

“It’s Greek To Me. . .”

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Powell Valley Middle School, Big Stone Gap, VA

Grade Level: 9-12

Time Allotment: 1-90 Minute Block

Overview:

This lesson makes learning about the geography of Greece and the contributions that the Ancient Greece Civilization made to the world. Students will be exposed to Powerpoint and Smartboard, and will learn key Virginia SOL objectives.

Subject Matter: Social Studies

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn contributions of ancient Greece society.
- Students will learn major geographic features of Greece.
- Students will analyze the way that the geography helped shape the development of ancient Greece.

Standards:

State Standards:

The Objectives listed may be used in part to address the Virginia Standards of Learning at the website www.pen.k12.va.us.

- STANDARD WHI.1 b, c, d,
The student will improve skills in historical research and geographical analysis by:
 - b) using maps, globes, artifacts, and pictures to analyze the physical and cultural landscapes of the world and interpret the past to 1500 A.D.;
 - c) identifying major geographic features important to the study of world history to 1500 A.D.;
 - d) identifying and comparing political boundaries with the location of civilizations, empires, and kingdoms from 4000 B.C. to 1500 A.D.
- STANDARD WHI.5a,b,f
The student will demonstrate knowledge of ancient Greece in terms of its impact on Western civilization by:
 - assessing the influence of geography on Greek economic, social, and political development, including the impact of Greek commerce and colonies.
 - describing Greek mythology and religion.
 - f) citing contributions in drama, poetry, history, sculpture, architecture, science, mathematics, and philosophy, with emphasis on Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Media Components:

- Smartboard Notebook with latitude and longitude activity
- Smartboard Gallery map of Europe and Greece
- Windows Media Player or Real Time Player
- Microsoft Powerpoint or Powerpoint Player
- Video Segments from www.unitedstreaming.com:
 - Discovering Ancient Greece* “Welcome to Ancient Greece”
 - Living History: Greece* “The Land and City-States of Ancient Greece”

Materials:

Per Class:

- Computer with LCD Projection device and speakers
- Smartboard*
- Color pencils

Per Student:

- Textbook with atlas
- Map
- Notebook paper
- Pencil

*Note: If a Smartboard is not available, an overhead projector and a blank wall, or overhead screen may be used.

Prep for Teachers:

- For the introductory activity, the teacher must prepare latitude and longitude introductory activity using Smart Notebook program and the textbook atlas (If a Smartboard is not available, a worksheet with latitude and longitude coordinates can be created. A transparency sheet can also be used.).
- Prior to the lesson, copies of the map must be made.
- The list of key features of Greece should be placed on the board.
- Desks should be arranged in even groups and leave one item needed for map labeling with each group.
- Finally, students should be divided into groups and a seating list of each group put onto the chalkboard with a leader clearly designated. It helps to assign groups the day before so that students are prepared to sit in their appropriate group as they enter the classroom.
- Teacher should also be familiar with the Powerpoint presentation (A copy is available at the end of the lesson.)

Introductory Activity:

Before the students enter the classroom, insure that the latitude and longitude activity is posted on the Smartboard for students to complete as they enter the classroom and class begins. **Say:** “Please sit in the place you were assigned yesterday,” as the students enter the room. Give students 10 minutes to complete the activity. (If a Smartboard is not available, a worksheet with several latitude and longitude coordinates for geographic features and/or cities in Greece can be made and distributed for students to answer. A transparency sheet can also be used.)

After 10 minutes, have student volunteers answer the questions from the latitude and longitude practice activity by writing the answers on the Smartboard (or answer orally.)

Learning Activities:

Say: “Students, this semester we have been learning about Ancient Civilizations. We have been learning about their geography and how it steered their development. We have also been learning about what each civilization has contributed to the world. We will now examine the Geography of Greece, and how this effected the development of the Ancient Greek Civilization. We will also look at contributions the Ancient Greeks made to the world that are important today.”

Say: “As we saw with the introductory activity that began class, Greece is a country that is made up of peninsulas and several islands. In our classroom, we are all sitting in isolated groups with much space between them, similar to the land of Greece. Located at each group is one item needed to complete the map labeling activity that we use to introduce a new area of the Ancient World. The leader of each group needs to ‘Trade’ some items from their group for items from the other groups to get the necessary supplies (color pencils, blank maps, and textbooks) needed to complete the map labeling activity.” Allow the trades to happen and allow 20 minutes for the labeling activity to take place. Reconvene as a class and have several students take turns labeling features of Greece on the map displayed on the Smartboard (or displayed on a transparency using the overhead projector). **Say** to the students, “Just as you and your groups had to trade for the necessities to complete the assigned task, Ancient Civilizations, including Ancient Greece, had to trade with others for the things they needed.”

Say: “Now that we have seen the physical characteristics of Greece, lets journey to Greece via several video clips to learn about why we study Ancient Greece. Students, I want you to listen for things that the world gained from the Ancient Greeks. Hint: there are at least eight mentioned in this segment.” **Play** the *Discovering Ancient Greece* “Welcome to Ancient Greece” clip, starting at the beginning and **Pause** at 1:31.

Say: “What influences did you find that the Greeks made on the world?” Let students

discuss their answers: (art, literature, architecture, history, drama, democracy, Olympics, math, and science.)

Say: “Now let’s watch the next segment. You will learn about the effects the rugged landscape had on the civilization itself. Find out what developed in Greece due to the landscape. Also, what tree is important to Greece, and what farm animal is raised throughout Greece?” **Play** *Living History: Greece* “The Land and City-States of Ancient Greece” beginning at the beginning at **Pause** at 1:35.

Say: “Okay. First of all, what tree is important to Greece, then and now?” (Olive tree) “What animal is important to the people of Greece?” (Sheep) “What was developed as a result to the rugged, spaced out terrain of Greece? (City-States). Discuss these questions and their answers with the students and then **Ask**, “What type of system do Americans have that is like the city-state?” Possible answers can include:

- States, which feature a capital city and the surrounding land and together form a country
- Counties, which feature a county seat and the surrounding land, which together form a state.

Proceed from these introductory video clips and discussion to the Powerpoint lecture. With this, the students will get notes pertaining to the Geography of Greece, and its influence on the development of the civilization, and the details on the contributions that the Greeks made to the world.

Culminating Activity:

Students should create comparison posters that feature drawings of Ancient Greek contributions to the world and their modern counterparts. For examples, one could draw a picture of what the ancient Olympic Stadium was like and then draw a modern football stadium or arena. A report that compares and contrasts the ancient structure and the modern structure should accompany the poster. (Oral presentations of each students work can be optional.) This activity can be completed outside of class, or an additional day can be planned so that the students can research with the internet and/or the school’s library.

Extension Activities:

Students may want to make collages of things in America that were influenced by Ancient Greece. Essays can also be written by using the Venn diagram to compare and contrast present day states or counties with city-states.

Cross-Curricular Activities:

English:

- Students may read portions of *The Iliad* and/or *The Odyssey*, which are excellent examples of the Greek tragedy. Students may also want to read Greek

Mythology, which are great examples of literature still studied today. It would also be fun to learn the Greek alphabet.

Math:

- Math teachers could teach about the advances the Greeks made in math that are important today.

Science:

- Classes could study the effects that pollution and the weather have had on the ruins of Ancient Greece.

Physical Education:

- Students could participate in a mini-Olympics.

Community Connections

- Students may want to share their posters with 3rd grade students, who have Ancient Greece in their Social Studies SOLs.
- Students could write to the Greek embassy for more information on the country.
- Parents could cook Greek recipes and bring them in for the students to sample.
- If there is a Greek restaurant in the area you could ask them to send a menu for the class and perhaps speak to the class.
- If a person in the community has recently visited or lived in Greece or is perhaps originally from Greece you could ask them to speak to your classes.