



# Ancient Greek Literature

Literature Study Guide Version 3.1

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Authors are listed roughly chronologically, in order of the publication of their most important works.

Author	Major Works	Details
<b>Homer</b> (authorship disputed)	Odyssey	<b>Odysseus</b> spends ten years returning home to his wife, <b>Penelope</b> , and son, <b>Telemachus</b> , in <b>Ithaca</b> after the <b>Trojan War</b> ; encounters <b>Circe</b> , <b>Polyphemus</b> , <b>Scylla</b> , and <b>Charybdis</b>
	Iliad	a chronicle of the <b>Trojan War</b> ; begins by invoking a goddess to "sing the rage of <b>Achilles</b> ," who kills <b>Hector</b> after the death of <b>Patroclus</b> ; includes a long description of the armor and <b>shield of Achilles</b> and a <b>catalogue of ships</b>
<b>Hesiod</b>	Theogony Works and Days	two works that contain, among other things, chronicles of the genealogy of the gods and stories from Greek myth
<b>Sappho</b> <i>poetry</i>	Ode to Aphrodite	a largely-surviving poem written on the island of <b>Lesbos</b>
<b>Aeschylus</b> <i>tragic plays</i>	Oresteia	trilogy of plays including <b>Agamemnon</b> , <b>The Eumenides</b> , and <b>The Libation Bearers</b> ; <b>Orestes</b> kills <b>Clytemnestra</b> after she kills <b>Agamemnon</b> for sacrificing her daughter Iphigenia for good winds on the way to the Trojan War
	The Persians Seven Against Thebes	
<b>Sophocles</b> <i>tragic plays</i>	Oedipus Rex	while trying to stop a curse on his city, the title king of <b>Thebes</b> discovers that he has accidentally fulfilled a prophecy that he would marry his mother, <b>Jocasta</b> , and kill his father, <b>Laius</b> ; Oedipus is advised by <b>Creon</b> and <b>Tiresias</b>
	Antigone	the title daughter of Oedipus performs burial rites for her brother, <b>Polynices</b> , and is hangs herself in a cave after being sentenced to death by <b>Creon</b> , enraging Creon's son, <b>Haemon</b>
	Oedipus at Colonus	
<b>Euripides</b> <i>tragic plays</i>	Medea	the title witch/sorceress is the lover of <b>Jason</b> , and gets revenge on him for marrying another woman by killing their sons, poisoning his wife, and flying away in a chariot pulled by dragons
	The Bacchae Alcestis	
<b>Aristophanes</b> <i>comic plays</i>	The Frogs	<b>Dionysus</b> disguises himself as <b>Heracles</b> and travels into <b>Hades</b> with his servant <b>Xanthius</b> ; he judges a contest between <b>Aeschylus</b> and <b>Euripides</b> to decide which one he will bring back to life to revitalize the contemporary drama of Athens; while approaching Hades, he crosses a lake inhabited by frogs that croak " <b>bre-ke-ke-kax ko-ax ko-ax</b> "
	Lysistrata	the title Athenian woman leads a strike in which the women of Athens and Sparta withhold sex from their husbands until they end the <b>Peloponnesian War</b>
	The Birds	<b>Pisthetaerus</b> and <b>Euelpides</b> build <b>Cloudcuckooland</b> , a floating city, with the support of the <b>Hoopoe</b> as a blockade against the Olympian gods
	The Clouds The Knights	