



Mount Olympus, Part II

3_A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes



What Have We Already Learned?

◀ Show image 2A-1: Mount Olympus

Ask students what they see in the image. Prompt them to recall that Mount Olympus is the highest mountain in Greece and was believed to be the home of the Olympian gods and goddesses. You may wish to use images 2A-2 through 2A-9 to review what students learned in the previous read-aloud about what were believed to be the characteristics and powers of the gods and goddesses of the ancient Greeks.

Note: You may choose to use the family tree diagram of the Olympian gods introduced in Lesson 2 as you read this lesson.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Ask students to predict what other powers and skills the gods and goddesses were believed to have. Also ask them what they think Zeus's news will be for all of the gods and goddesses who are being summoned to the palace on Mount Olympus.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen to the second part of the story to find out if their predictions are correct.



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◀ Show image 3A-1: Hermes hovering over Greek landscape¹

1 Who do you see in this image?
What do you think Hermes is doing?

2 A mission is a special job or task.
What is Hermes's mission?

3 Where do you think Hermes will go next?

4 or involved together

Hermes, messenger of the gods, was on a **mission** for his father, Zeus, the king of the gods.² Zeus was calling the most powerful gods back to their palace at the very top of Mount Olympus. Already Hermes had passed along Zeus's message to Apollo—the handsome god of music, poetry, and light—and to Apollo's sister, the huntress Artemis. Hermes had also carried the message to Zeus's brother, the mighty Poseidon, god of the sea. Hermes's task was not yet done, however, and now he hovered above Greece, looking and listening for the signs that would lead him to the next god he wished to find.³

This did not take long. In the distance, Hermes saw flashes of light from Earth beneath him. Flying in that direction, he soon heard screams and angry shouts, and now he could see below him two armies engaged⁴ in a battle. The lights Hermes had seen were flashes of sunlight reflecting off armor and weapons. The soldiers of one army were pushing back the soldiers of another army, which had now begun to panic and run.



◀ Show image 3A-2: Ares explaining battle to Hermes

5 A spectacle is an eye-catching and amazing sight.

6 or wider

7 or magnificent

Perched on a cloud high above the battle, and clearly excited by the **spectacle** below, stood Ares (*AIR-ees*), the god of war.⁵ Dressed all in red, tall and strong he stood, and his smile grew broader⁶ as Hermes landed beside him. "Hail, brother!" said Ares, for he was also a son of Zeus. Pointing down, he asked, "Isn't it glorious?"⁷ Here are humans at their best and worst, some displaying heroic courage and others cowardly fear."

8 If you are desperate, you are in need of something and will do anything to change your situation. Why do you think this soldier is desperate?

He pointed, and a beam of light shone on one of the desperate soldiers.⁸ "I have been watching that fellow there," said Ares. "See how he seeks to bring his fellow soldiers together to win the battle?"

Hermes had never understood his brother's attraction to battle, but it would not do to say so. Hermes thought to himself, "It seems to me that the best elements of humans are love, loyalty, and learning—not fighting." To Ares he said, "Zeus summons us all to Mount Olympus."

Without taking his eyes off of the battle below, Ares nodded and said, "I'll be there."⁹

9 So what is Ares the god of?



← **Show image 3A-3: Hermes approaching Athena and Demeter**¹⁰

10 [Point to each goddess in the image as you read. Demeter is wearing green.]

11 What is a city-state?

12 [Point to Image Card 1 (Olive Trees) on the Civilization Chart.] A grove is a group of trees growing or planted near one another.

13 The word *plentiful* is like the word *abundant*; it means in great amount. Remember the hardy tree that the ancient Greeks were able to grow even in the rugged soil? That hardy tree is the olive tree.

14 If Demeter is delighted, is she happy or sad?

15 So which one is the goddess of plants and the harvest? Which one is the goddess of wisdom and war?

But Hermes had already flown to the Greek city-state of Athens.¹¹ Here he found his sister Athena (uh-*THEEN*-uh), another daughter of Zeus and goddess of wisdom and war, walking among a **grove** of olive trees.¹² With Athena was Zeus's sister, Demeter (dih-*MEE*-tur), goddess of plants and of the harvest. In her wise, intelligent voice, Athena was saying, "And so, dear aunt, would you please make sure that this year's crop of olives is especially plentiful for the people of Athens?"¹³ Gently, Demeter answered, "I shall be delighted."¹⁴ Instantly, the nearby olive leaves turned a deeper shade of green.

Hermes landed, kissed his aunt's cheek, and then smiled at Athena. "I have come to tell you that Zeus calls us all to Mount Olympus."

"Of course," Athena answered.¹⁵



← **Show image 3A-4: Hermes entering Hephaestus's forge**

16 or rough-edged

17 Do you remember what a blacksmith does? A forge is a place where a blacksmith works to heat metal and shape it into different objects. [Point to the anvil as you read the next sentence.]

Hermes was off once more to his last stop—back to Mount Olympus, where he had started. There, Hermes followed the loud clang, clang, clang of metal striking on metal. His brother Hephaestus (heh-*FESS*-tuss), the god of fire and the blacksmith of the gods, was standing by his red-hot forge with a huge, heavy hammer in each hand, striking them in turn against a jagged¹⁶ lightning bolt.¹⁷ The lightning bolt was being shaped on top of an

18 You will hear more about this amazing horse later.



anvil, a heavy block of iron or steel with a smooth, flat top. Waiting outside to carry the lightning bolt to Zeus—who, as you remember, was the god of lightning and thunder—was a magnificent winged horse named Pegasus.¹⁸

Hephaestus did not even notice Hermes until the messenger god called out, loudly enough to be heard over the hammer strokes, “Greetings, brother!”

◀ **Show image 3A-5: Hermes and Hephaestus speaking**

Hephaestus stopped hammering and, wiping the sweat from his brow, looked over at Hermes. The two gods, though brothers, appeared to be opposites. Hephaestus was huge and muscular in his upper body, but slow-moving due to an injury that had left his legs badly damaged. Hermes was slender and so smooth that he seemed almost to dance in all of his movements.

Hephaestus’s face broke out into a big grin when he saw the messenger god. “Brother, where have you been while I have been tied down here at my forge?” he asked in his slow way.¹⁹

“Practically everywhere!” Hermes answered.²⁰ “Zeus has sent me to summon everyone to the great hall.”

By “everyone” Hermes meant the main gods, of whom he himself was one. In fact, there was only one left to contact. “Would you ask your wife to join us?” he asked.

Hephaestus frowned. “She does not like to be awakened this early,” he said, even though it was nearly noon by now, “but if it is for Zeus, I will do it.”

◀ **Show image 3A-6: Sleeping Aphrodite; Hephaestus and Hermes talking**

Hephaestus’s wife was the most beautiful of all the goddesses, the goddess of beauty itself and of love: Aphrodite (AF-roh-DY-tee). Aphrodite was as used to luxury²¹ as Hephaestus was to hard work.

Hephaestus told Hermes, “We will come.”

19 If Hephaestus is tied down, this means he is very busy and unable to leave because he has so much to do.

20 What are some of the places where Hermes has been?



21 or comforts and pleasures



22 [Point to each of the gods and goddesses other than Zeus and Hera; have students help you name them.]

23 or very beautiful

24 [Point to the goddess in purple in the image.]

◀ **Show image 3A-7: Zeus and Hera entering, all the other gods gathered**

Finally all of the gods and goddesses had gathered.²² Aphrodite told Athena in a laughing voice, “I’m sorry I look like such a mess, but Hephaestus said I had to hurry.” Athena smiled to herself, for as always, Aphrodite was absolutely stunning.²³

Athena had no chance to reply, for now the king and queen of them all, Zeus and Hera, entered. Hera²⁴ was the goddess of feminine power and women’s lives. She knew why Zeus had summoned them all: the family of the Olympian gods was about to welcome a new member.

Zeus raised a hand for silence, smiled, and announced, “Today is a special day. Today we invite to join us here on Mount Olympus a new god, the youngest of us all. Humans will worship him as they worship the rest of us.”



◀ **Show image 3A-8: Dionysus**

Zeus continued, “Welcome among us Dionysus (DY-uh-NY-suhs), god of wine, pleasure, and theatre.” Suddenly there appeared a handsome fellow with laughing eyes, a lazy smile, and dark, curly hair.

Dionysus spoke in a light, easy tone. “I am honored. I shall teach humans to make wine and raise cups of it in praise of us all, and they shall **dedicate**²⁵ their finest plays to the gods and goddesses. In these ways I hope to provide pleasure to humans and honor to us all.”

25 or offer up as a way to show respect or affection



◀ **Show image 3A-9: All twelve gods seated on their thrones**

And so it was that Dionysus joined the household of the gods and goddesses atop Mount Olympus, completing what is known as the twelve Olympian gods.²⁶

26 [Again, point to the gods and goddesses, and ask volunteers to name each.]

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 what Zeus's news for the gods and goddesses would be correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Literal* What is a city-state? (an independent city and the surrounding area it controlled)
3. *Inferential* Did Hermes accomplish his mission? Why or why not? (Yes; he delivered the message to all of the gods and goddesses that had been summoned by Zeus.)



◀ **Show image 3A-2: Ares explaining battle to Hermes**

4. *Literal* When Hermes approached his brother Ares, what was Ares doing? (watching a spectacle, two armies engaged in a battle) What was Ares the god of? (war)
5. *Evaluative* Hermes thought to himself that the best qualities of people were love, loyalty, and learning—not fighting. Do you agree with Hermes? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)



◀ **Show image 3A-3: Hermes approaching Athena and Demeter**

6. *Literal* What were Athena, the goddess of wisdom and war, and Demeter, the goddess of plants and harvest, doing when Hermes arrived by their side? (walking in a grove of olive trees) What did Athena ask Demeter to do for the people of Athens? (to make their olive crop more plentiful, or greater in number)



← **Show image 3A-4: Hermes entering Hephaestus's forge**

7. *Literal* Where did Hermes find his brother Hephaestus? (in the forge) What was Hephaestus doing in the forge? (shaping a lightning bolt for Zeus out of metal on an anvil)



← **Show image 3A-6: Sleeping Aphrodite; Hephaestus and Hermes talking**

8. *Literal* What is Aphrodite, Hephaestus's wife, the goddess of? (beauty and love)
9. *Evaluative* How did the powers and skills of the gods and goddesses you heard about help to explain how things came to be or how things happened in nature? (Ares caused war; Athena was the source of wisdom and war; Demeter caused the seasons to happen and plants to grow; Hephaestus made the lightning bolts for Zeus to throw; etc.)



← **Show image 3A-7: Zeus and Hera entering, all the other gods gathered**

10. *Literal* Who was the queen of the gods and goddesses and the wife of Zeus? (Hera)



← **Show image 3A-8: Dionysus**

11. *Literal* Who is the new god being added to the Olympian family of gods? (Dionysus) What is he the god of? (wine, pleasure, and theatre)
12. *Literal* Where were the Olympian gods and goddesses believed to live? (Mount Olympus)

[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.



← **Show image 3A-9: All twelve gods seated on their thrones**

13. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Remember, the ancient Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses. Which of the twelve Olympian gods or goddesses is your favorite? Why? (Answers may vary.)

14. 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: Mission

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, "Hermes, messenger of the gods, was on a *mission* for his father, Zeus, the king of the gods."
2. Say the word *mission* with me.
3. A mission is a special job or task.
4. Tricia was on a mission to collect as many cans as she could for the canned-food drive at her school.
5. Have you ever been on a mission or been given a mission? Try to use the word *mission* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "I was on a mission once when . . ." or "_____ gave me a mission to . . ."]
6. What's the word we've been talking about? What part of speech is the word *mission*?

Use a *Sharing* activity for follow-up. Directions: Tell about a mission you have had and what the outcome of your mission was. Remember to answer in complete sentences and be sure to begin your response with "I went on a mission to . . ." [You may wish to give students a specific mission, as individuals or as a class, pertaining to the domain, such as a research mission, and have them share the outcome.]



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Extensions

20 minutes

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

Point to Image Card 1 (Olive Trees), and ask students what they see in the image and what they remember about the olive tree. Tell students that in another lesson they are going to hear more about these unique trees. Place Image Card 5 (Olives) in the “Jobs” square, and tell students that the ancient Greek farmers harvested this fruit of the olive tree as part of their jobs.

Show students Image Card 6 (Gods/Goddesses), and ask them what they see. Have students identify each god and goddess in the image and share what they remember about their characteristics and special powers. Ask students which square they think the image should go in. Place the Image Card in the “Religion” square. Ask students which Olympian god is missing from Image Card 6. Prompt them to recall Dionysus, the god of wine and theater. Place Image Card 7 (Dionysus) in the “Religion” square, and remind students that in this read-aloud, the arrival of Dionysus was the reason the gods and goddesses were summoned by Zeus to Mount Olympus.

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 1-B1 on their own by drawing pictures and/or writing words in each square.

Retelling the Read-Aloud

Show students images 3A-1 through 3A-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. You may choose to have some students act out the story as others retell it to help make these fictional characters more memorable, having a different student come up to the front of the class each time a new god or goddess is introduced.