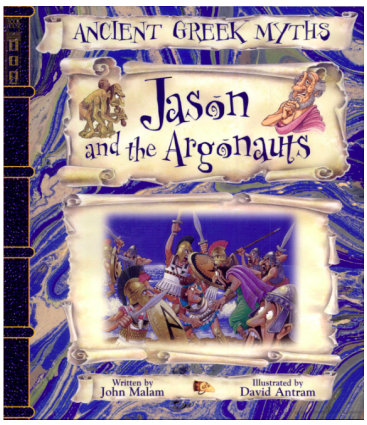
Viktoryia Bartsevich, "Entry on: Jason and the Argonauts by David Antram, John Malam, David Salariya", peer-reviewed by Elżbieta Olechowska and Elizabeth Hale. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/318. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

David Antram , John Malam , David Salariya

Jason and the Argonauts

United Kingdom (2004)

TAGS: Aeëtes Aeson Alcimede Argo Argonauts Argos / Argus (Constructor of "Argo") Athena Centaur(s) Chiron / Cheiron Colchis Corfu / Kerkyra Golden Fleece Harpies Hera Jason Medea Oracles Orpheus Pelias Poseidon Sirens



Courtesy of The Salariya Book Company, publisher.

General information	
Title of the work	Jason and the Argonauts
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2004
First Edition Details	John Malam, ill. David Antram, *Ancient Greek Myths: Jason and the Argonauts.* Brighton: Company Book House, 2005, 32 pp.
ISBN	1904642365
Genre	Humor, Illustrated works, Instructional and educational works, Myths, Picture books
Target Audience	Children
Author of the Entry	Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



David Antram , b. 1958
(Illustrator)

David Antram was born in 1958 in Brighton, England. He studied at Eastbourne College of Art. He has illustrated over 100 titles, mainly for children and young adults, including around 60 in the bestselling *You Wouldn't Want to Be* series. David Antram illustrated *You Wouldn't Want to Live Without Toilets* by Fiona MacDonald and David Salariya, *You Wouldn't Want to Live Without Antibiotics* by David Salariya, *How to Be an Ancient Greek Athlete* by Jacqueline Morley. All the aforementioned examples fall into the category of children's literature.

Sources:

The cover of *You Wouldn't Want to be a Slave in Ancient Greece!: A Life You'd Rather Not Have*.

Profile at the jacketflap.com (accessed: July 4, 2017).

Bio prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl



John Malam , b. 1957
(Author)

John Malam was born in 1957 in Wolverhampton, in England. He studied at the University of Birmingham, after which he worked as an archaeologist at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Shropshire. John Malam is a British author for children, as well as an editor and

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reviewer. He specializes in books for children. He wrote *Ancient Greeks at a Glance*, *Exploring Ancient Egypt*, *The Ancient Greeks*, *Gods and Goddesses*, *Myths and Civilization of the Ancient Romans*, *Greek Town* and others.

Sources:

Official website (accessed: June 4, 2017).

Profile on Brief Biographies (accessed: June 4, 2017).

Bio prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl

Questionnaire

1. What drew you to writing/working with Classical Antiquity and what challenges did you face in selecting, representing, or adapting particular myths or stories?

When I began writing for children, publishers “matched” me to their projects and commissioned me to write on subjects they knew I was familiar with. It is for this reason that I have been asked to retell Classical myths, and write about ancient civilisations. In every case, the publisher has already decided what the subject will be, and they then brief me about the age range, word count, and number of pages in the book.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?

There is a requirement in the UK primary school curriculum (children aged 7—11) for them to learn about particular periods in history, eg Ancient Greece and Rome. As their myths are full of supernatural characters, heroes, and magical events, they can be retold in an

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exciting and appealing way for a modern audience.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?) What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?

Yes – I have a degree in Ancient History & Archaeology. My sources are many and varied, and I have my own library of text books which I usually work from. I use some scholarly articles, but only occasionally, as my books don't need that level of research. I do use Wikipedia, but with caution, and like to cross-check information in verifiable sources.

4. Did you think about how Classical Antiquity would translate for young readers, esp. in (insert relevant country)?

A little. I became interested – fascinated – in antiquity (and prehistory) when I was a child, and read popular books about explorers and archaeologists finding "lost cities" or "buried treasure". I hope that some of my books might have inspired children to take an interest in the past.

5. How concerned were you with 'accuracy' or 'fidelity' to the original? (another way of saying that might be — that I think writers are often more 'faithful' to originals in adapting its spirit rather than being tied down at the level of detail — is this something you thought about?)

I try my best to be as accurate to the original source as possible – I feel this is important, and is my duty as a non-fiction writer. A fiction writer would be more likely to adapt the source material, and change it for their needs. Wherever I present a "fact", I want to be able to verify it with source material.

6. Are you planning any further forays into classical material?

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I hope so! But, this will only happen if a publisher approaches me and commissions me to write for them.

Prepared by Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl



David Salariya , b. 1954
(Illustrator)

David Salariya was born in 1954 in Dundee, Scotland. He is the founder of Salariya Book Company. David Salariya is an illustrator. His first illustration was done for *Reader's Digest*.

Source:

Interview at the creativeinterviews.com (accessed: April 17, 2018).

Interview at the childrensillustrators.com (accessed: April 17, 2018).

Bio prepared by Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com and Viktoryia Bartsevich, University of Warsaw, v.bartsevich@student.uw.edu.pl

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Additional information

Translation

Polish: *Jazon i Argonauci*, trans. Janusz Ochab, Warszawa: Firma Księgarska Jacek i Krzysztof Olesiejuk Inwestycje, 2006.

Summary

In this straight-forward retelling of the myth of the Argonauts, the story begins with the prophecy by the oracle who proclaims that Pelias, king of the city-state of Iolcus, should pay attention to his family, because they will deprive him of power. So Pelias decides to kill everyone, showing mercy only to his brother Aeson, whom he throws into the dungeon. When he arrives to kill Jason, his brother's son, he is tricked by Alcimede the boy's mother, into believing that the young man had died. The king allowed Jason to be taken for burial behind the city. However, Alcimede took the boy to the mountains and entrusted him for education to Chiron, the Centaur. When Jason set off to town to take revenge on Pelias, on the way he helped one old woman cross the river and it turned out that it was Hera, who has since started to look after Jason. During the crossing of the river the youngster lost one of his sandals.

King Pelias knew from the oracle that he should beware of a man with one sandal. Jason wanted to take from Pelias the throne, the king replied that he would gladly give back the throne in exchange for the Golden Fleece. The Golden Fleece was in Colchis, it was protected by a snake who never slept and no mortal ever managed to steal it.

Jason accepted the challenge and asked a shipbuilder named Argos to build a ship that could accommodate a crew of fifty. Athena also helped in the construction of the ship. The ship was given the name "Argo," which meant "swift".

The Argonauts' journey was very dangerous. They met Harpies, then they were endangered by entering the Bosphorus. Jason had to fulfill three tasks that the king of Colchis – Aeetes - had appointed him as a condition of letting him take the Golden Fleece. At Colchis Jason also met the beautiful Medea, the daughter of the king, who helped Jason’s to complete the tasks. Jason promised to marry her if she would go with him to Greece.

On the way back, there was a new danger to the Argonauts – the Sirens. However, Jason ordered Orpheus to sing as loudly as he could

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	and they only listened to him. Back at Iolcus, Jason learned that Pelias had killed his parents. Medea, thanks to a ruse, punished the king.
Analysis	Each book from the series *Ancient Greek Myths* is composed of texts and illustrations, the latter are more important than the text. *Jason and the Argonauts* tells the story of Jason's life and explain some other aspects of that myth, for instance who were the Centaurs, the Harpies and the Dragon of Cadmus. The book is filled with amusing illustrations which are colorful and pleasant to look at.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Aeëtes Aeson Alcimede Argo Argonauts Argos / Argus (Constructor of "Argo") Athena Centaur(s) Chiron / Cheiron Colchis Corfu / Kerkyra Golden Fleece Harpies Hera Jason Medea Oracles Orpheus Pelias Poseidon Sirens
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Death Journeys Love Relationships Religious beliefs

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