

# The Medieval City of Rhodes

## Worksheet

### Guidelines for educators

- **Context and the area of cultural heritage:** Tangible Cultural Heritage in Greece
- **Description and justification:** The Medieval City of Rhodes is located in Rhodes, the Dodecanese's largest island. It has a distinct architectural style that has been carefully preserved to this day. Rhodes' Medieval Quarter is Europe's oldest medieval town, and it was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1988. This beautiful setting has an interesting history that will pique students' curiosity in learning more. Students will be fascinated by Rhode's rich history. Its Medieval structures, mosques, traditional fountains, oriental themes, Byzantine and Gothic cathedrals will encourage them to learn more about Greek culture's beginnings. Many landmarks may be found throughout the city. Some date back to antiquity, although the majority are from the Knights' Period. The Archaeological Museum, for example, is situated in the Gothic structure of the Great Hospital of the Knights and houses treasures of art from Rhodes, as well as discoveries from ancient Lalyos and Kamiros and mosaic paintings from Rhodes. Students will be enthralled by this intriguing city even if they only watch a video or a documentary. They will be motivated to learn more about the island, the country, and its unique language.
- **Duration:** 45 minutes
- **Language level:** B2
- **Age group:** 12-18

- **Prior knowledge:** Students must have an intermediate language proficiency, being able to express personal opinions about subjective topics by using simple terminologies.
- **Thematic area, grammatical and syntactical phenomena (learning objectives):**

In this worksheet students will:

- Learn vocabulary on Middle Age art and architecture
- Learn adjectives and nouns to describe landscapes and historical narratives
- Practice using present simple, continuous and perfect tenses both in reading, writing, listening and speaking comprehension
- Practice using past simple, continuous and perfect tenses both in reading, writing, listening and speaking comprehension
- Practice using future simple and continuous tenses both in reading, writing, listening and speaking comprehension
- Practice passive voice both in reading, writing, listening and speaking comprehension

- **Skills developed (or benefits for students):**

At the end of this worksheet, students will:

- Learn about historical events occurred in the Medieval City of Rhodes
- Learn the geographical location and importance of Rhodes
- Enrich their vocabulary about Medieval Ages, Castles and Byzantine Culture, and more
- Practice their written skills by answering specific questions
- Practice their listening skills
- Practice their reading comprehension skills
- Practice their speaking skills by using their imagination
- Explore the tangible beauty of the Medieval City of Rhodes

**Material needed:** Pencils, Projector to present video and speaker for audio, and copies of the exercises

○ **References and resources:**

- UNESCO (n.d.). Medieval City of Rhodes. Retrieved from <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/493/>
- Kefala, K. (n.d.). Medieval Town of Rhodes. Odysseus Culture, Ministry of Culture and Sports. Retrieved from [http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/3/eh351.jsp?obj\\_id=7029](http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/3/eh351.jsp?obj_id=7029)
- Kastrologos (n.d.). Medieval Town of Rhodes. Retrieved from <https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=rodoscity>
- Kastrologos (n.d.). Palace of the Grand Master. Retrieved from <https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=rhodes>
- Toursim Rhodes (2015). *Medieval city of Rhodes* [Video]. YouTube. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_9B\\_xe3wrA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_9B_xe3wrA)
- Travel and Discover (2019). Rhodes Medieval Town Documentary Greece [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1XJ8Px0DLY&t=92s>

# Worksheet for the student

## EXERCISE 1:

(Duration: 20 minutes)

**Task 1:** Get introduced to the Medieval City of Rhodes by watching this short video

(Duration: 2 minutes): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_9B\\_xe3wrA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_9B_xe3wrA)

**Task 2:** Use the words from the box to complete the text<sup>1</sup> (Duration: 13 minutes).

administrative	sacred	mosques
synagogues	Medieval	masterpiece
siege	ammunition	Grand Master
damaged	internal	laity
influenced	Medieval	features
captivating	occupation	artefacts

### The medieval town of Rhodes

In ..... times, around the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the town of Rhodes was divided by an ..... wall in two sectors. The northern quarter was hosting superior residents like the Knights and the ....., and also the hospital, the cathedral, or other ..... buildings that had a significant role for managing the City itself. In the southern quarter, you could find the houses of the ....., street markets, and ..... where locals were praying.

The buildings of the Knights are built in Gothic architectural styles, ..... by Byzantine architectural ..... and later Ottoman influences. The overall effect is truly ....., that is why many tourists still visit the place nowadays.

<sup>1</sup> Source of text: <https://www.visitgreece.gr/experiences/culture/archaeological-sites-and-monuments/the-medieval-town-of-rhodes/> [slight changes have been applied to adapt the text to the needs of learners]

The many great churches in the medieval city are very interesting. Some of them were later used as ..... after the ..... of the Ottomans. The churches of Agia Triada (the Holy Trinity), Agios Athanasios (St. Athanasius), Agia Aikaterini, (St. Catherine), the church of Panagia tou Kastrou (the Virgin of the Castle) and Agia Paraskevi are all excellent examples of ..... architecture.

The palace of the Grand Master of the Order is one of the greatest monuments erected in the ..... Ages. During the Ottoman period it was seriously ..... by an ..... explosion. It was rebuilt during the time when Rhodes was under Italian ..... in 1912.

The Knights' Hospital, a unique gothic ....., truly outstanding, that now houses the Archaeological Museum, with many ....., like tombstones, paintings, statuary, jewellery, books and mosaics from the long history of the island.

**Task 3: Read the article below and answer the question by using your own words (Duration: 15 minutes).**

From 1309 to 1523 Rhodes, the largest island of the Dodecanese, was occupied by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem who had lost their last fortress in Palestine, in Acre, in 1291. They transformed the island capital into a fortified city able to withstand sieges as terrible as those led by the Sultan of Egypt in 1444 and Mehmet II in 1480. Rhodes finally fell in 1522 after a six-month siege carried out by Suleyman II.<sup>2</sup>

In 1440 the Mameluke sultan of Egypt tried without success to conquer the town, besieging it for 40 days. In 1480 Rhodes was besieged by the troops of Mehmed II but the powerful army of the conqueror of Constantinople manned with 100,000 troops and 170 ships was repelled thanks to the courage of the Knights and the strong fortifications, notwithstanding the outnumbering assailants. The Ottoman returned in 1522. The army of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent besieged the city with 400 ships and 100,000-200,000 men for six months. The city was defended by 7,000 armed men. In December 1522, the Grand Master Philippe Villiers de l'Isle Adam realized that the Christians could not hold much longer and decided to surrender.

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<sup>2</sup> Source of text: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/493/>

Due to its geographical position as a gate to the Aegean Sea, Rhodes has always had a vantage position on the trade routes between the West and the East and has been an important stop thanks to its well protected ports.<sup>3</sup>

**Question**

Why did many try to siege and occupy the Medieval City of Rhodes at that time? (30 words)

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<sup>3</sup> Source of text: <https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=rodosity>

## EXERCISE 2:

(Duration: 25 minutes)

**Task 1:** Listen to the 1-minute audio and fill in the missing verbs. You will listen to the audio three times. [Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q1XJ8Px0DLY&t=92s> from 0:00 until 01:17. Set playback speed: 0.75 if needed]. (Duration: 5 minutes)

The island of Rhodes is ..... at the crossroads of two major sea routes in the Mediterranean Sea. From the Aegean Sea to the coast of the Middle East and from Cyprus to Egypt, the town of Rhodes, one of the most beautiful and ..... of Europe's medieval cities, began to take shape in the last quarter of the seventh century upon the remains of a splendid Hellenistic city. Throughout its long history, different people who ..... on Rhodes left their mark on every aspect of the islands' culture. The old town is ..... by strong medieval walls, a typical example of the techniques of fortification of the 14th and 15th centuries. The fortifications of Rhodes, a Frankish town, long ..... to be impregnable, exerted and ..... throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin at the end of the Middle Ages. This medieval era city presents a significant departure from its counterparts on the European mainland built on an island just off the coast of Turkey, on the side of an ancient Greek city. Its port was once ..... by a statue of the Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

**Task 2: Read the below article<sup>4</sup> and highlight the spelling errors.** Also, try to write the correct word above the wrong (Duration: 10 minutes).

## The Palace of the Grand Master

The Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes is a palace in the town of Rhodes, on the island of Rhodes in Greece. The site was previously a Byzantine castle that functioned as a headquarters and fortress. It is the most important monument from the period of the loannite knights.

The palace was built in the 14th century by the Knights of Rhodes, who occupied Rhodes from 1309 to 1522. It was built on a location where previously a Byzantine fort from the 7th century existed. After the island was captured by the Ottoman Empire, the palace was used as a fortress.

The original palace was largely destroyed by an ammunition explosion in 1856. When the Kingdom of Italy occupied Rhodes in 1912, the Italians rebuilddd the palace in a pseudo-medieval style as a holiday residence for Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, and later for Benito Mussolini, whose name can still be seen on a large plaque near the entrance.

On 10 February 1947, the Treaty of Peace with Italy, one of the Paris Peace Treaties, determined that the recently established Italian Republic would transfer the Dodecanese to the Kingdom of Greece. In 1948, Rhodes and the rest of the Dodecanese were transferred as previously agreed. The Greeks converted the palace to a museum.

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<sup>4</sup> Source of text: <https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=rhodes>



**Task 3:** Group Activity. Look at the pictures of the Medieval City of Rhodes and answer the below question orally (Duration: 15 minutes).

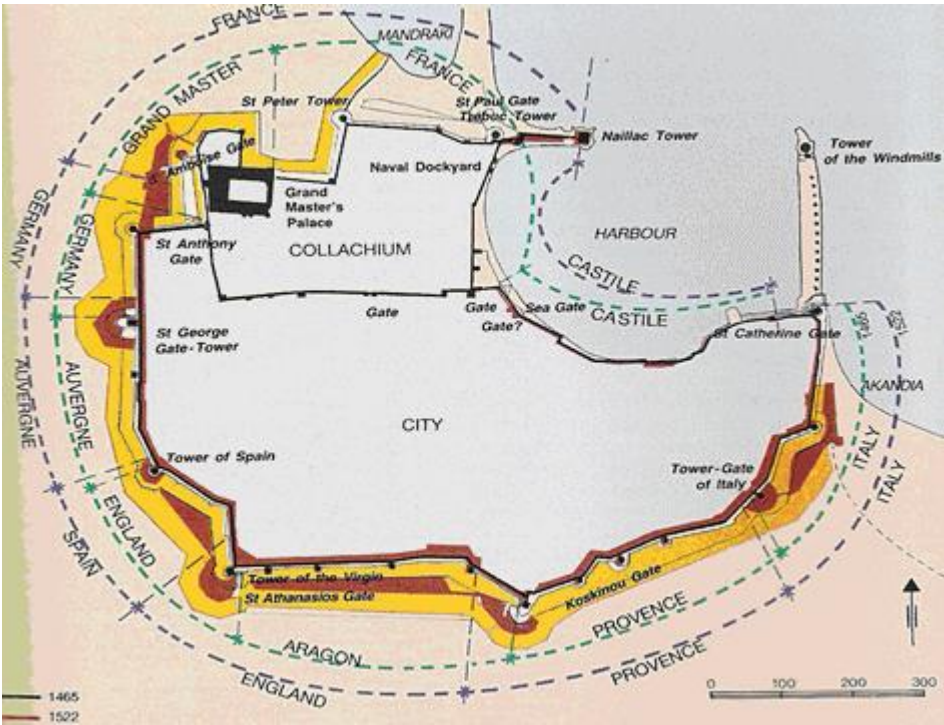


Image source: <https://www.kastra.eu/castleen.php?kastro=rodoscity>

## Question

Imagine you were the Grand Master of the City, what would you have done to make it impregnable to attacks? Discuss it with your group and use your imagination. You are also free to draw a simple map of your City in the box below.



## ANSWER KEY

### Exercise 1

#### Task 2:

#### The medieval town of Rhodes

In **medieval** times, around 14<sup>th</sup> century, the town of Rhodes was divided by an **internal** wall in two sectors. The northern quarter was hosting superior residents like the Knights and the **Grand Master**, and also the hospital, the cathedral, or other **administrative** buildings that had a significant role for managing the City itself. In the southern quarter, you could find the houses of the **laity**, street markets, and **synagogues** where locals were praying.

The buildings of the Knights are built in Gothic architectural styles, **influenced** by Byzantine architectural **features** and later Ottoman influences. The overall effect is truly **captivating**, that is why many tourists still visit the place nowadays.

The many great churches in the medieval city are very interesting. Some of them were later used as **mosques**, after the **siege** of the Ottomans. The churches of Agia Triada (the Holy Trinity), Agios Athanasios (St. Athanasius), Agia Aikaterini, (St. Catherine), the church of Panagia tou Kastrou (the Virgin of the Castle) and Agia Paraskevi are all excellent examples of **sacred** architecture.

The palace of the Grand Master of the Order is one of the greatest monuments erected in the **Medieval** Ages. During the Ottoman period it was seriously **damaged** by an **ammunition** explosion. It was rebuilt during the time when Rhodes was under Italian **occupation**, in 1912.

The Knights' Hospital, a unique gothic **masterpiece**, truly outstanding, that now houses the Archaeological Museum, with many **artefacts**, like tombstones, paintings, statuary, jewellery, books and mosaics from the long history of the island.

### Task 3:

That was due to its geographical location. It is a bridge between the east and west and had significant economic location.

Make sure students write it in their own style.

## Exercise 2

### Task 1:

The island of Rhodes is **situated** at the crossroads of two major sea routes in the Mediterranean Sea. From the Aegean Sea to the coast of the Middle East and from Cyprus to Egypt, the town of Rhodes one of the most beautiful and **best-preserved** of Europe's medieval cities began to take shape in the last quarter of the seventh century upon the remains of a splendid Hellenistic city. Throughout its long history, different people who **settled** on Rhodes left their mark on every aspect of the islands' culture. The old town is **encircled** by strong medieval walls, a typical example of the techniques of fortification of the 14th and 15th centuries. The fortifications of Rhodes, a Frankish town, long **considered** to be impregnable, exerted and **influenced** throughout the eastern Mediterranean basin at the end of the Middle Ages. This medieval era city presents a significant departure from its counterparts on the European mainland built on an island just off the coast of Turkey, on the side of an ancient Greek city. Its port was once **dominated** by a statue of the Colossus, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

### Task 2:

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