

Comprehension Workbook 1

The Trojan Horse

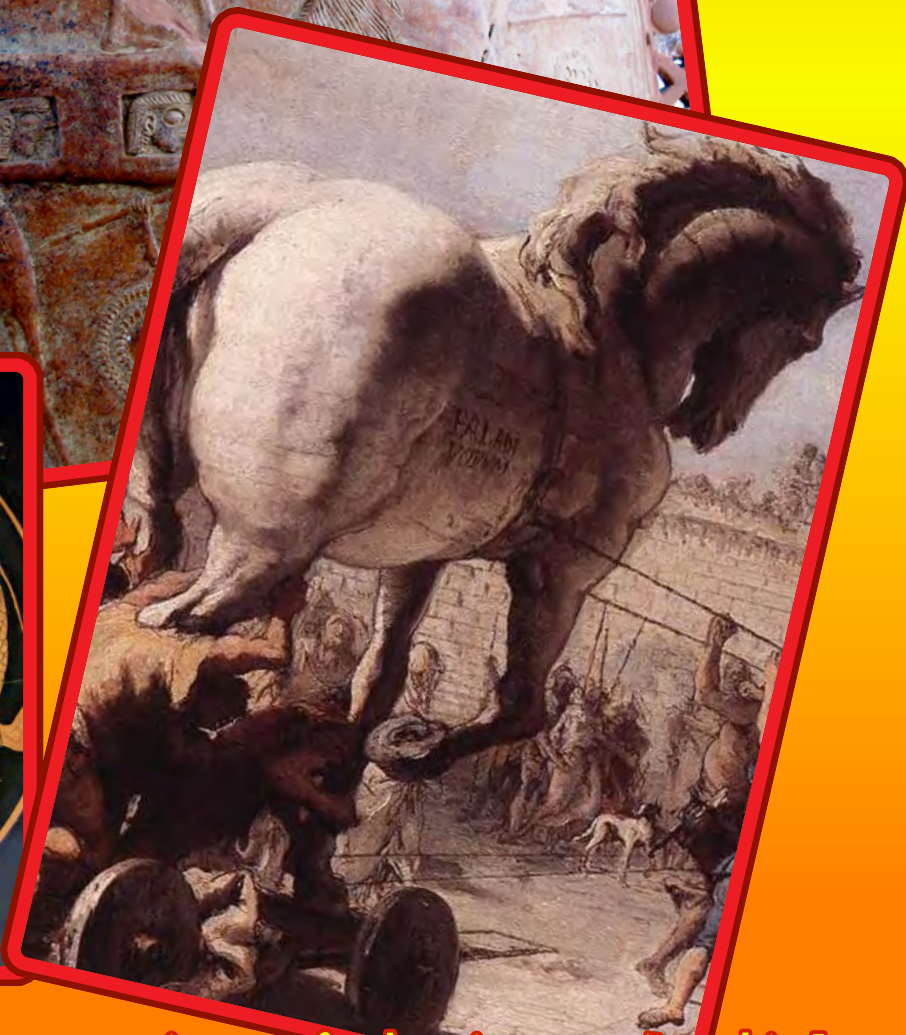
The world's most famous battle



Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

The Trojan Horse

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Find out about the meaning of stories and articles

Trojan Horse

Matches the requirements of the Literacy Strategy and designed to integrate with your normal subject studies. (This material is independent of any specific text book and can be used alongside any publisher's books including our textbook.)

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Unit 1: Battle myths

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Trojan Horse

The Greeks made much of their history into stories. Although they could write, it was a bit boring to hear just facts, and in any case, they wanted to make their history interesting. They were a little less concerned about whether it was true or not than we are today, so see these history stories as part fact, part fiction to add excitement for listeners.



The battle between the Greeks and the Trojans was going nowhere. It was stalemate. Then, the Greek Odysseus came up with the idea of building a great wooden horse (the horse being the emblem of Troy), and hiding soldiers inside. This horse would be left some way from the walls of Troy, and the Trojans would be fooled into wheeling the horse into the city as a trophy.

The Greeks built a wooden horse in three days. Odysseus' plan called for one man to remain outside of the Horse; he would act as though the departing Greeks had abandoned him, leaving the horse as a gift for the Trojans.

Next day, a Greek soldier named Sinon was the only one left beside the Horse. All the other Greeks had gone. He convinced the Trojans that the Horse was an offering to the goddess Athena, and it was a symbol of goodwill to make amends for their destroying Athena's temple in Troy.

However, while questioning Sinon, a Trojan priest guessed that it was a plot and warned the Trojans, "I fear Greeks even those bearing gifts". However, the Greek god Apollon sent two sea serpents to strangle him before any Trojan could believe his warning.

Helen of Troy also guessed the plot and tried to trick and reveal the Greek men inside the Horse by imitating the voices of their wives. King Priam's daughter Cassandra, the soothsayer of Troy, insisted that the Horse would be the downfall of the city and its royal family. She, too, was ignored.

The Horse was dragged into the city and put in the main square. Then, in the dead of night, Sinon went to the underbelly of the Horse and opened a trap door. The hidden Greek soldiers poured out and killed the Trojans while they slept.



Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'fear'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'fear' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'fear'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'fear'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'fear' means.



Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

| Key word | Synonym (similar word) |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| Example: emblem | badqe |
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Summarising

(the gist of the story)

To summarise means to rewrite the story in a shorter version using as many of our key words from Task 2 as needed.

1 Write a heading for your summary.

2 Now write the main idea in one sentence.
e.g. "This story tells us..."

3 Now add some detail to the main idea by writing more sentences after it.

**Finally,
can you rewrite your
summary to make it better?**

1. Look out for errors such as using the same word too often – use alternatives.
2. Make sure you have summarised the author's purpose in your OWN words.
3. Make sure your summary is in a logical order.
4. Is your summary informative AND interesting to others?

**There is
nothing wrong
with rewriting; even
the best authors
rewrite their
work.**

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4

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

The soldiers got out of the Horse.

The Greeks had set siege to the city, but they could not defeat it.

The Greeks then retreated and pretended to have left.

The Trojans were fooled into thinking the Horse was a goodwill offer.

The plan was to build a giant horse and hide soldiers inside it.

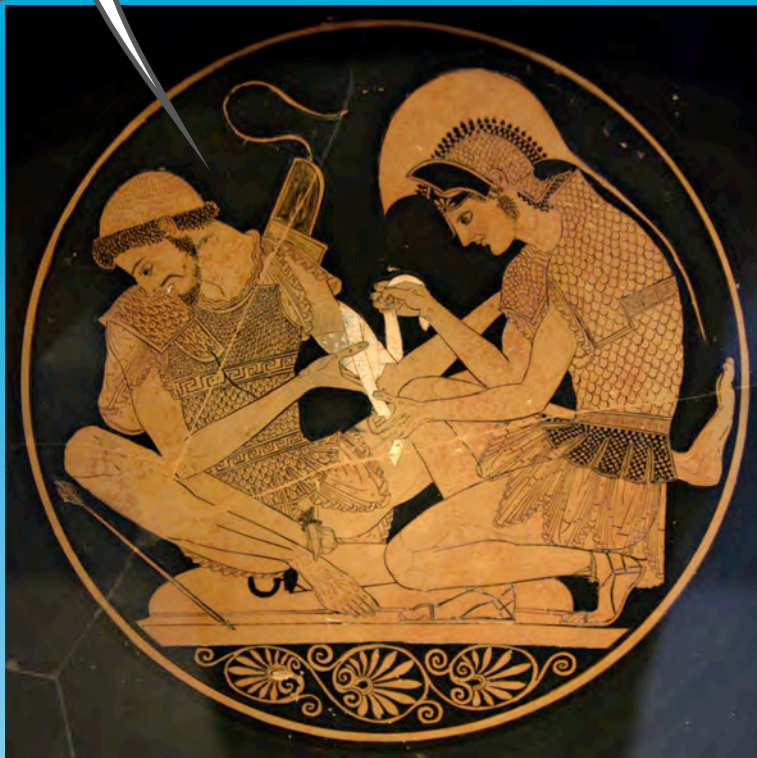
The Greeks needed a sneaky plan to win the battle with the Trojans.

At dead of night a Greek soldier undid the trap door.



Get to the facts

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the facts of the story.



Achilles tending the wounded Patroclus during the early stages of the battle for Troy.

1 Where did all this take place?

2 Who were the two armies?

3 Which model animal was used?

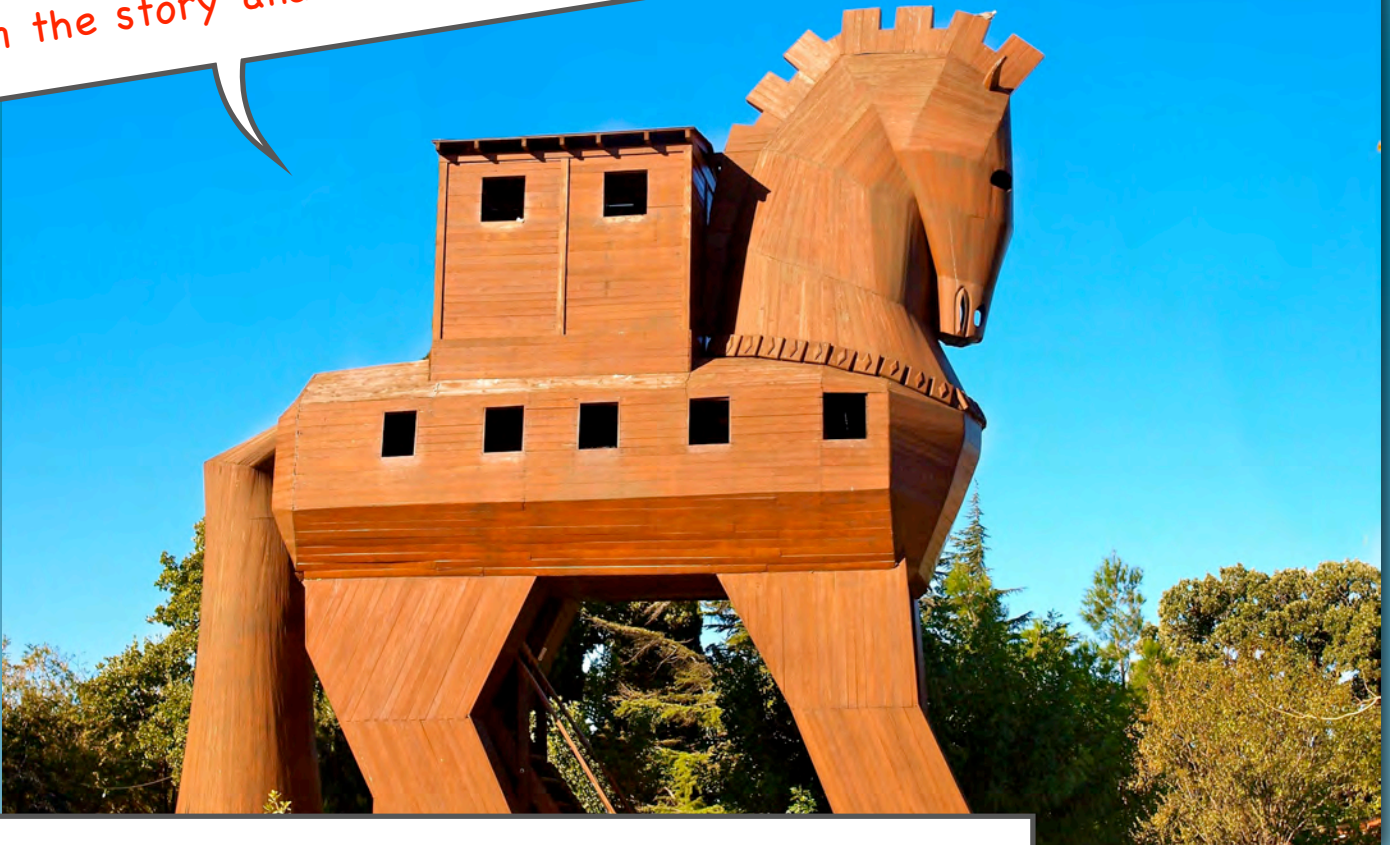
4 Which city did Helen come from?

5 What happened to the Trojans?



Whys and wherefores

Answer these questions to see how much you know about the meanings in the story and how it was written.



1 What was the purpose of the story?

2 Why do you think the Greeks used a horse and not an elephant?

3 Why do you think the Trojan priest was worried?

4 Why do you think Helen and Cassandra were ignored?



Opinions matter

Answer these questions to give your views and to develop the story.

- 1 Why do you think we remember this story?
- 2 Would we have remembered it just as well if nothing dramatic had happened?
- 3 Why did the Greeks tell stories?
- 4 This story is a tragedy. Why is it?
- 5 The story was told by the Greeks to show how clever they were. Do you think the story backfired on them?





Talking it through

It often helps if a group of people get together and discuss a problem.

A vase with one of the earliest ideas of the Trojan Horse on it. It was made in Ancient Greece about 670BC.

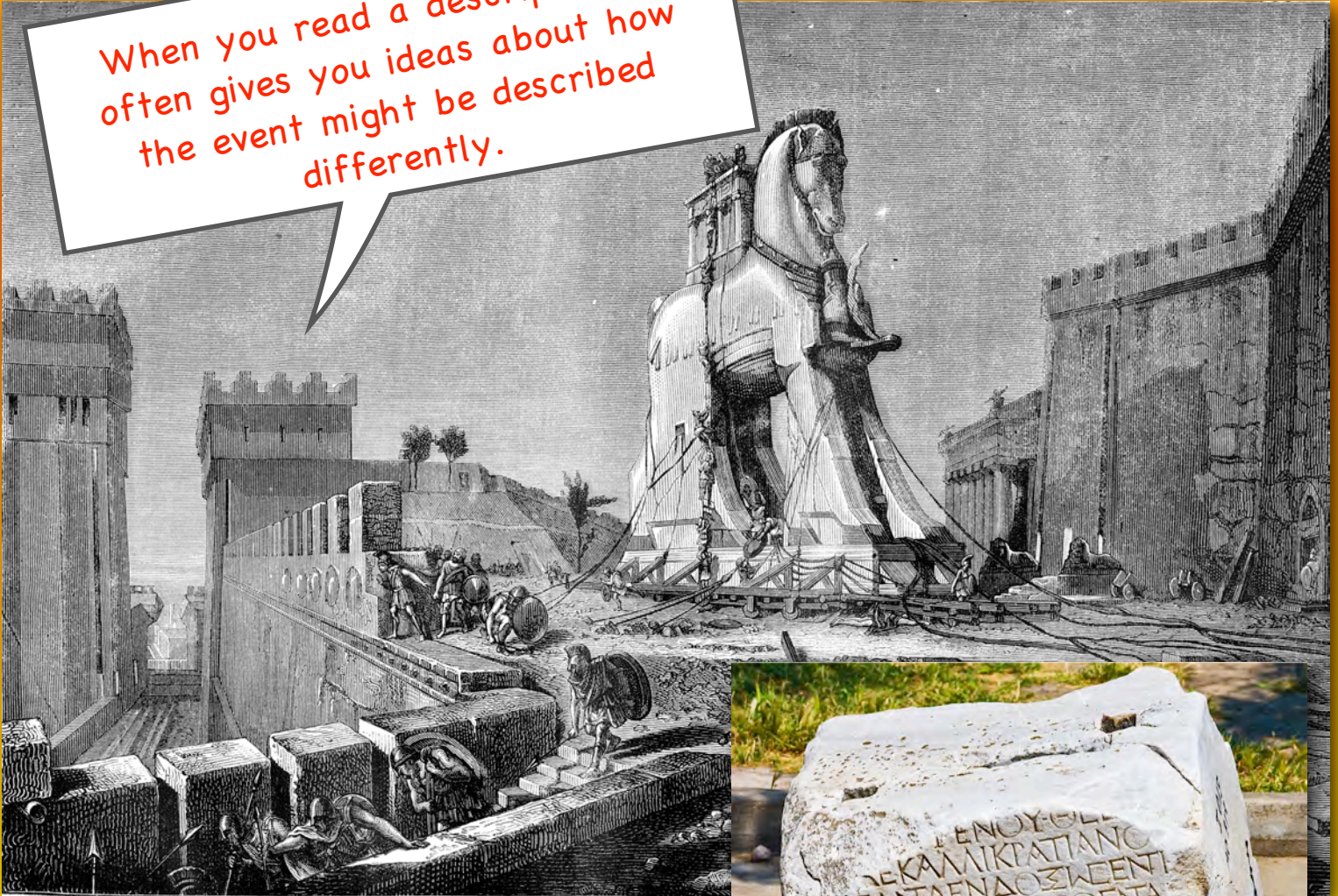


Discussion topic: Beware of Greeks bearing gifts

This is a famous saying that has been used down the ages. It is from the story of Troy where the Trojans are warned not to accept the Horse because it is bound to be a trick. Discuss what you think of using a saying like this today?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.



The horse

One day an archaeologist found a stone with the start of a story, written in Greek. This is what it said. "One morning, the Trojans woke up to see a horse. They were amazed, but then one of them said... (now you complete the story, but it must be different to the famous story on pages 3 and 13).

The Trojan Horse

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