



Educational Program: “In the Garden with the Museum’s Plants”

Material for optional student activities before and after a visit to the Acropolis Museum.

During your school group’s visit to the Acropolis Museum, the students will become familiar with the relationship between people and plants in antiquity and today, as well as the way one can learn about this relationship using artefacts as a starting point and with the assistance of an archaeologist.

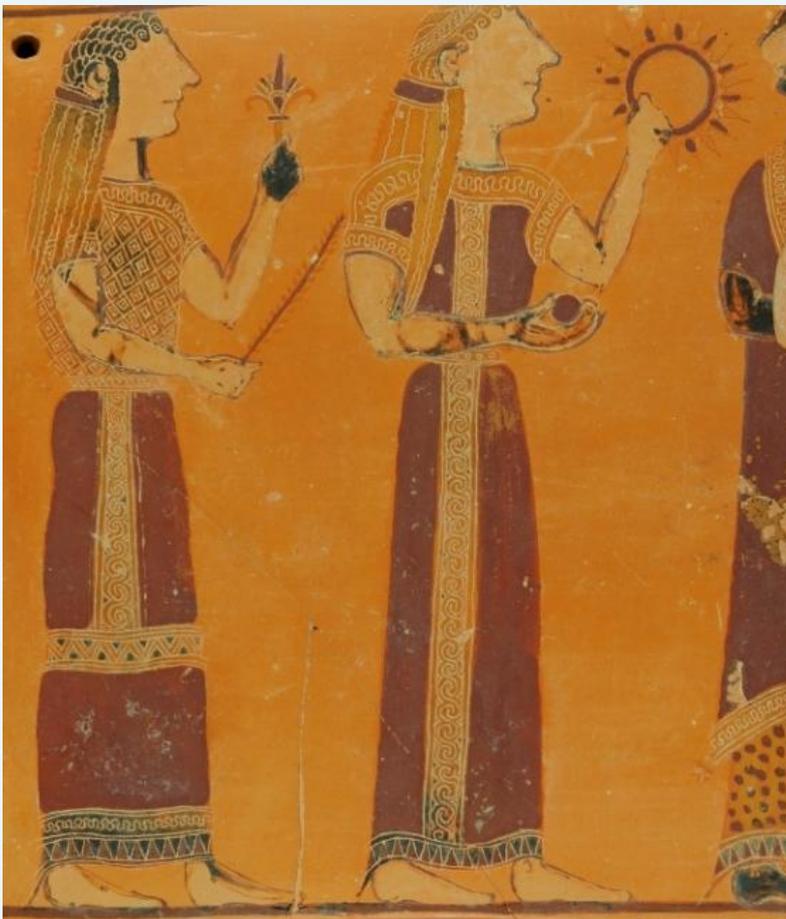
Some brief preparation with the students before their visit to the Museum can make the experience of this program even more fruitful.

Show the below image of an exhibit at the Museum to your students. Encourage them to observe it very carefully a number of times. Initiate a discussion about it based on the questions for students that follow.

After your visit to the Museum you can suggest to your students that they continue their critical and creative exploration of the same subject using the material below, thus reinforcing the benefits of the experience offered by this program.

Material for optional preparation in class:

- Look at the image below (or view the exhibit on the Museum's website using the zoom function):
<http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/el/content/iero-tis-nymfis>



- *Questions for the students:*

- * Observe the image carefully. You can display it in the classroom for a week, in order to become familiar with it and gradually discover its details. It depicts a painted clay tablet of about 570 BC, which was found in the sanctuary of Nympe, a divinity who protected marriage in ancient Athens. It was the gift of some ancient follower, probably hung from a tree or nailed to a wall, as the small opening at the top left of the tablet indicates.
- * How do you think the work with its representation of plants relates to the relationship between plants and people in that period?

- Material for the teacher:

Painted votive tablet, Acropolis Museum inv. no. NA 1957 Acr. 2

Material: Clay.

Date: About 570 BC

Description: Procession of three women, the first two of whom hold objects related to plants. The first from the left holds a branch and a lotus blossom, while the second holds a wreath and an unidentified fruit. It probably depicts the three daughters of the first king of Athens, Kekrops. The three daughters, Pandrosos, Herse and Aglauros, were personifications of the life-giving moisture of the earth.

Initial use: The tablet was a votive offering at the open-air sanctuary of Nymphé on the south slope of the Acropolis. Nymphé was one of the protectresses of marriage in ancient Athens. It is unknown where it was placed in the sanctuary, however, the hole preserved in the top left corner of the work indicates that it was intended to be hung from a tree or a wall, as was usual with similar votive tablets.

The relationship of the work with plants: The work relates to plants in a variety of ways:

- * Burning material is required for the ceramic kiln used in the production of a work in clay.
- * Such tablets with holes for suspension were probably hung from trees in the sanctuaries of the gods to whom they had been dedicated.
- * The women depicted hold plants.
- * The women depicted may be the daughters of Kekrops, who were personifications of the life-giving moisture of the earth which is related to the growth of plants.
- * The representation depicts impressively decorated garments. Some of the garments of antiquity used plants for the raw material, since flax was used for the manufacture of many yarns and some of the dyes were of plant origin, such as that which was derived from saffron.

Selected bibliography:

D. Pandermalis, a.o. *Acropolis Museum, guide* (Athens 2016) 48-61

For more on the sanctuary of Nymphé, see also: <http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en/content/sanctuaries>,
<http://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en/content/sanctuary-nymphe>

Optional material to take further advantage of the program experience

Suggest the following activities to kindergarten and year 1-2 students (ages 4-8):

- * Inside the museum you identified many plants observing beautiful objects, you heard stories and created a beautiful garden with plants of the Museum.
- * Observe your classroom. Can you identify any plants in the objects around you?
- * Consider the relationship between people and plants in the current age. How do we use plants on a daily basis in our lives?
- * With your group you can create a beautiful garden at your school, planting plants that you learnt about at the Museum!
- * You can also visit places other than the Acropolis Museum, talk with people who have different professions from archaeologists and learn more about plants and their relationship with people.

We would be very pleased if you shared the results of your activities with us at:
learning@theacropolismuseum.gr/en

Optional material to take further advantage of the program experience

-Suggestion for year 3 to year 12 students (ages 8-18) I:

After your experience at the Acropolis Museum:

- * Work in groups.
- * With your group, choose a plant that makes an impression on you and focus on it.
- * Learn about its characteristics, its environment and the way it grows.
- * If you want to, you can explore the history of its presence in the country it is from and its probable relationship with people in past ages.
- * Investigate the role played by the plant of your choice in the lives of people today in Greece and/or elsewhere. Search for information on its possible importance in nutrition, art, the economy, commerce, medicine, perfumery and other areas of people's lives.
- * You can also visit places other than the Acropolis Museum, talk with people who have different professions from archaeologists and learn more about the plant that interests you.
- * You can request the assistance of the Acropolis Museum's archaeologists by sending a message to learning@theacropolismuseum.gr
- * After the end of your work show the results of your research to the other groups. Together you can discuss the place of plants in people's lives.

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Optional material to take further advantage of the program experience

-Suggestion for year 3 to year 12 students (ages 8-18) 2:

After your experience at the Acropolis Museum:

- * Work all together. You can divide into groups and each group can undertake a very specific responsibility. For the final result the groups will have to work together.
- * Explore the significance that plants have today in the lives of people in your country.
- * Where will you search for sources of information?
- * In what areas of the lives of people in your area do you encounter plants and what plants are these?
- * Are the plants that people in your locale use today, only from that place?
- * You can also visit places other than the Acropolis Museum, talk with people who have different professions from archaeologists and learn more about the plants that interest you.
- * You can request the assistance of the Acropolis Museum's archaeologists by sending a message to learning@theacropolismuseum.gr
- * You can enhance your relationship and that of the people in your area with plants, creating a garden in the area of your school or elsewhere (indoors, on a terrace, in a courtyard, etc.). You can plant plants that you identified in the Acropolis Museum.

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