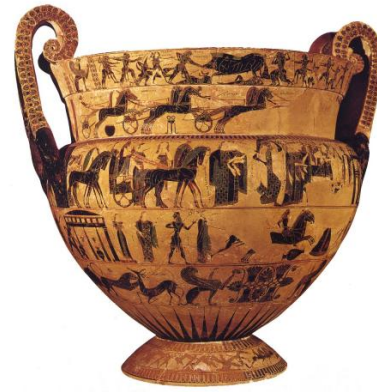




0. ACHILLES - Story Preface

1. ACHILLES

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The François vase, named after Alessandro François (the person who found it in the Etruscan town of Chiusi in 1848), depicts many scenes from the life of Achilles. The main scene is the marriage between Achilles' parents, Peleus and Thetis. We know the name of the potter (Ergotimos) and the painter (Kleitias) because they identified themselves on the black-figure Volute Krater when they made it (around 570 BC). At 66 centimeters, it is 2.16 feet high. Today the great treasure, which illustrates many of Homer's stories in the *Iliad*, is maintained at the Archaeological Museum in Florence, Italy. Image online via Wikimedia Commons.

Achilles, according to Greek mythology, was half-immortal (from his mother Thetis, an immortal sea-nymph) and half-mortal (from his mortal father Peleus, the King of Phthia, in Thessaly).

To make her child completely immortal, Thetis tried various things - like totally immersing her son into the water of the Styx, river of the Underworld. If the water totally covered her baby, Thetis believed he would live forever.

There was a slight problem, however. Thetis could not *completely* bathe her son in the water. To do so, she would have had to let go of him.

In the end, Achilles was protected by the river everywhere on his body *except* for the heel where his mother held him. Because of that vulnerable heel, which would prove to be her son's undoing, Thetis failed in her efforts to insure her son would never die.

When Thetis could not make Achilles fully immortal, she was afraid for him and left the boy with Peleus, her husband. Achilles' father then brought his young son to study with Chiron, the mythological father of Greek medicine.

Chiron, an immortal Centaur (that is, half-man, half-horse), could teach the young lad much about life. But even he could not protect the child from his potentially fatal Achilles' Heel.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/ACHILLES-Troy>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/ACHILLES-Troy>

Media Stream



Thessaly - Location in Ancient Greece

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Thessaly-Location-in-Ancient-Greece>



Greek Mythology - Underworld Map, River Styx

Greek Mythology, Map of the Underworld - online, courtesy Carlos Parada.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Greek-Mythology-Underworld-Map-River-Styx>



Thetis Dips Achilles in the River Styx

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Thetis-Dips-Achilles-in-the-River-Styx>



Peleus and Achilles - To Chiron

Image online, courtesy Louvre Museum via Tufts University.

PD

View this asset at:

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Achilles - With His Father, Peleus

Image online, courtesy Louvre Museum via Tufts University.

PD

View this asset at:

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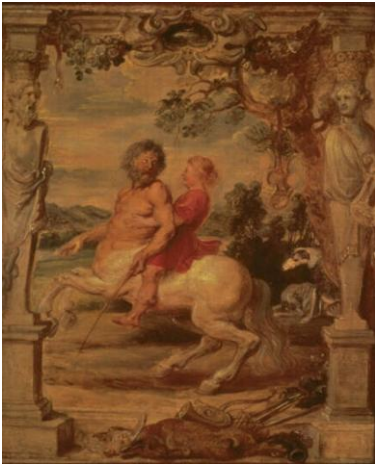


Education of Achilles - James Barry

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Education-of-Achilles-James-Barry>



Chiron, the Half-Man Centaur - By Rubens

Image online, courtesy the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen website.

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ACHILLES

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