

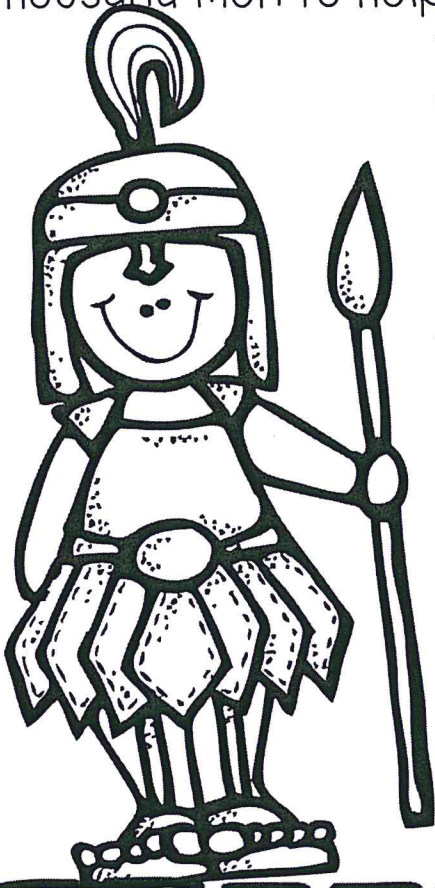
The Trojan Horse

Once there was a lovely woman named Helen. She was the most beautiful woman in ancient Greece. Many men wanted to win her heart. She chose to marry King Menelaus, and she became the Queen of Sparta.

Unfortunately, Helen's marriage to Menelaus did not stop other princes and kings from wanting to marry her, as well. Young, handsome Paris, Prince of Troy, was one of the men that were captivated by Helen's beauty. Paris kidnapped Helen and took her to his home in Troy. Helen became known as Helen of Troy.

King Menelaus was furious and was not going to tolerate the prince stealing his wife. He called together an army of fifty thousand men to help him get his wife back. Among these men were some of the greatest heroes of the world: Achilles the heroic, Odysseus the sneaky, and Ajax the arrogant. With these men, a thousand ships sailed to the shores of Troy, just outside the city walls. This was the beginning of one of the most terrible wars. It was known as the Trojan War.

After ten years, many of the men were dead, including Achilles, Ajax, and the prince, Paris. However, after countless battles, the Greeks never made it inside the city walls to regain possession of their queen.



The Trojan Horse

The Greek soldiers were ready to surrender and return to Greece, but Odysseus was not ready to give up. He had a clever idea to get into the city. None of the soldiers thought it would work, but they were desperate to end the war, so they were willing to give it a try.

One morning the Trojans woke up and discovered that the beaches were deserted and there was nothing left but a huge wooden horse. The Trojans were puzzled by the strange horse and debated about what it meant and what should be done with it.

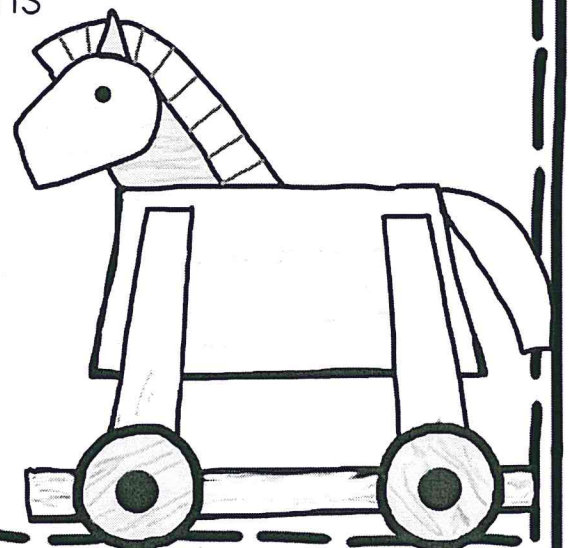
"It's a tribute to our great city...The City of Horses," some said.

"It's a trick," others voiced.

The Trojans began to celebrate. They pulled the enormous wooden horse inside the city walls for a victory party. It would stand in the city as a reminder that the Greeks had surrendered to the powerful Trojans.

The celebrations lasted for many hours and late into the night. The Greeks all the while sat inside the hollow body of the horse patiently waiting for the last of the Trojans to go to bed.

Once the city was sound asleep, a small door on the horse's belly opened and the Greek soldiers leaped out of the huge hollow horse. Just as Odysseus had predicted, the Trojans had carried the Greeks right into the



The Trojan Horse

center of the city.

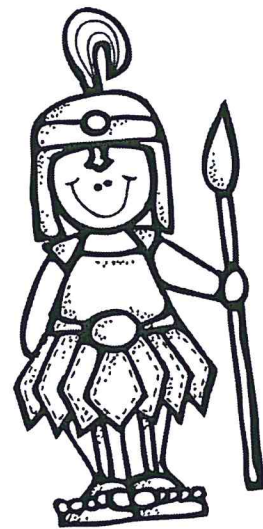
The Greeks opened the city gates and signaled to the army of ships to sail back to shore. They had been hiding just over the sea's horizon. It did not take long before the entire Greek army flooded the city of Troy. All of this happened while the Trojans slept soundly.

It took no time for the Trojan War that had lasted ten years to finally come to an end. The Greek soldiers were able to sail away happily because they had recaptured their queen. She was returned to King Menelaus where they lived happily the rest of their days.

Some of the Greek soldiers did not make it back to Greece immediately. It ended up taking Odysseus and some of his men another ten years before they would return home. His trip home is known as the *Odyssey*. That is totally different story!

What is what is the theme of The Trojan Horse?

The phrase, "beware of Greeks bearing gifts" generated from this myth. After reading this story what can you infer about the meaning of this saying?



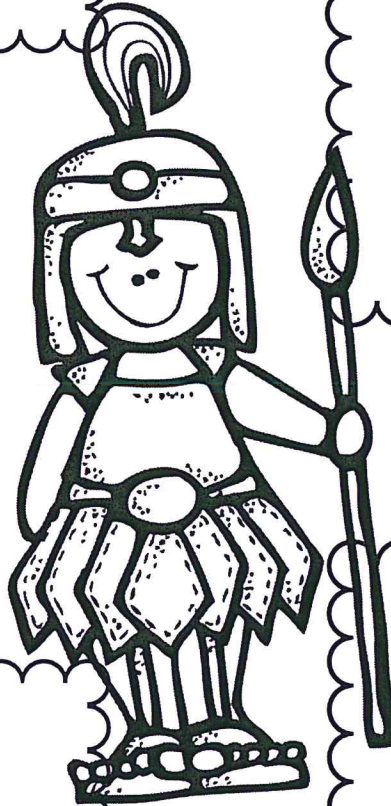
The allusion "an Odyssey" comes from Odysseus's ten year journey home from battle. An Odyssey means "a long journey".

Odysseus

What character traits would you use to describe Odysseus? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Character Trait

Evidence from the text



Character Trait

Evidence from the text

~nq12