Kids don’t get enough art these days. Not in their schools. Not in their communities. They don’t get enough access to theater, jazz or poetry. So it’s no wonder the only Homer some kids know can’t compose his own name, much less create epic poetry.

Homer was a philosopher. He was a storyteller. And he’s the guy credited with writing the single most important texts in Greek history. Just a thought: Maybe your kid should know him.

The Bold, the Beautiful

And the Homeric. Greek gods. Achilles holes. Trojan horses. All come brought to us by one very ancient dude — the blind poet and nomadic artist Homer. Turns out the fanciest gossip didn’t originate in beauty shops. The Greeks thrived on oral storytelling and were likely some of the first gossip queens — with Homer serving as their prolific leader. The Greeks were just as obsessed with sensational reality as we are. Although nowadays our melodramatic faves come from a steady stream of soap operas and reality TV and the comfort of our very own couches. Woo-hoo!

Mmmm, Ancient Poetry.

The Iliad and Odyssey — the luring poems that bring ancient Greece to life for us modern-day folk. In them Homer describes the lust, bravery and violence that plagued a civilization in over 25,000 lines of Greek lore. But these Homeric works don’t just weave a tale of Greek and Trojan warfare. They are considered by the Greeks to be the highest cultural achievements of their people — the single defining moment in their society. The Iliad and Odyssey are Greek character in stone. See, America’s youth has more to learn from Homer than how to properly don a toga, after all.

When in Greece.

If the Greeks could pass down Homer’s poetry from the 8th century B.C., surely we can pass it on to our kids today.

Make sure your kids get their daily dose of art. Take them to a classic movie, a museum or the opera. It will do more than entertain their sponge-like little brains now it will up their capacity to learn later. For Ten Simple Ways to get more art in kids’ lives, visit us at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.