

Ancient Greek myths

What were ancient Greek myths for?

Myths were important to the ancient Greeks for many reasons. Myths were ways of explaining how the world was made and where human beings came from. They helped people think about how they should behave and what might happen to them if they behaved badly or made mistakes. They showed what people should be like and helped people learn what was good and bad. Greek cities used myths to explain who founded them and to make themselves appear important and powerful.

Greek myths after the ancient Greeks

People in other periods of history have used Greek myths in many different ways. They are still used today.

The top picture shows a tapestry made for the king of France in the early AD 1700s. It probably hung in one of the rooms of a royal palace. It shows the symbols of France and of the French king in the middle. At the top is the head of the god Apollo. The rays of the sun are bursting from around him. Notice that he does not look very Greek, but wears the white wig that was fashionable in the 1700s. What do you think the French king is trying to say about himself by including Apollo in this tapestry?

The bottom picture shows the cover of a music CD released in 1994 by Malkit Singh, a famous singer from Birmingham. He is the biggest-selling bhangra singer of all time. He has called his CD 'Midas Touch' and uses a lot of gold colour in his photo. What do you think Malkit Singh is saying about himself by using the character of Midas in this way?



Tapestry woven for King Louis XV at the Gobelins Manufacture in France 1730-1740

Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program



CD issued by Oriental Star Agencies Ltd; 1994

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