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## THE FALL OF TROY



### Unit Overview

This part of the story of the Trojan War comes from Virgil's *Aeneid*, since Homer's *Iliad* ended with Hector's funeral. Remember that the Trojan War had been going on for nine years. Troy just suffered a great loss with the death of Hector.

### Achilles

With Hector dead, Achilles knew that his death was not far behind. His mother had told him that it was his fate to die soon after Hector. Before his death, he completed one last feat of arms. Prince Memnon of Ethiopia had come to the assistance of Troy and brought with him a large army. For some time, the Greeks were hard pressed to fight with this new group of warriors, and many Greek warriors died as a result. Finally, Achilles killed Memnon in a glorious battle. This was Achilles' last battle. He had driven the Trojans before him up to the city wall of Troy. Paris then shot an arrow at Achilles. Apollo guided this arrow so that it struck Achilles in the foot in the one spot where he could be wounded.



### Achilles

When Achilles was born, Thetis had intended to make him invulnerable. She dipped him into the River Styx. In doing so, she was careless because she did not make sure that the water covered the part of Achilles where she was holding him. This part of his body was the area at the back of his foot and ankle. So, when Paris shot the arrow at Achilles, Apollo made sure the arrow struck him in this region. Achilles died, and Ajax carried his body out of the battle while Odysseus held the Trojans back. After Achilles' body was burned on a funeral pyre, his bones were buried in the same urn that held the bones of his friend, Patroclus.

The armor that Thetis had presented Achilles with before his battle with Hector caused the death of Ajax. It was decided in an assembly that the armor should go to Ajax and Odysseus. A secret vote was taken between the two of them, and it was decided that Odysseus would take the armor. This was a serious matter. It meant that Odysseus should be honored and the man who was defeated in this vote would be dishonored. Ajax saw himself as disgraced. In a fit of anger, he was determined to kill Agamemnon and Menelaus. He believed that they had turned the vote against him.

At night, Ajax went to find Agamemnon and Menelaus. When he approached their tents, Athena sent him into a fit of madness. He tore through the flocks of sheep the Greeks had with them. He thought he was slaying Agamemnon and Menelaus. Instead, he was killing sheep. When he realized what he had done, he was ashamed. He felt that everyone was looking down on him. He was embarrassed about losing the vote for the armor and he was even more upset that he had brought about the deaths of the animals for no apparent reason other than he had temporarily lost his mind. Ajax then drew his sword and killed himself. The Greeks did not provide him with a funeral pyre. They believed that a suicide death would not be honored with a pyre. Instead, they buried him.

### Philoctetes

The death of Ajax following so quickly after the death of Achilles dismayed the Greeks. The prophet Calchas told them that he had no message for them from the gods but that there was a man among the Trojans who knew the future. This man's name was Helenus. If they captured him, they could find

out what they should do. Odysseus captured him and he told the Greeks that Troy would not fall until someone fought against the Trojans with the bow and arrow of Hercules. When Hercules died, the bow and arrow were given to Philoctetes. Philoctetes had been with the Greeks earlier in their travels to Troy.

On the voyage, the Greeks stopped at an island to offer a sacrifice. Philoctetes was bitten by a serpent. It was a bad wound and it would not heal. It was impossible to take him to Troy with them; the Army couldn't wait. They left him at Lemnos. Lemnos was uninhabited at that time, but it was the island in the story of the Quest for the Golden Fleece that was inhabited by women.

It was cruel to leave a wounded man on a deserted island, but they were desperate to get to Troy. With his bow and arrow, he would be able to provide himself with food. When the Greeks learned that they would need a favor from Philoctetes, they thought it would be impossible to get the bow and arrow from him. Surely he was still upset for being abandoned. They sent Odysseus to Philoctetes. The Greeks knew that Odysseus was smart enough to get the bow and arrow by trickery. Odysseus succeeded in gaining the bow and arrows and in persuading Philoctetes to regain the Greek army. In Troy, the Greek physician was able to heal him. The first man he wounded in battle was Paris.

As Paris fell, he begged to be taken to Oenone, the nymph he had lived with on Mount Ida before he made his judgment. Oenone had told him that she knew of a magic drug to cure any ailment. They took Paris to Oenone but she refused. She could not forgive him for leaving her for another woman. She watched him die and then killed herself.

## Taking Troy by Surprise

Troy did not fall because of Paris' death. He was no great loss to the city. The Greeks learned that there was a sacred image of Athena called the Palladium in the city. As long as it was in Troy, the city could not be taken. Odysseus and Diomedes were determined to steal the Palladium. Diomedes was the one who bore the image off. One dark night, Diomedes climbed the wall of Troy with help from Odysseus. He found the Palladium and returned to the Greek camp with it. With this great encouragement, the Greeks were determined to wait no longer, but they needed to devise a way to put an end to the war.

The only way they could get their army into Troy was by surprise. It had been almost ten years since the war began. The city walls were still uninjured. They had never suffered a real attack. The fighting had taken place, for the most part, at a distance from them. The Greeks had to find a secret way of entering the city. The new strategy was to build a wooden horse. This was Odysseus' idea.

Odysseus had a skilled woodworker make a large wooden horse. It was hollow inside and so big that it could hold a large number of men. Odysseus then persuaded the army to hide inside of the horse. The plan was that the other Greeks would pretend to go out to sea. Instead, they would hide beyond the nearest island where they would not be seen by the Trojans. Whatever happened, they would be safe. They could sail away if anything went wrong. If something went wrong, though, the men in the horse would surely die.

Odysseus' plan included leaving one man behind in the Greek camp. This man would have a story to tell the Trojans that would make them want to bring the horse into the city. Then, when the night was

the darkest, the Greeks would leave the horse and open the city gates to the Greeks who were waiting in their ships.

On the day that the plan was put in place, the Trojan watchers saw two amazing sights. In front of the gates stood a large wooden horse. It was so strange to them because they had never seen anything like it. The noisy Greek camp was deserted and their ships were gone. They had given up and set sail for Greece. The city of Troy rejoiced.

The people flocked to the camp to see for themselves what the Greeks had left. Once they had taken in the vast emptiness that had been the camp, they returned to the city gates to look at the large horse. The Greek who had been left behind revealed himself to the Trojans. This man's name was Sinon. He was seized by Priam. Sinon was weeping and protesting, saying that he no longer wanted to be a Greek. He told the story Odysseus instructed him to tell.

The story Sinon told was that after stealing the Palladium, Athena was very upset with the Greeks. When they went to the oracle to ask how to amend the situation, the oracle said a Greek needed to be sacrificed in order to make things right. Sinon was the individual chosen to be sacrificed. Everything was ready for the sacrifice, but right before it began Sinon escaped and hid in a swamp. He watched the ships sail away.

It was a good story and the Trojans never questioned it. They pitied Sinon and assured him that he could now live among them. So, it was with a brilliant plan and trickery that the city of Troy was conquered, not with violence. Sinon did not forget the second part of the story. This part of the story involved the horse.



Sinon said that the horse was made as an offering to Athena. It was so huge because the Greeks didn't want the Trojans to take it into the city. The Greeks hoped that the Trojans would destroy it so that it would draw Athena's anger upon Troy. If it was taken into the city, Athena's favor would go to the Trojans and not the Greeks. Poseidon also helped with this tale. Poseidon didn't care for Troy.

The priest Laocoon had been urgent with the Trojans to not keep the horse. He said that he feared the Greeks, even when they were bearing gifts. Priam's daughter, Cassandra, also echoed this warning. No one listened to her, however, and she returned to the palace before Sinon was discovered. Laocoon and his sons heard Sinon's story and did not believe it. Just as Sinon finished telling his story, two large serpents arose from the sea. The serpents approached Laocoon and his two sons, wrapped themselves around them, and crushed them. The serpents then disappeared. To the other spectators, there could be no doubt that Laocoon and his sons were punished for doubting Sinon's story.



### Cassandra Warns the Trojans

The Trojans then dragged the horse through the gate and up to the temple of Athena. They began rejoicing, not only for the end of the ten year battle, but also for the good fortune that was to come to them from Athena.

In the middle of the night, the door in the horse opened. One by one, the Greeks let themselves out of the horse. They went to the city gates, threw them open wide, and let in the remainder of the Greek army. Fires were started in buildings throughout the city. By the time the Trojans were awake, they were struggling to put on their armor. Troy was burning. They rushed out onto the streets in states of confusion. Soldiers were waiting in the streets for them, however, ready to strike them down when they exited their homes. Many died without having the opportunity defend themselves.

The Trojans tried everything to defend themselves. They tore the tops off of houses and tried to throw beams down upon the Greeks. One of the towers of Priam's castle was toppled over in an attempt to crush Greek soldiers. Over the debris of the tower, the Greeks rushed with a huge beam. They battered at the palace doors until the doors caved in. The Greeks were inside the palace before the Trojans could come down from the roof. Inside the courtyard, the women and children had gathered with Priam, the King. Achilles had previously spared Priam, but now his son struck him down in front of his wife and daughters.

By now, the end of the war was near. Too many Trojans had been killed in the beginning of this battle. The Greeks could not be beaten back anywhere. Slowly, the defense ceased. Before morning, all of the Trojan leaders had been killed except for one. Aeneas, Aphrodite's son, was the last Trojan standing. He had fought against the Greeks bravely. Now, however, he could do nothing more for Troy. He hurried to his family, his old father, little son, and wife. As he went to his family, Aphrodite appeared to him. She was urging him on and keeping him safe from the fires and the Greeks. Even with the help of his divine mother, he could not keep his family safe. When the family fled their home, Aeneas' wife was separated from the group and killed. He was able to save his father and his son. He carried his father on his shoulders and held onto his son's hand. He would not have been able to do this without the help of Aphrodite. She was the only god who helped a Trojan that day.

Aphrodite helped Helen as well. She helped Helen escape the city and took her to Menelaus. He received her gladly and the two of them set sail for Greece together.

When morning came, Troy was a fiery ruin. All that was left was a group of helpless women whose husbands had been killed in battle. Their children had been taken from them. They were waiting to be taken overseas to a life of slavery. Among the women were Hecuba, the old queen, and her daughter-in-law, Andromache. Andromache had been Hector's wife. Andromache still had her son, Astyanax, with her. A messenger from the Greek camp approached Andromache and delivered bad news. He told Andromache that her son could not go with her. Instead, Astyanax was to be thrown from the wall of Troy. Astyanax was carried away from his mother by the Greeks.

Before the death of Astyanax, a young girl named Polyxena had been sacrificed on Achilles' grave. She was the daughter of Hecuba. With the death of Hector's son, Troy's last sacrifice was accomplished. The women waiting for the ships watched the end of their once great city.







**Now answer questions 1 through 29.**




## Rebuilding the Trojan Horse

The following video clips detail a recent effort by *Unsolved Histories* to rebuild the Trojan Horse. The goal was to determine whether or not the horse actually could have existed and entered the city of Troy. The videos also show a modern day group of men attempting to stay inside the horse for an extended period of time like the Greeks did. Watch the video clips in order to understand the project.

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|---|---|
|  QuickTime | Constructing the Trojan Horse (9:35)      |
|  QuickTime | Selecting Men for Inside the Horse (3:41) |
|  QuickTime | Moving the Horse into Position (7:46)     |
|  QuickTime | Men Tested inside of the Horse (6:26)     |

The Trojan Horse also played a large role in the 2004 movie *Troy*. The following video gives a brief behind-the-scenes glimpse into the building of the Trojan Horse on the set.

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|  QuickTime | Building the Trojan Horse on the Set of <i>Troy</i> (1:43) |
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## Writing about Literature

In this unit, the story of the Trojan Horse was told. Imagine that you were a Greek soldier who was present for the last battle in Troy. You were inside the stomach of the horse on the night of this battle. Write a letter home to your family, telling them about the events of this night. Include details about planning ahead of time. Also include details about the emotions you were feeling during this battle. Your letter should begin with a salutation, contain at least three paragraphs of 5 to 7 sentences each, and include a closing.

To begin your letter writing, complete one of the gathering information tasks listed below. The gathering information tasks should generate important details about the story of the Trojan Horse, including emotions.

<b>Gathering Information Tasks</b>	
<b>Brainstorming</b>	A technique in which you come up with as many ideas as possible on a subject
<b>Clustering</b>	A technique in which you break down a subject into smaller parts – Place the subject in the middle and circle it. Write related ideas around the subject, circling them and drawing lines to the subject.
<b>Asking Questions</b>	A technique in which these questions are used to gather information: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?
<b>Direct Observation</b>	A technique in which the writer relies on the five senses – sight, touch, smell, hearing, tasting.
<b>Indirect Observation</b>	A technique in which the writer examines the experiences of others by asking questions, watching, interviewing, etc.
<b>Imaging</b>	A technique in which the writer uses his imagination to generate ideas

Next, compose your salutation and first paragraph. The salutation of your letter should greet the reader. The first paragraph should introduce the topic of the letter to the reader. You should also discuss the events of the Trojan Horse myth in chronological order.

Then compose the rough draft of the body of the letter. Your rough draft should include two paragraphs which contain important details about the Trojan Horse myth. It should also include personal details such as emotions and personal accounts of the evening.

Finish the letter with a conclusion sentence. The conclusion sentence should bring the letter to a close. It should leave the reader with a sense of closure. Your letter should end with a closing, such as Love, Sincerely, etc.

In the questions section of this unit, you will be asked to self-evaluate your work, revise, edit, and submit a final draft of your letter.



**Now answer questions 30 through 36.**





## MVP Project

You have spent two units learning about the events of the Trojan War. You have seen how the actions of many different people and gods have changed the course of the war. Your task now is to choose the person or god whom you believe had the biggest impact on the events of the Trojan War.

Create an award for your Trojan War MVP. You may create a medal-style award, a trophy, a certificate, or any other type of award. You must submit a digital copy of the award or a digital picture of the award in the questions section. Your award will be evaluated using the following checklist.

- The award states the person's or god's name.
- The award clearly states why it is being given.
- The award is neat and organized.
- The award uses correct spelling and capitalization.
- The award accurately reflects the person's or god's contribution to the Trojan War.

Along with this award, you will present a two-minute speech presenting the award to your MVP. The speech should include some basic background information about the person's or god's family, accomplishments, and personality. Then explain the impact that your MVP had on the events of the Trojan War. Keep in mind that the goal of this speech is to honor your MVP. You will record your speech in the questions section. You will also be asked to submit a typed copy of your speech. Your speech will be evaluated using the following checklist.

- The speech explains the person's or god's family background.
- The speech describes the person's or god's accomplishments.
- The speech describes the person's or god's personality.
- The speech clearly states why the award is being given.
- The speech explains the person's or god's impact on the Trojan War.
- The speech honors the chosen person or god.

- The ideas in the speech are well-organized and easy to follow.
- The speech is written and delivered using formal language, not slang.
- The speech is written and delivered using complete sentences.
- The student spoke slowly enough to be understood.
- The student spoke clearly enough to be understood.
- The student's voice varied in volume and speed throughout the speech.



**Now answer questions 37 and 38.**