

SOURCES FOR WAR WITH TROY

War with Troy draws on a wide range of sources from ancient Greece and also includes some material from the Roman era. The Trojan War was fought more than 3000 years ago, in the twelfth century BC, according to the findings from excavations. But we know most about it from Homer's epic poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and Greek vase paintings, the source of all the photocopyable illustrations in the Teacher's Guide (apart from the map and the scene on the walls of Troy). Sources for the episodes where the storytellers have kept *particularly* close to the original ancient Greek and Roman literary sources are as follows:

Episode	Source
4. First Blood	Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , Book 12 (the death of Cygnus)
5. The Duel	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 3 (the fight between Menelaus and Paris)
6. Greek on Greek: Wounded Pride	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 1 (the argument between Agamemnon and Achilles)
7. Triumph for the Trojans?	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 6 (Hector and Andromache); Books 7-14 (the battle turns the Trojans' way); Book 16 (Patroclus borrows Achilles' armour)
8. New Armour for Achilles	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 16 (the death of Patroclus); Book 19 (Hephaestus makes new armour for Achilles)
9. The Anger of Achilles	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 20 (Achilles returns to the battlefield); Book 22 (the death of Hector)
10. The Pity of Achilles	Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Book 24 (Priam visits Achilles in the Greek camp to secure the return of Hector's body)
12. Odysseus Takes Charge	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> , Books 4, 8 and 11 (the fall of Troy)

HOMER AND HIS POEMS

Most of the story line in *War with Troy* is based on Homer's *Iliad* (the name is derived from Ilium, the Greek name for the city of Troy), which is the earliest and greatest surviving work of ancient Greek literature. Homer composed the poem many centuries after the Trojan War: the Greek historian, Herodotus, writing in the fifth century BC, put him '400 years before my own time at the most', i.e. about 850 BC. Recent research suggests that the *Iliad* was composed a little later, about 750 BC (and the *Odyssey* about 725 BC).

The *Iliad* is a poem of more than 15,600 lines, divided into 24 chapters, normally referred to as 'books'. The central theme of the *Iliad*, as Homer says in the opening line, is the anger of Achilles. It is set in a very tight time-scale. Books 2 to 22 record merely four days of fighting from the tenth, and final, year of the war in Troy, and the central books from 11 to 18 encompass a single day of fighting. Even the beginning and end of the *Iliad* add only a few weeks to the total. Overall the *Iliad* covers only from Episode 6 in *War with Troy* (the argument between Achilles and Agamemnon) to Episode 10 (the return of the body of Hector).

The *Iliad* was intended to be heard and there are historical records of public recitations of Homer's works at civic ceremonies, religious festivals, and in markets throughout the classical world. As Greek literature and culture began to develop in Athens, competitive recitals of the Homeric poems were introduced into the Panathenaea, a religious festival to the state goddess Athene. According to tradition the first written edition of the Homeric

epics was put together in the middle of the sixth century BC, and the modern text of the Homeric poems was transmitted through medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, themselves copies of now lost ancient manuscripts. The two epic poems formed the basis of Greek education and culture throughout the classical age and provided the foundation of humane education down to the time of the Roman Empire and the spread of Christianity.

The form of *War with Troy* is in keeping with Homer's original poem. The *Iliad* is an **oral** poem: it was *composed* rather than *written*, with the expectation that it would be *heard* not *read*. Daniel Morden and Hugh Lupton have composed this version of the story in the same way. At no stage was their retelling put down in writing, though a transcript of their oral performance is included in this *Teacher's Guide*. They have also employed similar techniques to Homer, such as the use of repeated descriptions (e.g. Zeus the cloud-compeller) and story patterns, and the pictorial effects of extended similes.

GREEK POTTERY AND VASE PAINTING

It is our good fortune that pottery was used so extensively by the Greeks in the manufacture of storage containers and everyday jars and vases. Large numbers of such containers and vases have survived from the Greek period, partly because they were so commonplace and widespread (Greek vases were exported throughout the Mediterranean), and partly because of the durability of the material (pottery is almost immune to decay).

Many of the pots and vases were decorated with pictures and artists would often draw their inspiration from Greek myths and legends such as the Trojan War. Stylised human figures and narrative scenes first appear on Greek vases from about 750 BC. Almost all the vases used for the downloadable illustrations were made sometime later, in the second half of the fifth century or the first half of the fourth century BC. Detailed information on the illustrations is given alongside each download link.

The vase painters followed a number of conventions and used standard 'identifiers' for frequently recurring figures, such as the Olympian gods and goddesses. Hermes can be recognised by his winged sandals and Athene by her aegis (half breastplate, half cloak).

Vase paintings rarely provide the only source for an event in the epic cycle. Many of the paintings can be linked directly to specific scenes from Homer's poems: for instance, the illustration for Episode 6 shows **Briseis being taken from Achilles**, just as Homer describes in *Iliad*, Book 1; and similarly **Priam and Achilles** (Episode 10), showing Priam's visit to Achilles' tent, picks up on Homer's account in *Iliad*, Book 24. But painters may add their own interpretation to a Homeric scene. The painter of Hector's meeting with Andromache at the Scaean Gate (**Hector and Andromache**, Episode 7), which is clearly taken from *Iliad*, Book 6, has left out baby Astyanax, whose inclusion might have made the scene rather sentimental; and has instead added Paris and Helen, to suggest, through the juxtaposition of the two very different couples, the steadfast loyalty of Hector and Andromache.