



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

We can seldom glimpse into the workshops, baths and sickrooms of ancient people, or the hidden everyday lives of women, children, slaves, or artisans who have left little trace.

Ancient Lives: Insights from the Classics and Archaeology Collection, a new exhibition at the Old Quad (the University of Melbourne), gives a rare window into the Greek and Roman worlds. Jointly curated by Dr Caroline Tully and Dr Tamara Lewit, both Honorary Fellows in SHAPS (Classics and Archaeology), the exhibition combines two presentations: *Amor et Mors: Vessels for the Beautiful Body in Life and Death* and *White, tawny, blood-red, black: Wine in the Greek and Roman Worlds*.

TEACHER RESOURCE

This teacher resource is developed by the curators to support school engagement with the exhibition, which presents about 100 objects. Cups and jugs, gold coins and terracotta statuettes, a mummy mask and a sarcophagus fragment, tiny glass bottles and a cosmetic dish speak to us with the voices of ancient people about their intimate lives.

Direct connections to the Australian and Victorian curricula are made for:

- History (Year 7, AC)
- Classical Greek and Latin (Years 7-10, AC)
- VCE History (Units 3 and 4: AoS 1)
- VCE Classical Studies (Unit 1: AoS 1&3; Unit 2: AoS 1&2; Unit 3 and 4: AoS 1&2)

An Exhibition Room Sheet which sets out the didactics and objects displayed in PDF format is available to [download from the website](#).

Curators' videos (also displayed on iPad at the exhibition) can also be downloaded for classroom use.

Student groups are invited to attend free exhibition visits, available Monday to Friday 10am-5pm (July 2023 – May 2024).

Bookings are essential: school-bookings@unimelb.edu.au

Location: [Old Quad \(Building 150\)](#), The University of Melbourne, Parkville

History - Year 7

ACTIVITY 1: The ancient world

[AC9HH7K11](#): *key beliefs, values and practices of an ancient society, with a particular emphasis on one of the following areas: everyday life, warfare, or death and funerary customs.*

Scavenger hunt

Group A: Look around and find

- Something you could use at a symposium or party
- Something you could use at a Roman bathhouse
- Something you could use at a market
- The oldest dated object on display
- The newest dated object on display

Group B: Look around and find

- An image of the god of wine
- An image of the goddess of love
- An image of a possible slave, carrying a bag of wine made out of an animal skin
- Two figures with wings
- A military figure

Group A: Look at all the objects displayed:

- What different gods, goddesses or mythical beings can you see represented in paintings, sculptures or coins?
- Have you learned about any of these groups or deities previously? Did you see anything new or surprising?

Group B: Find as many different types of objects as you can in the exhibition:

- What was each of these types of objects used for?
- Do we use any similar types of objects for the same purpose today?
- What did the Greeks and Romans do with wine and oil, apart from drinking/eating?

ACTIVITY 2: Historical perspectives and interpretations

[AC9HH7S06](#): *identify perspectives, attitudes and values of the past in sources.*

This exercise can be completed during class after the tour.

Choose your favourite object, or one you think is interesting or surprising:

- What does it tell us about ancient society? Think about how it was made, what it was used for, who used it, and any images or decoration on it.

Classical Greek and Latin – Years 7 to 10

Engaging with texts: Accessing the ancient Greek and Roman world through Classical Greek and Latin texts

Years 7 and 8 ([ACLICLE002](#) & [ACLICLE032](#)):

- *Gathering, collating, and presenting information about daily routine in the ancient Greek/Roman world, about family life, education, food, hygiene, exercise*
- *Examining artefacts from the Classical Greek/Roman period*
- *Researching attitudes of Greeks/Romans revealed in their myths and legends.*

Look through all the objects on display:

- Who used wine and oil in the Greek and Roman world? What did the Greeks and Romans do with wine and oil, apart from drinking/eating it?
- What different gods, goddesses or mythical beings can you see represented in paintings, sculptures or coins? Have you learned about any of these groups or deities previously? Did you see anything new or surprising?

Choose your favourite object on display, or the one you think is most interesting or surprising:

- What does it tell us about ancient society? Think about how it was made, what it was used for, who used it, and any images or decoration on it.

Years 9 and 10 ([ACLICLE017](#) & [ACLICLE047](#)):

- *Convey interpretations of information and ideas about ancient Greek/Roman society and culture*

Choose one object on display which you find particularly interesting, striking or informative:

- What information does it give us about the values and attitudes of the ancient society which produced it? Consider, for example, status, gender roles, or religious beliefs.

Look through all the objects on display:

- Who used wine and oil in the Greek and Roman world? What did the Greeks and Romans do with wine and oil, apart from drinking/eating it?
- How were wine and oil connected with religious and ritual beliefs and practices?

VCE History – Units 3 and 4: Ancient History

Area of Study 1: Living in an ancient society

The social, political and economic features of ancient society: hierarchies; differences in the experiences of men and women, locals and foreigners, and slaves and free people; the distribution and expression of power between groups; economic features of life, including agriculture, industry and trade; religious practices and cultural expressions.

Choose one object displayed which you find particularly interesting, striking or informative:

- What information does it give us about the ancient society which produced it? Consider economic, social, technical, political or religious aspects.
- What were wine and oil used for in Greek or Roman society, apart from food and drink? What cultural practices were central to the use of wine and oil in ancient Greek and Roman societies?
- How were wine and oil used differently by different groups in Greek or Roman society? How did this establish and reflect or cut across gender roles or status in society?
- What can we learn about ancient agriculture, industry and trade from the objects displayed?

VCE Classical Studies

Unit 1: Mythical worlds

Area of Study 1 – Gods, heroes and monsters

Characteristics, ideas and functions of myths, ways in which myths were communicated such as through vase paintings and sculpture, the nature of classical societies as revealed through myths.

- What divinities or mythical beings can you see represented in the exhibitions? How are their meanings communicated in terms of symbols or attributes?

Area of Study 3 - Myths in classical cultures

What was the place of myths in ancient Greek and/or ancient Roman life?

- With which activities are divinities or mythical beings associated through their representations? What does this tell us about the relationship of myths to rituals and other cultural practices?

Unit 2: Classical worlds (Area of Study 1: Society through culture) & Units 3 and 4: Classical works

- *What do classical works reveal about the society in which they were produced?*
- *Ideas presented in a classical work*
- *Techniques used by the classical artist to express these ideas*

Choose one object displayed which you find particularly interesting, striking or informative:

- How and by whom was it used? What information does its style, imagery, or technique of production give us about the ancient society which produced it? Consider religious, social, political or technological ideas.

Unit 2: Classical worlds

Area of Study 2 – Classics through time

- *How have classical works influenced Western civilisation?*
- *How have classical works been used to convey ideas in later works?*
- *What does a comparison between classical works and later works reveal*

Look at the commemorative plate with the words ‘Comus Ludlow 1934’:

This plate was designed by Gertrude Hermes for the Benthall Pottery Company in England to celebrate the 300-year anniversary performance of a masque (play with music and dancing) written by Christian poet John Milton, first performed at Ludlow Castle in 1634. In the masque, a lady is captured by Comus, a character inspired by the Greek god Comus (Κῶμος) - in ancient mythology, the son and cupbearer of Dionysos and the god of festivity and revels. In the masque, Comus holds a magician’s wand and tempts the lady to drink from his magical cup (symbolising sexual pleasure and drunkenness) until she is freed due to her determined virtue and chastity.

Compare the image on the 1934 plate with the ancient objects and images displayed. What does this plate tell you about the influence of Greco-Roman works through the 17th to 20th centuries? How does the image of Comus on the plate (and his role in the masque) differ from the images of wine deities and mythological figures on Classical works and their meaning?