

A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY

Picture Study



PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF
PUBLICOLA

A CHARLOTTE MASON PLENARY PRESENTS

PLENARY PICTURE STUDY FOR
PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF
PUBLICOLA

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HOW TO USE THIS PLENARY PICTURE STUDY

Picture Study is an integral part of a Charlotte Mason education. Sharing the beauty of art with students is something we feel strongly about at The Plenary. We have opted to integrate Picture Study with the subject of Plutarch. We believe the added artwork helps students to connect and visualize events within the text. The fascinating world of ancient Greece and Rome comes alive through great works of art. Many artists throughout history have painted famous scenes from Plutarch's *Lives* time and again.

Here's how to incorporate Picture Study with any study guide from The Plenary Plutarch Series. Each Plutarch Guide has 12 lessons. Notice which of these lessons match up with a lesson in the accompanying Picture Study. For example, the Publicola Picture Study has Info Sheets for Lessons 1, 2, 4, 8, and 9 because those lessons correlates to Lessons 1, 2, 4, 8, and 9 in the Publicola Guide.

Read a lesson in the Plutarch Guide, have the student narrate, then introduce the additional material in the accompanying Picture Study lesson.

Give the student a print to study and tell them some background information about the painting. Share any information to help bring attention to important aspects of the artwork or the story. Note that The Plenary provides background information and a range of discussion questions for each painting. Some paintings will have more information than others, depending on the artist's intent and the amount of information readily available. The types of questions provided range from simple questions for younger students to more complex questions for older students. Feel free to choose background information and discussion questions that resonate with you and your individual students.

The goal is to allow the student to make connections between the print and the text they have just read. Discuss how the artwork and the text are related. Does the artist do a good job of telling the story? What was the artist's intent when he created the artwork? Try not to give your own opinions on whether you like the artist or the paintings. Let the students decide if they like the work for themselves. You want the students making their own connections.

In various *Parents' Review* articles regarding Picture Study, the PNEU teachers listed goals for the lessons. Some of those goals included "the idea that every artist shows us his or her conception of a subject through a painting"; that "the idea of a story is worked out in the composition of the picture"; and that "every artist has an idea which he or she wishes to be interpreted." What idea is the artist trying to convey? And how does he want us to interpret that idea? These are grand ideas that should easily facilitate grand discussion.

In some cases, we have provided more than one painting for a specific lesson. Many artists throughout history chose to illustrate the stories of ancient Greece and Rome. In this case, we are asking the student to compare and contrast the artwork pieces with each other and with the text. Which artist illustrated the story better? How do different artists highlight different aspects of the story? What are the ideas represented? And how are they represented differently by each artist?

After the lesson is completed, display the paintings until a new piece is introduced. Let the students become familiar with the work by displaying it in a common area where it can be seen daily. If space permits, display all the included paintings for the length of the term. The displayed artwork will be a visual representation of the story told within Plutarch's text.

Additional information can also be found on the PLUTARCH RESOURCES page of our website at CMPLINARY.COM. You will also find a more in-depth look at how to implement Picture Study in The Plenary article "Picture Study Throughout the Forms."

We hope you enjoy Picture Study and Plutarch with The Plenary!

Rachel Lebowitz & Ruk Martin

PLUTARCH'S LIFE OF PUBLICOLA

LESSON #4: TREASON BRUTUS AND HIS SONS

THE LICTORS RETURNING TO BRUTUS THE BODIES OF HIS SONS BY JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID

c. 1789

OIL ON CANVAS, 323 X 422 CM, 10 FT. 7 IN. X 13 FT. 10 IN.

LOUVRE MUSEUM, PARIS, FRANCE

PAINTING INFORMATION

This scene was painted by Jacques-Louis David in 1789 at the beginning of the French Revolution. When the painting was first displayed in the Paris Salon in 1789, it was immensely popular with the crowds who came to see it. The full title of the painting is:

Brutus, First Consul, Returned To His House After Having Condemned His Two Sons Who Had Allied Themselves With The Tarquins And Conspired Against Roman Liberty; The Lictors Return Their Bodies So That They May Be Entombed

In David's painting, Brutus is sitting in the chair in the foreground on the left. Behind him, the lictors carry in the two bodies of his sons, Titus and Tiberius. The dark statue placed between Brutus and his sons is a statue depicting the Republic of Rome. Brutus' wife and daughters are on the right hand side of the painting.

David also sketched this scene before he painted it. You can view the sketch through a link found on our PUBLICOLA RESOURCES page at CMPLINARY.COM.

PLENARY QUESTIONS

1. Describe Brutus' reaction to the scene in the painting. How do you think he feels?
2. Compare Brutus' reaction to the reaction of the women.
3. How does the artist use light to draw attention to certain parts of the scene?
4. Why do you think the artist uses light to draw attention to the women and not to Brutus?
5. Why do you think the artist painted a statue of the Roman Republic into the painting?
6. Why do you think he placed the statue between Brutus and the bodies of his sons?
7. What sort of political message do you think this painting may have had when it was first unveiled during the French Revolution? What kind of statement do you think David was making, if any?
8. View the sketch of the painting. How does it differ from the final painting? Why do you think David made the changes and how do the changes impact the message of the painting?

SPACE FOR YOUR OWN DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND NOTES:



THE LICTORS RETURNING TO BRUTUS THE BODIES OF HIS SONS

JACQUES-LOUIS DAVID