



Classroom activities

It's all Greek to Shelley

Activity summary:

Shelley famously died with a copy of Sophocles in his pocket. What influence did ancient Greek literature have on him? Read the poem *Epipsychidion* and at least one other Shelley poem. Write a short account of how Greek language, literature and culture is used in these poems. You should consider similarities and differences.

Suggested groups: Y11-12

Resources:

A copy of *Epipsychidion*. Access to other Shelley poems.

Word-processing facilities or writing materials.

Jenny March's *Dictionary of Classical Mythology* may be useful for looking up unfamiliar names and stories. Likewise the *Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*.

Learning Objectives:

- * Increase awareness of English literature's links with its classical heritage.
- * Greater knowledge of the classical world.
- * Improve understanding of processes of reception and literary relations.

AO and Syllabus links:

Different Culture – analysis and argument, and Literary heritage links.

Explore how language, structure and forms contribute to the meaning of texts, considering different approaches to texts and alternative interpretations.

Further information:

This task could steer students away from reliance on internet search engines and provide a chance to teach research skills in using the dictionaries provided.

Teachers may like to introduce the Greek alphabet.

Discussion could focus on why we use Latin and Greek allusions – was this the same for Shelley? Where else do we see the classical world reflected in our contemporary society? What does the classical world mean to students now? What references would they use to make the same points as Shelley?