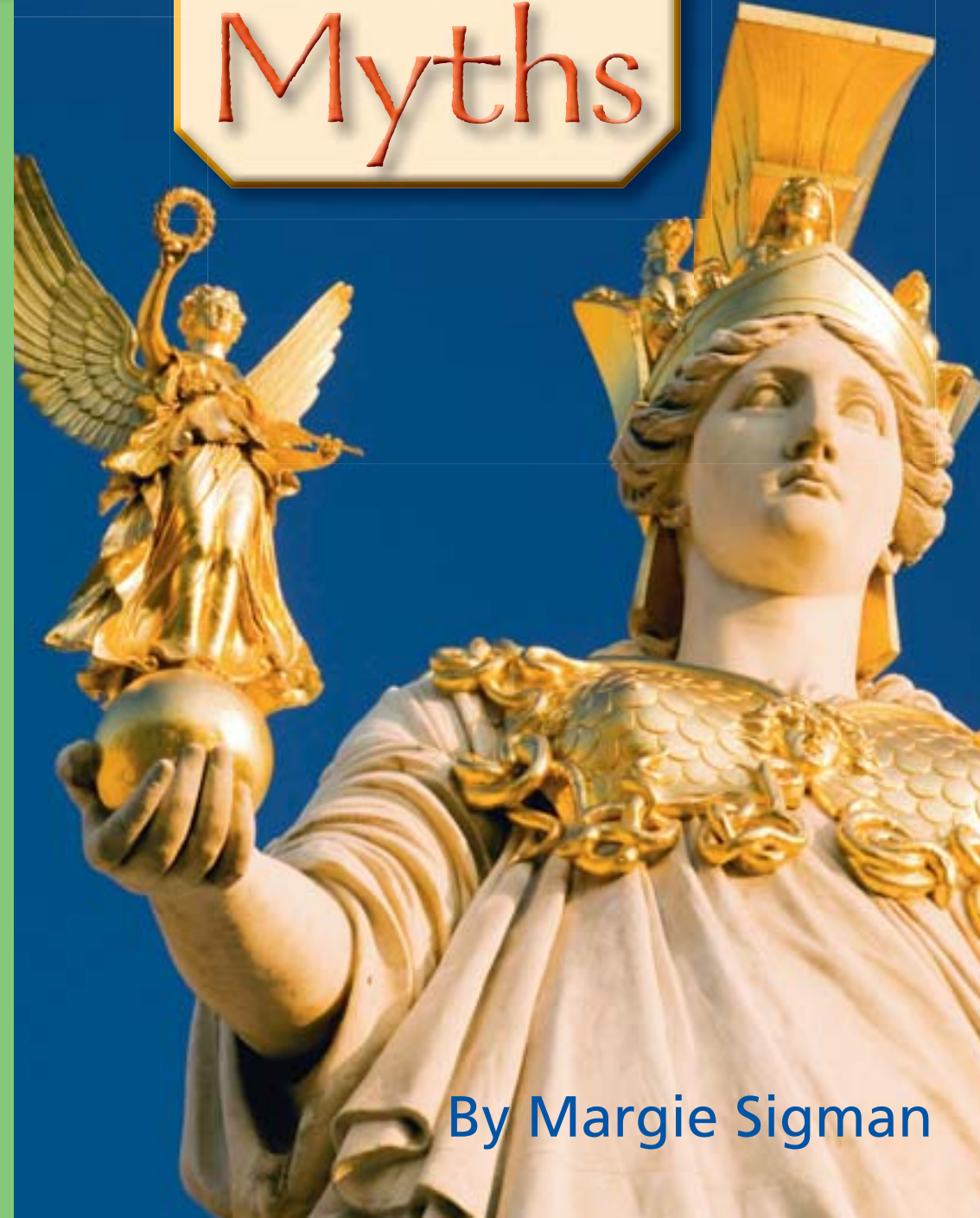


Suggested levels for Guided Reading, DRA™, Lexile®, and Reading Recovery™ are provided in the Pearson Scott Foresman Leveling Guide.

Social Studies

Social Studies

Greek Myths



Genre	Comprehension Skills and Strategy	Text Features
Expository nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generalize• Author's purpose• Inferring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headings• Glossary

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By Margie Sigman

Vocabulary Words

aqueducts

content

crouched

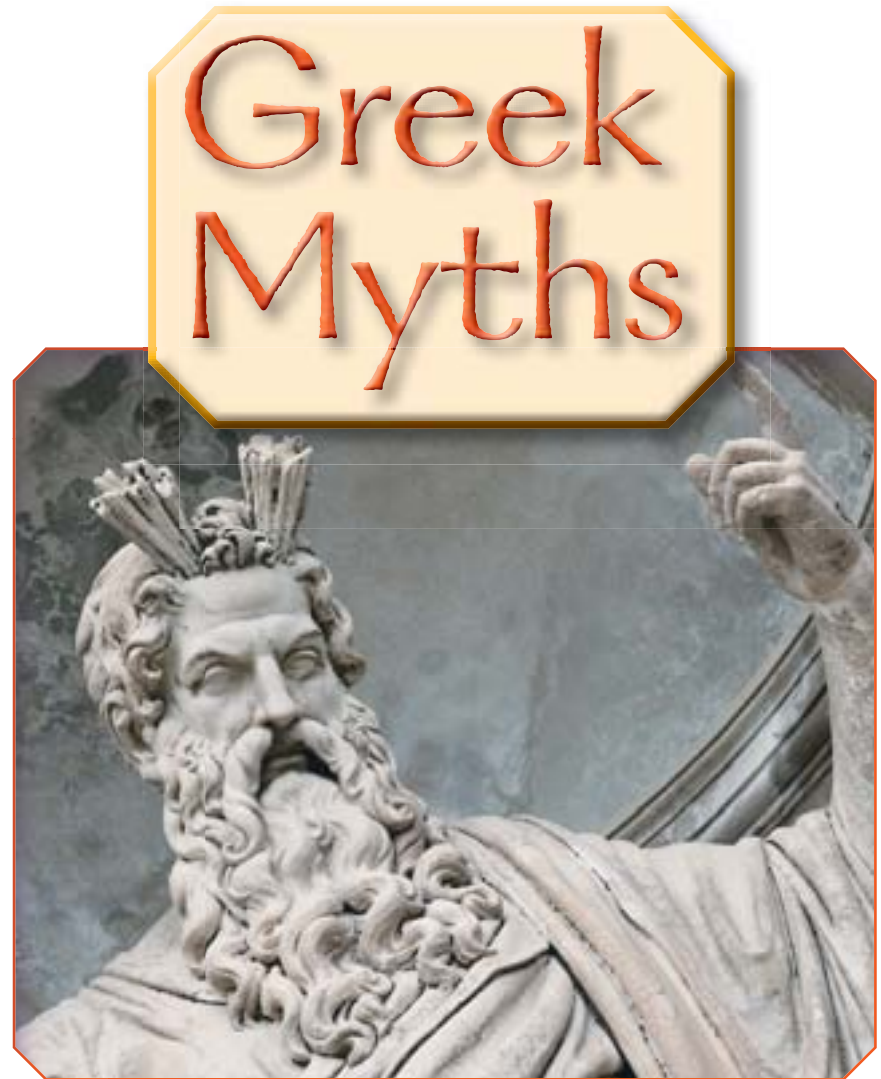
guidance

honor

pillar

thermal

Word count: 665



By Margie Sigman

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Note: The total word count includes words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in chapter titles, captions, labels, diagrams, charts, graphs, sidebars, and extra features are not included.

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Introduction

People have always tried to understand natural events, such as the change of seasons or dangerous weather. Today science can tell us why these things happen. Long ago, events such as storms or earthquakes seemed to happen for no reason, so people made up stories, or myths, to explain them.

Illustrations

12, 14 Lin Wang.

Photographs

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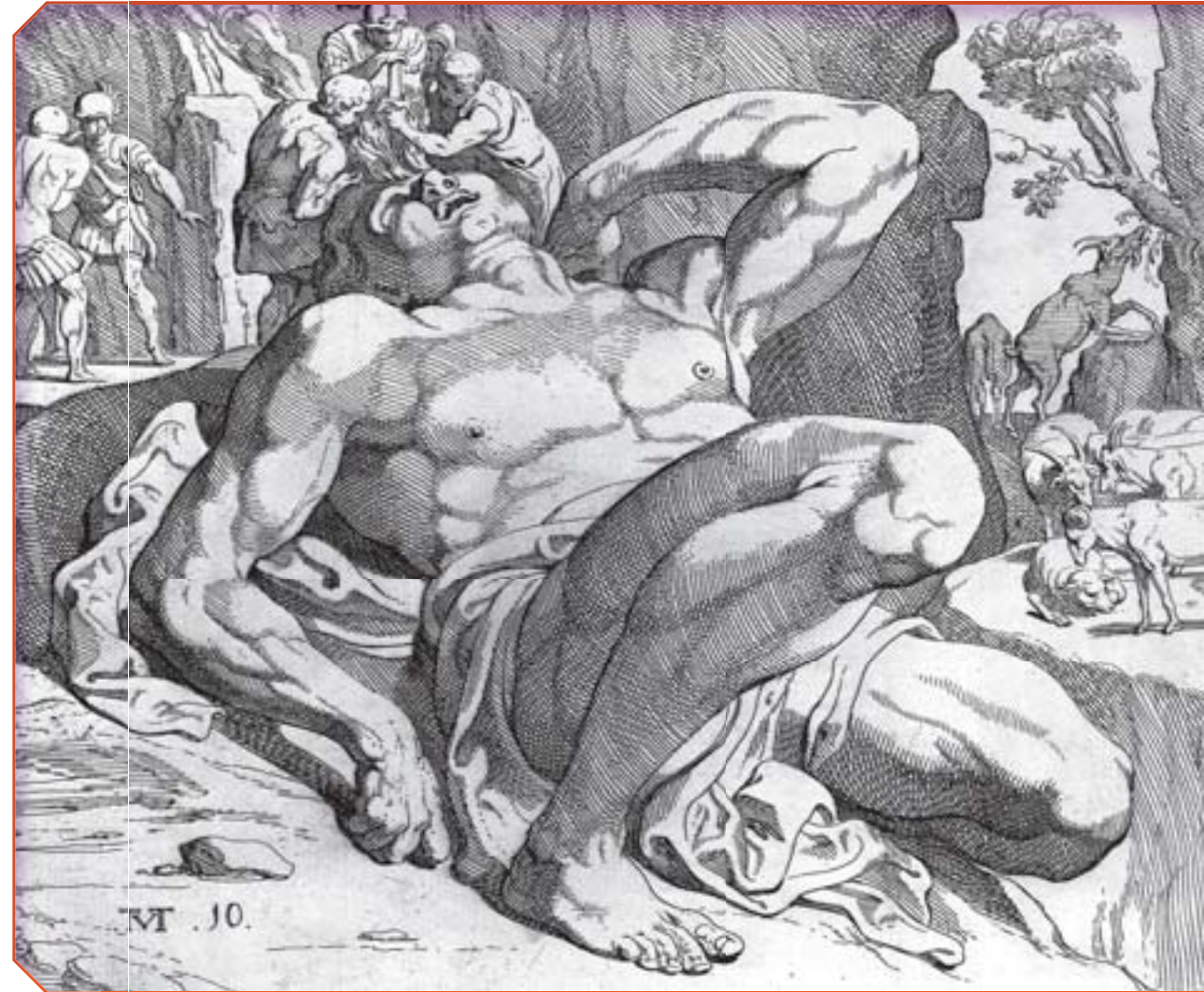
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Ancient Greece

Many of the myths we read today were first told in ancient Greece, thousands of years ago. These myths were about gods and goddesses, animals, and humans. They told of amazing places on tall mountains and at the bottom of the sea. There were giants, one-eyed monsters, and beautiful maidens.



Some stories were about Greek heroes who faced terrible storms and evil enemies. The heroes had great courage and **honor**. How these heroes lived their lives provided **guidance** for the Greeks.

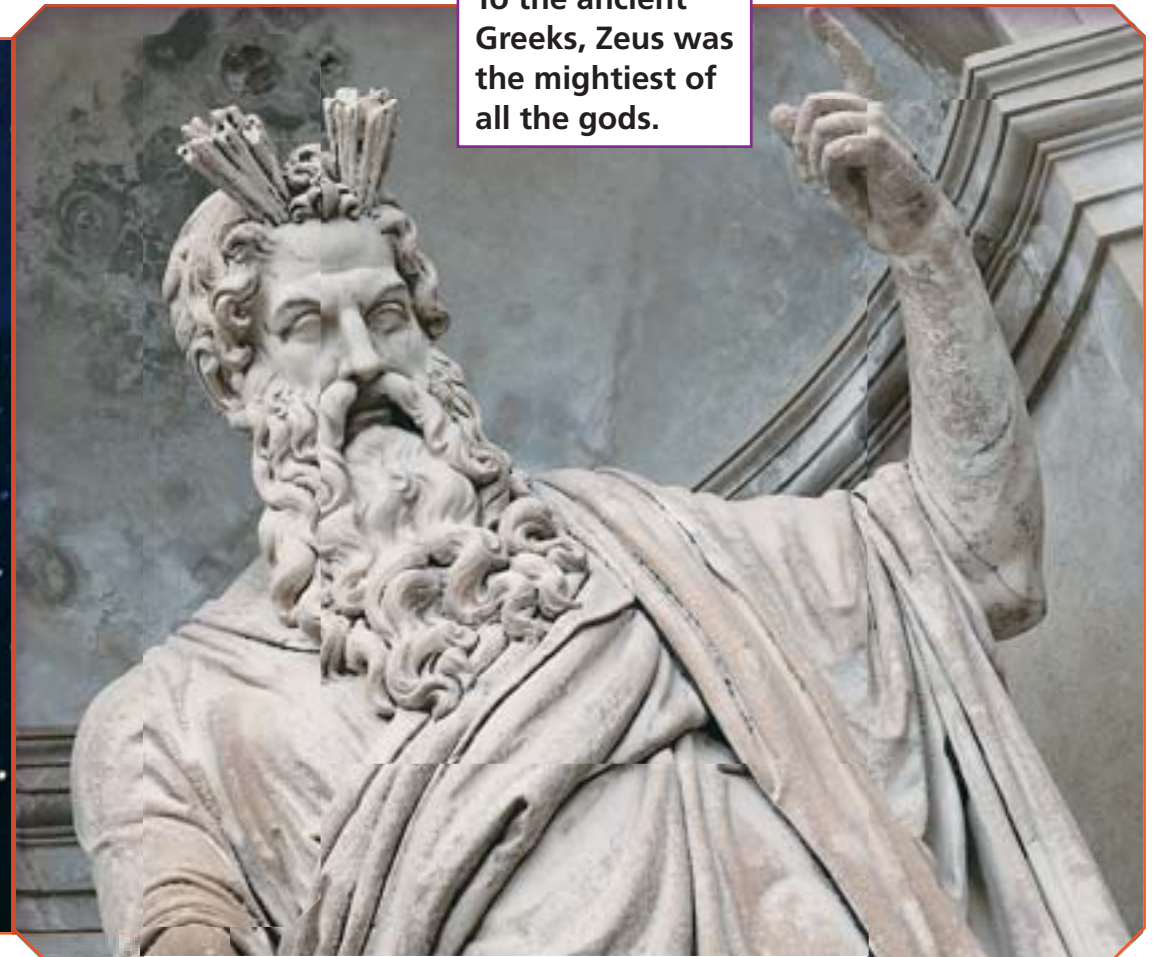
In the Beginning

The ancient Greeks believed that, at first, there was only Chaos, a place where land, sea, and air were all mixed up in a great empty space. Finally, heaven and Earth sprang from Chaos. Powerful gods called Titans ruled over this first world. Then Zeus, who was born to the Titans, rebelled and led his brothers and sisters in a war against the Titans. Zeus won.

Zeus, Hades, and Poseidon

Zeus then became the mightiest god of all. He ruled over the heavens and the other gods and goddesses. His brother Poseidon ruled over the seas. His other brother Hades ruled over the Underworld, which was dark and full of mystery. Ugly creatures **crouched** there.

To the ancient Greeks, Zeus was the mightiest of all the gods.





Gods and People

The Greeks believed that the gods and goddesses watched over them and made things happen to and for them—both good and bad. If there was thunder, it was an angry god banging his hammer in the sky. If a girl fell in love, one of Cupid's arrows had struck her heart. If a sailor was lost at sea, he must have made Poseidon angry.

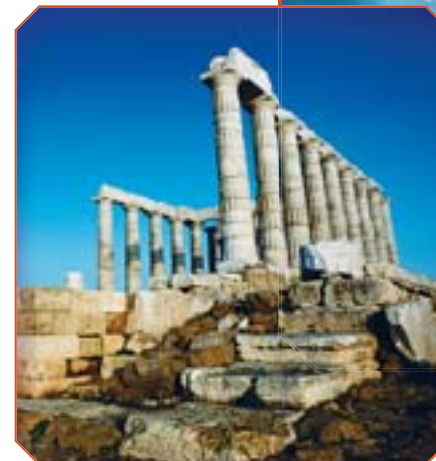
Other Gods and Goddesses

The Greeks gave their gods and goddesses magical powers. For example, the god Apollo carried the sun across the sky in his golden chariot each day. If a day was cloudy, that was because Apollo was off hunting! Athena, the goddess of wisdom and war, could change shape to help heroes. The Greeks named the city of Athens in her honor. Other gods and goddesses ruled over farms, mountains, forests, and animals.



The Laws of Poseidon

In one myth, Poseidon made laws for an island called Atlantis. As long as people obeyed the laws, they kept their freedom. Poseidon put the laws on a **pillar** in the temple, where everyone could see them. He warned them of a terrible curse if they broke his laws.

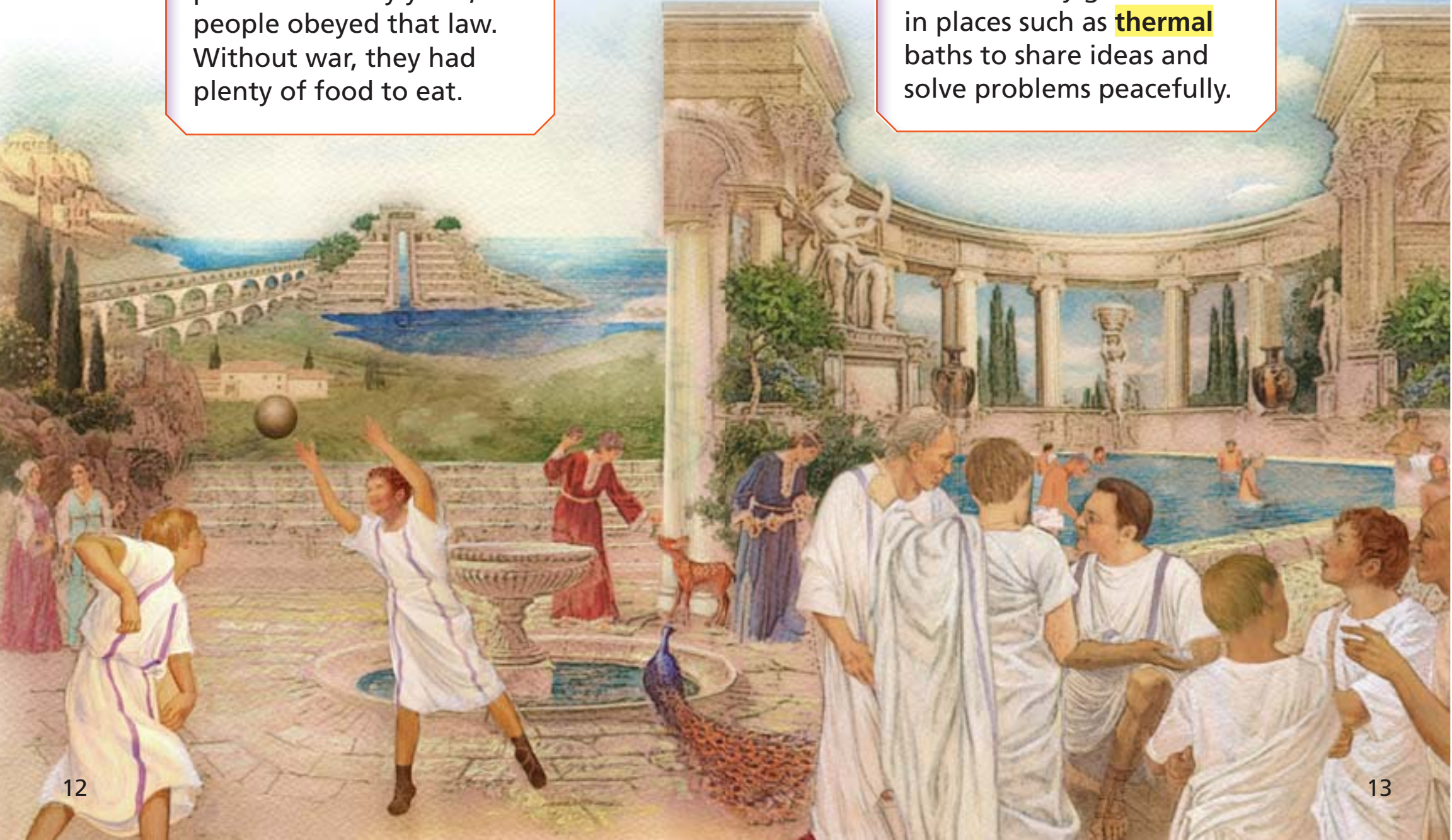


Greek Laws

People in ancient Greece loved their freedom. But they also understood human nature. They knew that people who are free sometimes take away the freedom of others. So they made laws to help everyone get along and deal fairly with one another. They made up myths to tell what might happen if people disobeyed those laws.

Poseidon's most important law said that everyone must live in peace. For many years, the people obeyed that law. Without war, they had plenty of food to eat.

They built roads to make traveling easier. They built **aqueducts** to bring water to cities. They gathered in places such as **thermal** baths to share ideas and solve problems peacefully.

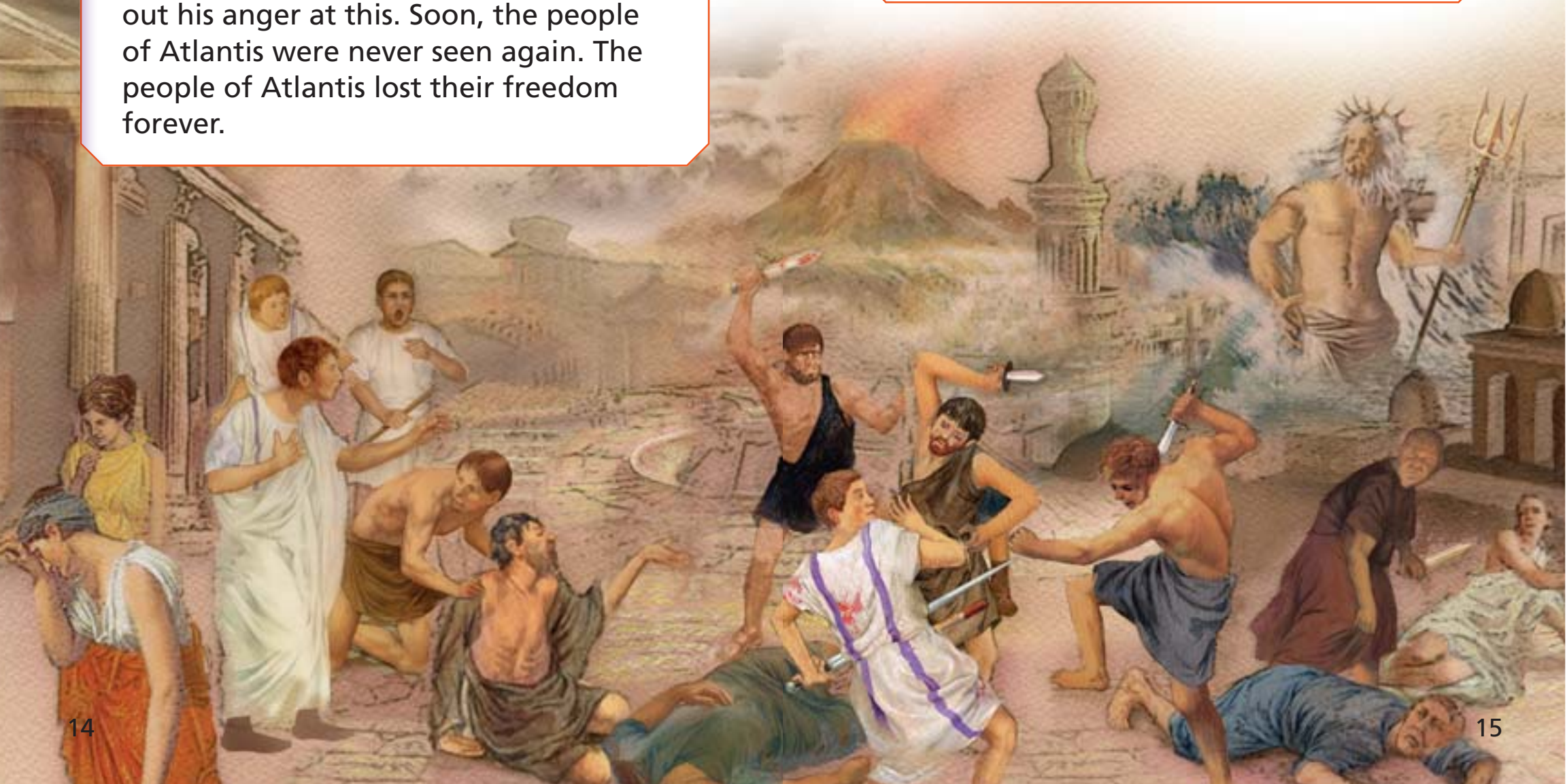


Human Nature Takes Over

Over time, some people were no longer **content** to obey Poseidon's laws. They became greedy and stole from their neighbors. Other people grew lazy. Zeus, the most powerful god of all, roared out his anger at this. Soon, the people of Atlantis were never seen again. The people of Atlantis lost their freedom forever.

2,500 Years Later

We still tell myths such as the story of Atlantis today. Why? These stories remind us of how to live our lives. They show what can happen when people disobey the law. Most of all, myths are exciting stories!



Glossary

aqueducts *n.* large stone structures that carry water long distances

content *adj.* happy with what one has

crouched *v.* to squat with arms close to the body

guidance *n.* help or advice

honor *n.* showing special respect

pillar *n.* column that stands alone or holds something up

thermal *adj.* having to do with heat

Reader Response

1. Based on this book, what general statements can you make about what the ancient Greeks believed? Copy the chart below and fill in the facts you know and what statement you can make.

fact	fact	fact
↓	↓	↓
generalization		

2. After reading the end of the book, what can you infer about what happened to the people of Atlantis?
3. Find the word *aqueducts* in the book. What is an aqueduct? Do we have anything similar today?
4. What do you think the people of Atlantis could have done differently?