

Drama

MYTH
a traditional and
often-ancient story

VICTORY
COMES AT A
PRICE

THE TROJAN WAR

BY SPENCER KAYDEN

BASED ON THE EPIC POEMS THE *ILIAD* AND THE *AENEID*



CHARACTERS

Circle the character you will play.

*Starred characters are major roles.

***CHORUS 1 AND 2:** Each to be read by half the class

***NARRATORS 1 AND 2 (N1, N2)**

Go to Scope Online to hear the characters' names pronounced.

THE TROJANS

PRIAM: King of Troy

***HECTOR:** Priam's older son

PARIS: Priam's younger son

CASSANDRA: Priam's daughter

ANDROMACHE: Hector's wife

HELEN: Paris's wife

TROJAN SOLDIER

THE GREEKS

ODYSSEUS: A Greek leader

***ACHILLES:** The mightiest Greek warrior

PATROCLUS: A Greek warrior and Achilles' best friend

THETIS: Achilles' mother and a sea goddess



AS YOU READ, THINK ABOUT:

What traits were most valued in ancient Greece?

Scene 1 THE WALL OF TROY

CHORUS 1: Our story takes place long ago, in the ancient city of Troy.

CHORUS 2: A beautiful city of learning and light!

CHORUS 1: How the Greeks long to stamp it out.

N1: King Priam and his children stand on the enormous wall that surrounds Troy.

PRIAM: Ten years we have fought this war. Oh, how I pray to Zeus that it will end.

HECTOR: We can't back down now, Father.

PRIAM: So many good men have died.

CHORUS 2: So many Greeks.

CHORUS 1: So many Trojans.

HECTOR: Paris, will you join me in battle today?

PARIS: If I were to die, this whole war would have been for nothing.

CASSANDRA: It's your fault this war ever started.

PARIS: That is simply not true.

HECTOR: You stole Helen from her husband!

PARIS: It's not my fault. The gods made her fall for me!

CHORUS 2: Paris speaks a partial truth.

CHORUS 1: He *asked* the gods for Helen's heart.

HECTOR: Didn't you think Menelaus would come after you?

PARIS: I hardly expected him to launch 1,000 ships to our shores.

PRIAM: Quiet now. Helen was just an excuse to go to war. The Greeks have long wanted to take our city.

Zeus is the ruler of all gods on Mount Olympus and the most powerful. He is associated with the thunderbolt.



Scene 2 GREEK CAMP

N2: In a tent, Achilles reclines on a pile of blankets and pillows. He is playing his **lyre**.

CHORUS 2: Behold, the mighty Achilles!

CHORUS 1: Such pride!

CHORUS 2: Such honor!

CHORUS 1: Such strength!

N1: Odysseus and Patroclus walk in.

ODYSSEUS: Achilles, my old friend, we cannot win without you.

N2: Achilles shrugs.

N1: He continues to strum his lyre.

ODYSSEUS: You are the fiercest warrior in the world. Think how many Greek lives will be spared if you return to battle.

ACHILLES: Why should I fight? The Trojans have done nothing to me.

ODYSSEUS: At this very moment *the Trojans* are breaking through our defenses.

ACHILLES: This is not my problem. I am sailing home tomorrow.

PATROCLUS: Last night, the gods sent me a vision. I was wearing your armor in battle. The very sight of your helmet made the Trojans flee.

ODYSSEUS: Achilles, why not let Patroclus wear your armor and pretend to be you?

N2: Achilles considers this.

ACHILLES (to Patroclus): Only if you promise not to fight Prince Hector. He is the greatest Trojan warrior.

PATROCLUS: You have my word.

CHORUS 2: But the desire for glory makes liars of us all.

Scene 3 THE BATTLEFIELD

N1: Wearing Achilles' armor, Patroclus charges the gates of Troy.

PATROCLUS: Beware, Trojans!

ODYSSEUS: It's working! The Trojans are retreating!

N2: Patroclus **brandishes** his spear.

PATROCLUS (*yelling*): Cowards! Is there not a true man among you?

N1: Hector steps forward.

HECTOR: I will fight you, Achilles.

CHORUS 1: Patroclus remembers his promise to Achilles.

CHORUS 2: But his promise cannot compete with his pride.

N2: Spears clash. Hector **defly** slices off Patroclus's chestplate and it clatters to the ground.

HECTOR: Terrorize us no more, Achilles!

N1: Hector thrusts his spear. Patroclus crumples.

ODYSSEUS: Nooooooooo!

CHORUS 1: Sad day!

CHORUS 2: Red day!

N2: The fighting stops as Trojans and Greeks gather around the body in solemn disbelief.

N1: Hector removes the helmet of the man he has slain.

HECTOR (*gasps*): What trick is this? This is not Achilles!

ODYSSEUS: No. It was his truest friend.

INFORMATIONAL TEXT

What Is Your Achilles' Heel?

Today, if someone is said to have an "Achilles' heel," it means that the person is generally strong but has one terrible weakness that can ultimately lead to his or her downfall. The expression comes from the myth of Achilles (surprise, surprise). According to the myth, Achilles' mom, Thetis, dipped him in the magical river Styx, making him invincible on every part of his body that touched the water. The heel of his foot, where Thetis was holding him, did not touch the water though. So Achilles' heel was his one vulnerability.



Scene 4 HECTOR'S HOME

N2: Hector prepares for battle. His wife, Andromache, holds their baby boy.

ANDROMACHE (*tearfully*): I may never see you again.

HECTOR: I must face Achilles.

ANDROMACHE: You could stay here, safe with your family.

HECTOR: My place is on the front lines, with the men. Imagine their scorn if I hid behind our walls. I could never face the people of Troy if I did not fight.

ANDROMACHE: If you face Achilles on the battlefield, you will leave me a widow and your child fatherless.

N1: Hector takes his son in his arms.

HECTOR: Oh Zeus, help this boy grow up to be brave and true. (*to Andromache*) I cannot escape my fate. If I am doomed to die, then I will die defending the city I love.

Scene 5 ACHILLES' TENT

CHORUS 1: A cloud of grief and rage surrounds Achilles.

N2: His mother, Thetis, appears beside him.

CHORUS 2: Hail, Thetis, goddess of the sea.

THETIS: My son, what sorrow has befallen you?

ACHILLES: Patroclus has been slain. I will not rest until Hector falls by my spear.

THETIS: Pack up your ships. Return home.

ACHILLES: Patroclus was like a brother to me. Why do you discourage me from **avenging** his death?

THETIS: If you sail home now, you will live a long, fruitful life. If you return to battle, you will be remembered as the greatest warrior the world has ever seen, a hero whose name will be known until the end of time—

CHORUS 1: See how her eyes fill with tears!

THETIS: —but my son . . . you will die.

ACHILLES: So be it.

Scene 6 THE PALACE GARDENS OF TROY

CHORUS 2: Courage and pride!

CHORUS 1: Fury and woe!

N1: Andromache comes upon Helen, who is weeping.



HELEN: I wish I had never come here with Paris.

ANDROMACHE: Your regret is touching but means little to us who have lost so much.

HELEN: I, too, have lost much. The Trojans will never accept me; they blame me for the war. And the Greeks **revile** me. People see me and recoil as if I were diseased. At least Hector has treated me with kindness.

ANDROMACHE: Do not speak of my husband. Because of you, he faces Achilles today.

HELEN: I cannot help that I fell in love with Paris. Cupid struck me with his arrow.

ANDROMACHE: And do you love him still?

HELEN: In truth, I have come to loathe the sight of him.

ANDROMACHE: Is that meant to console me?

Scene 7 THE BATTLEFIELD

N2: From the wall above Troy, Priam watches the battle.

CHORUS 2: What is it like to watch your loved ones march to certain death?

N1: Down on the battlefield, Achilles calls to Hector.

ACHILLES: Hector! Turn and face me!

N2: Hector turns, panting.

HECTOR: I will fight you. But if I am slain, promise that you will leave my body for my family to bury with honor.

ACHILLES: Fool, there are no vows between wolves and lambs. Your body will be a feast for the vultures.

N1: Achilles plunges his spear. Hector falls.

Today, we use the phrase "Trojan horse" to refer to someone or something used to trick an enemy.

ACHILLES: The pleasure I take in ending your life is a crumb compared with my grief at the loss of my friend.

N2: The light goes out of Hector's eyes. Trojan soldiers approach to retrieve his body.

ACHILLES: Stand back, or you will share his fate!

N1: On the wall, King Priam wails. Cassandra and Andromache weep. Paris stares in grim horror.

Scene 8 THE GREEK CAMP

N2: That night, King Priam, in disguise, rides into the Greek camp.

N1: He sneaks into Achilles' tent. Removing his cloak, he falls to his knees.

PRIAM: I ask for your mercy. I cannot rest until my son has been given a proper burial.

N2: Achilles guides Priam to a seat.

ACHILLES: It has been foretold that I will die soon after Hector.

PRIAM: You killed him knowing that **prophecy**?

ACHILLES: Yes. I wanted revenge at any cost.

PRIAM: And are you satisfied?

ACHILLES: I see the **anguish** I have caused you. For every man I have slaughtered, there is a father who grieves for him. Let us weep together, old man, for all we have lost.

N1: The two men regard each other with respect.

ACHILLES: You may take your son's body. We will have 10 days of peace so that you may grieve.



Scene 9 THE PALACE IN TROY

N2: Ten days later, a Trojan soldier runs to the palace.

TROJAN SOLDIER: The Greek ships are gone!

PRIAM: Is this wretched war finally over?

TROJAN SOLDIER: In the night, they broke down their camp and sailed for home. They left a most impressive tribute to Athena, to grant them a safe journey.

PRIAM: What is this tribute?

TROJAN SOLDIER: An enormous wooden horse, nearly as tall as our walls.

PRIAM: Show us.

N1: The soldier leads Priam, Paris, and Cassandra to the shore, where a massive horse rests on the sand.

PRIAM: Marvelous!

PARIS: Shall we bring it into the city?

CASSANDRA: The Greeks cannot be trusted. What if the horse has some evil purpose?

PRIAM: Nonsense. Let us bring it into our city as a symbol of our victory.

CASSANDRA: I beg you, Father, do not do this.

Scene 10 WITHIN TROY

CHORUS 1: See how the Trojans celebrate.

CHORUS 2: They do not know that their shining city will soon be in ashes.

N2: The horse sits in a courtyard in Troy. After the revelry dies down, two dozen Greeks slide out from a

hole in its belly.

N1: They dart from shadow to shadow until they reach the gates. They open the gates, and the entire Greek army spills inside.

N2: The Greeks had not sailed for home; they had merely hidden their ships beyond the harbor.

N1: The Greeks destroy Troy, setting fire to every home, every temple, every garden. Paris watches from the palace.

CHORUS 1: At last the coward finds his courage.

N2: Paris strides onto the battlefield.

N1: He sees Achilles walking arrogantly among the ruins of the city.

N2: Trembling, Paris loads an arrow into his bow and takes aim. He fires.

N1: The arrow strikes Achilles in his one vulnerable spot: the back of his heel.

N2: Achilles collapses.

ACHILLES: No more rage, no more sorrow. No more death, except my own.

PARIS: Behold, the great warrior lies in the dust.

Epilogue

CHORUS 2: Troy was annihilated.

CHORUS 1: The Greeks were complete in their victory.

CHORUS 2: But the Greeks had been gone so long.

CHORUS 1: They had been at war so long.

CHORUS 2: A shadow had fallen across their hearts.

CHORUS 1: And few were to survive the perilous journey home. ●

Athena was the goddess of war, wisdom, and the arts.



If You Lived in Ancient Greece

A day in the life of a 12-year-old boy **By Kristin Lewis**

You are sitting in the shade of an olive tree, sweating through your tunic in the afternoon heat. Your assignment is to memorize the *Iliad*, which happens to be one of your favorite stories. Even though you've heard it a thousand times—as have most citizens of ancient Greece—your heart still quickens when Hector battles Achilles.

HARD WORK

You and the other nine boys in your class have been at school since sunrise. Learning is highly prized in your society. At school, you study grammar, reading, writing, math, music, and gymnastics.

There is no such thing as public education, and your father pays a lot of money for you to go to school. Most boys finish school by age 12 so they can focus on learning a trade, like fishing or farming. One day you will become an **apprentice** to your father, a wealthy craftsman. Your sisters

do not attend school at all. Girls in ancient Greece spend their days learning to cook, weave, and run a household.

The wind whips up, carrying the salty scent of the sea. You take a deep breath. Frowning, your *paidagogos* tells you to get back to work. This man is one of your father's

slaves; he goes to school with you to make sure you stay focused and work hard.

DINNERTIME

After school, you stop at the neighborhood dunghill, which consists of a long pit over which as many as 30 people can squat at a time. Then you go home to your family's mud-brick house, where you are greeted by the delicious smells of the dinner your mother has prepared: porridge made from barley, along with cheese, octopus, vegetables, eggs,

fruit, and wine. You hope dessert will be honey cake. You greet your father, who sits on the best chair in the house, called a *thronos*. After dinner, you play with your friends, kicking a ball—an inflated pig's bladder—around in the last light of the day.

DRIFTING OFF TO SLEEP

As soon as the sun sets, everyone goes to bed. You curl up on your mattress, which is stuffed with dry grass.

Life for you and your family is full of uncertainty. Your city-state is pretty much always at war with other city-states over land and borders. You

aren't old enough to fight, but your father expects you to watch the battles from a distance so you'll get used to the sight of bloodshed.

But you don't think about that right now. As you drift off to sleep to the soft sounds of waves breaking on the shore, you imagine you are the brave and mighty Hector, riding out in all your honor and glory to defend your home. ●



School is often held outside, sometimes at your teacher's house.



Epic poems like the *Iliad* are read for more than entertainment. They are thought to improve the reader's character.



Most people in your city-state are farmers; there are also fishers, scholars, and artists.

WRITING CONTEST

The story of the Trojan War reflects the values of ancient Greece. What qualities can you infer were most admired? How did education help young Greeks develop those qualities? Answer both questions in a short essay. Use text evidence from the play and the narrative essay. Send your essay to **TROY CONTEST**. Five winners will each get *King of Ithaka* by Tracy Barrett.



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