

Reading Guide for The Curious Historian



2A



TCH ARCHIVES



The Curious Historian Level 2A Reading Guide

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Reading Guide for *The Curious Historian Level 2A*

This recommended reading list has been compiled by the series authors; Leslie Rayner, curator of [The Classical Reader](#); and Colleen Gomez, Scholé Academy teacher.

A Note from Dr. Christopher Perrin

One way to regard history is as a record of the past. There are various kinds of “records” that we can turn to: inscriptions, monuments, buildings, statues, written documents, and other preserved artifacts. Literature is certainly a kind of document that we can add to this list, and is itself a large category that can include historical accounts, biography, myths, legends, poetry, novels, political philosophy, and so on.

Literature from many historical periods can be a very rich source of information for the historian. To understand both Greece and Rome well, for example, one should know at least some of the great literature of these civilizations. Homer’s *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are critical to understanding the Greek mind, just as Virgil’s *The Aeneid* is to understanding the Roman mind. We could say the same about other civilizations for which we have extant literature.

The historian will not only be a reader of the great, enduring literature of any given civilization that he or she studies, but will also want to be a reader of the history and context of a given literary work. History and literature are thus interrelated disciplines that shed light upon each other while also preserving their differences. This is why in our *The Curious Historian Level 2A (TCH2A)* text we have, where appropriate, referenced great literary works such as *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *The Ramayana*, and *The Mahabharata*, and noted their contributions to our historical understanding. We want students to see the valuable and complementary role that literature plays in the study of history.

We also want to encourage students’ inquisitive natures. Therefore, we have compiled this collection of reading recommendations, sorted by genre and subject, for students (and teachers) who would like to dive deeper into the topics covered in the *TCH2A* text. We encourage you to look for additional opportunities to integrate literature into your course and to help students learn to appreciate the interdisciplinary benefit of both their historical and literary studies.

General Resources for Parents and Teachers

The Book of Virtues by William Bennett. This anthology of stories from literature and history illustrates and exemplifies the key virtues, such as self-discipline, compassion, responsibility, and honesty. The reading selections are taken from a wide range of history and literature, including the Bible, American history, English poetry, and Greek mythology. This is a rich resource for educators as they guide their students in conversations about the virtues and their importance in our lives.

Plato: The Great Philosopher-Educator by David Diener. Any attempt to encapsulate Plato’s thought regarding education is a daunting task. Plato’s views are many and diverse, and throughout history innumerable analyses of his thought already have been made. The attention that has been paid to interpreting Plato, however, is certainly not undeserved. Plato is one of the principal founders of the Western intellectual tradition, and it is nearly impossible to examine the historical development of any academic topic without, knowingly or unknowingly, addressing Plato’s views. Regardless of our final assessment of Plato’s educational thought, it is unquestionable that his understanding of education has had a profound impact on the development of educational theory and practice around the world for nearly two and a half millennia. The study of his views is thus of great benefit, both as a means of examining fundamental questions about the nature of education



addressed in his work, and also as a means of better understanding the historical roots of the Western educational tradition.

Common Arts Education: Renewing the Classical Tradition of Training the Hands, Head, and Heart by Christopher Hall, MAT. The liberal arts—the trivium and quadrivium—represent the core, the academic foundations, of a classical education. And yet, they alone cannot meet our basic needs, for we must eat, heal, defend ourselves, trade, build, find our way around, and more. It is these common arts that provide the experiences in real application that will allow students to become not only fully functional in their knowledge, but fully charitable in the world. In this book, author Chris Hall outlines a vision for the resonance between the liberal, fine, and common arts, supplies concrete steps that teachers can take to implement a common arts curriculum, and provides a series of experiences to try in any classroom, at any grade level.

Ancient Voices: An Insider's Look at Classical Greece by Louis Markos. In this title, Dr. Markos guides readers through the history of classical Greece by examining the thoughts and writings of some of the most important figures from this period, including Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon, and Pericles.

The Myth Made Fact: Reading Greek and Roman Mythology through Christian Eyes by Louis Markos takes its readers on an exploration of Greco-Roman characters, art, and stories—one that spans 50 myths and sheds new light on the legends of Hercules, Orpheus, Jason, Phaedra, Oedipus, and many more. The journey through myth unfolds through six unique parts, each pointing beyond the lustful and wrathful Olympian gods to the One Holy Creator who stands, like Aslan, at the back of all our stories. Dr. Markos offers distinct insight into how the common people of pagan Greece and Rome received their myths and used them as guides to virtuous living. By doing so, he helps his readers receive myth in the right spirit: not as historical tales that contradict the Bible, but as testimonies to the yearnings of people who lacked clear revelation but nevertheless hungered and thirsted for Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. With a ClassicalU subscription, you can take an online course that is based on this book and taught by Dr. Markos: <https://classicalu.com/courses/myth-made-fact/>.

Ancient Greece

Nonfiction Books for Students

Ancient Greece: Modern Rhymes about Ancient Times by Susan Altman and Susan Lechner provides an overview of the food, people, culture, and history of ancient Greece through the use of delightful illustrations and rhymes.

Archimedes and the Door of Science by Jeanne Bendick. With well-written text and simple but beautiful illustrations, this book offers readers insight into the work, discoveries, and influence of the famous Greek mathematician Archimedes.

Artemisia of Caria (The Thinking Girl's Treasury of Real Princesses) by Shirin Yim Bridges. Learn about Artemisia, the Greek princess who grew up to become a sailor, a ship's captain, a famous admiral, and then an advisor to Xerxes during the Persian War.

The Librarian Who Measured the Earth by Kathryn Lasky. This beautifully illustrated picture book describes the life of Eratosthenes—the director of the Library of Alexandria, the author of history's first geography book, and the mathematician famous for accurately measuring the globe's circumference. With its many interesting details about Eratosthenes's life, world, and extraordinary accomplishments, this book will delight students of history, math, and science.

Ancient Greece: Archaeology Unlocks the Secrets of Greece's Past (National Geographic Investigates) by Marni McGee. This book describes some of the most important archaeological finds from ancient Greece and explains what the discoveries have taught us about who the ancient Greeks were and how they lived. It