

# I. The legacy of the Ancient Greeks

In this unit you will

- read the story of Europa and Zeus
- learn why the Ancient Greeks were important for Europe
- learn the Ancient Greek alphabet



## Europe

The name of the continent Europe comes from ancient Greek mythology – a story about a Greek princess called Europa, who was carried away by the most important god in Ancient Greece – Zeus.

### 1) Look at the key words below. What do you think the story of Europa and Zeus is about?

**Zeus – bull – horns – soft fur – carry away – run – Europa – pretty – not afraid – stroke – sit on the back**

### 2) Before you read the story find Tyros or Tyrus and Crete on a map.

#### Europa and Zeus

The king of Tyros was called Agenor. Tyros or Tyrus is in modern Lebanon. He had a very pretty daughter called Europa. Zeus, the most important god in Ancient Greece, watched Europa and the other girls of Tyros playing on the beach beside the sea. He wanted to carry Europa away: Zeus always carried beautiful young women away. But how could he carry away Europa?

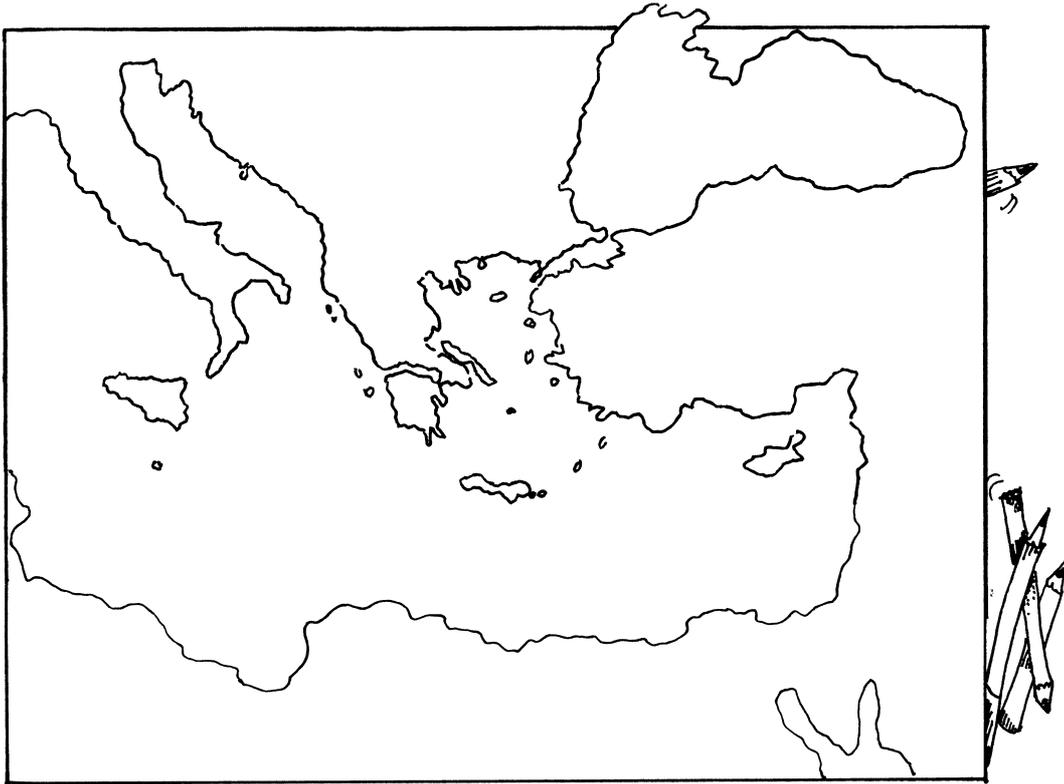
He thought about it. Then Zeus had a wonderful idea. He changed himself into a pure white bull with soft fur. Then he came out of the sea towards the girls and they all ran away except Europa. She was not afraid of the bull. She loved its soft and trustful eyes. First of all she touched the bull's horns then Europa sat on the wonderful bull's back.

The bull – Zeus – headed back in to the sea and took Europa with him. The young girls never saw Europa again. She had to swim with Zeus through the Mediterranean Sea to Crete.

Greek mythology says that Zeus and Europa had three sons. One of them was called Minos. He became the king of Crete.

**3) Do the following:**

- (1) Colour the seas blue and label them.
- (2) Mark Greece.
- (3) Label the island of Crete.
- (4) Mark Tyros.
- (5) Complete the sentences below.



Zeus was one of the most powerful \_\_\_\_\_ in ancient Greece.

Who was Europa's father? \_\_\_\_\_

Zeus changed himself into a \_\_\_\_\_ and went to \_\_\_\_\_ .

What did the bull look like? \_\_\_\_\_

Was Europa afraid of the bull? \_\_\_\_\_

What about the other girls? Were they afraid? \_\_\_\_\_

How was the bull able to carry Europa away? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did the bull take the girl? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4) Now act the story out. Work in groups.

You will need:



paper



a pencil



good ideas

(1) Write down a dialogue between Europa and Zeus.

(2) Act out your story in front of the class.

#### Who were the Ancient Greeks?

The Ancient Greeks lived in Europe before the birth of Jesus Christ. They lived in the region we still call Greece, but modern Greece does not cover the same area as Ancient Greece.

The Ancient Greeks **developed** a special way of life. We call this **the Greek civilisation**.

#### Where was Ancient Greece?

On the map below you can see where the Ancient Greek civilisation was found.



We need to know about the Ancient Greek civilisation because it is the **foundation** of our own civilisation. Here is a list of some of the things in our lives which can be **traced** back to the time of the Ancient Greeks:

- parts of our language
- maths
- science
- drama
- stories
- history
- art

### What can we trace back to the Ancient Greeks?

#### Words

Many words that we use today in English and other languages come from Ancient Greek.

Our word

*orchestra*

*biology*

*democracy*

Greek word

*orkheisthai* = to dance

*bios* = life + *logos* = word

*demos* = the people + *kratein* = to rule

We would say today that democracy means "government by the people".

*bible*

*biblia* = books

The New Testament of the Bible was first written in Greek.

*theatre*

*theatron* = a place to see things

Many other "theatre" words also come from Greek:

*drama*

*drama* = things that happen

*tragedy*

*tragos* = ram, he-goat + *ode* = song

*comedy*

*komodia* = singing at a theatre festival

#### Alphabet

The first two letters in the Greek alphabet are *alpha* = a and *beta* = b. These two words give us our word "alphabet".



### Architecture

You can see buildings all over the world that have been built like Ancient Greek buildings e.g. The Austrian Parliament.

### The Olympic Games

The first Olympics Games were held in an Ancient Greek city called Olympia in 776 BC.



### Marathon

A marathon is now a long-distance race but in Ancient Greek times it was the name of a place. A runner, called Pheidippides, ran from Athens to Sparta to get help before the Battle of Marathon. The distance he ran was 42,195 metres. This is still the length of the marathon race today.

Here is the Greek alphabet.

capital letter (upper case)	small letter (lower case)	Greek name	English sound
A	α	alpha	a
B	β	beta	b
Γ	γ	gamma	g
Δ	δ	delta	d
E	ε	epsilon	e
Z	ζ	zeta	z
H	η	eta	eh
Θ	θ	theta	th
I	ι	iota	ee
K	κ	kappa	c or k
Λ	λ	lambda	l
M	μ	mu	m
N	ν	nu	n
Ξ	ξ	xi	ksi
O	ο	omicron	o

## exploring Europe

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Π	π	pi	p
Ρ	ρ	rho	r
Σ	σ	sigma	s
Τ	τ	tau	t
Υ	υ	upsilon	u
Φ	φ	phi	p
Χ	χ	chi	chi
Ψ	ψ	psi	ps
Ω	ω	omega	oh

### 5) Write your name using the Greek alphabet.

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### 6) Work together and complete the table.

English	German	Czech	Hungarian	Slovak	other
	Europa				
biology ( <i>bios</i> = life, <i>logos</i> = word)					
geography ( <i>ge</i> = earth, <i>graphia</i> = writing)					
atlas					
bible ( <i>biblia</i> = books)					
theatre ( <i>theatron</i> )					
democracy					
angel ( <i>angelos</i> = messenger)					

## The legacy of the Ancient Greeks

idea					
idiot					
comet ( <i>kometos</i> = "a long haired one")					
problem ( <i>problema</i> )					