



# Mount Olympus, Part I

# 2<sub>A</sub>

## Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

### What Have We Already Learned?

Review with students what they learned in the previous read-aloud about the ancient Greek civilization. You may wish to ask the following questions:

- What is a civilization? (a group of people living together in a well-organized way)
- Was the area of the ancient Greek civilization smaller or larger than the present-day country of Greece? (larger)
- What are the names of the three seas that surrounded ancient Greece? Hint: Think of the acronym BAM. (Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea)
- What is the name of the largest Greek island in the Mediterranean Sea? (Crete)
- What is a city-state? (an independent city and the surrounding area it controlled)



### Essential Background Information or Terms

#### ◀ Show image 2A-1: Mount Olympus

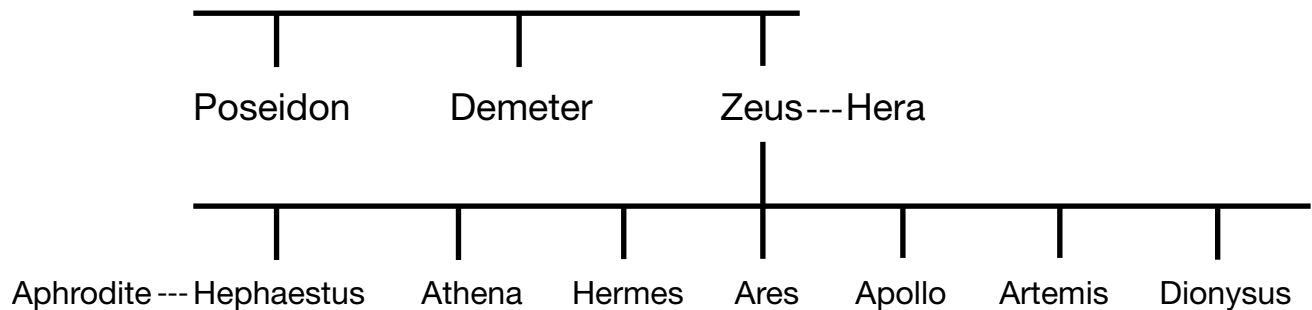
Remind students that one of the components of a civilization is religion, or a set of beliefs and practices. Explain that people in ancient times often developed religions as they sought explanations for how things came to be or how things happened in nature, such as thunder and lightning, the tides of the ocean, or the seasons.

Tell students that, like the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, and the people of other ancient civilizations, the ancient Greeks believed in beings called gods and goddesses. Explain that gods are male beings, and goddesses are female beings. Point to the image and

tell students that the Greeks believed that the most powerful of these gods and goddesses lived in a palace on the very top of Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece. Show students the location of the mountain on Poster 1.

Explain that the ancient Greeks believed these gods and goddesses were ruled by a king named Zeus and a queen named Hera, and that they each had a different power or skill that explained how something came to be or how something happened in nature. Explain that these gods and goddesses were also believed to be immortal, or able to live forever.

**Note:** You may choose to draw the family tree diagram of the Olympian gods below (on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard) and use it as you read Lessons 2 and 3. The dotted lines indicate marriage. This family tree is oversimplified for the purposes of this domain and for age-appropriateness. Greek myths are revisited in later grades in the Core Knowledge Sequence to further discuss what was believed to be the complex origins and relationships of the Greek gods.



### **Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud**

Ask students to predict some of the powers or skills that the gods and goddesses were believed to have.

### **Purpose for Listening**

Tell students to listen to this fictional story to find out if their predictions are correct and to learn more about the gods and goddesses the ancient Greeks believed lived on Mount Olympus.



## Mount Olympus, Part I

### ◀ Show image 2A-2: Twelve thrones on Mount Olympus<sup>1</sup>

- 1 What do you see in the image?  
Why do you think there are twelve thrones?
- 2 The word *delightfully* means with great delight or pleasure.

The day began **delightfully**, of course.<sup>2</sup> Every day began delightfully on Mount Olympus, for it was the home of the gods. Because these gods called Mount Olympus their home, they were called the Olympian gods. Sometimes they enjoyed roaming on Earth, which is where the gods could be found at this moment—all except Hermes (*HUR-meess*) and Apollo (*uh-PAHL-oh*).



### ◀ Show image 2A-3: Hermes with winged sandals, wand; Apollo with harp<sup>3</sup>

- 3 [Point to each as you read.]
- 4 A messenger is someone who carries messages and does other errands, or jobs. [Point to the sandals, helmet, and baton as you read on.]
- 5 or had
- 6 or moving lightly and quickly, like a butterfly

Hermes, **messenger** of the gods and son of Zeus, appeared in an instant at the side of his brother Apollo.<sup>4</sup> Hermes was wearing his famous winged sandals and winged helmet, and he carried a small, wooden stick, or baton, with wings on either side. All of these extra wings gave Hermes even greater speed than he already possessed.<sup>5</sup> Because he was constantly flitting here and there,<sup>6</sup> carrying news among the gods and leading lost travelers back in the right direction, Hermes needed all the speed he could get. When he was moving his fastest, it always seemed as if—*WHOOSH!*—he just appeared out of nowhere.

Apollo, the god of music and poetry, was startled when Hermes suddenly appeared, even though he should have been used to it by now. “Do you have to pop up like that?” he protested.<sup>7</sup> “I was just composing the most wonderful song on my harp, and you have made me forget where I was in the melody.”<sup>8</sup>

“So sorry,” Hermes exclaimed, although he was secretly pleased, for he was a bit of a trickster.<sup>9</sup> Hermes went on, “But soon you will have more of an audience, for our father, Zeus, has **summoned** us all here to the great hall at once.”<sup>10</sup> Glancing around nervously, he added quietly, “And you know how he can be when he is kept waiting.”<sup>11</sup>

- 7 or said with disapproval
- 8 If Apollo is composing a song, what is he doing?
- 9 What is a trickster? Can you give me an example of another trickster you have learned about?
- 10 The word *summoned* means called forth or requested to come.
- 11 Who is Zeus? Why do you think the king of the gods has summoned all of the gods and goddesses to the great hall on Mount Olympus?



◀ **Show image 2A-4: Hermes listening to Apollo's song**

Hermes looked at the harp he had given to Apollo long ago, made from the shell of a large tortoise with strings stretched across it. “Still, I can stay for a moment if you would be kind enough to play whatever you were working on.” He sat down on a thick cushion on the floor.

Apollo smiled, and because he was also the god of light, his smile could truly light up a room. “I would be delighted,” he said, and his fingers ran so swiftly<sup>12</sup> across the harp strings that they seemed almost liquid.<sup>13</sup> As always, the song was so beautiful that anyone listening would think it must be the best song that could ever be played—that is, until Apollo played the next one.

Hermes actually sat unmoving, which was quite rare for him, and at the end of the song, he sighed. Then he was gone, his parting “thank you” hanging in the air. Apollo thought, “That boy must learn to slow down.”

12 If Apollo is delighted, is he happy or sad?

13 or quickly and smoothly



◀ **Show image 2A-5: Stag appearing before Hermes in forest**

Hermes had already left behind the high, cloud-covered mountain and he was settling down into a lush<sup>14</sup> green forest below.<sup>15</sup> Here Hermes was especially alert, for he was searching for the greatest of hunters—or rather, huntresses—his sister, the goddess Artemis (ART-eh-miss).<sup>16</sup> If anything could travel as quickly as Hermes, it would be one of Artemis's arrows, for she was the goddess of hunting, wilderness, and animals.

Hermes could hear the crashing and crackling of branches as something large broke through the trees nearby.<sup>17</sup> Suddenly, a great, antlered stag<sup>18</sup> burst from the bushes not five feet from Hermes, panic in its eyes as it saw him.<sup>19</sup> Turning, the stag disappeared from the little clearing as suddenly as it had arrived. Hermes had only enough time to think, “How graceful!” when two huge hounds leaped from the bushes, ready to follow the stag. Hermes simply held up his wooden baton, and the two dogs stopped at once, lying down before him, panting.

14 or thick and healthy

15 What is the name of the mountain where the gods were believed to live?

16 Just as a female god is called a goddess, a female hunter is called a huntress.

17 What do you think is crashing through the trees?

18 or male deer

19 Why do you think the stag has panic, or fear, in its eyes?



← **Show image 2A-6: Hermes talking to Artemis, dogs lying at their feet**

A moment later, their mistress Artemis appeared. Disappointment showed on the goddess's face at losing the deer she had been hunting. At such moments, Artemis could be cruel, but when she saw Hermes, she smiled, for she was very fond of him.

"I wondered why the hounds had stopped," she said.

"I'm afraid that you will have to stop also," Hermes replied. "Our father Zeus has summoned us to come to Mount Olympus as quickly as possible."<sup>20</sup>

At once Artemis placed the arrow she had been holding into the quiver she wore over her shoulder.<sup>21</sup> "I will leave right away," she said, but as Hermes flew off again, he saw her looking **longingly** at the bushes where the deer had disappeared.<sup>22</sup>

20 What does *summoned* mean?

21 [Point to the image.] A quiver is a long case that holds the arrows of a bow, a type of weapon made of wood.

22 The word *longingly* means with longing or a very strong desire. Why do you think Artemis is looking longingly at the bushes?



← **Show image 2A-7: Hermes diving through the waves**

A minute later, the messenger god hovered in midair, high above the sea that surrounded Greece and which held hundreds of islands of all sizes.<sup>23</sup> With eyes as sharp as one of Artemis's arrows, Hermes shot through the ocean waves. Weaving among a dozen dancing dolphins, he came to rest next to the **massive**<sup>24</sup> shoulders of his uncle Poseidon (poh-sy-dun), the god of the seas and of all that crosses the seas.

23 Do you remember which seas border Greece and have many islands, including Crete? [Show students Poster 1 as a guide.] Think of the acronym BAM. (Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea)

24 or very large and heavy



← **Show image 2A-8: Hermes and Poseidon talking, watching ocean performance**

Poseidon's long, white beard moved like sea foam in the water as he turned and spoke. "Hermes, you are welcome here!" he boomed out in a mighty voice, and Hermes remembered that Poseidon, brother of Zeus, could make the earth shake, for he was also the god of earthquakes. Pointing his great trident,<sup>25</sup> a three-pointed pitchfork which he sometimes used to stir up the waves of the sea, the sea god said to Hermes, "Watch with me."

25 [Point to the trident in the image.]

26 What does *massive* mean?

27 or moved quickly

28 [Point to the octopus in the image.]  
*Octopi* is plural for octopus—one octopus, many octopi.



◀ **Show image 2A-9: Hermes dodging a lightning bolt**

29 Can you guess who the god of lightning is? It's Zeus, the king of the gods.

30 The word *deafening* means very loud. Have you ever heard deafening thunder?

So the two gods watched as the dolphins swam in smooth, wide figure-eights, and massive whales rose up from the depths to swim through the loops of the dolphins' design.<sup>26</sup> When the show was over, a hundred octopi jetted<sup>27</sup> in front of the whales and dolphins, shooting black ink from their bellies as a sort of closing theatre curtain to end the performance.<sup>28</sup> Poseidon roared with laughter at this surprise ending. Then, turning to Hermes, he asked, "What brings you here, nephew?"

Hermes replied, "Zeus asks you to come with all speed to Mount Olympus."

"I shall go at once," he said. But before he set out to see his brother, Poseidon took the time to thank the dolphins, whales, and octopi for their performance. When he finished, Hermes was already gone. "It is wonderful how he does that," Poseidon thought.

In the sky high above him, Hermes was already seeking out another of the gods. Suddenly, a lightning bolt split the air only ten feet from the messenger god.<sup>29</sup> This was followed by a deafening crash of thunder.<sup>30</sup>

Zeus was getting impatient. Hermes called upward, "I am moving as quickly as I can, my lord!" The messenger of the gods hurried on his way.

**Note:** Tell students that they will hear the rest of this story in the next read-aloud.

### Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about the powers or skills the gods and goddesses were believed to have correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Literal* Where did the ancient Greeks believe the gods lived? (in a palace on Mount Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece)
3. *Inferential* Did the ancient Greeks worship one or many gods and goddesses? (many)
4. *Inferential* Who were the Olympian gods you heard about in this story? (They were the most important Greek gods.)
5. *Literal* Who was king of all of the gods? (Zeus)



◀ **Show image 2A-3: Hermes with winged sandals, wand; Apollo with harp**

6. *Literal* Which god was the messenger for all of the other Greek gods? (Hermes) How did he get around so quickly? (He had wings on his helmet, baton, and shoes that helped him to fly.) What message was Hermes delivering to the other gods and goddesses? (They had been summoned to Mount Olympus by Zeus.)
7. *Inferential* Describe Hermes using adjectives. (speedy, light, playful, helpful, etc.)



◀ **Show image 2A-4: Hermes listening to Apollo's song**

8. *Literal* Which god did Hermes visit first? (Apollo) What was Apollo the god of? (music, poetry, and light)



◀ **Show image 2A-6: Hermes talking to Artemis, dogs lying at their feet**

9. *Literal* What was Artemis the goddess of? (hunting, wilderness, animals) What was she hunting with her bow and arrow when Hermes found her? (a stag, or male deer)



◀ **Show image 2A-8: Hermes and Poseidon talking and watching ocean performance**

10. *Literal* Which massive god did Hermes visit next? (Poseidon) What was he the god of? (the seas and earthquakes)
11. *Evaluative* How did some of the powers of the gods and goddesses explain how things had come to be or how things happened in nature? (Apollo created music, light, and poetry; Artemis created hunting; Poseidon created earthquakes and storms in the seas; Zeus created lightning and thunder; etc.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

12. *Evaluative* *Think Pair Share*: Why do you think Zeus, the king of the gods, is summoning the other Olympians to Mount Olympus? (Answers may vary.)
13. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these remaining questions.]

## Word Work: Summoned

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “But soon you will have more of an audience, for our father, Zeus, has *summoned* us all here to the great hall at once.”
2. Say the word *summoned* with me.
3. If you are summoned, you are called forth or requested to come to a specific place.
4. The principal summoned all of the students to the auditorium for a special announcement.
5. Have you ever summoned someone or been summoned by someone? Try to use the word *summoned* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I summoned \_\_\_\_\_ once when . . . ” or “\_\_\_\_\_ summoned me once when . . . ”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *summoned*?

Use a *Sharing* activity for follow-up. Directions: Tell about a time when you were summoned by someone—such as a parent, teacher, or friend. Remember to answer in complete sentences and be sure to begin your responses with “I was summoned once when . . . ” [You may wish to have students act out this word by going to the front of the class and summoning another student to join them.] Other forms of the word *summoned* include: *summon*, *summons*, and *summoning*.



**Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day**



# Mount Olympus, Part I

# 2<sub>B</sub>

## Extensions

**20** minutes

### Civilization Chart (Instructional Master 1B-1, optional)

Place Image Card 4 (Mount Olympus) in the “Religion” square. Have students share what they see in the image and what they remember about Mount Olympus. Tell them that you will place Image Cards for the gods and goddesses in the “Religion” square in the next lesson.

Review with students what is already on the Civilization Chart, and have them discuss what they remember about each image.

- ✈ Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students complete Instructional Master 1B-1 on their own by drawing pictures and/or writing words in each square.

### Retelling the Read-Aloud

Show students images 2A-1 through 2A-9. Have them retell the story of the Olympian gods and goddesses, using words like *first*, *next*, *then*, and *finally* to reinforce the sequence of events. To help make these fictional characters more memorable, you may choose to have some students act out the story as others retell it.