

# Lesson Plan: The Oracle's Challenge - A Modern Greek Odyssey

## Materials Needed:

- The book: "The Glory of Greece" by Beth Zemble and John Holdren
  - Notebook or journal
  - Pencils, pens, and colored pencils or markers
  - Drawing paper or a sketchbook
  - Optional: Building materials like LEGOs, clay, cardboard, or recycled materials
  - Optional: Access to a computer for research or creating a digital product
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## Lesson Details

**Subject:** Ancient History, Creative Arts, Language Arts

**Grade Level:** Grades 5-8 (adaptable)

**Lesson Duration:** 2-3 hours (can be split across multiple days)

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## 1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Analyze** at least one major contribution of ancient Greece (e.g., democracy, theatre, architecture, mythology) using "The Glory of Greece" as a primary resource.
  - **Synthesize** their understanding by creating an original project that applies a Greek concept to a modern-day scenario.
  - **Articulate** and defend the connections between their creative work and the principles of ancient Greek culture in a short presentation.
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## 2. Lesson Activities & Instructional Strategy

### Part 1: The Oracle's Riddle (15-20 minutes)

- **Hook:** Begin the lesson by presenting a "riddle from the Oracle at Delphi." Say: "*I have cities without houses, forests without trees, and water without fish. What am I?*" (Answer: A map).
- **Connect:** Explain that just like a map, the ideas of ancient Greece are all around us, even if we don't always see them. Today, we're not just going to read about Greece; we are going to use its ideas to create something new.
- **Activate Prior Knowledge:** Ask the student: "Before we open the book, what one word comes to your mind when you think of ancient Greece? Why?" Discuss their answer briefly.

### Part 2: A Symposium of Ideas (30-45 minutes)

- **Instruction:** The goal of this phase is not to read the whole book, but to explore it like a treasure hunter. The student will choose one "Big Idea" from ancient Greece to become an expert on for the day.
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- **Student Choice:** Have the student browse "The Glory of Greece" and choose one of the following topics that sparks their interest:
  - **Mythology & Heroes:** Gods, goddesses, monsters, and epic quests.
  - **Architecture:** The Parthenon, columns (Doric, Ionic, Corinthian), and the pursuit of perfection.
  - **Theatre:** Comedy and Tragedy, masks, the chorus, and famous playwrights.
  - **Philosophy:** Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and the art of asking big questions.
  - **Democracy & The Polis:** The idea of citizenship, voting, and public debate.
- **Focused Reading & Note-Taking:** The student will read the relevant sections of the book about their chosen topic. In their notebook, they should jot down at least 5-7 key facts, concepts, or vocabulary words. Encourage them to sketch ideas or symbols related to their topic.

### Part 3: The Creator's Agora - The Main Project (60-90 minutes)

- **Instruction:** Explain that in the ancient Greek *agora* (marketplace), people didn't just buy goods; they shared ideas. The student's task is to take their "Big Idea" from the symposium and create a modern product to share at the "Creator's Agora."
- **Project Options (Student Choice):**
  1. **The Modern Myth-Maker:** Write and illustrate a short myth (1-2 pages) about a modern hero (e.g., a scientist, an artist, an activist) who must overcome a modern "monster" (e.g., misinformation, pollution, apathy). The myth must include a Greek god or goddess playing a role and a clear "moral" or lesson.
  2. **The 21st Century Architect:** Design a blueprint for a modern public building (like a new community library, a tech company headquarters, or an eco-friendly school) using at least three key principles of Greek architecture (e.g., specific column types, symmetry, pediments, friezes). The student should label the parts and write a short paragraph explaining why they chose those features. They can draw this or build a model using LEGOs, clay, or cardboard.
  3. **A Socratic Dialogue on a Smartphone:** Write a dialogue, in the style of a text message exchange or a short script, between two people debating a modern ethical problem. One person should use the "Socratic Method" (asking questions to lead the other person to their own conclusion). Topics could include: "Is it more important to be popular online or to be kind?" or "Should we use technology to solve all our problems?"

### Part 4: Presenting to the Polis (10-15 minutes)

- **Closure & Reflection:** The student presents their finished project. After presenting, ask them these reflection questions:
  - "Which specific ideas from 'The Glory of Greece' were the most important for your project?"
  - "If an ancient Greek saw your project, what do you think they would be most surprised or impressed by?"
  - "What was the most challenging part of bringing an ancient idea into the modern world?"

## 3. Differentiation & Inclusivity

- **For Support:**
  - Provide templates for the projects (e.g., a "myth-maker" story map, a building blueprint outline with labels to fill in, sentence starters for the dialogue).
  - Reduce the number of required elements (e.g., "use at least one principle of Greek architecture" instead of three).
  - Work collaboratively on the brainstorming or note-taking phase.
- **For Challenge:**

- Ask the student to combine two project ideas (e.g., write a myth about the construction of their designed building).
- Require the student to research one aspect of their topic beyond what is in the book and incorporate that new knowledge.
- For the dialogue, challenge them to write from the perspective of Plato or Aristotle debating the modern topic.

#### 4. Assessment

The student's learning will be assessed through the final project and presentation, using a simple, clear rubric.

Category	Goal	Evidence
<b>Greek Connection (Analysis)</b>	The project clearly and accurately incorporates key concepts from the chosen Greek topic.	Student correctly identifies and uses elements like column types, Socratic questioning, or mythological structures.
<b>Creativity &amp; Application (Synthesis)</b>	The project applies Greek ideas to a modern context in a unique and thoughtful way.	The myth, blueprint, or dialogue is original and demonstrates creative thinking beyond simple reproduction.
<b>Clarity &amp; Presentation (Articulation)</b>	The project is well-executed and the student can clearly explain their creative choices during the presentation.	The final product is neat and easy to understand. The student confidently answers reflection questions.