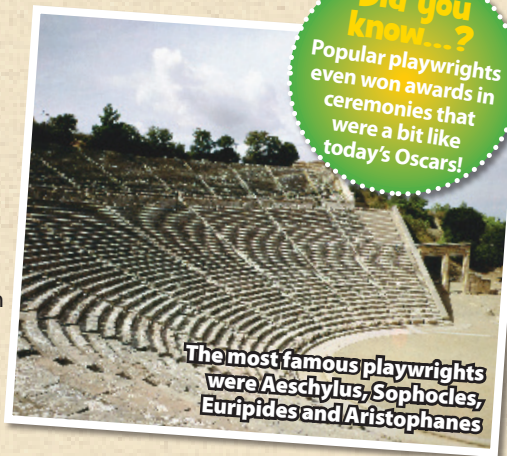


What a performance!

Did you know that the Ancient Greeks invented the theatre? They loved watching plays, and most cities had a theatre – some big enough to hold 15,000 people!

Only men and boys were allowed to be actors, and they wore masks (see below), which showed the audience whether their character was happy or sad. Some of the masks had two sides, so the actor could turn them around to change the mood for each scene.



The most famous playwrights were Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes

Did you know...? Popular playwrights even won awards in ceremonies that were a bit like today's Oscars!



ACTING UP

There were three types of Greek play, comedies (which made fun of their rulers), tragedies (which taught people about right and wrong), and Satyrs (a mix of both comedy and tragedy).

Myths and monsters

The Ancient Greeks had lots of stories to help them learn about their world.

The gods featured heavily in these tales, and so did mythological monsters – like Cerberus, a three-headed dog that guarded the gates to the underworld; Medusa, a slithering sorceress whose look could turn people to stone; and the Cyclops who had one eye in the middle of its forehead. Yikes!



TERRIFYING TWOSOME

Scylla and Charybdis were two scary sea monsters, believed to live on opposite sides of the Strait of Messina, so sailors were terrified of entering the stretch of water between the two fearsome beasts!



Sailors feared the sea monsters of Messina!

Growing up in Greece



Did you know...? The Greeks had some strange superstitions about food – some wouldn't eat beans as they thought they contained the souls of the dead!

Boys generally started school aged seven, but girls had to stay at home and be taught cooking and weaving by their mothers. Rich families would send a slave to school with their sons, and their job was to keep an eye out for any bad behaviour! Just like you, the children of Ancient Greece played with action figures and dolls, except that theirs were made from wood or clay. They also liked playing with balls, which were made from a blown-up pig's bladders. Yuck!



ALL DRESSED UP!

Most Ancient Greeks wore a *chiton*, which was like a long T-shirt made from one large piece of cotton. The poor slaves, however, had to make do with a loincloth (a small strip of cloth wrapped around the waist)!

Great gods

The Greeks believed that a family of gods lived in a cloud palace above Mount Olympus (the highest mountain in Greece). These gods were thought to have special powers, and each had control over a different aspect of life. Let's meet some of them...



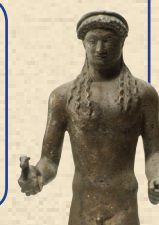
ZEUS

Zeus was the king of all gods. He was also god of the sky, and when he was in a bad mood, he'd create huge storms and thunderbolts!



POSEIDON

Zeus' brother, Poseidon, was in charge of the sea and horses. He showed his anger by striking the bottom of the sea to cause earthquakes!



APOLLO AND ARTEMIS

These were Zeus' kids. Apollo was the Sun god and in charge of music. His twin, Artemis, had the power to send deathly plagues, but she could heal people too. Phew!



TOP TEMPLES

The Greeks put statues of their gods inside temples, the most famous of which is the Parthenon. This temple in Athens was built for the goddess Athena, the protector of the city.



Greeks worshipped gods at special temples