

Navigating the Island of Aggression

Lesson 5: Ares and Athena

Key Concepts:

- Aggression can lead to impulsive actions with damaging consequences.
- Cultivating calm in a conflict helps to resolve issues by allowing those involved to problem-solve strategically.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students compare and contrast strategy and impulsivity as conflict resolution tools.
- Students evaluate the effectiveness of strategy versus impulsivity in a conflict.

Profile of a Graduate Standards:

- Upper Elementary, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving: (5) I identify a problem and propose a solution.
- Middle School, Creative Thinking and Problem Solving: (4) I consider advantages and disadvantages to my chosen method for solving a problem.

Materials:

- Laptop, Chromebook, or tablet
- Ship's Logs
- Slides and digital exit ticket, available at [.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials](https://www.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials)
- Projector or other way to display a digital slideshow

Vocabulary:

- Reason
- Strategy
- Impulse

Lesson Procedure:

1. **Show slide 1.** Title slide
2. **Show slide 2.** Hitting wall
3. "In some of the last classes we talked about how aggression can make you do and say things impulsively."
4. **Show slide 3.** Broken knuckles
5. "In other words, rage can make you do or say things without thinking or considering the consequences. The Greeks had a god who represented unchecked and uncontrolled aggression."
6. **Show slide 4.** Ares
7. "His name was Ares and he was a fearsome god. He represented uncontrolled rage and violence. Although Ares was considered by humans to be very powerful, he was not very well liked by them or by the other gods. In fact, in an ancient story called the *Iliad*, Zeus, Ares' father and king of the gods, even said to him: 'No more, you lying, two-faced...I hate you most of all the Olympian gods...'"

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Lesson Procedure:

8. “Ares was a liar. He misled people into believing that an impulsive action was a good idea, but the action would end up causing negative consequences for them. Also, Ares was weak and not often victorious. His sister Athena, a goddess of war and wisdom, was much stronger and more successful in battle, and even defeated him in a fight in the *Iliad*. Hercules beat him too. Why was Ares, who was impulsive in his rage, less successful than Athena, who was more strategic and well trained?”
9. **Show slide 5.** Ares and fire
10. “Ares represented anger unleashed in rage. He was impulsive, and drove people to make bad decisions in their anger. He represented rage that distorts reason or careful thought.”
11. **Show slide 6.** Athena and Ares
12. “Athena, on the other hand, represented strategy, wisdom, learning, strength, and calm in the midst of conflict. She was widely worshipped, and many temples throughout Greece were built to honor her. She was so important that Athens, which became the most well-known ancient Greek city-state, was named after her, and she was a favorite goddess of the warrior-society Sparta. Even though she was a goddess of war, she did not use aggression thoughtlessly, instead she represented thinking about the consequences of actions, and making strategic plans.”
13. **Show slide 6.**
12. “We are going to watch a clip from a movie called *Seven Samurai*, by the Japanese film maker Akira Kurosawa. In it we will see two men who are Samurai, trained in martial arts, fighting with swords. One is poorly trained. He is aggressive and therefore impulsive. The other is very well trained, and therefore confident and calm. He only uses violence as a last resort. We could think of one of the Samurai as being like Ares and the other as being like Athena.
13. **Show slide 7.** Play video. Show the video twice.
14. **Questions** for students (pause for answers)
“Which fighter do you think represents Ares? Which represents Athena? What about each fighter makes you think of Ares or Athena? Which one would you want on your side in a swordfight? Why? Why can being well trained help you become calmer? How can being aggressive and impulsive and not thinking things through cause problems in your life, or make your problems worse?”

Digital exit ticket:

1. List of 3 words that describe Ares.
2. List of 3 words that describe Athena.
3. Why was Athena more popular than Ares?

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Activity 5: The Optical Illusion of Rage

Key concepts:

Rage is a powerful feeling that can overwhelm us. In a moment of rage, we can act out aggressively in ways that later, when we are calm, we regret.

Learning Outcomes:

Students compare optical illusions to the way anger can distort reason in a conflict.

Portrait of Graduate Profile/Standard:

- Upper Elementary, Social and Cross Cultural Empathy: (4.1) I identify how perspectives affect the way different people react to a situation, event or issue.
- Middle School, Critical Problem Solving: (4) I consider advantages and disadvantages to my chosen method for solving a problem (4.1) I understand that there may be alternative answers, approaches and strategies.

Materials:

- Laptop, Chromebook, or tablet
- Slides and digital exit ticket, available at [.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials](https://www.peaceliteracy.org/navigation-curricular-materials)
- Projector or other way to display a digital slideshow

Vocabulary:

- Optical illusion
- Distort
- Deception
- Persuasive

Activity:

1. **Show slide 1.** Title slide
2. “We have been talking about how aggression and rage can distort the way we see things. In other words, they can twist our way of seeing so that aggression appears to be a good response, whether towards others, towards ourselves, or towards objects. Remember, Ares is a liar, and can mislead us with deception! Unfortunately, later on, we may regret acting out aggressively. We may have hurt someone, damaged a relationship, hurt ourselves, or destroyed something valuable to us. Aggression and rage can be very persuasive! This is one of the reasons Ares is such a powerful adversary, and why he was so greatly feared.”

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Activity 5: The Optical Illusion of Rage

Activity, continued:

3. **Show slide 2.** Distorted image
4. “In this lesson we are going to look at some optical illusions. Optical illusions are things that deceive our eyes by appearing to be something other than they really are.”
5. **Show slide 3.** Definition of optical illusion
6. “Let’s watch a brief video. Notice how the image shown plays tricks with your eyes and confuses your perceptions.”
7. **Show slide 4. Play video.** After, close the ppt. slideshow.
8. “In your Ship’s Log, write a scenario in which anger or rage is distorting someone’s perceptions. You can draw a small cartoon, or a drawing with speech bubbles, or you can write a paragraph. (You can also role play this for your class, and discuss the scenario together afterwards.)”
7. **Regroup** to share some scenarios.