

Chalkline

The background of the slide is a blue-tinted version of Raphael's fresco 'The School of Athens'. It depicts a large group of ancient Greek philosophers in a grand architectural setting with arches and statues. The figures are engaged in various activities like teaching, debating, and studying.

Write it once. Teach it everywhere. · 一次编写，处处可用



The usual way

- Slides in one app, worksheets in another
- Copy the same words into a handout, a website, a packet
- Fix a typo in one place... and miss the other three
- Make a separate version for families and an answer key for you

The result

Five copies of everything, slowly drifting apart. Hours every week spent formatting instead of teaching.



Speaker notes

Ask the room: how many places does the same lesson live for you right now? Slides, a doc, a shared drive, an LMS page, a printed packet...



The Chalkline way: one file, many outputs

You write

One plain-text file per deck or worksheet: words, pictures, and a few labels at the top (title, type, who it's for).

Chalkline makes

- **Slides** to present, and a **slide PDF**
- A **web page** and a **printable PDF** of each worksheet
- A **unit packet**: every printable in one PDF, with a cover and contents
- A **year packet** with every unit
- A **student**, a **teacher** and a **family** website



Speaker notes

Everything in this sample was made this way. Open any slide deck or worksheet file in VS Code to see how little is in it.



A slide is just text you can read

This is a whole slide. Open the file and you see:

Athens and Sparta

- Athens was a democracy.
- Citizens could {{< vocab "vote" >}}.
- Sparta trained soldiers.

starts a new slide. - makes a bullet point. {{< vocab "vote" >}} adds a vocab pop-up, with 中文 and 🔊. That's most of it.

-  **Edit it like a document.** Change a word, save, and the slide updates.
-  **Or ask an AI to edit it.** “Add a bullet about the navy.” Plain text is easy for AI to change correctly.
-  **It can't look messy.** Fonts, colors and layout come from the school style, on every slide.
-  **Write once.** The same words become the slides, the web page and the PDF.



Speaker notes

For teachers new to this: you don't need to learn a language. Most slides are headings and bullet points, exactly as they look here. When you want something fancier (two columns, a box, a vocab pop-up, a poll), copy it from an existing slide, or ask an AI assistant to add it. Then show the real “Athens and Sparta” slide in Unit 1 to compare.



Every unit gets a home page

- The unit's **objectives** at the top
- Every slide deck and printable, with links to the PDFs
- A **Unit packet (PDF)** button: all the printables, ready to send to the copier
- Nothing to list by hand: add a file to the unit folder and it appears

Try it: open **Unit 1: Ancient Greece** in the sidebar.



Packets build themselves

- Every worksheet, handout and reference in a unit, **in order**
- A **cover** with the objectives and contents
- Page numbers running through the whole packet
- Slides, posters and tests stay out
- Add an **outside PDF** (a map, an official form) with one line

Teacher version

The teacher build makes **teacher packets**: the same pages plus answer keys, with an orange **TEACHER EDITION** tab.



Speaker notes

Packets are made fresh from the source files, not glued together, so they always match the latest worksheets.



Vocabulary support, built in

Tap or hover a word with a dotted line to see its card: picture, 中文 and a simple definition.

- Ancient Athens was a democracy.
- Rome built a huge empire.
- An aqueduct carried water to the city.

One list, used everywhere

The words live in one spreadsheet. Slides, worksheets, the **vocab app** and Quizlet/Kahoot exports all read it.

English is the goal; 中文 is support, and never appears in quizzes.



Speaker notes

Try the pop-ups now. Then open “History vocab 词汇” in the sidebar: all 37 words from the three units, searchable in English or Chinese.



Three websites from the same files

Students

Slides, worksheets, vocab. No answer keys.

Teachers

Everything, plus **answer keys, speaker notes** and teacher packets.

Families

The objectives, the **vocab app** and only the slides you choose to share.

One label decides who sees a file: `audience: [teacher, student, parent]`



Classroom tools in every deck

- A **timer** on any slide (press **T**)
- A **clock** in the corner (press **K**)
- **Speaker notes** in a second window (press **S**)
- **Tap-to-vote polls**: no devices, no accounts

2:00

Start

Reset

+1 min



Speaker notes

Start the timer to show it. It keeps running in a small box if you change slides.



Try a poll

Which feature will you try first?



Packets



Vocab pop-ups



Family site



Slide PDFs

0 votes

Show results

Reset



Speaker notes

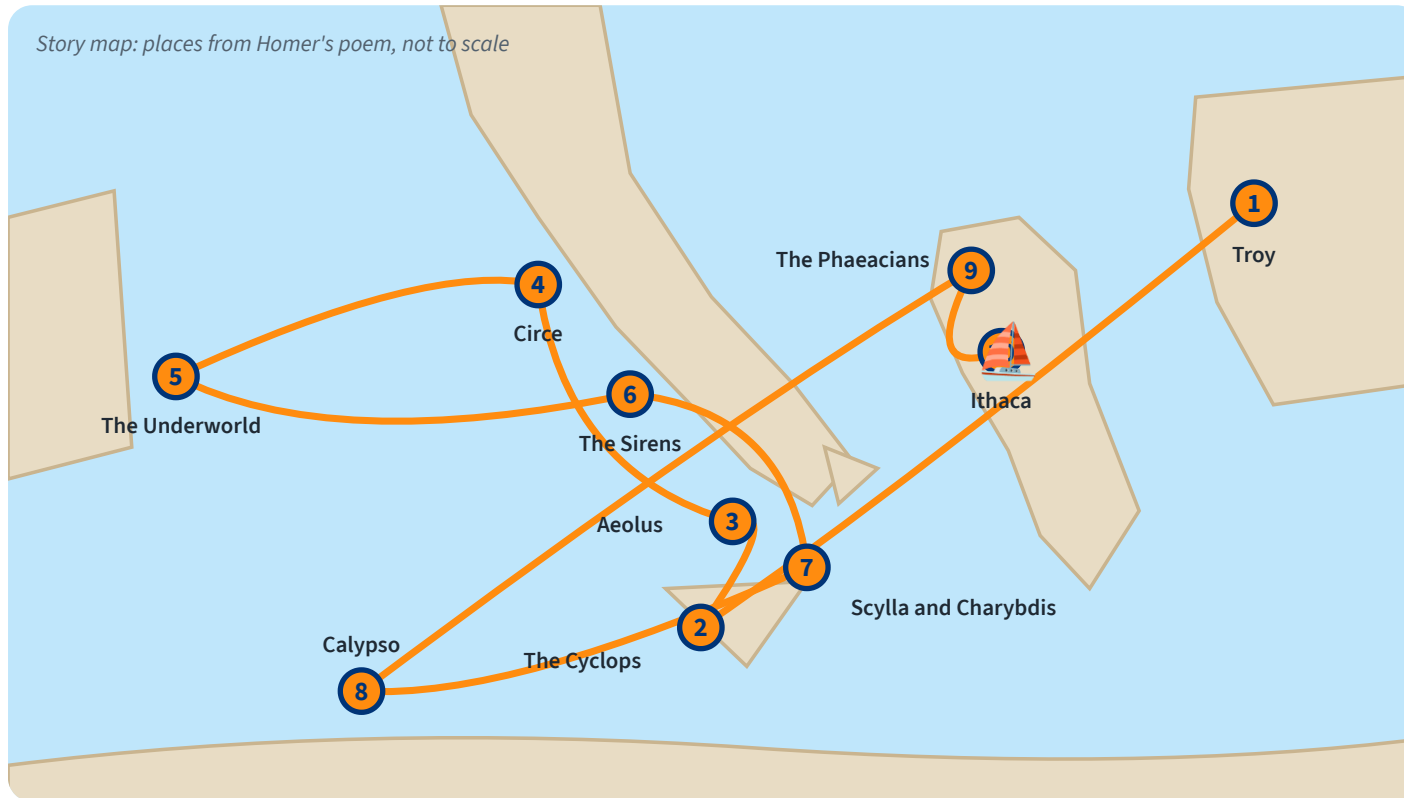
Tap an answer on the board (or press 1–4), then press R or click Show results.



Slides can do anything a web page can

Ten years, ten stops: Troy, the Cyclops, Aeolus, Circe, the Underworld, the Sirens, Scylla and Charybdis, Calypso, the Phaeacians, and home to Ithaca.

Story map: places from Homer's poem, not to scale



The Odyssey 奥德赛: ten years, ten stops, one hero trying to get home.

Press **Play**, or hover a stop for its story.

Made with AI

This map is about 150 lines of code. An AI assistant wrote it from one paragraph: *“Make an interactive map of Odysseus’s journey home: numbered stops, a ship that sails the route, and the story of each stop on hover.”*

Maps, timelines, games, simulations: if a web page can do it, a slide can too.



Speaker notes

The code lives in [course/units/01-ancient-greece/odyssey/](#), and the Greece unit uses it too. To make your own, describe what you want to an AI assistant (Claude, for example) and ask for a self-contained HTML/JavaScript block for a Quarto reveal.js slide. In the slide PDF the whole route is shown at once.



So what else can you do?

Each one is a working example in this course. Click to jump there.

-  **Fragments:** [reveal answers one click at a time](#)
-  **Transitions:** [zoom into a slide](#), or [glide a picture into place](#) (auto-animate)
-  **Embedded videos:** [a TED-Ed video inside a slide](#)
-  **Interactive activities:** [tap-to-match](#), [a story map](#)
-  **Infographics:** [a draw.io diagram you can hover](#)
-  **Polls:** [tap-to-vote on the board](#)
-  **Timers:** [think, pair, share](#)
-  **Vocab pop-ups:** [with 中文 and read-aloud](#)
-  **Pictures and backdrops:** [a full-screen title, photos with captions](#)
-  **Speaker notes:** press **S** on any slide

These links jump between slide decks, too: any slide can link to any other slide.



Speaker notes

Every link opens the example slide in another deck: press the browser's Back button to return here. In a slide, a link to another deck is just `[text](../01-ancient-greece/city-states-slides.html#/athens-or-sparta)`.



It always looks like your school

- Colors, fonts and logos are set **once**, in **brand/**
- Slides, web pages, PDFs and the vocab app all follow
- Change the brand file and **everything** updates

No more fixing fonts slide by slide.



Editing with an AI assistant

- The files are plain text, so tools like Claude can read and edit them
- `CLAUDE.md` tells the assistant the rules for this course
- While you work on one worksheet, only that file is rebuilt: quick to check
- When it's done: save, and rebuild that unit's packet



Speaker notes

Example request: “Add a 5-question exit ticket to the Rome republic deck, with Chinese glosses on the key words.”



Get your own copy

1. **Install** (once): VS Code, Quarto, Python 3, Git, and Chrome or Edge. The README has the links.
2. **Clone**: in VS Code, press **Ctrl+Shift+P** (Mac: **Cmd+Shift+P**), choose **Git: Clone**, paste the address, pick a folder, then **Open**.
3. **Start**: double-click **Start Chalkline** in the folder. The first time takes a few minutes.

The address

<https://github.com/insufficientdoubt/chalkline-sample>

Then

Your site opens at **localhost:4100**, in the teacher version. Your copy is yours: change anything.

Just want to look first? The online version: insufficientdoubt.github.io/chalkline-sample



Speaker notes

In a terminal instead of VS Code: `git clone https://github.com/insufficientdoubt/chalkline-sample.git`, then open the folder. No GitHub account is needed to clone; you need one only to save changes back to GitHub.



How this sample is organized

course/units/01-ancient-greece/

index.qmd the unit page: title, objectives

city-states-slides.qmd a slide deck

athens-vs-sparta.qmd a worksheet (web + PDF)

images/ photos for this unit's slides

vocab/data/vocab.csv the 37 vocab words

vocab/images/ vocab pictures (GRC-003.svg = democracy)

brand/ colors, fonts, logos



Make your own unit

1. Copy a unit folder, for example `01-ancient-greece`, and rename it
2. In its `index.qmd`, change the title and objectives
3. Edit or replace the slides and worksheets, keeping a `type:` label on each
4. Add your words to `vocab/data/vocab.csv`
5. Double-click **Start Chalkline**: your unit is on the site



Exit ticket

How ready do you feel to make your first unit?



Got it



Sort of



Not yet

0 votes

Show results

Reset



Picture credits

- **Title:** *The School of Athens*, Raphael (about 1510), public domain, via Wikimedia Commons.
- Everything else: original, made for this course. Unit picture credits: each unit's [images/CREDITS.md](#).

