

The Gods and Goddesses

The cast of eleven. Their roles, symbols, powers and families

Meet the gods first. Everything else in Classics needs them.

This belongs to Henry.

1. Alphabet

2. Gods

3. Myths

4. Buildings and Games

The big idea

The gods are like a huge, powerful family, always falling out. Learn each one by a single picture first, the symbol, then add the detail.

The shape of the family

Two simple patterns make eleven gods much easier to hold.

The three brothers split the world

After the gods won power, three brothers shared out the world. Picture it as a stack, top to bottom.

Zeus took the sky (the top)

Poseidon took the sea (the middle)

Hades took the underworld (the bottom)

The twins

Apollo and **Artemis** are twins, children of Zeus. Both start with A. Both carry a bow. Apollo is linked to the sun, Artemis to the moon.

How to use the god cards

Learn the **symbol** for each god first. That one picture pulls the rest back: the role, the powers, the family. Do not try to learn all the detail at once.

The king and the queen



Zeus

King of the gods

Role

Ruler of all the gods. God of the sky, thunder and weather.

Symbols

Thunderbolt, eagle.

Powers

Throws thunderbolts. Controls the sky. Leads Olympus.

Family

Husband of Hera. Brother of Poseidon and Hades. Father of many gods.



Hera

Queen of the gods

Role

Queen of Olympus. Goddess of marriage and family.

Symbols

Peacock, crown.

Powers

Protects wives and marriage. Famous for her jealousy of Zeus.

Family

Wife of Zeus. Mother of Ares.

The other two brothers



Poseidon

God of the sea

Role

God of the sea. Also earthquakes and horses.

Symbols

Trident (a three pronged spear), horse.

Powers

Stirs up storms and earthquakes. Known as the Earth Shaker.

Family

Brother of Zeus and Hades.



Hades

God of the underworld

Role

God of the underworld and the dead.

Symbols

Cerberus, his three headed guard dog. A helm that makes him invisible.

Powers

Rules the dead. Can vanish from sight.

Family

Brother of Zeus and Poseidon. Husband of Persephone.

Watch out

Hades is not the devil, and the underworld is not the same as a Christian hell. Hades is simply the god in charge of where the dead go.

The twins



Apollo

Sun, music, healing

Role

God of the sun, music, healing and seeing the future.

Symbols

Lyre (a small harp), the sun, a bow.

Powers

Music, healing, and giving prophecies through his oracle.

Family

Son of Zeus. Twin brother of Artemis.



Artemis

Hunt and the moon

Role

Goddess of the hunt, wild animals and the moon.

Symbols

Bow and arrows, deer, the moon.

Powers

A perfect hunter. Protector of young animals.

Family

Daughter of Zeus. Twin sister of Apollo.

Two sides of war



Athena

Wisdom and clever war

Role

Goddess of wisdom, skill and clever, planned warfare.

Symbols

Owl, olive tree.

Powers

Wise advice and clever battle plans.
Skill in crafts.

Family

Daughter of Zeus, born fully grown from his head.



Ares

War and violence

Role

God of war, the bloody and violent side of it.

Symbols

Spear, helmet, shield.

Powers

Brute force and rage in battle.

Family

Son of Zeus and Hera. Not much liked by the other gods.

The key contrast

Both are war gods, but in opposite ways. **Athena** is the clever, planning side of war. **Ares** is the brutal, bloodthirsty side. That contrast is a favourite exam question.

Love and the messenger



Aphrodite

Love and beauty

Role

Goddess of love and beauty.

Symbols

Dove, rose.

Powers

Can make anyone fall in love.

Family

One of the gods who set off the Trojan War (booklet 3).



Hermes

Messenger of the gods

Role

The messenger. God of travellers, trade and trickery.

Symbols

Winged sandals, winged cap.

Powers

Very fast. Moves between the world of the living and the dead.

Family

Son of Zeus.

The harvest, and a recap



Demeter

Goddess of the harvest

Role

Goddess of the harvest and growing crops.

Symbols

Wheat, grain.

Powers

Makes crops grow. When she grieves, nothing grows at all.

Family

Sister of Zeus. Mother of Persephone (booklet 3).

Family links at a glance

- Three brothers: Zeus, Poseidon, Hades.
- Zeus and Hera: king and queen.
- Children of Zeus: Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Hermes.
- Twins: Apollo and Artemis.
- Mother and daughter: Demeter and Persephone.

YOUR TURN

The gods: questions

QUICK CHECK

1. Who is the king of the gods, and what is his symbol?

2. Which god rules the sea, and what does he carry?

3. Whose symbol is the owl?

4. Name the two twins and one symbol they share.

5. Which goddess is the mother of Persephone?

EXPLAIN

6. Athena is linked to both wisdom and war. Explain how these fit together.

YOUR TURN

Compare and explain

COMPARISON

Compare Ares and Athena as gods of war. How are they different?

EXAMPLE ANSWER

Both Ares and Athena are linked to war, but in opposite ways. Ares is the god of the violent, bloody side of war, all rage and brute force, and the other gods do not much like him. Athena is the goddess of clever, planned warfare, using wisdom and good tactics. So Ares stands for fighting, while Athena stands for thinking. That is why Athena is also the goddess of wisdom, and Ares is not.

EXPLAIN

7. Why is it useful to learn each god's symbol before anything else?

Memory aids and connections

Memory aids

- **One picture per god.** Thunderbolt is Zeus. Trident is Poseidon. Owl is Athena. Dove is Aphrodite. Wheat is Demeter. Winged sandals are Hermes.
- **The brothers as a stack.** Sky on top (Zeus), sea in the middle (Poseidon), underworld at the bottom (Hades).
- **The A twins.** Apollo and Artemis. Both start with A, both carry a bow. Apollo the sun, Artemis the moon.
- **War pair.** Athena thinks, Ares smashes.

Where this leads

The gods are not just a list to learn. They drive the stories in the next booklet.

- **Demeter** is the reason we have seasons.
- **Aphrodite** sets off the Trojan War.
- **Hades** takes Persephone to the underworld.

Learn the gods well here, and the myths in booklet 3 will already half make sense.

What to revise first, and answers

1 Role and symbol for each god

This underpins nearly every other topic in Classics.

2 The three brothers and the two twins

Two patterns that hold five gods at once.

3 Athena versus Ares

A likely comparison question.

The must know floor

- For each god, their role and at least one symbol.
- Zeus sky, Poseidon sea, Hades underworld.
- Apollo and Artemis are the twins.
- Demeter is the harvest. Aphrodite is love. Athena is wisdom.

Answers

1. Zeus. His symbol is the thunderbolt (also the eagle).
2. Poseidon. He carries a trident.
3. Athena.
4. Apollo and Artemis. They share the bow (and both are children of Zeus).
5. Demeter.
6. Athena is the goddess of clever, planned war. Wisdom and war fit together because winning a battle takes good thinking and tactics, not just fighting.
7. Because the symbol is one simple picture that pulls back all the detail: the role, the powers and the family. it is the easiest hook to remember.