

Ancient Greek Literature Cheat Sheet

Version 3.0

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

Author	Works	Details
Homer (authorship disputed)	Odyssey	Odysseus spends ten years returning home to his wife, Penelope , and son, Telemachus , in Ithaca after the Trojan War ; encounters Circe , Polyphemus , Scylla , and Charybdis
	Iliad	a chronicle of the Trojan War ; begins by invoking a goddess to "sing the rage of Achilles ," who kills Hector after the death of Patroclus ; includes a long description of the armor and shield of Achilles and a catalogue of ships
Hesiod	Theogony Works and Days	chronicles of the genealogy of the gods and stories from Greek myth
Sappho <i>poetry</i>	Ode to Aphrodite	a largely-surviving poem written on the island of Lesbos
Aeschylus <i>tragic plays</i>	Oresteia	trilogy of plays including Agamemnon , The Eumenides , and The Libation Bearers ; Orestes kills Clytemnestra after she kills Agamemnon after the Trojan War
	The Persians Seven Against Thebes	
Sophocles <i>tragic plays</i>	Oedipus Rex	while trying to stop a curse on his city, the title king of Thebes discovers that he has accidentally fulfilled a prophecy that he would marry his mother, Jocasta , and kill his father, Laius ; Oedipus is advised by Creon and Tiresias
	Antigone	the title daughter of Oedipus performs burial rites for her brother, Polynices , and is hangs herself in a cave after being sentenced to death by Creon , enraging Creon's son, Haemon
	Oedipus at Colonus	
Euripides <i>tragic plays</i>	Medea	the title witch/sorceress is the lover of Jason , 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	
Aristophanes <i>comic plays</i>	The Frogs	Dionysus disguises himself as Heracles and travels into Hades with his servant Xanthius ; he judges a contest between Aeschylus and Euripides 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 " bre-ke-ke-kax ko-ax ko-ax "
	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 Peloponnesian War
	The Birds	Pisthetaerus and Euelpides build Cloudcuckooland , a floating city, with the support of the Hoopoe as a blockade against the Olympian gods
	The Clouds The Knights	