

Statue of Zeus at Olympia

SEVEN WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Most statues honor a particular person we admire or want to remember. The Statue of Zeus at Olympia was a little different. It was built to show respect to the god of sky and thunder, at least according to the Ancient Greeks. Up on Mount Olympus, the supposed home of the gods, Zeus was the boss. He was the father of most of the gods and he could throw lightning bolts out of his hands. It was little wonder that the Ancient Greeks thought he deserved a truly impressive statue.

Around 432 BC, Greek sculptor Phidias stepped up to the challenge. He created a towering Zeus out ivory and gold-plated bronze that sat upon a throne of cedar wood. The entire statue was over 39 feet tall! Strabo, a visitor to the Temple of Zeus where the statue was displayed, observed that if Zeus were to stand up out of his throne, his head would break through the roof.



Sadly, this great statue was destroyed sometime during the 5th century AD. Hundreds of years later, we can only imagine what this magnificent wonder must have looked like.

CREATE YOUR OWN STATUE!

Imagine you're Phidias. You're a skilled sculptor and you just received a big delivery of ivory, gold, bronze and cedar wood. What will you create? Your statue can be of anything from your favorite athlete to your favorite dessert.

DIRECTIONS:

Draw a picture of your statue.

Write an inscription—the words that will be displayed on the statue.

Make sure your inscription includes what you think is special about your statue.

