

Troy

A gripping portrayal of the most famous war in literature

About the Story

Lexile: 1100L (captions)

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

Learning Objective: to analyze relationships among characters

Key Skills: text structure, inference, compare and contrast, author's craft, character, literary analysis

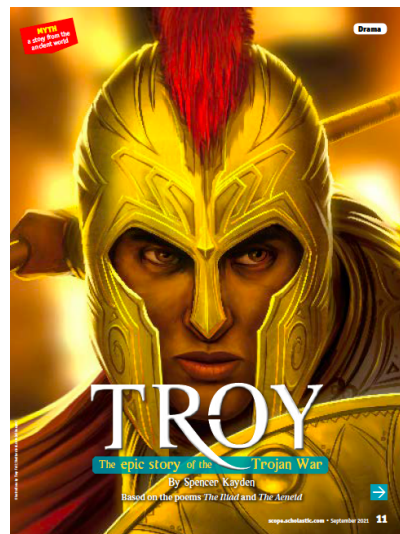
Essential Questions:

- What can we learn about a society from its stories and myths?
- What is the cost of war?
- How can stories promote certain values?

Standards:

The article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.5, R.7, R.10, W.2, W.9, SL.1, SL.2, L.4, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of support materials at scope.scholastic.com.

Audio:

- Text-to-speech
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation Guide
- Podcast: Meet Achilles

Slideshow:

- Mythology in Modern Language

Connected read-aloud plays from the Scope archives:

- *The Monster in the Cave*
- *Into the Burning Sun*
- *Gods Versus Giants*
- *Hunting a Snake-Headed Monster*
- *The Doomed Quest*
- *Hercules the Mighty*
- *Into the Maze of Doom*

Skill Building Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Preparing to Write: Gods and Mortals
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice
- **Core Skills Workout:** Inference
- **Literary Elements:** Theme Anticipation Guide, Character Thinking Tool
- Choice Board
- Quiz*
- Contest Entry Form

*Available on two levels

Step-by-Step Lesson

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

1. Preparing to Read

15 minutes

Do-Now: Anticipation Guide (5 minutes)

- Project the **Theme Anticipation Guide** on your whiteboard or share the Google Form version with each student (both available in your Resources tab). Have students decide whether they agree or disagree with each statement, then discuss. After reading the play, ask students to share whether any of their answers have changed and if so, why. You might also have them complete the Theme Anticipation Guide as one of the characters.

Preview Vocabulary (5 minutes)

- Project **Vocabulary: Definitions and Practice**. Review the definitions as a class. (Optionally, have students complete the practice activity for homework.) Highlighted words: *anguish*, *brandishes*, *deftly*, *lyre*, *envied*, *revile*, *scorn*, *tribute*

Practice Pronunciation (5 minutes)

- Project our **Pronunciation Guide** and play its audio at Scope Online to show students how to pronounce the names of characters and places in the play.

2. Reading and Discussing

45 minutes

- Have a volunteer read the As You Read box on page 12 of the magazine or at the top of the digital story page.
- Assign parts and read the play as a class.
**Tip: To help the class keep track of which characters are Greek and which are Trojan, separate students into three groups. Seat those playing Greeks on one side of the room, those playing Trojans on the other side, and chorus members, gods, and stage directors in the middle.*
- Break students into groups to discuss the following close-reading and critical-thinking questions.

Close-Reading Questions (15 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

- 1. What do the first two scenes help readers understand about the war?** (text structure)
In Scene 2, Paris and Hector debate whether Paris is to blame for the war, which began after Paris and Helen fell in love and Helen's husband took revenge on all of Troy. At the end of the scene, King Priam asserts that the Greeks had always been looking for an excuse to declare war on Troy. However, both scenes contain evidence that the gods on Mt. Olympus are in control of mortals' lives. Paris explains in Scene 2 that Helen left her husband for him because it was the will of the gods. Therefore it was the gods who caused the war to begin—and, as Scene 1 makes clear, it is the gods who will decide who wins the war.
- 2. In Scene 3, Patroclus promises Achilles that he, Patroclus, won't fight Hector. The chorus then says, "But the desire for glory makes liars of us all." What events does this line foreshadow?** (text structure)
The line suggests that Patroclus will break his promise if the chance to be seen as a hero arises. In Scene 4, he does exactly that: He fights Hector and is killed.
- 3. After Patroclus crumples in Scene 4, the stage directors say "The fighting stops. Trojans and Greeks gather in solemn disbelief." Why is it difficult for both sides to believe what has just happened?** (inference)
The Trojans and the Greeks gather in solemn disbelief for different reasons. The Trojans cannot believe that Hector has just slain Achilles, the mightiest warrior in the world. The Greeks—who know it was Patroclus inside Achilles' armor—are shocked that Patroclus went back on his word and met such a sad fate. They know that Patroclus' death will be very upsetting for Achilles.
- 4. Reread Scenes 5 and 6. How are they similar?** (compare and contrast)
In both scenes, a mighty warrior—Hector or Achilles—prepares for battle while a loved one (Hector's wife and Achilles' mother) pleads with him not to fight. Both men respond that they are willing to die to show their bravery. Even the language the two characters use is similar—both say a version of "If that is my fate, so be it."
- 5. Consider Athena's line to Hector on the battlefield in Scene 8: "Athena (slyly): The gods are with you, Hector." What do the character directions in this line help readers understand?** (author's craft)
The direction "slyly" indicates to readers that Athena is saying these words to Hector in a deceitful, manipulative manner—that actually, Athena is not with Hector and the Trojans. Further evidence of this appears back in Scene 1 when Athena says that the Greeks are the most deserving of victory.

6. **What does Scene 9 reveal about Achilles?** (character) *Earlier in the play, Achilles refuses to allow Hector's body to be buried with honor. Now, Achilles is relenting. This shows that Achilles is a complex character who can change his views. It also shows that he can be merciful.*
7. **The character box at the beginning of the play indicates that Cassandra is a priestess with the gift of prophecy. What does this mean? When in the play does Cassandra seem to employ this gift?** (character) *A prophecy is a foretelling or prediction of what will happen. At the end of Scene 10, Cassandra seems to sense the tragedy that the horse will bring to Troy when she warns, "The Greeks cannot be trusted. What if this tribute has some evil purpose?"*

Critical-Thinking Questions

(5 minutes)

The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.

1. **This play is based on one of the oldest and most famous stories ever written about war. What does it say about the nature of war and its effect on people?** *Answers will vary. Students may say that the play is a war story and at the same time it is an antiwar story. Although it does show us heroism and bravery, it also shows the tragedy and senselessness of war, portraying the Trojan War as devastating in nature as each side seeks vengeance and glory. It shows the toll of death, both in numbers and in the pain suffered by those who lose friends and family. For example, Achilles loses his friend Patroclus, and Priam watches his son Hector die.*
2. **Based on the play, what qualities can you conclude were highly valued in ancient Greece?** *Students may say that the play exalts qualities such as courage, honor, and glory: Patroclus breaks his word and loses his life for the chance to be seen as a hero, Hector accepts his fate to die defending his city, and Achilles is revered for being the greatest warrior in the world. Characters who don't exhibit these qualities are derided. For example, Hector tells Andromache that he would be scorned if he hid behind Troy's walls instead of fighting Achilles. To this, Andromache replies, "Like your brother Paris?"—clearly criticizing Paris for refusing to fight. Later, when Paris shoots an arrow at Achilles, the chorus comments, "At last, the coward finds his courage."*

3. Skill Building and Writing

30 minutes

- Have students complete **Preparing to Write: Gods and Mortals**. This activity will help them organize their ideas in preparation for the writing prompt on page 16 in the printed magazine and at the bottom of the digital story page.

- Alternatively, have students choose a culminating task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of differentiated activities.

Other read-aloud plays from the *Scope* archives based on ancient myths:

- [*The Monster in the Cave*](#) (based on the Greek myth of Odysseus and the Cyclops; September 2020)
- [*Into the Burning Sun*](#) (based on the Greek myth of Daedalus and Icarus; February 2020)
- [*Gods Versus Giants*](#) (based on the Norse myth “The Apples of Life”; September 2019)
- [*Hunting a Snake-Headed Monster*](#) (based on the Greek myth of Perseus and Medusa; September 2018)
- [*The Doomed Quest*](#) (based on the Mesopotamian myth of Gilgamesh; May 2017)
- [*Hercules the Mighty*](#) (based on the Greek myth of the 12 Labors; September 2017)
- [*Into the Maze of Doom*](#) (based on the Greek myth of Theseus and the Minotaur; December 2016/January 2017)