Inanna and Persephone – Two Goddesses in the Underworld

Subjects: English · History · Religious Studies | recommended from age 13 (B1) | Video: 8:51 min



Watch the video
youtu.be/zyewg0ehLgY

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

A · Before watching

1. How do you explain today why there is summer and winter? One sentence is enough.

B · While watching

1. Why did Inanna go down into the underworld – and what did she ask Ninshubur to do?

2. What happened at the seven gates of the underworld?

3. How was Inanna brought back to life?

4. Why did Persephone have to return to the underworld every year?

5. Whom did Inanna send to the underworld in her place – and why?

Useful words

underworld	Unterwelt	seed	Kern
gate	Tor	harvest	Ernte
to kidnap	entführen	to revive	wiederbeleben
pomegranate	Granatapfel	season	Jahreszeit

C · Put the story in order

Number the events from 1 to 8 in the order they happen in the video.

	The judges of the underworld kill Inanna with the eye of death.
	Inanna has demons take her husband Dumuzi.
	Inanna puts on her seven symbols of power.
	Hermes fetches Persephone, but Hades hands her a pomegranate.
	Hades kidnaps Persephone into the underworld.
	Persephone must spend six months a year in the underworld.
	At every gate Inanna must give up part of her power.
	Enki sends two beings who bring Inanna back to life.

D · Think and discuss

1. Inanna acts on her own, while things happen to Persephone. What does that say about the two goddesses?

2. The Sumerian version is about 1,500 years older than the Greek one. Why is that remarkable?

E · Inanna and Persephone compared

Complete the table with information from the video.

	Inanna (Mesopotamia)	Persephone (Greece)
How does she get to the underworld?		
Who helps her?		
What keeps her in the underworld?		
What does the myth explain?		

F · Get creative

1. In your exercise book, write Demeter's complaint to the gods after her daughter has disappeared (8–10 sentences).