

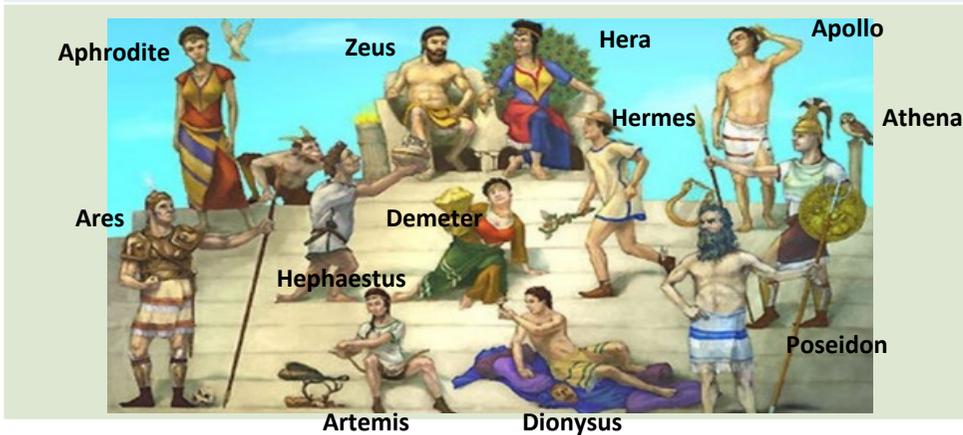
Religion and beliefs in Ancient Greece

Very important. Gods thought of as like humans – sad, happy, angry, jealous. It was important to keep the gods happy or life could be bad. There are hundreds of gods and demi gods with thousands of stories that Greeks used to explain they way things are.

Each home would have a small altar where the family would pray to whichever god. There were also 'doorway gods' protecting people coming in or out.

Each city would have their own god that was special to them. For example, Athena in Athens. Her symbol was the owl, which can be seen on Athen's coins.

Zeus was king of the gods, and he was married to Hera. They had lots of god goddess children. They all lived on Mount Olympus (apart from Hades).



Key Myths and legends

Hercules	A half-human who was the son of Zeus. Tricked into killing his wife by another jealous God, he completed 12 labours as punishment.
Aesop	Born a slave. Collected and wrote stories that taught lessons and entertained people. Examples include the the tortoise and the hare.
Prometheus	Zeus was giving out gifts to the gods but didn't want to give any to humans because he didn't like them. Prometheus snuck up to Mount Olympus and stole fire to give to the humans. He was punished by being tied to a cliff to be eaten by eagles forever.
The three sisters of fate	Every time someone is born one sister creates a thread (their life), the second sister then randomly decides the fate of that person. The third sister decides when to kill them. Gods couldn't interfere.
Pandora's box	Pandora was the first woman. Athena gave her wisdom. Aphrodite gave her beauty. Zeus tricked her and gave her a box to give to Prometheus' brother. She opened it, and all negative things like hatred, war, sickness etc. fell into the world.

Decisions

When faced with a big decision, most Ancient Greeks would ask an oracle or soothsayer who would speak with the voice of the gods and tell them something about the future.

Rich and poor came. Asking about things like whether to go to war, or to help them have children.



Literature and Art

Greek myths and gods are depicted everywhere in their art and stories. Pottery, coins, carving all show how life was centered around fearing and honoring the gods.

These stories are a part of the way we live. For example, we have 52 weeks in a year because Hercules had 52 children.

