

Faces™

Great Cities of the World: Athens

The city of Athens is located in the southern part of Greece. Ancient Athens is considered to be the birthplace of western civilization. Contemporary Athens is the center of political, financial, and cultural activities in Greece. This month's issue of FACES magazine explores the staying power of this beautiful city.

CONVERSATION QUESTION

What makes Athens a great city?

TEACHING OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about ancient and modern-day Athens.
- Students will learn about the Parthenon's transformations throughout history.
- Students will learn how the ancient Greeks tried to explain natural events.
- Students will compare life in a historical time period to life today.
- Students will analyze the causes and effects of events in Greek history.
- Students will compare past and present perspectives.
- Students will create a travel brochure for the Greek city of Athens.
- Students will research the current controversy over particular monuments and statues.
- Students will create Greek mythology trading cards.



In addition to supplemental materials focused on core Social Studies skills, this flexible teaching tool offers vocabulary-building activities, questions for discussion, and cross-curricular activities.

SELECTIONS

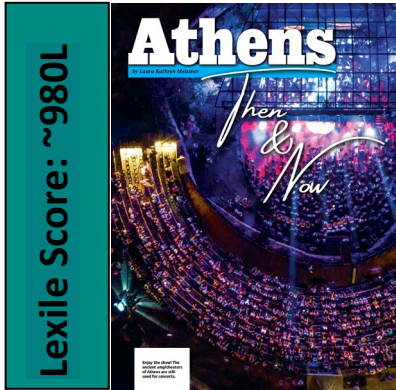
- **Athens, Then & Now**
Expository Nonfiction, ~980L
- **The Parthenon Through Time**
Expository Nonfiction, ~1100L
- **Inspired by the Gods**
Expository Nonfiction, ~900L

Faces® Teacher Guide: November/December 2021

Athens, Then and Now

pp. 8–11, Expository Nonfiction

This article takes students on a journey to Athens, Greece, where they will learn that this ancient city is an exciting blend of old and new.



RESOURCES

- Comparing Time Periods: Amazing Athens

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about ancient and modern-day Athens.
- Students will compare life in a historical time period to life today.
- Students will create a travel brochure for the Greek city of Athens.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **peninsula** (p. 9) a piece of land that is almost entirely surrounded by water and is attached to a larger land area
- **tourism** (p. 11) the business of providing hotels, restaurants, and entertainment for people who are traveling

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes Athens a great city?

Students may know Athens as the birthplace of the Olympics. Inform the class that Athens is also the capital of Greece and its largest city. Generate excitement for this topic by going outside to host some simple competitions. Have students consider why a location with a huge sports arena would also be a hub for social, cultural, and financial activity.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the word *peninsula* on the board. Allow students to share prior knowledge of the word. Using a map or the internet, show students these peninsulas: Alaska Peninsula, Indian Peninsula, Iberian Peninsula, Somali Peninsula (Horn of Africa). Then have students infer the meaning of the word *peninsula*. Reveal the definition and have students compare this with the definitions they wrote. Next, display the word *tourism* and its definition. Ask students to brainstorm ways they could boost tourism in their own city/state.

READ & DISCUSS

Reinforce comprehension of the concepts presented in the article by using the following questions to direct discussion:

1. What is the most obvious indication of the ancient Athens civilization?
2. Describe the Athens Metropolitan Area.
3. What is the Parthenon? How do “building tricks” make the Parthenon look perfectly straight from a distance?
4. Why is Pláka an important part of modern Athenian culture?
5. Why is tourism very important to people who live in Athens?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Comparing Time Periods

INSTRUCT: Greek civilization has evolved to incorporate modern living, while still maintaining the cultural standards of the past. Remind students that when studying a region, it is important to consider the many facets of life in that region. Distribute the *Comparing Time Periods: Amazing Athens* graphic organizer and tell students that they will be using information from the article to compare ancient Athens and contemporary Athens.

ASSESS: Review the chart with the class. Have students discuss why it is important to preserve certain elements of the past.

EXTEND

Geography Have students locate Athens on a world map. Instruct them to fold a piece of paper into thirds to create a travel brochure (or use an online brochure template). Using information from the article and other sources, students should include the following in their brochures: location, climate, historic sites, recreation, culture, and interesting facts. Encourage students to use or create attractive graphics elements.

Amazing Athens

Comparing Time Periods Use information from the article to note how the elements listed below have changed over time.

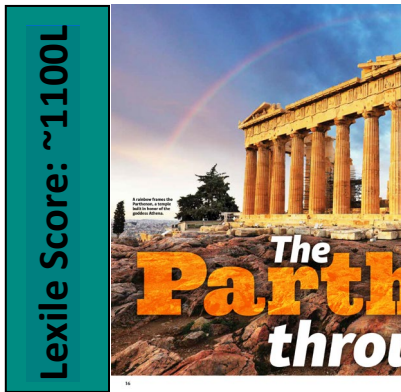
Time Period	Architecture	Commerce	Entertainment	Clothing
Ancient Athens				
Contemporary Athens				

Think Tank: What aspects of Greek culture have remained consistent throughout time? Discuss with a partner.

The Parthenon Through Time

pp. 16–19, Expository Nonfiction

In its day, the Parthenon was a spectacular tribute to the goddess Athena and the center of religious life in the powerful Greek city-state of Athens. Readers will learn about its tragic destruction throughout history as well as its profound reconstruction.



RESOURCES

- Analyze Causes and Effects: The Power of the Parthenon

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the Parthenon's transformations throughout history.
- Students will analyze the causes and effects of events in Greek history.
- Students will research the current controversy over particular monuments and statues.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **converted** (p. 18) changed something so that it can be used in a different way
- **defaced** (p. 18) intentionally ruined the surface of something
- **invincible** (p. 18) impossible to defeat or overcome

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes Athens a great city?

Have small groups of students discuss buildings in their town/city that have been built and rebuilt, or that underwent renovations. Ask students to list reasons why a structure may need reconstruction (weather damage, vandalism, repurposing, etc.). Introduce the article and tell students they will be reading about the transformations of one of the most famous and recognizable buildings in the world.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post the key words and discuss their meanings. Then display the following prompts and have students discuss responses with a partner.

1. How could your gymnasium be **converted** for a school prom?
2. What are some examples of public property being **defaced**?
3. Discuss book/movie characters that are **invincible**.

READ & DISCUSS

Have students read the article and answer the questions below.

1. What was the Parthenon?
2. Who was it built to honor?
3. How were the statues made?
4. Where is it located?
5. Why was it built?
6. When was it completed?
7. Why was the Parthenon's entrance changed from east to west?
8. How did the Parthenon become a stone quarry for 150 years?
9. What is the goal of the ongoing restoration work on the Parthenon?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Analyzing Cause/Effects

INSTRUCT: Guide students to acknowledge that the Parthenon is a building with an incredible narrative and has remained a relevant site throughout Greek history. Distribute the *Analyze Causes and Effects: The Power of the Parthenon* organizer and tell students they will be recording the causes and effects of events that have shaped the history of the Parthenon. Have them reread the article with a partner to underline passages that will be helpful for this purpose.

ASSESS: Have students work in pairs to complete the organizer. Review the answers and invite students to share their responses.

EXTEND

Current Events Have students use newspapers, magazines, and the internet to research public statues and monuments that have become controversial. Instruct students to identify the reasons some statues/monuments are being removed. As a class, discuss what should be done with the dismantled figures. Then have groups debate whether historic statues should be taken down.

The Power of the Parthenon

Analyze Causes and Effects Consult the article to identify and explain the cause(s) of the events listed below and the effect(s) of these events on the Parthenon.

Cause(s)	Event	Effect(s)
	A great fire breaks out in the third century C.E.	
	The Ottoman Turks invade Athens in the mid-1400s.	
	The Turks and Venetians fight a battle in 1687.	
	British ambassador Lord Elgin rediscovers the temple's sculptures in the early 1800s.	
	Greece declares the Acropolis an archeological site after 1834.	

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Inspired by the Gods

pp. 28–29, Expository Nonfiction

This article examines the significance of Greek mythology and introduces its many gods. More than merely stories, these ancient tales were created to explain the world and answer timeless questions.



RESOURCES

- Compare Perspectives: Time After Time

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn how the ancient Greeks tried to explain natural events.
- Students will compare past and present perspectives.
- Students will create Greek mythology trading cards.

KEY VOCABULARY

- **blacksmith** (p. 28) a person who makes or repairs things made of iron, such as horseshoes
- **marketplace** (p. 29) the economic system through which different companies compete with each other to sell their products

ENGAGE

Conversation Question: What makes Athens a great city?

Point out that Greek mythology factors into our everyday lives. Ask if anyone has a pair of Nike sneakers and explain that the brand is named for the Greek goddess of victory. Explain that the Dove soap company is named after Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty. The dove was her symbol. Ajax cleanser was advertised as “Stronger than dirt!” and named after a Greek mythological hero known for his strength.

INTRODUCE VOCABULARY

Post and discuss the key vocabulary words and definitions. Then ask students to predict answers to the following questions: How might a **blacksmith** be connected to a volcano myth? Why might naming products after Greek gods help companies achieve success in the **marketplace**? Have students revisit predictions after reading the article to check their accuracy.

READ & DISCUSS

Preview the questions below. Then read the article aloud, pausing for discussion when answers to the questions are revealed.

1. How did the ancient Greeks try to explain natural events before the invention of modern science?
2. How did the ancient Greeks explain fire?
3. How are these characters from modern books and movies connected to Greek myths: Hermione Granger, Percy Jackson, Meg?
4. How is Greek mythology used in popular advertising campaigns?
5. Why do you think classic stories from Greek mythology still fascinate and influence us today?

CONCEPT/SKILL FOCUS: Comparing Perspectives

INSTRUCT: Discuss the content of the article with students and distribute the *Compare Perspectives: Time After Time* graphic organizer. Review with students the fact that modern scientific concepts have replaced the need for myths, but in ancient times myths served an important purpose. Instruct students to use the chart to explain past and present perspectives on the natural events listed.

ASSESS: Have students write a myth to explain the existence of tornadoes.

EXTEND

Mythology Gather a collection of resource books about Greek gods and goddesses. Students will use information from books and the internet to create trading cards. Be sure each student has chosen a different character and has researched the god’s strengths/weaknesses, friends/enemies, superpowers, where they live, their appearance, symbols, and what they are best known for. Encourage colorful artwork. Make multiple copies of the completed cards so that students may use the set to study the gods and goddesses of Greek mythology.

Time After Time

Compare Perspectives Consult the article to review how the natural events listed below were explained long ago by the ancient Greeks. Describe this in the second column. In the last column, describe how modern scientists explain these events today.

Natural Events	Explained by the Ancient Greeks	Explained by Modern Scientists
earthquakes		
sunrise and sunset		
volcanic eruptions		
thunderstorms		
change of seasons		