

Some Major Characters in the *Iliad*

(Also see the glossary in the back of your book.)

Gods

Zeus: the Father, son of Cronus; king of the gods, god of sky and thunder

Muses: goddesses who inspire music and poetry

– *major gods supporting Greeks* –

Hera: queen of the gods, goddess of marriage

Pallas Athena: goddess of wisdom, war, women, weaving

Hephaestus: god of metalworking and fire

Poseidon: god of the sea and earthquakes

Hermes: messenger of the gods, guide to the underworld, god of borders, travel, trade

– *minor gods supporting Greeks* –

Thetis: sea goddess, mother of Achilles

Iris: goddess of the rainbow; Hera's messenger but also sometimes sent by Zeus

– *major gods supporting Trojans* –

Phoebus Apollo: the Archer; god of sun, light, healing, disease, music, poetry, prophecy

Ares: god of war

Artemis: goddess of moon, hunting, virginity (Apollo's sister)

– *minor gods supporting Trojans* –

River Xanthus/Scamander: primary river in the area of Troy

Greeks (Achaeans, Argives, Danaans)

Achilles: greatest Greek warrior; son of goddess Thetis; son of Greek king Peleus (Pelides)

Agamemnon: son of Atreus (Atrides); brother of Menelaus; Greek king with the largest army and therefore supreme commander of all the Greek troops

Menelaus: son of Atreus (Atrides); brother of Agamemnon; Greek king; husband of Helen, who was abducted by Paris

Briseis: young woman captured in war and given to Achilles (not Greek herself)

Nestor: wise older king

Odysseus: king famous for cleverness, tactics, and use of words (later, the hero of Homer's *Odyssey*)

Patroclus: friend and fellow-warrior of Achilles

– *important beginning Bks 4-6* –

Diomedes: son of Tydeus (Tydides); a great Greek warrior

– *important beginning Bks 7-9* –

Great Ajax: giant Ajax or Telamonian Ajax, a great Greek warrior (distinguished from the shorter Little Ajax or Oilean Ajax)

Phoenix: old man who raised Achilles

Trojans (Dardans, Dardanians, Teucrians)

Priam: king of Troy

Hector: greatest Trojan warrior and supreme commander of the Trojans, son of Priam

Paris: abductor of Helen, son of Priam

Helen: wife of Menelaus (not Trojan herself), mortal daughter of Zeus

– *important beginning Bks 4-6* –

Pandarus: an archer

Aeneas: commander of the Dardanians, son of Aphrodite, future ruler of the Trojans¹ (later, the hero of Vergil's *Aeneid*)

Hecuba: queen of Troy, wife of Priam, mother of Hector and Paris

Andromache: wife of Hector

– *important beginning Bks 10-12* –

Sarpedon: son of Zeus; a great Trojan warrior

¹ *Iliad* 20.355-356 in Fagles's translation; *Iliad* 20.307-308 in the original Greek.