

Scheme of Learning: Festivals

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 fifth topic of the GCSE Classical Civilisations course, and the aim is to provide pupils with a thorough understanding of how festivals played such an intrinsic part in Greek and Roman life. Unlike modern times, Ancient Greece and Rome did not have weekends, but did have 140 days a year set aside for religious festivals and celebrations. Religious festivals are a major feature of the ancient world's calendars, and is the first real opportunity for pupils to study ancient society. The pupils will study two Greek festivals: the Great Panathenaia and the City Dionysia; and two Roman festivals: Lupercalia and Saturnalia. Pupils will study the purpose of each festival, what happened during each festival, and why they were such an integral part of religious and societal life. The topic very much builds on the knowledge about Athena and Dionysus, and their knowledge about temples such as the Parthenon. Pupils will study the Parthenon in even greater depth by studying the ionic frieze. The pupils are also introduced to new Roman gods and festivals.

Lesson Sequence:

The lessons have been sequenced carefully to build pupils understanding of the festivals before applying this knowledge to analysing temple decorations. The first lesson, similarly for all topics, asks pupils to gain a general understanding of the two Greek festivals: the Great Panathenaia and the City Dionysia. They do this through exploring the knowledge map that accompanies this topic and forms the backbone of the topic's lessons. The aim is for pupils to gain an initial understanding of the festivals origins and content. It will also introduce the pupils to some key Tier 3 vocabulary.

The next sequence of lessons will focus on learning about the Great Panathenaia in greater depth. The first lesson looks at the sporting contests in the Great Panathenaia, and once pupils have an understanding of them they apply this knowledge to the analysis of Greek amphorae, the prizes awarded at the festival. There is also an opportunity to bring in an extract from the Iliad by Homer by examining the chapter on the funeral games of Patroclus which contain similar sporting contests to the festival. Pupils will develop an understanding of just how brutal some of these sporting contests were.

The sequence of lessons then move to the other contests within the Great Panathenaia, and then to the procession and how it involved the entirety of Athens. Once pupils have a knowledge of the procession, they then examine the impressive ionic frieze of the Parthenon which depicts the entirety of the procession, culminating in the presentation of the peplos to Athena.

It is at this stage that the course switches to look at the second Athenian festival: the City Dionysia. Similarly to how pupils developed their knowledge of the Great Panathenaia, pupils will learn about its origins and then the events of the festival. The festival is very different in terms of content to the previous one, with the focus of the festival is theatre and performance. Pupils will learn the difference between comedy and tragedy, and learn of key Greek playwrights such as Aristophanes.

The final sequence of lessons focus sees a switch to the Roman festivals of Lupercalia and Saturnalia. Pupils will learn the origins of each festival and the key events of each one. They will understand that they were very different to the grand festivals of Athens, but they still carry such immense importance. There is a need for pupils to be able to compare Greek and Roman festivals. At the end of this topic, pupils should have a greater understanding of how religion and society were so intrinsically linked, and how the Gods and Goddesses of Greece and Rome formed the basis of ancient leisure time.

Sequence of Lessons:

1	Festivals Lesson 1 – Greece (Overview)
2	Festivals Lesson 2 – Panathenaia (Amphorae)
3	Festivals Lesson 1 – Panathenaia (Sporting Contests)
4	Festivals Lesson 4 – Panathenaia (Contests)
5	Festivals Lesson 5 – Panathenaia (Procession)
6	Festivals Lesson 6 – Panathenaia (Panathenaic Frieze)
7	Festivals Lesson 7 – City Dionysia (Origins)
8	Festivals Lesson 8 – City Dionysia (Plays)
9	Festivals Lesson 9 – Rome (Overview)
10	Festivals Lesson 10 – Lupercalia
11	Festivals Lesson 11 – Saturnalia
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Topic Resources:

Knowledge Map:	9. Knowledge Map: Festivals (Ancient Greece)	Prescribed Sources:	5. Prescribed Sources: Festivals
	10. Knowledge Map: Festivals (Ancient Rome)		

Assessment:

Knowledge:	19 question knowledge test
Application of Knowledge:	Three exam questions: one on identifying a god/goddess, on eon Heracles labours, and one on festivals (totalling 17 marks)

Supportive Reading:

The Iliad Homer	Funeral Games of Patroclus