercules is explored here through the Roman version of the story and will see Hercules ascend to the Gods.

Sequence of Lessons:

1	Heracles (Greece) – Overview of Topic (Knowledge Map)
2	Heracles (Greece) – Birth and Early-Life
3	Heracles (Greece) – Twelve Labours
4	Heracles (Greece) – Twelve Labours (Prioritising)
5	Heracles (Greece) – Twelve Labours (Images)
6	Heracles (Greece) – Metopes (Temple of Zeus, Olympia)
7	Hercules (Rome) – Story of Cacus
8	Hercules (Rome) – Cult of Hercules
9	Hercules (Rome) – Story of Nessus/Death of Hercules
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Topic Resources:

Knowledge Map:	2. Knowledge Map: Heracles	Prescribed Sources:	2. Prescribed Sources: Heracles
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Assessment:

Knowledge:	28 question knowledge test
Application of Knowledge:	Two exam questions: one on identifying a god/goddess, and one on Heracles' metopes all worth 10 marks.

Supportive Reading:

Heroes Stephen Fry	Chapter on Heracles