



STUDY KIT 8

Title: TEMPLE OF POSEIDON AT CAPE SOUNIO

Topic: The temple of ancient mariners/ How the Aegean Sea got its name/

Keywords: Poseidon, mariners, architectural order, mythology, Minotaur, Aegeus, Aegean Sea

Subject: HISTORY, ARTS, ARCHAEOLOGY

Cross-curricular Topic: CULTURAL HERITAGE, MYTHOLOGY

Level: Upper secondary

Age: 16+

Number of students: 30

Duration in hours: 2

Place (classroom, outdoor etc.): outdoor

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Language: ENGLISH

Overview: Participants will walk to the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion visiting one of the most important archaeological sites in Attica, famous for the sunset view and the myth of Aegeus, which still lives on in the name of the Aegean Sea. They will have to answer questions and/ or perform tasks on the spot.

They will also observe the famous geodetic triangulation of ancient Greece as the location of temples and their sanctuaries form conspicuous geometric formations.

They will create a ceramic olive oil lamp. They will draw their ceramicist logo.

Objectives:

- **To learn about this important site and how it was connected to ancient fears and superstitions**
- **To exercise by walking**
- **To learn about the importance of pottery in ancient Greece and create a clay lamp.**
- **To relax on the rocks and “feel” the place with their bodies**

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Learning material and tools:



- Map of the area
- Picture of the ancient Greek architectural orders
- Summary of the basic information that students need to study before visiting the site (**Annexes 1, 2, 3, 4,5**)
- maps and ruler
- clay, water, and tools

Preparation:

Students study **Annexes 1-5** at home

All the material will have been uploaded on Wikiloc application

AND/OR

printed on paper handouts in the form of Worksheets

Evaluation:

The answers on the task list

Extra material:

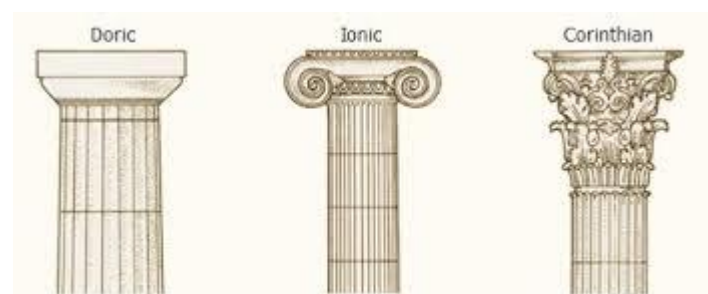
NONE

Detailed description/ instruction:

Students are divided into multinational groups of 6 (3 Greek students, 3 foreign students). Using their smartphones OR their maps and worksheets they follow the track and stop at each waypoint to answer the relevant questions and do the relevant tasks.

Waypoint 1: The temple

1. Why was the temple dedicated by mariners to Poseidon?
2. What is the architectural order of the temple? How can you tell?



3. How did the Aegean Sea get its name?

Waypoint 2: On the south-west side of the Temple

1. Why was the temple built on this site? What are the obvious and hidden reasons?

Waypoint 3: On the south-west side of the Temple

1. How long do you think the ancient Athenian guards would need to send the message " hostile ships approaching " from Cape Sounion to Athens?
2. What technologies would they choose from?

Waypoint 4: On the south side of the Temple

1. Do you think oil lamps were an important invention? Why/not?
2. Make your own oil lamp (workshop)
3. Relax and watch the sunset

Waypoint 5:

1. What are the beneficial effects of sunlight?
2. ENJOY THE SUN AND THE WIND



ANNEX 1

TEMPLE OF POSEIDON AT CAPE SOUNIO.

In a maritime country like Greece, Poseidon, the god of the sea occupied a high position in the divine hierarchy. In power, Poseidon was considered second only to Zeus (Jupiter), the supreme god himself. His anger was manifested in the form of storms and he was greatly feared by all sailors. Poseidon was usually portrayed carrying a trident, the weapon he supposedly used to stir up storms. Don't forget that this was an age without mechanical power, and storms very frequently resulted in shipwrecks and drownings. The temple at Cape Sounion, Attica, therefore, was a venue where mariners, and also entire cities or states, could praise Poseidon by making animal sacrifice or leaving gifts. The temple of Poseidon was constructed in 444–440 BC, over the ruins of an older temple. It is situated 60 meters above the sea. It is of Doric order, built in the same period and to similar plan as the Temple of Hephaistos in the Agora of Athens, probably built by the same architect. The total number of original columns was 34. Fifteen columns still stand today, made of locally quarried white marble. The temple of Poseidon was destroyed in 399 AD by the Roman Emperor Arcadius. Again, a column from the temple, looted by Lord Elgin in the 19th century, can be seen in the British Museum.

THE MYTH OF AEGEUS: HOW THE AEGEAN SEA GOT ITS NAME

According to Greek mythology, the Aegean Sea was named after mythological Greek King Aegeus after he flung himself off the cliff, to his death, upon the mistaken belief that his son had died. This ancient tragic tale involves a theme that is still used in modern story-telling today, which is that of misunderstanding and the tragic consequences that can follow. King Aegeus was the mythical ruler of ancient Athens. Theseus was his son. At the time, Minos, King of Crete declared war on Athens. However, he agreed to peace under one condition – sacrifice. Minos created an elaborate labyrinth, within which he imprisoned the dreadful creature known as the Minotaur. Every nine years, Athens had to send seven male and seven female youths, known as tributes, to King Minos by ship. King Minos would then place the fourteen youths into the labyrinth to be devoured by the Minotaur. This was the price Athens had to pay for peace between themselves and Crete. This continued until the brave Theseus came alone and offered to help bring this dreadful practice to an end by volunteering to go with the fourteen tributes so that he could slay the Minotaur. Aegeus was scared for his son's life. To help ease his father's fears, Theseus agreed that he would announce his fate by displaying white sails on his ship upon his return home. Aegeus waited on Cape Sounion, overlooking the sea, for his son's return. When he saw Theseus' ship approach with black sails, signifying Theseus' death, Aegeus was devastated. He threw himself off the cliff and into the sea where he perished. Unfortunately, this was all a tragic

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mistake. Theseus had successfully killed the Minotaur, and left the labyrinth very much alive. But he inadvertently forgot to change the black sails to white. This misunderstanding ended Aegeus' life. The body of water hence became known as the Aegean Sea.

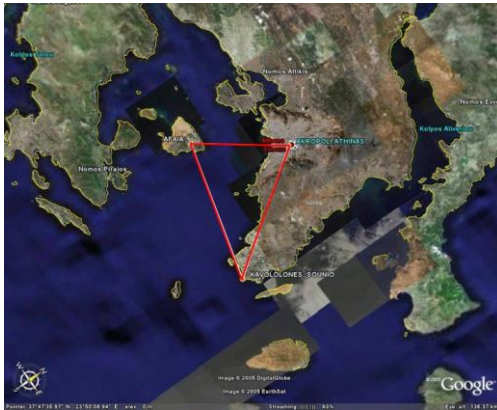


ANNEX 2

MATHEMATICS & RELIGION

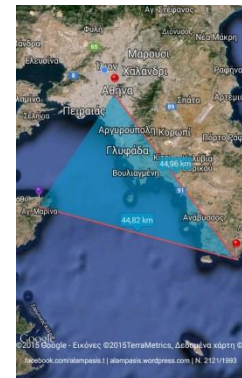
Aristotle mentions in his "Politics" "But it is fitting that the dwellings assigned to the gods and the most important of the official messes should have a suitable site, and the same for all, excepting those temples which are assigned a special place apart by the law or else by some utterance of the Pythian oracle. And the site would be suitable if it is one that is sufficiently conspicuous in regard to the excellence of its position, and also of superior strength in regard to the adjacent parts of the city" (VII, 1331a). Hipparchus agrees and he states that geodetic methods can identify any point on Earth. The best known and most studied case geodetic triangulation is the equilateral triangle formed by the Temple of Hephaestus in Athens (GP 37.9755 and 23.7216 GM, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Hephaestus), the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion Cape (GP 37,6502 and 24,0245 GM, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sounion>) and Temple of Aphaia Athena in the island of Aegina (GP 37,7544 and 23, 5329 GM, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Aphaea), with a distance of 47,226 meters (242 stadiums) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stadion_\(unit\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stadion_(unit))). This equilateral triangle formed has sides of length 44.82 km (the Temple of Poseidon Sounion and the

Temple of Aphaia Aegina) and 44.96 km (from Poseidon's Temple to Sounion to the Temple of Hephaestus in the Ancient Agora). That is, the equal sides of the triangle diverge only by 0.2946591282%.



ANNEX 3

SEND ME A MESSAGE, or an SMS. *Communication and Telecommunication in Ancient Greece.*



The first and foremost method of transmitting information and messages was based on the power of the human body to cover distances as soon as possible (the Marathon run, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pheidippides>)

Pythagoras was the first to use the reflection of sunrays on polished metal.

The victorious general Miltiades (battle of Marathon against the Persians) was able to intercept signals, which reflected the sunrays on soldiers' shields.

The Spartan baton is used to send encrypted messages.

Victory in the Olympic games was announced with pigeons

Flags of various colors were used by the ancient Greeks for telecommunication.

Phryctoria: The method used two sets of five torches. When a signal had to be sent, the appropriate torches were lit and placed on top of the towers called *phryctoriae*, which would be visible to the next tower (usually 20 miles away), and then relayed to the next hill in succession. It was invented by the Greek engineers Cleoxenes and Democletus in the 2nd century BC. When for example they wanted to send the letter *o* (omicron), they lit five torches on the right set and three torches on the left set.

ANNEX 4

Ceramics in Ancient Greece: the case study of the oil-lamp.

Light has always been vital in the daily life, in art, in philosophy and in religion of people around the world. An ancient olive oil lamp is an object that was used to produce light continuously for a period of time using a source of olive oil. The object was made of clay. They were a popular means of lighting in ancient times and were made of the main body, the upper part which was decorated, the handle, the fuse hole and the tank hole. Salt was mixed with the oil in the lamp so that it wouldn't get overheated. In some cases, these lamps had three or four fuses.



ANNEX 5

The sun:

Brightens your day and your mood! Sunshine causes the release of endorphins such as serotonin; proven to improve mood and energy, and increase feelings of calmness and focus, to boost our mood and decrease the effects of stress.

Gives you energy! Sunshine prevents over-production of melatonin, the sleep-inducing hormone, melatonin, which is produced by your body as soon as it's dark...

Makes you sleep better! A little bit of sun is all you need to regulate your circadian rhythms. By balancing serotonin and melatonin production, it improves quality of sleep, eases symptoms of depression, and aids concentration.

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It's Vitamin D Party! It induces the production of vitamin D, well-known for promoting healthy bones eyes and teeth.

As if that's not enough already, Vitamin D has been linked to eye health too.

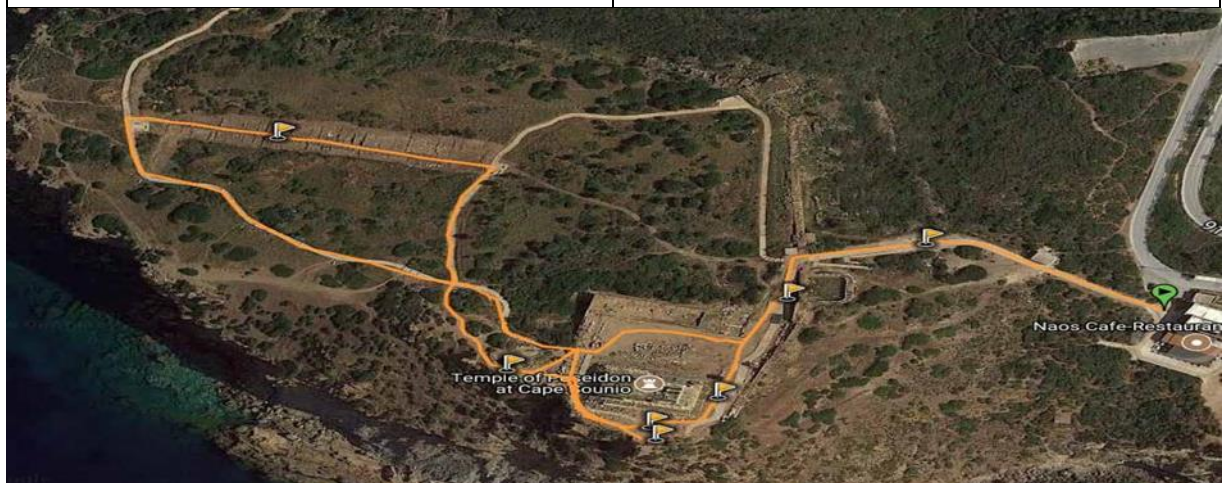
Sun-kissed (not burnt) skin is happy skin: by causing the production of nitric oxide, the sun helps protect your skin against UV damage and promotes healing. It can also be beneficial for skin conditions such as eczema, dermatitis, acne and fungal infections.

We're well aware of the dangers of excess sun exposure, but did you know that a moderate amount of sunlight can help prevent some types of cancer? According to studies, the more sun there is during the day, the less likely it is that you'll have a number of cancers.

SOUNIO STUDENTS' WORKSHEET

STUDENT NAMES

NAME	NATIONALITY





Waypoint 1: The temple

1. Why was the temple dedicated by mariners to Poseidon?



2. What is the architectural order of the temple? How can you tell?



Blank grid lines for writing the answer to question 2.

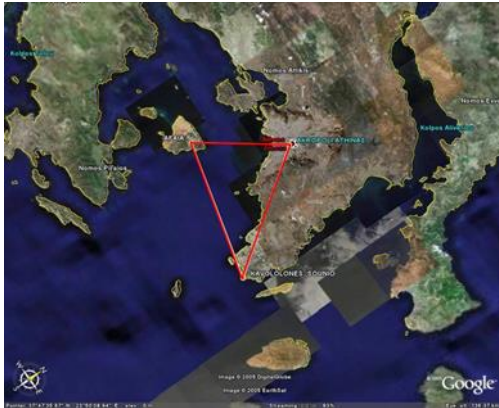
3. How did the Aegean Sea get its name?

Blank grid lines for writing the answer to question 3.



Waypoint 2: On the south-west side of the Temple

1. Why was the temple built on this site? What are the obvious and hidden reasons?



Waypoint 3: On the south-west side of the Temple

1. How long do you think the ancient Athenian guards would need to send the message "approaching hostile ships" from Sounion Cape to Athens? Why?



2. What technologies would they choose from?

Waypoint 4: On the south side of the Temple

Do you think oil lamps were an important invention? Why/not?

Waypoint 5: Sun therapy

1. What are the beneficial effects of sunlight?

2. ENJOY THE SUN AND THE WIND