

HOMER'S TROY

Mark It on the Map

Have students locate the area highlighted on page 17 on a world map. Then have them use the scale of miles to measure the area that includes Greece, the Aegean Sea, and western Asia Minor. Let them figure out a comparable area in the United States as a reference.

Vocabulary

epic poem	c. (circa)
dactylic hexameter	stratum
bard	trilogy
archaisms	ostracism

Introduction

Ask if any of the students have ever heard about Homer. Allow these students to explain what they know. Make a list of key places and figures in Homer's world. Leave plenty of space between names and post the list in the classroom. As the class works along in the issue, have students add identifying details under each name.

Questions for Discussion

- Who was Homer?
- What is the *Iliad*? The *Odyssey*?
- What "beauty contest" started the Trojan War? Explain why.
- Why did the Greeks build a gigantic wooden horse?
- In which time period is the Trojan War thought to have taken place?
- What role did the chorus play in Greek plays?
- What is the theme of Euripides' play *Trojan Women*?
- What aids did Schliemann use to help him find Troy?
- What did Schliemann believe he had found?
- What is "Priam's Treasure"? Be specific.

Writing Workout

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Read the quotation at the top of page 2. Write about a time in your life when you did exactly what Homer suggests. Be specific with your answer.
- Which poem do you like best, the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*? Explain why.
- Read "Stratum by Stratum" on pages 18–21. Write captions for each of the illustrations.
- Pretend you are a reporter. What four questions would you ask Schliemann? Give a reason for asking each question.

Think About It

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Why do you think it was important for the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to be written in meter (dactylic hexameter), rather than to have rhyming lines? (Because the poems were told orally, bards added variations or omitted sections depending on circumstances and memory. Thus, meter provided an even flow and allowed a bard to accent important words and phrases.)
- Do you think there really was a huge wooden horse? If yes, why? If no, what do you think the story represents?
- Think of a political situation—local, state, national, or international—that could be described with the phrase "beware of Greeks bearing gifts." Explain why you think this is true.
- Do you agree with Russia's attitude concerning "Priam's Treasure"? Why or why not?

Debate

Divide the class into two teams to debate the following: Stolen art should be returned to its original owner, even if thousands of years have passed since the art was stolen. Allow the teams time to prepare a 2-minute opening statement and a 5-minute argument. After both sides have presented their opening statements, allow the teams time to prepare a 3-minute rebuttal. Follow the debate with a classroom discussion about the topic.

Play the Part

Perform the play “Euripides’ Trojan Women” found on pages 24–29. Assign parts. Have those students with no parts make simple costumes and props. Have students research where the Greeks performed their plays and replicate the setting as closely as possible.

Get Into Art

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

- Divide the class into two groups. Have one group illustrate the scenes from the *Iliad* as described in the article “Love Leads to War” on pages 8–12. Have the second group do the same with the story of the wooden horse from the *Odyssey*, following the tale found in “A Horse Brings Victory” on pages 13–16.
- Have students read the article “The Hunt for Priam’s Treasure” on pages 37–41. Then assign each student to illustrate the travels of “Priam’s Treasure” after Schliemann found them, including a caption for each image and a date. This also could be a group project: Assign each group a time period and then make a collage with students’ illustrations.

Research Projects

Students may complete one or more of the following activities:

- Bring the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* to class. Assign each poem to a group of students. Have the students write a brief synopsis of each book of the poem assigned to them. Then have the students in each group present their synopses to the class—first the *Iliad*, and then the *Odyssey*.
- Assign a student or group of students to find a significant event—other than those at Troy—that took place in each of the six time periods outlined on pages 18–21.
- Bring books to the classroom about art pieces (such as the Rosetta Stone, the Elgin Marbles, and shipwreck treasures like those from the *Titanic*) whose present-day ownership is being contested. Assign students to research the action being taken in at least two cases. Have them present their findings to the class.

Just for Fun

Students may complete one or both of the following activities:

- Make a wax tablet and stylus by following the directions on pages 30–31.
- Find a long-forgotten site in your area by following the directions on pages 44–45.

Follow These Footsteps

Homer

Euripides

Heinrich Schliemann