



WALT DISNEY Pictures
presents

HERCULES

S T U D Y



G U I D E

Aimed at primary pupils, the ideas in this study guide are intended as starting points for a cross-curricular project on the film 'Hercules' at Key Stage 1 and 2. Many curriculum areas are covered although the focus is on History Study Unit 4 - The ancient Greeks and English.

The activities seek to complement and extend the pleasure the children will have derived from the visit to the cinema and from watching the BBC programme, whilst at the same time meeting some of the requirements of the National Curriculum and Scottish Guidelines.

The tables provided on the inside back cover can be used for planning and record keeping. This page also has an ornate Greek border. Simply cover up the tables and photocopy to create special sheets for the children to write up their work.

FILM SYNOPSIS

'Hercules' is Disney's new animated blockbuster, based on the original drawings of British artist Gerald Scarfe and featuring Danny DeVito and James Woods among the talented voice cast.

All the gods gather on Mount Olympus to celebrate the birth of Zeus' son, Hercules. Everyone is elated except for Hades, Lord of the Underworld, who has been planning a hostile take-over of the cosmos. Hades discovers that only Hercules will stand in the way of his scheme, and so he sends his bungling henchmen, Pain and Panic, to get rid of the baby god. However, they botch the job, and Hercules is left half-god, half-mortal.

In order to rejoin the gods on Mount Olympus, Hercules must become a true hero - but, as he goes round ridding the planet of monsters and becoming the biggest superstar in history, he learns that being a true hero involves something more...

UK release date: 10th October 1997

Certificate: U

Running time: 91 minutes

Distributed by: Buena Vista International (UK) Ltd.



WHERE IS GREECE?

The film 'Hercules' is set in Ancient Greece. Greece is a country in Europe. Look at the two maps on page 15, and then photocopy them to use with the following tasks.



Using books/atlasses, try and find out which piece of land on the map of Europe is Greece. Write it down and colour it in. Next:



Athens is the capital of Greece. Find out where it is and mark it on the map of Greece.



Write down the names of the seas that surround Greece. Colour these in.



Mark down on the map of Europe the country and town in which you live. Colour it in a different colour to that of Greece.



Try and find out roughly how many miles away Greece is from Great Britain and your home town?



If it took you 2 hours to travel to Greece, at what speed would you have to travel (miles per hour)? What if it took you 3 hours or 5 hours? Fill in the table below writing down the name of the place you live in the gap.

		Time taken	Miles per hour
_____	to Athens	2 hours	
_____	to Athens	3 hours	
_____	to Athens	4 hours	
_____	to Athens	5 hours	



On the map of Europe, draw a line showing the quickest route between Greece and your home town. How many different countries and oceans would you have to travel across?



Now try this using the LONGEST route possible! Write your results down in the table below.

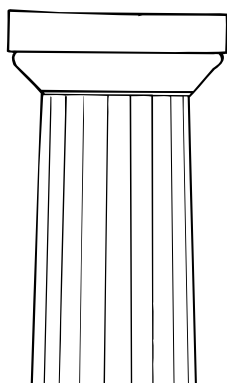
As you go through this guide you will notice the names of other Greek places. When you read the names try and locate them and mark them on the map.

ATHENS

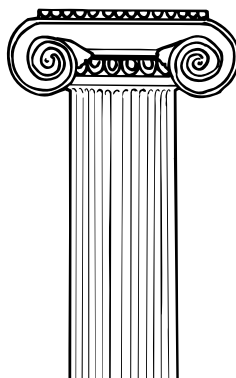


GREEK STYLE

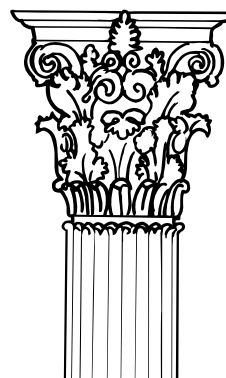
The images we see in the film 'Hercules' show Greece thousands of years ago and Greece today has changed a lot. Some of the buildings remain - the ruins of the Parthenon for example. Many of the new buildings are constructed using the styles of historical times. These will include elegant columns - built to support temple archways. Three styles of column are shown below:



DORIC



IONIC



CORINTHIAN



Look for examples of Greek-style architecture in your local town or village. Older town halls for example usually reveal signs of Greek influence. Take photographs or draw the buildings to take back with you to school.

GREECE TODAY



In your classroom start to collect information about Greece using books you find in the library. Ask your local travel agent if you may take home old travel brochures featuring Greece. If you have access to the INTERNET, find out if you can access information on Greece. Do any of the CD ROM's in school have information on Greece?



Find out if anyone in your class or family has visited Greece. Ask them to bring in souvenirs, photos or postcards.



Start your own scrapbook about Greece using pictures from the travel brochures. Write up information on the computer to put in your scrapbook.



By looking in travel brochures find out what the average temperature in Greece is each month compared to Britain. What about rainfall?

OR - You could draw a bar-chart comparing the temperature in Greece and Britain each day.

Find these out by looking in a daily newspaper.



How large is Greece?



How many people live there?



What are the traditional dishes of Greece? (CLUE: Moussaka is mentioned in the film.) Look for foods associated with Greece in your local supermarket.



What is the traditional costume of Greece?



PARTHENON

WHAT IS A MYTH?

The story of Hercules is a myth. This means that it probably never really happened and is merely just that - a story.

Myths are powerful stories from many years ago which every country and culture seems to have. The themes in these stories usually include the fight between good and evil and contain a moral code or rules. Characters can be gods, goddesses, animals and humans with special powers. These stories have no basis in fact or a natural explanation.

These stories have survived throughout the years. Before the printed word, storytellers let the tales be known and songs or ballads were written about the deeds of the characters in the tales.

The first known myth was told in 2,300 BC - about 1,000 years before the Greek myths began. This told the story of Gilgamesh and was written on clay tablets. You can see fragments of this in the British Museum.



TASK

There are many other Greek myths that you could find out about. Some of these are mentioned in the film 'Hercules' by Hercules' trainer Phil who even claims to have trained the mythological heroes Jason and Perseus himself! These myths include:



King Midas and the Golden Touch



Pandora's Box



Jason and the Golden Fleece



Perseus and the Gorgon



Pegasus and Bellerophon

Choose one of the myths above (or any others that you can find out about) and write the story. Read your story back to your class. If you are brave enough you may even want to act out a myth. You could use mime and have a narrator to explain the story or act the story out using words as well as actions.

TASK

You may want to look at myths from Great Britain.

These could include stories such as:



Saint George and the Dragon



The Loch Ness Monster



Beowulf and Grendel

OR, myths from other cultures:



Anansi - Caribbean



Rama & Sita - India

Can you find out about any local myths and legends from your town - is there a building that is haunted or an old tale that is known by people in your area? Ask your family for help and visit your local library and ask them for information so that you can find out as much as possible.



WHO WERE THE GODS?

Ancient Greek religion tried to explain how the world began - as the Muses also do at the beginning of the film 'Hercules'. Mother Earth formed the world and also created the gods and goddesses. However, monsters and giants like the Titans were also created and the world was in chaos until Zeus fought the Titans and won, becoming King of the gods.



The Greek myths usually featured gods and goddesses - each responsible for some part of everyday life. People relied on these stories of the gods rather than upon actual historical evidence when they wanted to learn about the past. People prayed to whichever one was most relevant to them - e.g. protecting the harvest, keeping people safe in wartime etc. Worshippers believed that the gods would look after them if they offered them food from their harvests and animal sacrifices.

The gods were immortal (this meant that they lived forever) and had supernatural powers such as

strength. They lived on top of Mount Olympus - the highest mountain in northern Greece in between Thessaly and Macedonia).

THE GALLERY OF THE GODS: WHO'S WHO?

ZEUS - King of the gods and Lord of the weather. Married to Hera. Domineering and powerful but seen as more humorous in the film. Carries thunderbolts and an eagle as his symbols.

HERA - Queen of the gods. Goddess of marriage and women. Seen as Hercules' mother in the film but in Greek mythology his mother was a human being.

ATHENE - Goddess of wisdom and war. Always wore armour and has the owl as her symbol. (Athens is named after her.)

HADES - Ruler of the Underworld - the Kingdom of the dead. Gloomy and frightening. Had a helmet which made him invisible.

POSIEDON - Lord of the seas from an underwater palace. Controlled storms, sea monsters and earthquakes.

APOLLO - God of light, truth, music, poetry, science and healing. Told the future and carried a bow and arrows.

HEPHAESTOS - The blacksmith who made supernaturally powerful weapons. Often seen with a hammer, tongs and an axe.

APHRODITE - Goddess of love and beauty. Had a magic golden belt which made her irresistible.

DEMETER - Goddess of plants and harvest - responsible for growth and fertility of crops.

EROS - Son of Aphrodite - made people fall in love by shooting them with his golden bow.

HERMES - Messenger of the gods. God of travellers and thieves. Had a winged helmet and sandals.

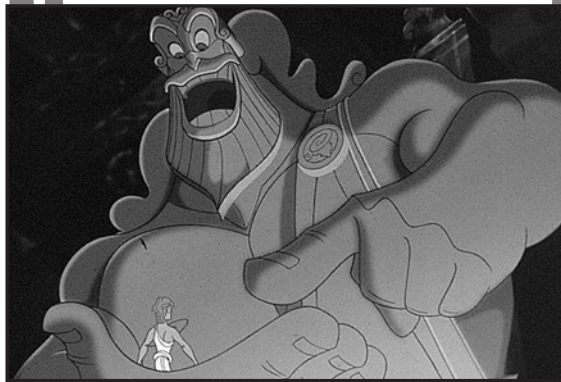
THE MUSES - These were the goddesses of the arts.

You may find in your research that some of the names of the gods are different. This is because both the Greek and Roman names of each god can be used. Hercules is the Roman name of the god whilst his Greek name is Heracles.

THESSALY MACEDONIA



MOUNT OLYMPUS



FASK You are shown what the Disney animators think some of the gods and goddesses look like in the film. You can also see interpretations of them on pieces of pottery made thousands of years ago. What do YOU think they would have looked like? Using the descriptions given on page 4, try and draw your interpretations of the gods.

When all the class have finished their drawings, compare them and choose the most creative picture of each god and goddess. Now create your own 'pantheon' or gallery of the gods by displaying your chosen pictures on your classroom wall. Make columns for each god to stand between out of corrugated card painted white.

FASK MODERN DAY HEROES

If you have room left in your classroom you could make up a gallery of modern day heroes. Nominate people you think deserve to be called heroes today because of their abilities or personality - these could be famous people - Linford Christie for example or people that you know personally - the lollipop lady. Use pictures from magazines, photographs or drawings to create your display. You could even make a huge collage that uses all these items.

FASK Write an advert asking for the services of a hero to take on a fearsome monster of your choice. What kind of qualities would he or she need to have?

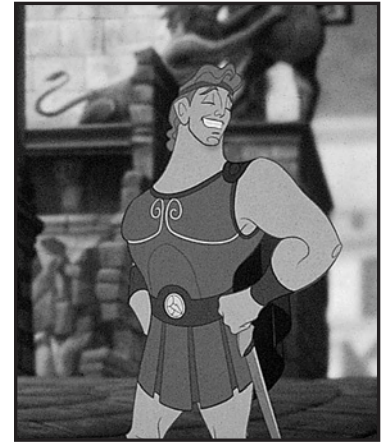


HERCULES - THE MYTH BEHIND THE MAN

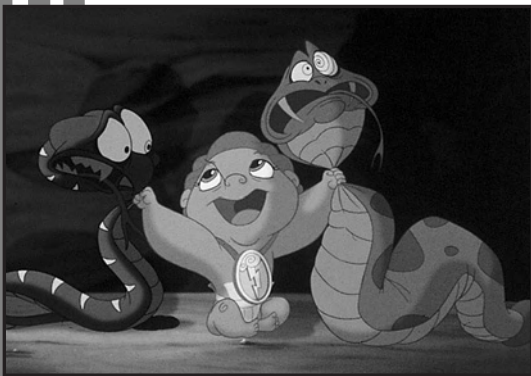
The myth of Hercules was first written down in the year 1,000 BC. There are many different versions of the story around. This is because it is so old and details have changed throughout the years as different storytellers have told the story. This is a little bit like 'Chinese Whispers' - the game played when you sit in a circle and whisper a story or sentence to the person sitting next to you. This is passed on around the circle and by the time the story reaches you once more, it may have changed due to people hearing it incorrectly or changing bits slightly.



Play a game of Chinese Whispers as a class. See how each whisper changes. Write the whispers down so you can see how they changed.



HERCULES AND THE TWELVE LABOURS

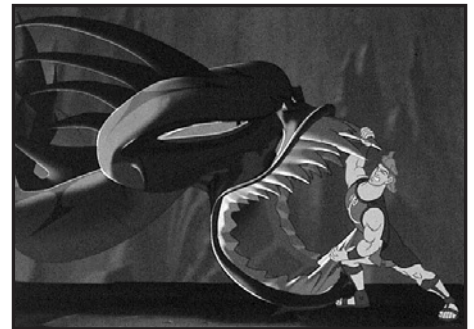


Hercules was the son of Zeus and Alcmene. Alcmene was a human which meant that Hercules was a demi-god (half god and half human). When he was born, Zeus' wife, Hera, was so jealous that she sent two deadly snakes to the baby Herc's cradle to kill him. Hercules strangled them both, amazing everyone with his incredible power of strength.

Zeus was told in a prophecy that the only way to save the world from disaster was through Hercules. Alcmene had Hercules trained in all the arts required in a warrior - fencing, wrestling, charioteering etc. so that he could protect himself.

He was given 12 terrible tasks or labours. If he completed them, he would be made a god and could join his father up on Mount Olympus. These tasks are listed below:

1. KILL THE NEMEAN LION
2. DESTROY THE LERNAEAN HYDRA
3. CAPTURE THE CERYNITIAN DEER
4. TRAP THE ERYMANTHIAN BOAR
5. CLEAN THE STABLES OF KING AUGEIAS IN ONE DAY
6. DESTROY THE STYMPHALIAN BIRDS
7. CAPTURE THE CRETAN BULL
8. ROUND UP THE MAN-EATING MARES OF KING DIOMEDES
9. STEAL THE BELT OF QUEEN HIPPOLYTE
10. ROUND UP THE CATTLE OF GERYON
11. COLLECT THE APPLES OF THE HESPERIDES
12. CAPTURE CERBEROS FROM THE UNDERWORLD



Hercules successfully performed all 12 labours. But again the vengeful Hera tried to kill him - this time by poison. However, rather than dying, Hercules finally became a god and joined his father Zeus on Mount Olympus.



MOUNT OLYMPUS



Try and find out more about the tasks Hercules had to perform. With a partner, choose one of the labours and write up what you find out to tell to the rest of the class. Draw a picture of Hercules performing the labour you have chosen.



Make your own storyboard up showing the life of Hercules. (This looks like a cartoon strip.) Once finished, the whole class could make a huge display covering each wall of the classroom demonstrating the 12 labours. Use the Greek alphabet shown on page 10 to write the titles of the display.

OR: Make up a poem celebrating the life of Hercules or even a musical piece - a rap for example - as the Muses do in the film.

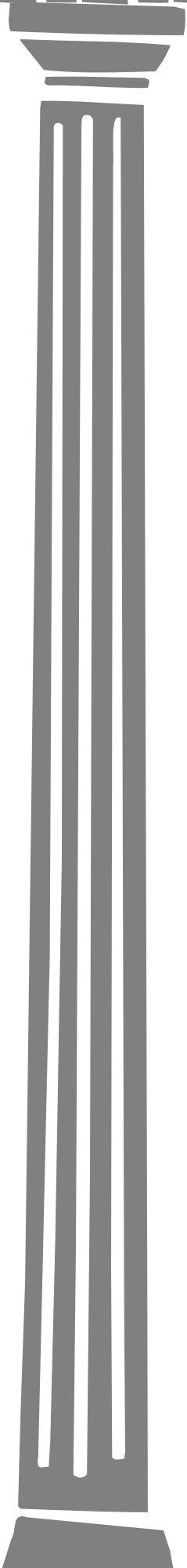
OR: Make up your own branch programme on a computer showing the life of Hercules. This can be made into a game with classmates choosing what will happen next to Hercules on his quest for immortality.

Disney's version has been altered to appeal to children today. They have taken out all the gruesome bits unsuitable for a younger audience and made it much more modern. To find out about Hercules, the filmmakers spent nine months reading books on mythology and visited Greece to get a feel for the style and history of the country.

Some parts of the story were also altered to make the myth more understandable. However much of the main story remains. For example, when the Muses sing the song 'Zero To Hero', we see Hercules fighting with the boar, the birds and the lion from the 12 Labours.

Now that you have read the original myth, compare this to the Disney version. What are the differences? What remains the same? Have Disney added any new characters for example? Write your comparisons in the boxes below.

IN DISNEY'S 'HERCULES'	IN THE ORIGINAL MYTH



CHARACTERISATION: THE GOOD GUYS AND THE BAD GUYS

In 'Hercules', as with every Disney film, we have the good guys and the bad guys. You can normally tell the difference between the two due to the way they look, the way they dress, the lighting/colours used and the way they sound. Sometimes it is a little harder to tell. Halfway through a film, a person may change in character due to events that have occurred. Take Meg for example. At the beginning of the film, Meg works for the evil Hades and is very suspicious of Hercules. As she gets to find out more about Hercules however, she warms towards him and turns her back on the work she has been carrying out for Hades.



Using the chart below, write down those characters in the box who fit into each category. How can we tell that these characters are good or bad?

GOOD GUYS	BAD GUYS	INBETWEENERS

Hercules, Megara, Pegasus, Phil, Zeus, Amphitryon, Alcmene, Hades, The Muses, The Fates, Pain, Panic, Nessus the centaur



Take the hot seat! Take on the role of one of the characters from the film 'Hercules', e.g. Hera. Find out as much as you can about your character and then put yourself in the hot seat. The rest of the class will ask you questions about why you acted in the way you did and you will have to defend your actions!



THE PLACES

The animators working on the backgrounds for the film 'Hercules' have drawn them in particular ways to influence the way we feel about them. Bad places were coloured in monochromatic greys and blues whereas the good places were colour saturated and bright. Each background took an average of 53 hours to paint and there were 1,601 backgrounds used in the film altogether. Below we describe four of the places seen.

THE UNDERWORLD: This is coloured in using blues and greys. It is the kind of place that looks as if it would hurt you with its gaping holes and sharp spiky rocks. This is where Hades lives and is in charge of all the dead people whose bodies are cast into the river once they have passed on. The place is guarded by Cerberus - the savage three-headed dog.



MOUNT OLYMPUS: (As shown on page 4.) This was coloured in using soft pinks, violets and blues. The place has a soft glow around it and looks - in contrast to the Underworld - very soft and comfortable. The palace itself is drawn with soft flowing strokes with columns and curves all around. This is where the gods and goddesses live and is an ever-drifting world of clouds.



THEBES - 'THE BIG OLIVE': Coloured-in grey. Looks very dirty and weathered after all the catastrophes that have occurred there. Lots of shadows and dark corners for people to hide in with graffiti on the walls. In contrast to the soft flowing contours of the countryside, the city - based on a modern day skyscraper-filled town of America - is drawn with many straight vertical lines and huge towering structures.

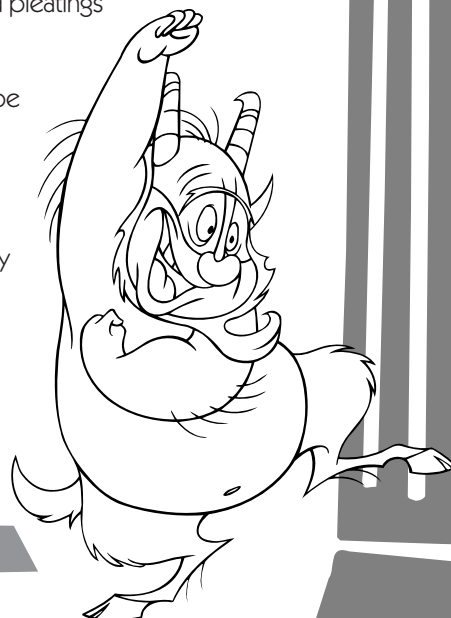
HERC'S HOME VILLAGE: The village where Hercules grows up with his foster parents Amphytrion and Alcmene looks and sounds like a typical Greek village. It is very green with shades of pink and yellow, giving an impression of heat. Crickets can be heard chirping in the background. It is very different to Thebes. The olive trees in the countryside are painted a terracotta shade - an orangey-red colour used in ancient Greek pottery. They are drawn with curved trunks which look like the draped pleatings and folds of Greek dress.

TASK

Choose a place that you would like to draw in school - this could be your classroom, the dinner hall or the playground for example.

You are going to draw the area in two ways. Try and make one drawing to make the place look very warm and inviting - use soft, flowing strokes of the pencil and colour it in using warm colours. In your next drawing make the place look very unwelcoming and scary! Use sharp, spiky strokes and cold, shadowy colours.

Pin your drawings up on the wall and as a class compare them to see if you have achieved your aim.



MOUNT OLYMPUS



THEBES

THE GREEK ALPHABET - AS EASY AS (A,B,C!)

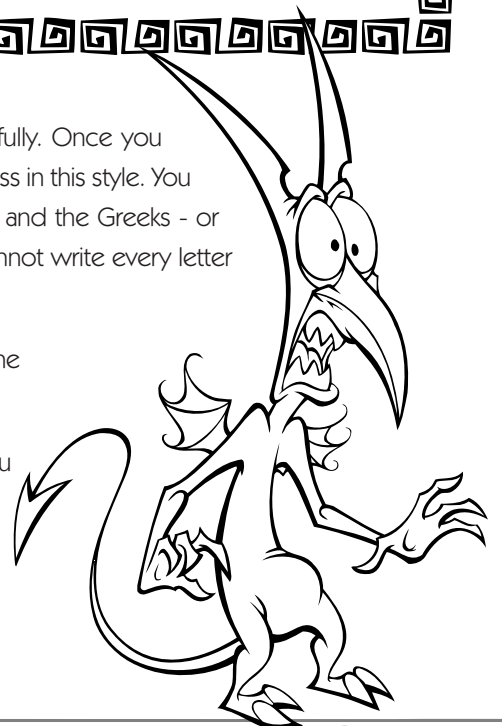
Shown on this page is the Greek alphabet. This looks quite similar to the English alphabet although, if you look closely, there are differences. For example, there are 24 letters in the Greek alphabet - how many are there in the English alphabet? Some letters are also missing - can you work out which these are?

Α	Alpha	a	Ν	Nu	n
Β	Beta	b	Ξ	Xi	x or ks
Γ	Gamma	g	Ο	Omicron	o
Δ	Delta	d	Π	Pi	p
Ε	Epsilon	e	Ρ	Rho	r
Ζ	Zeta	z	Σ	Sigma	s
Η	Eta	e or ay	Τ	Tau	t
Θ	Theta	th	Υ	Upsilon	u or oo
Ι	Iota	i	Φ	Phi	f or ph
Κ	Kappa	k	Χ	Chi	ch
Λ	Lambda	l	Ψ	Psi	ps
Μ	Mu	m	Ω	Omega	oh

TASK Practice drawing each letter of the alphabet carefully. Once you have got the hang of it, write your name and address in this style. You can then use the alphabet to illustrate your work on Hercules and the Greeks - or even to write secret letters to your friends! You may find that you cannot write every letter - there is not an 'h sound' for example.

TASK Now try to write the name of your school using the Greek alphabet.

Practice saying the names of each letter - get a friend to test you to see how many you remember.





Hercules has to go through many hours of training before Phil, his trainer, thinks he is ready to start being a hero. He has to practice running, jumping, throwing etc. These are all the types of events that were included in the ancient Olympic Games. In fact it was rumoured that Hercules himself competed in the first Games.

**WHEN WERE THE FIRST GAMES HELD?
WHY DO WE HAVE THE OLYMPIC GAMES?
WERE THE ANCIENT OLYMPIC GAMES THE SAME
AS THE GAMES WE HAVE TODAY?**

The first Games were held in the year 776 BC at Olympia in honour of Zeus. They were held every four years until 1,000 years later in the 4th century - 396 AD when they were banned.

The Olympic Games were restarted in 1896 in Athens and have been going ever since. It is a chance for the top athletes in every country in the world to compete against each other in various sporting activities.

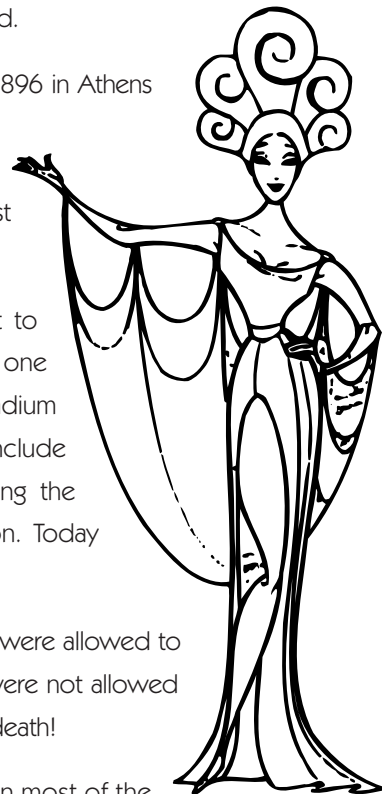
The ancient Games were very different to the event today. They began with only one activity - running the length of the stadium (192.3 metres) and expanded to include

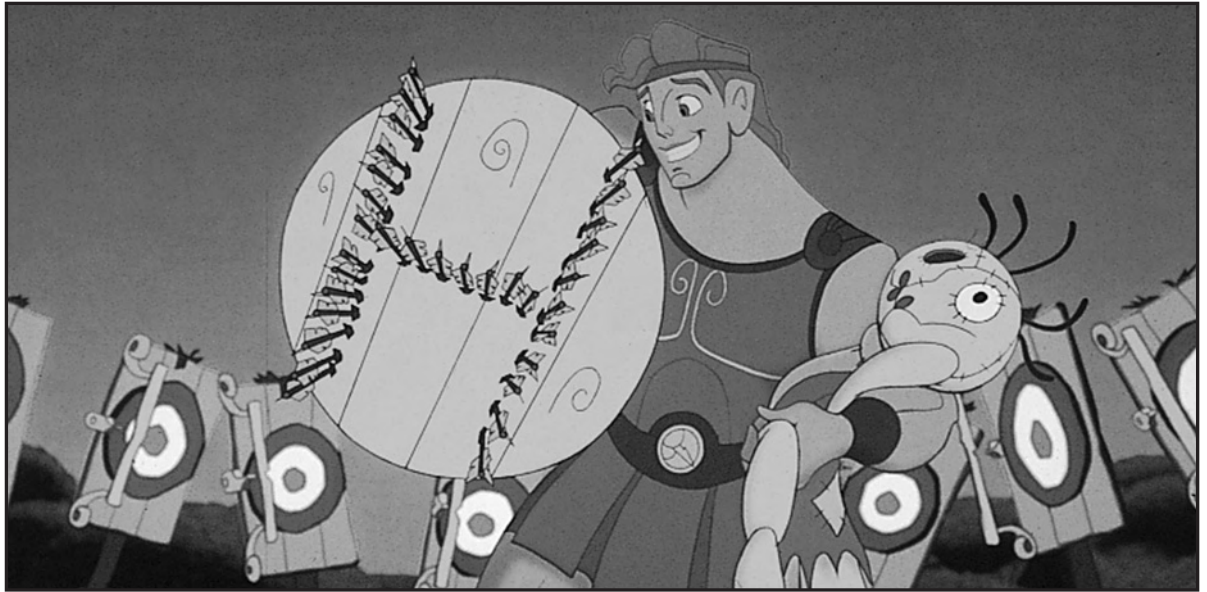
the Pentathlon. This contained five events - long jump, throwing the javelin, 200 metre sprint, the discus and a wrestling competition. Today there are many more events - 97 for women and 163 for men.

Another big difference was the fact that in ancient times only men were allowed to compete. Not only were women not allowed to take part, they were not allowed to watch! Those who tried and were caught were punished - by death!

Competitors in the ancient Games would not wear any clothes in most of the events - something that definitely would not be allowed today! Much worse was the type of clothing worn in running races - heavy armour...







The prize for those who won included olive wreaths and palm branches. Today, winners receive medals.





TASK Hold your own Olympic Games! As a class, year or even as a whole school put on your own championships. Events could include high jump, relay, javelin etc. or you could have your own fun games with events such as the egg and spoon or the sack race.

This would need a lot of organising. You will need to think about the following:

-  **TEAMS:** There should be 6-12 people in each team. These should be mixed in terms of sex and (if the whole school is taking part) age.
-  **EVENTS:** There need to be at least 5 events.
-  **JUDGES:** You will need to find people to judge the games who will not be biased towards one team.
-  **RECORD SHEETS:** You will need to draw up record sheets for each event to record the times and distances of each competitor.
-  **PRIZES:** You may want to give the people taking part prizes as in ancient times. You could make your own wreaths for example. Every person taking part should get some kind of prize - a certificate for example.
-  **OLYMPIC OATH:** Every person taking part in the Games should swear an oath - promising to take part fairly and not cheat. Perhaps you could create your own school oath.

GOOD LUCK!

TASK Imagine that Hercules has arrived to take part in the next Olympic Games here in the present day! Write a report about what happens. How does Hercules compare to modern athletes like Carl Lewis and Colin Jackson for example? What would Hercules think about women competing in the Olympic games?



HOW DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE ANCIENT GREEKS?



It is very difficult to find out about the ancient Greeks as they lived so long ago. Archaeologists have been able to uncover clues from this time from the objects that have survived underground e.g. ruins of buildings, sculptures and pottery. On much of the Greek pottery that has been uncovered, there are pictures which had been painted on them to show aspects of daily life including what people wore, what they ate and drank etc.

Pictures of the gods and their adventures are also shown on the pottery from this time. Some of these are shown below. The pots were always painted using two colours. 'Black-figure' vases had their decoration painted on in black whilst the background was left the colour of the clay - an orangey-red. 'Red-figure' vases were painted the other way round with the background in black. Patterns decorated the vase at the top and the bottom. These vases were used to carry wine and water, and also to store grain.



Copy the vase outline given below so that it fills an A4 page. Now draw your own ancient Greek picture inside the outline. Try and colour it in using the red or black-figure method mentioned and sketch patterns at the top and bottom of the vase.



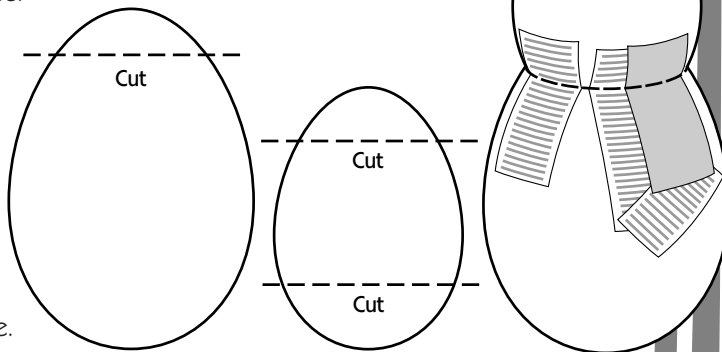
Make your own vase.

You will need - balloons of different shapes and sizes, newspaper, paste, paint, glue. Choose the balloons you would like for your vase. The balloons you use will have an effect on the shape of the vase. You could use one large balloon or combine two with the larger one at the bottom for balance.

Blow up the balloons. Cover the balloons with strips of papier mâché. Allow to dry.

When dry, you can burst the balloons without the papier mâché collapsing. Press the bottom of your 'vase' gently on a surface so that it has a flat base.

You will now need to cut holes in your vase. If you are using one balloon only, cut off the part that you would like to be the top of your vase - as shown to the right. If you are using two balloons you will need to cut one hole in the larger balloon shape and two in the smaller. Join the two together using strips of pasted paper. Allow to dry once more.



You can now paint patterns onto your vase.

Try and keep to the colours of ancient Greek vessels. If your vase is large enough you can paint Hercules and some of the other characters from the film - Hercules fighting Hades for example.



During the last hundred years animators like Walt Disney have perfected the art of making animated feature films. 'Hercules' is the 35th full-length feature film to be produced by Walt Disney Pictures. It uses traditional Disney style and modern computer technology to bring the mythological world of Ancient Greece to life. So let's look at some of the stages in the making of 'Hercules'.



SPRING 1995: The animators were taken on a tour of Greece and Turkey to start their ideas rolling and to give them inspiration.

LATE 1995: Animation began with 906 artists, animators and technicians involved.

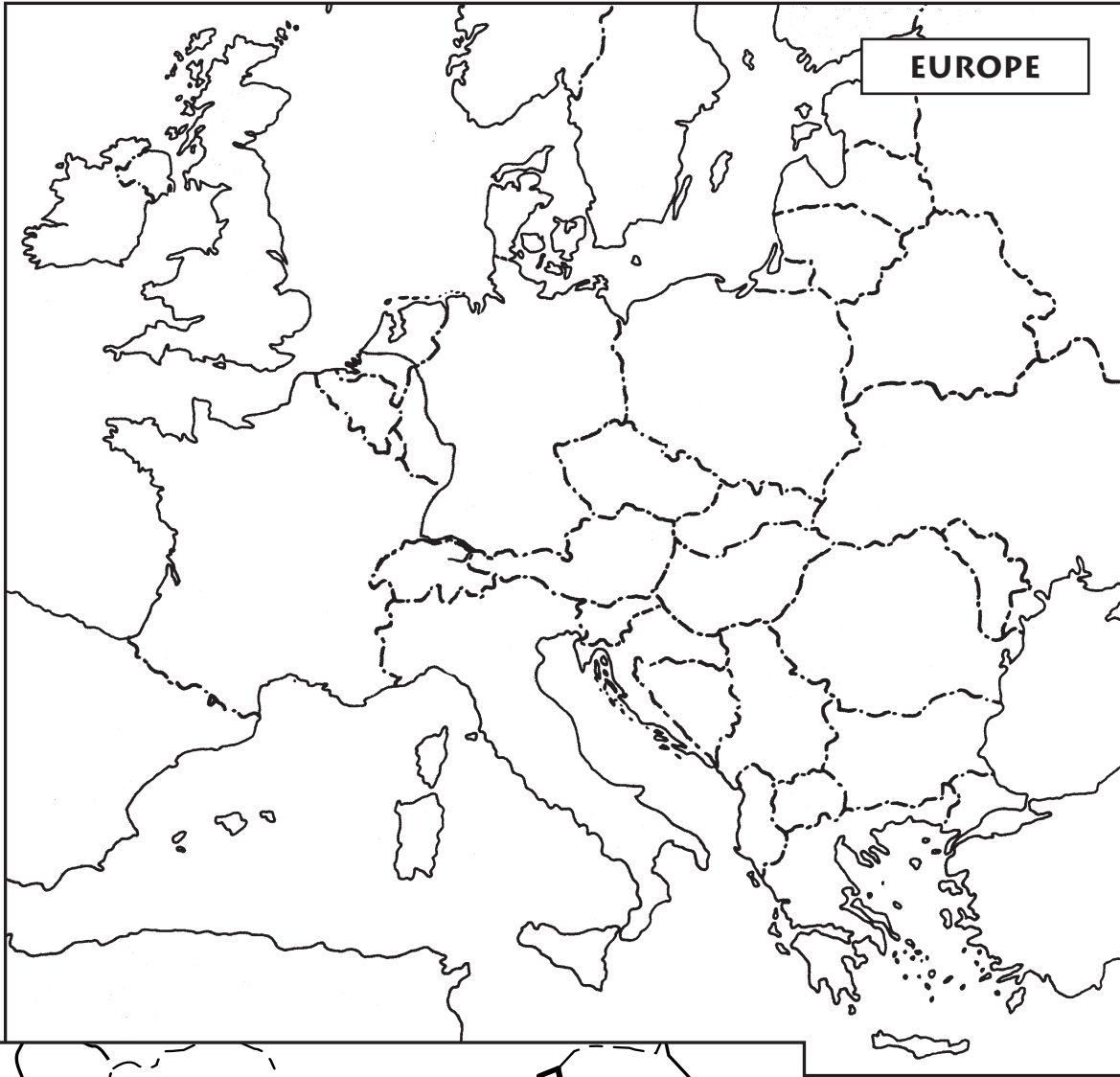
COMPUTER-GENERATED ANIMATION: This is just one of the methods of animation used in the film. This method of animation was used for the 30-headed mythical beast - the Hydra and also the creation of Mount Olympus. Models of the Hydra had to be scanned into the computer and were made into a wire-frame three dimensional (3D) model that was gradually built up into a textured and coloured form that could finally be recorded onto film. The Hydra needed to be created on computer due to the complexity of the drawings - drawing 30 heads in each picture would take a long time.

THE HYDRA: The Hydra took two years of work to complete even though the scene on film only lasts five minutes! Fifteen artists and technicians were responsible for creating the Hydra on screen. It has 1,224 individual animation controls - each control producing one degree of movement. Altogether 23,392 controls were needed to produce movement in the Hydra as each of the heads has 41 teeth and 26 fins!

TASK Make your own monster! In rough, make sketches of a mythical monster who is tough enough to beat the mighty Hercules. When you are ready, draw this in neat to display in the classroom. If you have the appropriate computer programme, have a go at designing your monster on the computer.



WHERE IS GREECE?





Bringing film to education across the UK

For over twenty years our charity has been bringing film to teachers and schoolchildren. We produce BAFTA winning and curriculum-based resources, run cutting-edge teacher training events and each year take 430,000 schoolchildren to the cinema free of charge in the world's biggest festival screening programme for young people, National Schools Film Week.

Visit our website to find out more and see our latest resources.

www.filmeducation.org

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Written by Louise Wordsworth. Produced by Film Education for Buena Vista International (UK) Limited.

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