

# Ancient Cultures Mini Series



## Ancient Rome

Learning Packet





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# How To Use This Packet

This packet is designed to offer activities, projects, and resources to accompany watching the short educational video about an object in the Roman gallery at Glencairn Museum. It's designed for you to do as much or as little of the packet as you would like! You can do every single activity or just half of one, whatever works for you, your students, or your family.

Parts to do before you watch the video:

- Introduction
- What Do You Already Know?
- Terms to Try
- Connecting Artwork

Parts to do while watching the video:

- Myth Matching
- Drawing a New Beginning

Parts to do after you watch the video:

- Dive Deeper
- Explorer's Notebook



# Introduction

How do the objects of ancient cultures demonstrate the worldview of the culture that created them, and reflect their religious beliefs and daily practices? Human beings have shared common hopes and fears throughout time and across cultures. Through discovered objects, let's explore examples of common human concerns that people in Ancient Rome faced that might not be so different from ours today.

What is something that brings you joy? Draw or write about it.

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What is something that causes you sadness? Draw or write about it.

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## What Do You Already Know?

In order to understand the significance of the objects from Ancient Rome that survive today it is important to think about how the people of this area saw the world and their place in it. Before watching the Ancient Rome video, let's think about what you might already know about Ancient Rome!

Here is a map of Ancient Rome.





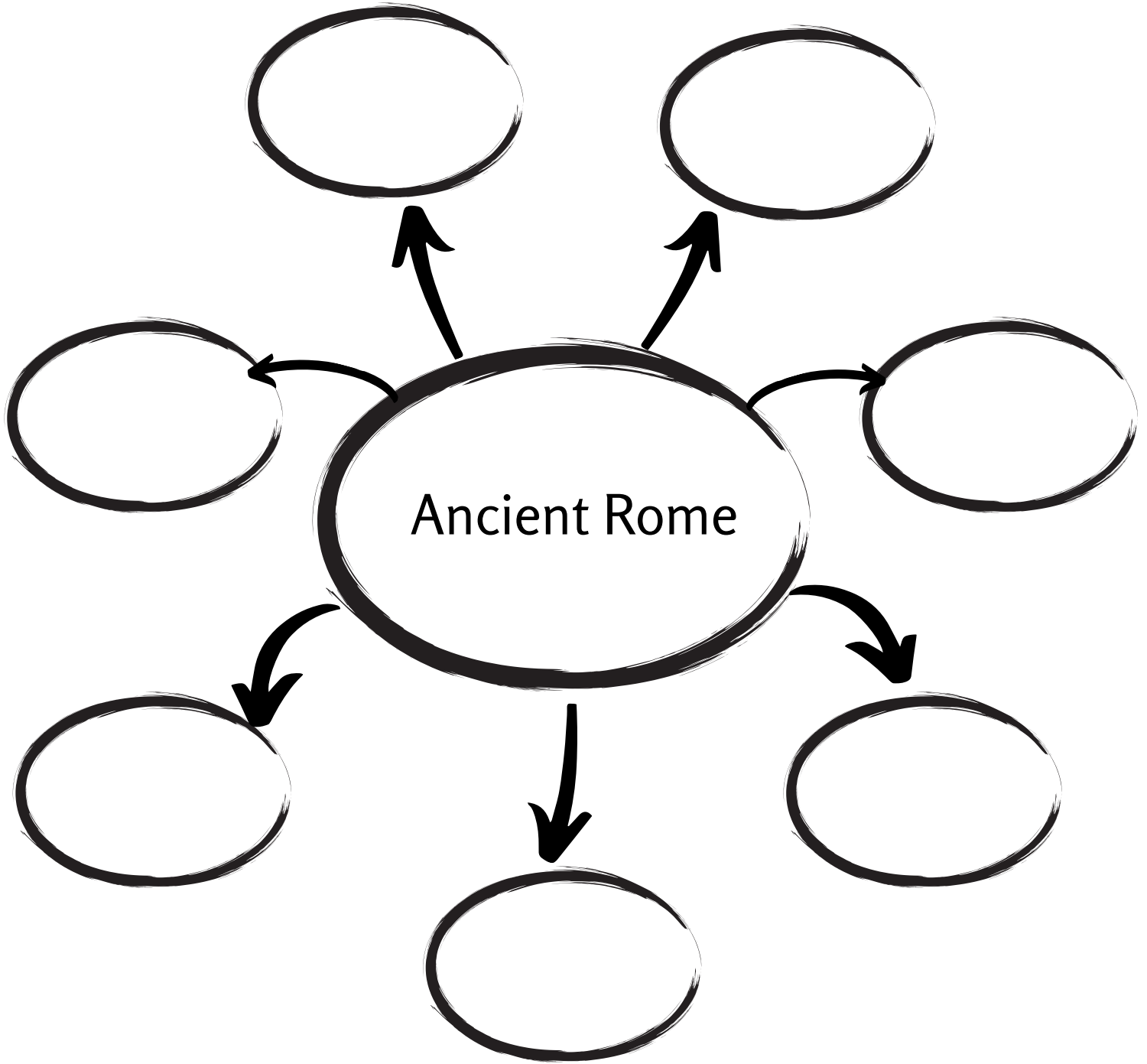
## What Do You Already Know?

Using the map on the previous page, and the chart on the next page, brainstorm what you might know. This could include:

- The names of different groups of people from the area of Ancient Rome
- Their beliefs
- The practices and rituals they were known for
- The locations they inhabited or moved to
- What kinds of buildings and structures they created
- Types of artwork and objects that different cultures created
- Sources of food and particular dishes
- Organization of society within each culture
- Anything else that comes to mind!



# What Do You Already Know?





## Terms to Try

On the next page, there's a list of terms or words about Ancient Rome. You can use the activities on this page to learn what these words mean.

### Illustrating

Choose a word and create a work of art based on that vocabulary term. What's the most creative way you can show these words? Can you use ancient art and artifacts for inspiration?

### Acting

Choose a word and create a short scene that shows the meaning of the word. These scenes can be abstract and creative, they can take place in the time period, or they can use the word directly. What if you used the words to play charades?

### Rhyme and Rhythm

Choose one vocabulary word or a few, and see if you can create a short poem using your chosen words! If you want, you can recite your poem to another person or a group of people. Sometimes poems can be turned into songs. Can you think of a tune to sing your poem to?

## Key Words

**Archaeologist:** someone who studies human history by excavating areas that contain objects and artifacts from the past

**Deity:** a very holy being, a god

**Divine:** something connected to, or that has power like a god

**Marble:** a kind of limestone that is often used in art and architecture that can be carved and polished

**Monotheistic:** believing in or worshipping one god

**Myth:** a story that may or may not be rooted in historical fact that is ingrained in the culture of a people

**Polytheistic:** believing in or worshipping multiple gods

**Ritual:** the habitual way something is done, particularly something holy or important

**Shield:** a large piece of armor carried by someone to defend themselves

**Statue:** a 3D object that shows a person, animal or thing carved out of a hard substance

**Symbol:** something that stands for or represents something else

**Worldview:** the way in which a person or culture understands and interprets the world around them



## Connecting Artwork

Ancient Roman art and objects are still inspiring people today!

Explore the three modern day artists in the next few pages to find out what kind of art they create, and how their art was inspired by ancient Roman culture and myths, and other ancient cultures. Once you have explored their pages, choose one of the activities below to extend your knowledge!

### Pick a Medium

Each of the artists' works are in a different medium or kind of material. Thompson's is in paint, Spero's is in glass mosaic, and Jago's is in marble. Choose one of these mediums and see if you can create your own piece of artwork in that material. You might swap out glass mosaic for paper mosaic, or marble for something softer like modeling clay.

### Pick a Myth

The works of art that are highlighted for each artist show a connection to some ancient myth or mythological being - Paris, Aphrodite, Athena, Venus, etc. Choose and research a Roman myth or mythological person and create a piece of art that is inspired by your choice. It can be in any medium you like!



Bob Thompson was born on June 26, 1937 in Louisville, Kentucky. He drew inspiration from mythology and Renaissance paintings, as well as from Jazz music and bright, abstract colors and shapes. He died when he was only 28 in Rome, Italy, on May 30, 1966.



This painting shows the myth of the judgement of Paris, in which Paris, a mortal, must choose which goddess - Hera, Athena, or Aphrodite - is the most beautiful. He chooses Aphrodite and hands her an apple as a prize.



The Judgement of Paris  
by Bob Thompson  
Oil on Canvas  
1964

This painting is a great example of Bob Thompson's work. He loved to use bright colors and big shapes. He often painted people naked and without faces or lots of details, just like the people in this painting. He painted different versions of the myth of Paris over and over again. This is just one of them. He loved to paint all sorts of myths from all sorts of religions, including Ancient Greek and Roman religions and Christian myths. You can find out more about Bob Thompson and his artwork here [s.si.edu/3i16mPu](https://s.si.edu/3i16mPu)

Nancy Spero was an American visual artist. She was born on August 24, 1926 in Cleveland Ohio and died on October 18, 2009. She lived most of her life in New York City, but also lived in Italy for a few years. A lot of her artwork shows images of women from prehistory, or mythological times, all the way through to the modern day.



These images are just a few of the 22 scenes that Spero created in glass mosaic in the 66th Street-Lincoln Center NYC subway station. The images show women from history and myth as well as from today. Some of the women are inspired by ancient cultures like ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece. You can see and learn more about these beautiful mosaics here [bit.ly/3yK9eGi](http://bit.ly/3yK9eGi) and here [bit.ly/3fuGNEu](http://bit.ly/3fuGNEu), and here you can watch a short video showing Nancy Spero and the creation and installation of her incredible mosaics! [bit.ly/3fYcLZ8](http://bit.ly/3fYcLZ8)



The ancient Romans were also very well known for their large mosaics that were placed on walls, floors, and ceilings! This image is of a mosaic found in a Roman villa in Austria from around 300-400 CE that depicts the Greek myth of Theseus. Learn more about it here [bit.ly/34qGvlv](http://bit.ly/34qGvlv)



The statue below is called "Venus" and was carved by contemporary, self-taught, Italian artist Jacopo Cardillo (also known as Jago). He was born in Italy on April 18, 1987. Today he lives in Napoli (Naples), Italy. Looking at this piece some people guess it might be symbolizing how the beauty of a person truly comes from within.



"Venere" (Venus)  
Marble  
2018

Unlike the Greeks, who often depicted their sculptures and portraits to show the most beautiful and ideal forms, the Romans took on a style of art known as verism. Verism comes from the Latin word "truth" because in these portraits all of the blemishes and wrinkles of the person were included in the statues and paintings of them. The Romans wanted to be able to identify a person based on their portraits and we can see this continue through Jago's extremely realistic artwork. See more of his artwork here [bit.ly/3fQ6TRz](http://bit.ly/3fQ6TRz)

This is a statue from Glencairn's Roman gallery. It is from the Flavian Period of Roman history (69-96 CE.) This statue is carved of white limestone. If you look closely you might notice that just like Jago's statue of Venus, this statue shows very fine and realistic details!





## Myth Matching

As you play the video, pay attention to the names of these important mythological figures. Can you match each name to its description? Draw a line to connect them.

- |             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 1. Medusa   | A) The Roman goddess of victory                   |
| 2. Minerva  | B) The god of gates, doorways, and new beginnings |
| 3. Janus    | C) The Greek goddess of victory                   |
| 4. Nike     | D) A Greek gorgon with snakes for hair            |
| 5. Victoria | E) The Roman goddess of war                       |
| 6. Perseus  | F) A Greek hero                                   |
| 7. Athena   | G) The Greek goddess of war                       |

Check the answer key on the next page to see how you did!



## Myth Matching Answer Key

1. Medusa → E) The Roman goddess of war
2. Minerva → C) The Greek goddess of victory
3. Janus → B) The god of gates, doorways, and new beginnings
4. Nike → A) The Roman goddess of victory
5. Victoria → D) A Greek gorgon with snakes for hair
6. Perseus → F) A Greek hero
7. Athena → G) The Greek goddess of war



## Drawing a New Beginning

Janus is the Roman god of gates, doorways, and new beginnings. Is there a new beginning in your life? Are you starting a new grade in school or a new project? Are you excited about a new trip or new experience? Draw about it here.



## Dive Deeper

The Roman Empire existed for over 1000 years. At the peak of its strength about 1900 years ago, it stretched across Europe, from Great Britain, across the continent, into the Middle East, and along North Africa. The Roman objects in Glencairn's collection highlight how the culture of ancient Rome had its own beliefs and practices, but as it grew Romans learned from the cultures they encountered and were very open to adopting new things from them. Now that you've watched the video, explore the suggestions below to find out more!

### Object Observations

Click here [bit.ly/3cxtVJN](https://bit.ly/3cxtVJN) to see an image of an ancient Roman object in Glencairn's collection. This is just a small section of the whole object. Print, project or zoom in on the image to view it. Using the questions as prompts, have a discussion as a class or in small groups.

- What do you notice?
- What do you think the object is made of?
- What do you think this small section is part of?
- How big or small do you think the object is?
- Do you think this object meant something to the people who owned it thousands of years ago or not? If so, what kind of meaning?
- What do you think this object was used for?
- Do you think this object designed to be seen or hidden? Why do you think so?

Click here [bit.ly/3yK1a8o](https://bit.ly/3yK1a8o) and scroll to the end to find out more about this object!



## Dive Deeper

### Ancient Rome Today

There are many words and ideas from Roman culture that we still use today, for example the month of January is named after the two-headed Roman god Janus, pictured on a coin to the right. See if you can find out what other parts of our lives today were influenced by the Romans and make a poster to show them all!



### The Protection of the Gods

Part of ancient Roman culture included wearing images of different gods and goddesses as jewelry and on clothing. It was believed the gods had the power to influence life on earth, and so people would wear charms and give offerings to provide protection and good luck. Research the different names and domains of Roman gods and goddesses, and then choose one to design as a charm for a necklace. What kind of protection or benefit will your creation provide?



# Explorer's Notebook



*A Multisensory Experience  
Inspired by a Roman Statue of Minerva-Victoria*



Hello, explorers!

Doesn't this statue look kind of strange with no arms and no head? Long ago, when it was first made, it had a head and arms, but over time they have been lost.

This statue is called the Minerva-Victoria. Minerva is the name of a Roman goddess. Minerva is the goddess of wisdom and war. Victoria was the Roman goddess of victory. Do you know what victory means? Victory means you have won! By showing these two goddesses in one statue, ancient Romans would be reminded of their powerful army.



Minerva-Victoria  
(Minerva in the guise of Victory)  
Possibly from Cyrene, North Africa  
Circa 2nd century CE  
09.SP.1629

This statue was made in the Roman Empire. The Ancient Roman Empire was very, very big. There is a city still called Rome today, but experts think that the Minerva-Victoria was made in a place that is called Libya today. On the next page is a map with a small section magnified to show where this statue is from. Do you see the star on the map? That is where the Minerva-Victoria was made.





No one knows where the Minerva-Victoria's arms and head are. Where do you think they are? What do you think happened to them?

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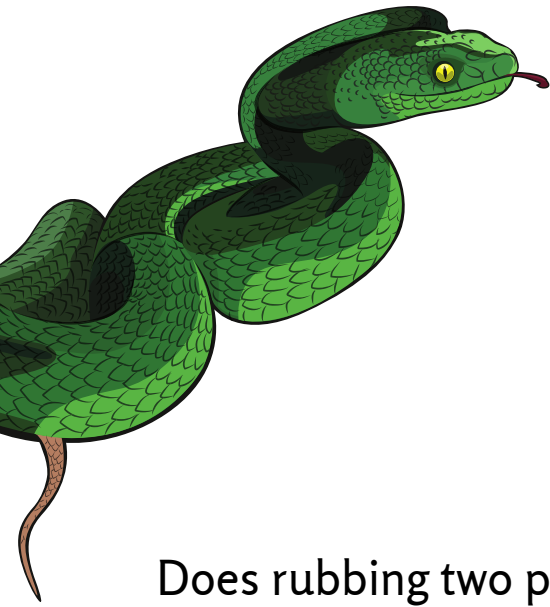
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Have a good adventure!

# Exploration 1: Sound Scavenging

In this statue, Minerva is wearing things showing different animals. She has a clasp that has snakes on it and a shield made of goat skin. Look around your house to see what things you can find that make the same sounds as these animals.



What does a snake sound like? Can you make that sound? Does running water sound like a snake?

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Does rubbing two pieces of paper together sound like a snake?

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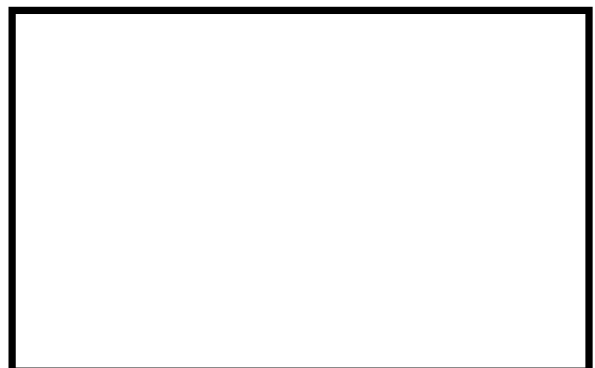
What else can you find that sounds like a snake? Draw or write about it!

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What does a goat sound like? Can you make that sound? Does it sound like a goat if you run your fingers along the couch cushions?

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Does it sound like a goat if you drag a chair on the floor?

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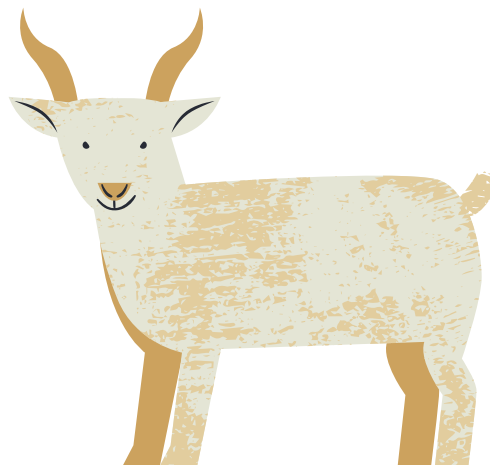
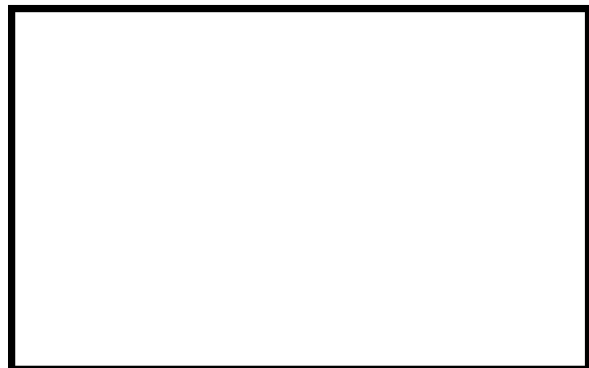
What can you experiment with that sounds most like a goat? Draw or write about it!

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## Exploration 2: Dressing Up

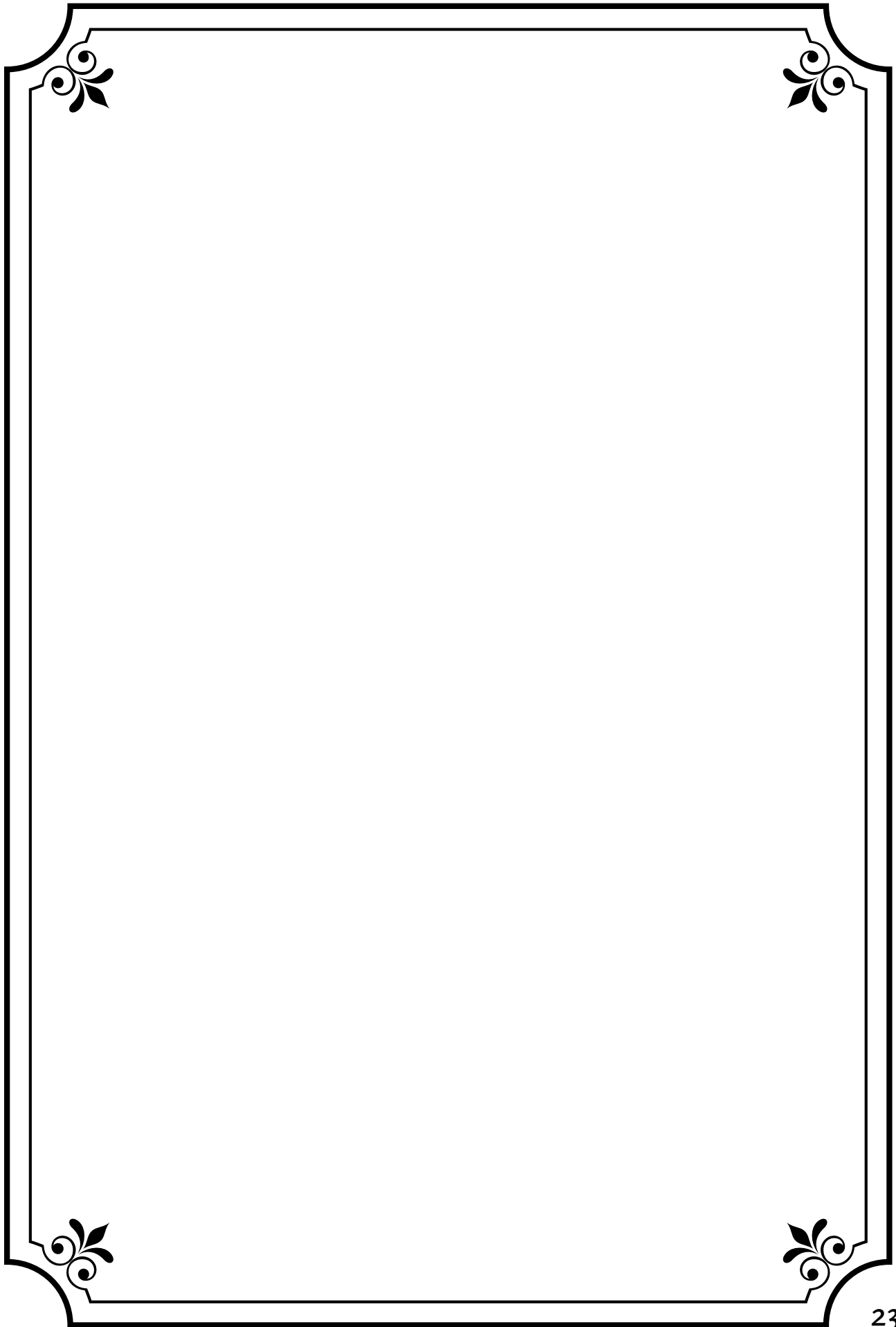
The Minerva-Victoria is wearing a special outfit called a peplos. She has a shield on her back that is kind of like a cape. She has a clasp holding the shield onto the peplos.

What can you find in your house that you can make into a peplos? How about a dress or a blanket? You might need a grownup to help you with some safety pins.

What can you use to make a shield that looks like a cape? How about a towel? What can you use to clasp it on? Can you make a snake clasp out of paper and put it on a safety pin?

On the next page, draw a picture of you wearing the outfit you made.





## Exploration 3: Making Libum

Libum is a delicious treat that the Ancient Romans often gave to the gods as a gift. It is made with cheese and can be sweet, so you might think that it will taste like a cheesecake, but it's a little more like bread. Here is how you can make it.



Libum

Yields 4 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of all purpose flour
- 1 cup of grated cheddar cheese
- 1 egg

Optional:

- Libum is typically cooked on top of fresh bay leaves. You can use fresh bay leaves, dried ones, or none at all. It will still be delicious!
- If you'd like to add something to the top of the libum you can use pine nuts or even pieces of walnut.

## Directions:

1. Ask a grownup to help you preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Beat the egg and grate the cheese.
3. Mix together and knead the flour, egg, and cheese together with your hands. Your hands might get messy! The dough should all stick together. You might need to add a few splashes of water to help it form.
4. Form the dough into a round loaf shape and place it on a greased or parchment paper-lined baking tray. Use some aluminum foil to make a tent over the libum.
5. Bake the libum in the oven for 15-30 minutes or until golden brown.
6. Ask a grownup for help to move your libum into and out of the oven.

What did you smell as the libum was cooking? You can write about it or draw a picture.

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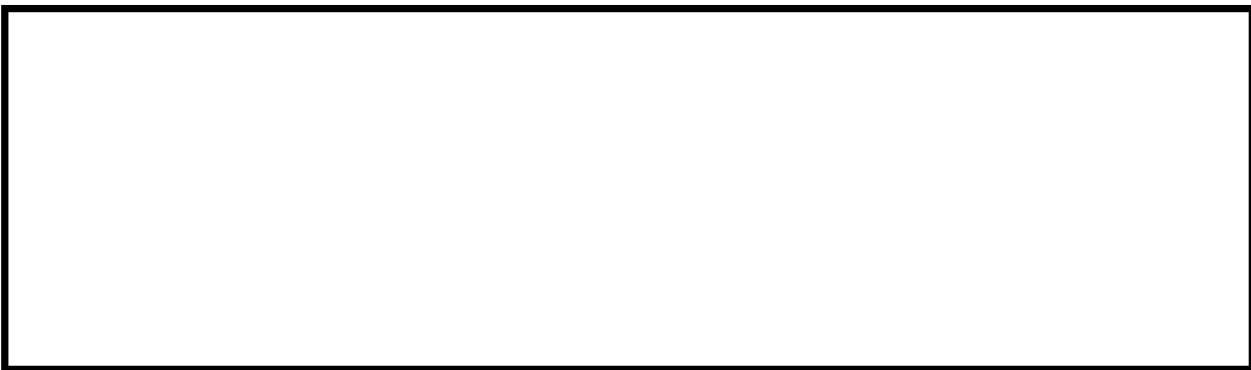
What does the libum taste like? Have you ever tasted something like it before?

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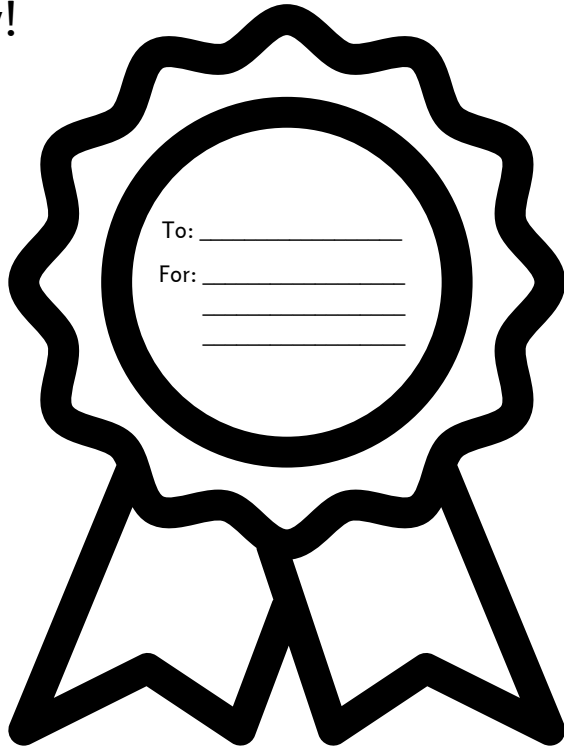
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# Additional Activity: Celebrating Victories

A great way to celebrate victories is to give gifts to other people. You can cut out and color the awards below and give them to your friends and family!



## Exploration 4: Coloring the Minerva-Victoria



Even though the Minerva-Victoria is all one color now, it was probably painted bright colors in the past. What colors do you think the Minerva-Victoria might have been?

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On the next page, you can see an idea of how the Minerva-Victoria might have looked when it had arms and a head. You can color it however you would like!

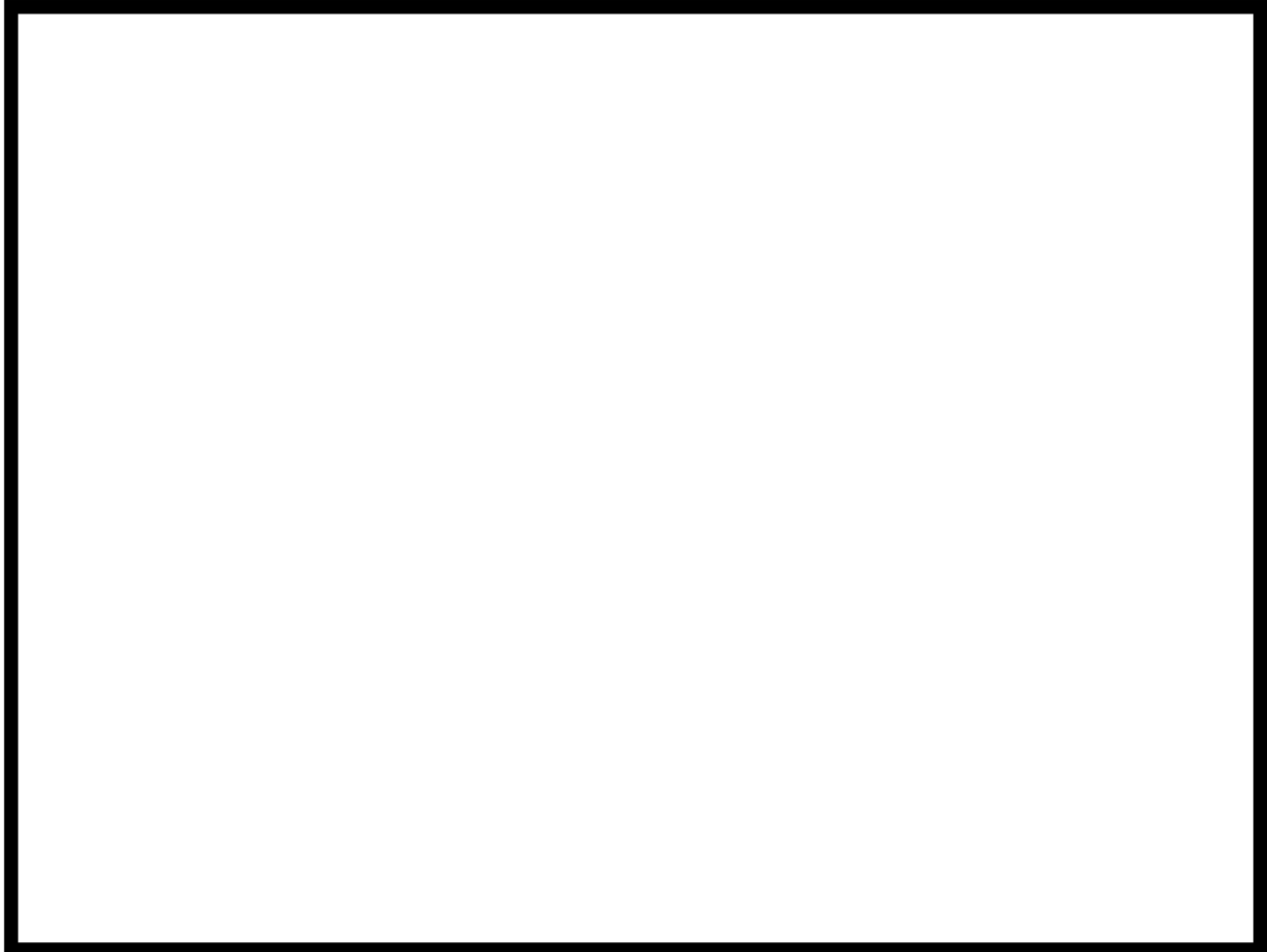


## Exploration 5: Minerva and Neptune's Contest

In Ancient Greece, it was important for cities to have a god or goddess who would protect them. Long ago, King Cecrops (pronounced see-crops) had just founded a city. He needed a god or goddess to protect it.

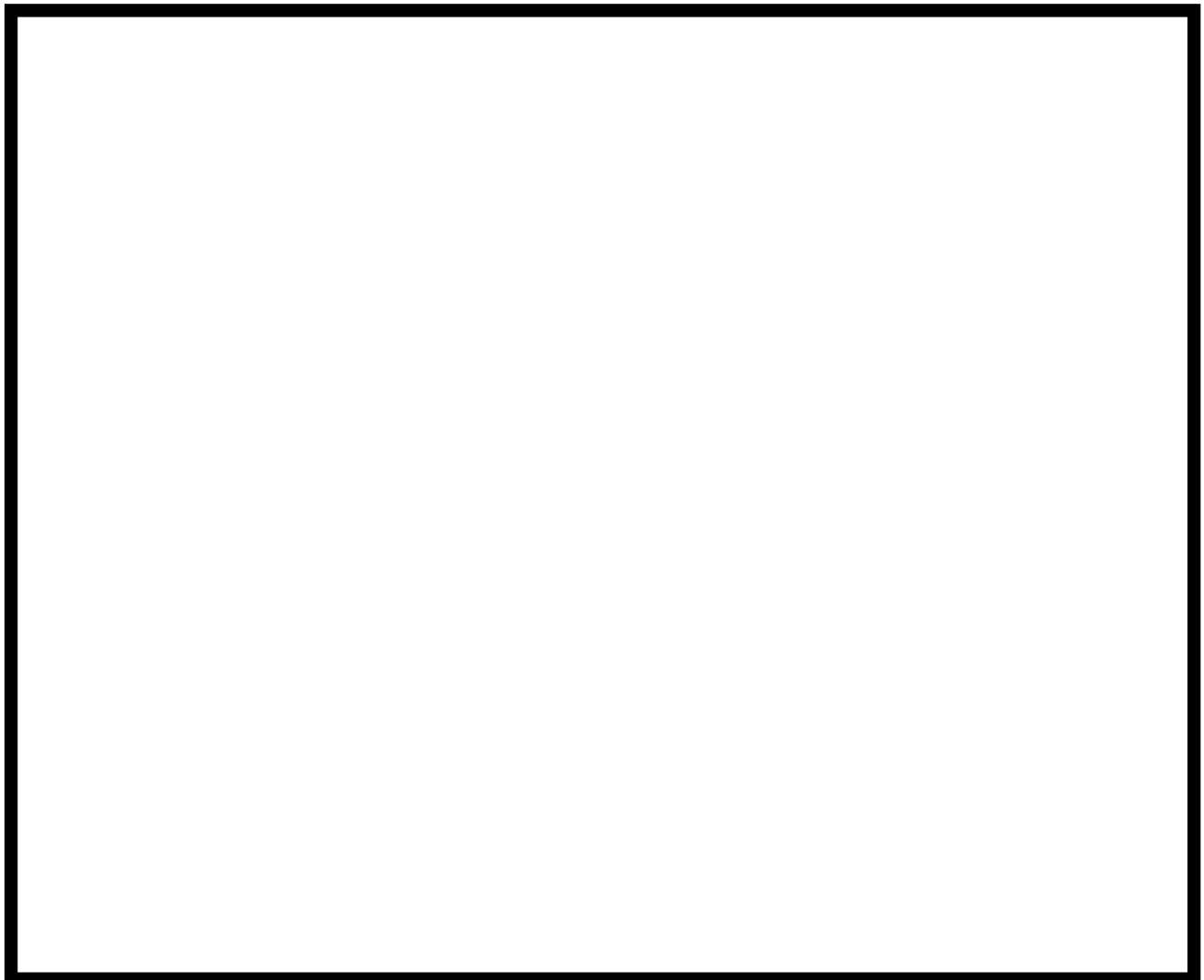


What do you think King Cecrops would look like? How do you think he stood or walked? Try moving around like King Cecrops and draw a picture of what you looked like when you were acting like King Cecrops.



Both Minerva, the Roman goddess of war, and Neptune, the Roman god of the sea, were interested in being the protector of this new city. They couldn't both be the protector. How on earth would King Cecrops choose?

Minerva was a warrior goddess and was very smart. What do you think she stood like? What did she look like when she walked? Try moving around like Minerva and draw a picture of what you looked like when you were acting like Minerva.



Neptune was the god of the sea. How do you think he stood? What did he look like when he walked? Try moving around like Neptune and draw a picture of what you looked like when you were acting like Neptune.

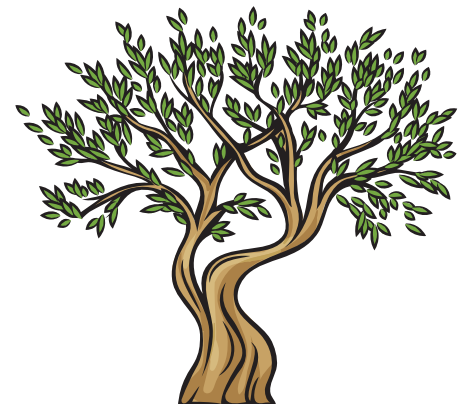


Minerva and Neptune decided that they would give the city gifts and then King Cecrops could choose the gift he liked best. Whoever gave the better gift would be the protector of the city.

Neptune gave the people a fountain, but instead of fresh water, it was full of salt water. How could you act out being a fountain? Try it out. What did you look like when you pretended to be a fountain?



Minerva gave the people an olive tree. The people loved the olives and the oil they could make from it. How can you act out being a tree? Try it out. What did you look like when you pretended to be a tree?



King Cecrops and the people loved Minerva's gift the most. She was victorious in the competition and was the protector of the city!

## Sources

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## Credits

Developed by Fiona Dwyer for Glencairn Museum  
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