

Ancient Greece

Map of Ancient Greece

Name: _____ Date: _____

In this unit, you will learn about ancient Greece. Look carefully at the map. Put an X on Athens. Put a Y on Sparta. Put an O on Mount Olympus.



Ancient Greece

Vocabulary

1. **Alexander the Great**—ancient Macedonian who conquered most of the known world around 334 B.C.
2. **Archimedes**—ancient Greek inventor and mathematician who invented Archimedes' Screw
3. **aristocrats**—wealthy property owners in ancient Greece
4. **Aristotle**—ancient Greek philosopher; teacher of Alexander the Great
5. **Athens**—ancient Greek city-state
6. **city-state**—an ancient Greek region that has its own government and citizenry
7. **Delian League**—ancient Athens and her allies
8. **Euclid**—ancient Greek mathematician who developed a branch of geometry
9. **freeman**—male citizen of ancient Athens
10. **fresco**—a type of painting in which a picture is painted onto a plaster wall
11. **helots**—ancient Spartan slaves
12. **Hellenistic Age**—ancient Greek civilization that emerged under the rule of Alexander the Great
13. **Hippocrates**—ancient Greek doctor who believed that disease had natural causes that could be studied
14. **immortal**—to live forever
15. **Minoan civilization**—early Greek civilization located on the island of Crete (2500 B.C.)
16. **Mount Olympus**—mountain on which the ancient Greeks believed the gods and goddesses lived
17. **Mycenae**—early Greek civilization located in Peloponnesus (2000 B.C.)
18. **oligarchy**—type of government where only a few people rule the many
19. **Peloponnesus League**—ancient Sparta and her allies

Ancient Greece

Vocabulary (cont.)

20. **Peloponnesian War**—ancient conflict between Athens and Sparta (431 B.C.)
21. **polytheism**—belief in more than one god
22. **Plato**—ancient Greek philosopher; student of Socrates
23. **Pythagoras**—ancient Greek mathematician
24. **Socrates**—ancient Greek philosopher who developed the Socratic method
25. **Sparta**—ancient Greek city-state
26. **thetes**—ancient Athenian craftsman or laborer
27. **Thucydides**—ancient general and historian who fought in and wrote about the Peloponnesian War
28. **Trojan War**—legendary battle between the ancient Greeks and the people of Troy in the 12th or 13th century B.C.

Early Greek Civilizations

Brief #1

Focus

The physical geography of ancient Greece played a big role in how it developed.

The physical geography of any place is an important key in understanding how and why its civilization developed the way it did. Ancient Greek civilization is a good example of this idea.

Ancient Greece was located along the coasts of three large bodies of water: the Aegean Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Ionian Sea. Because of this, the ancient Greeks were excellent sailors and traders.

The interior of Greece is made up of a lot of mountains. In ancient times, this kept populations of people isolated from one

another. This isolation helped communities develop independently from one another. These areas had their own governments and their own ideas about how things should be done. Eventually, these independent communities would grow into Greek city-states. A **city-state** was a region in ancient Greece with its own government and citizenry. Athens, Sparta, and Thebes were important ancient Greek city-states.

Vocabulary

1. city-state
2. Minoan civilization
3. fresco
4. Mycenae



Crete and Mycenae

Ancient Greece consisted of many islands located out in the Mediterranean Sea. One of these islands was called Crete. In about 2500 B.C., the Minoan civilization existed there. The civilization gets its name from King Minos.

The Minoans were great traders. They were also skilled potters and painted beautiful frescoes on the walls of their palaces. A **fresco** is a painting on a plaster wall.

In about 2000 B.C., the Minoan civilization began to decline. No one is really sure why this happened. Scholars do know, however, that some Minoans migrated to and settled on the mainland of Greece. After a time, these settlements grew into powerful city-states.

One of these Greek city-states was called Mycenae. It was located in an area on the Greek mainland called the Peloponnese. The Mycenae people were warriors, and they built a city which was fortified by huge stone walls. The huge stone lions that guard the entrance to the Mycenae citadel (a kind of palace) still stand to this very day.

Fast Fact

The palace of King Minos had 1500 rooms!

Athens and Sparta

Brief #2

Focus

Athens and Sparta became two of the most powerful Greek city-states.

Although Athens and Sparta were both a part of what is considered to be Ancient Greece, they were two independent city-states. These two city-states had different cultures and political systems, but they did speak the same language.



Politics in Ancient Athens

The political system in Athens in 500 B.C. was a democracy. Ancient Athens had elected officials and an assembly.

To be part of the Athenian Assembly, you simply had to be a citizen of Athens. Of course, the ancient Athenians did keep slaves. Slaves were not allowed to take part in politics. In addition to the assembly, there was also a council of five hundred members. The job of the council was to execute the decisions made by the Assembly.

The ancient Athenians believed that it was every citizen's duty to participate in politics. Citizens had to serve on juries and be informed and able to discuss the issues that were important to their city.



Life in Ancient Athens

Like most civilizations, Athenian society had a structure. **Freemen were the male citizens of Athens.** Among the freemen there were aristocrats. **Aristocrats were wealthy men who owned property.** Aristocrats could also be military men. Farmers made up the middle ranks. At the bottom were the thetes. **The thetes were craftsmen and men who did manual labor.**

In ancient Athenian society, boys, especially if they came from the aristocracy, were well educated. They studied math, music, reading, and writing. Older boys could go to a kind of college where they continued their studies in philosophy and ethics. All male citizens were required to train in the military for two years.

Life was different for girls in ancient Athens. They were not educated, even if they did come from wealthy families. Women were considered to be the property of their husbands. Athenian girls learned domestic duties like spinning and weaving.

Vocabulary

1. Athens
2. Sparta
3. freemen
4. aristocrats
5. thetes
6. oligarchy

Athens and Sparta

Brief #2 (cont.)

Vocabulary (cont.)

7. oligarchy
8. helots
9. Delian League
10. Peloponnesus League
11. Peloponnesian War
12. Thucydides



The Military in Ancient Sparta

The government of Ancient Sparta was a kind of combination of an oligarchy and a democracy. An **oligarchy is a government that is led by a few people.** (Ancient Sparta did have some elected officials.)

In ancient Sparta, the military was the most important thing in their politics and society. When boys turned seven years old, they were taken from their parents and sent away to learn how to be soldiers. They were treated badly and given very few clothes and little food. They were expected to steal what they needed in order to survive. This is how the Spartans taught survival skills. As a result, the Spartan army was the strongest and most feared military in the region.



Life in Ancient Sparta

Physical strength was highly prized in ancient Spartan society, for both men and women. Everyone was expected to exercise and be physically fit. The Spartans frowned upon luxuries and comfort. Being tough and self-reliant was important.

Unlike in ancient Athens, Spartan women were educated. They learned how to read and write. They took part in athletics. They were also allowed to own property. The Spartans believed that all of these things would help Spartan women have healthy babies.

Spartans usually married at about the age of twenty. But even after marriage, Spartan men lived most of their lives in military camps away from their wives.

Most city-states in ancient Greece had slaves, but the slave population in ancient Sparta was enormous. **The Spartan slaves were called helots.** They were treated very badly — beaten, humiliated, and often murdered. Because the helot population was so huge, they outnumbered the Spartans. So the Spartans had a hard time keeping them under control. There were often slave rebellions, which challenged Spartan authority.

Fast Fact

Spartan infants would be put to death if they were sick or weak.

Athens and Sparta

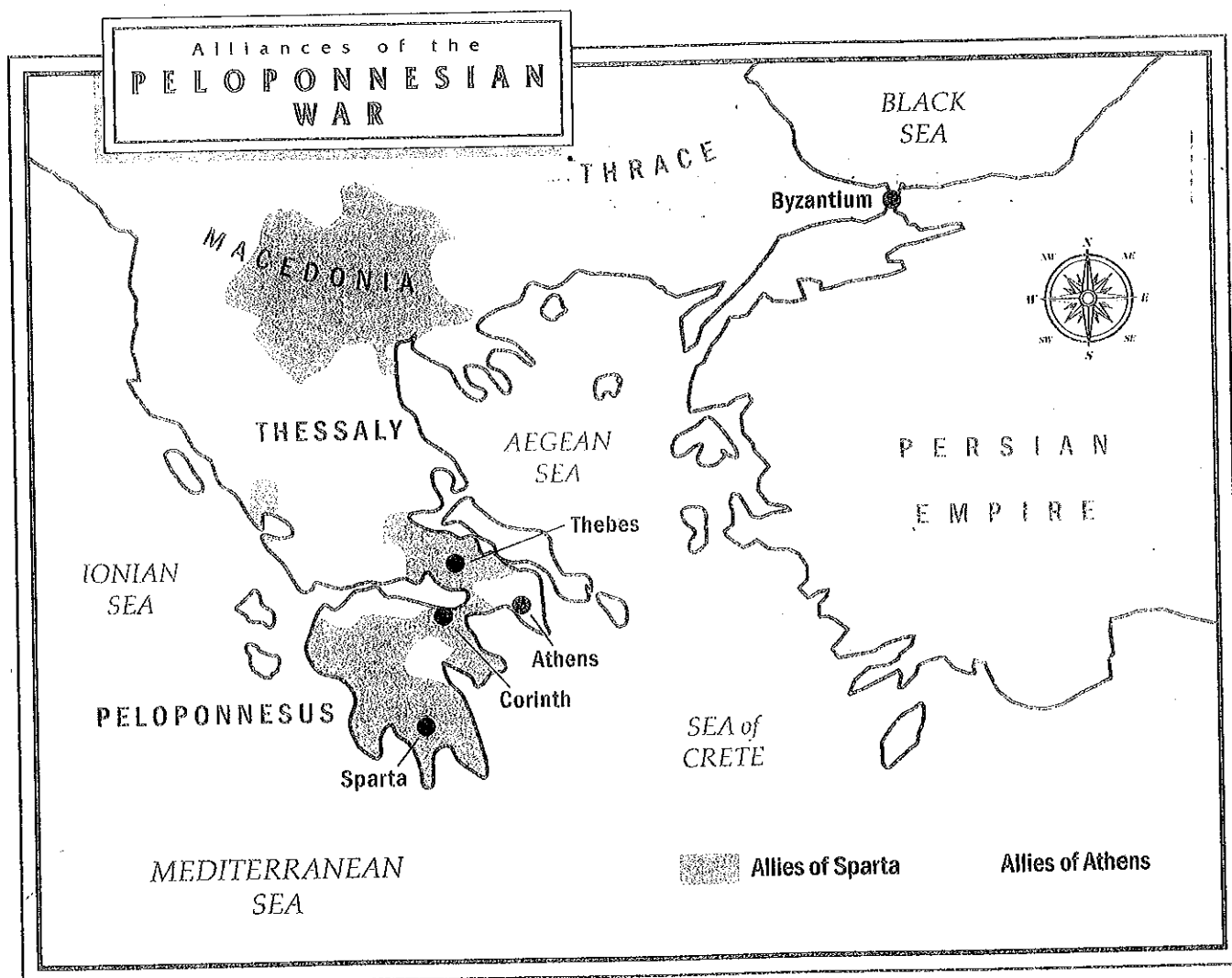
Brief #2 (cont.)



The Peloponnesian War

The Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta both had power and influence in the region. They each also had alliances with various city-states. Athens formed the Delian League. The Delian League was a group of many Greek city-states, including Thessaly and Thrace. The Delian League was originally formed to fight the Persian Army when they invaded Athens in 490 B.C.

Sparta had allies in the region, too. The Greek city-states who allied with Sparta were called the Peloponnesus League. They included Corinth and Macedonia.



War broke out between Athens and Sparta and their rivals in 431 B.C. This twenty-seven-year conflict between Athens and Sparta is known as the Peloponnesian War.

Athens and Sparta

Brief #2 (cont.)



The Peloponnesian War (cont.)

The Peloponnesian War consumed the entire region. Sometimes Athens would seem to be winning, and at other times Sparta would be victorious. Athens had a strong navy, and there were many battles at sea fought during this conflict. But Sparta had a powerful land army. The army attacked villages and towns, and destroyed farms.

The constant fighting weakened both sides in the conflict, but it was Athens that surrendered in 404 B.C. Although Sparta was the victor, the war had taken its toll on them, too. They were never again the superpower they once were.



Thucydides

Thucydides was a general in the Athenian army. He fought during the Peloponnesian War. After the war, he wrote a detailed history of it called *History of the Peloponnesian War*. It is a collection of eight books. In his books, Thucydides strove to be impartial and fair in his telling of the events, even though he was an Athenian general. It was really the first time a balanced approach to the telling of history had been attempted. For this reason he is considered to be the father of modern history.

Greek Mythology

Brief #3

Focus

Ancient Greek myths and legends are still popular today.

The ancient Greeks were polytheistic. Polytheism means that you worship more than one god. The ancient Greeks had many, many gods. They believed that their gods were immortal. If something is immortal, that means that it can live forever. The ancient Greeks also believed that their gods lived on Mount Olympus. Mount Olympus is a real place located in northern Greece.

Ancient Greek myths, like most myths, were stories that people told that helped to explain some of the mysteries of life and the natural world. Greek myths explain how life began, how the seasons came to be, and what happens to people after death.



Major Greek Gods

- **Zeus** is the king of the gods. He rules the thunder, rain, and lightning, among other things.
- **Hera** is the wife and sister of Zeus. She has a jealous streak and can be quite vengeful.
- **Poseidon** is the god of the seas and the brother of Zeus. He lives at the bottom of the ocean and rules the waves.
- **Demeter** is the goddess of agriculture.
- **Athena** is the goddess of wisdom. She is the daughter of Zeus. Athens is named for this goddess.
- **Hestia** is the goddess of the home.
- **Aphrodite** is the goddess of beauty and love. She was born from the foam of the sea.
- **Apollo** is the god of light and truth. He is also young and handsome.
- **Ares** is the god of war. He is the son of Hera.
- **Artemis** is the goddess of the hunters and animals. She is the twin sister of Apollo.
- **Hephaestus** is the god of fire and volcanoes. He was born deformed. He is also a skilled blacksmith.
- **Hermes** is the messenger of the gods. He also watches over travelers and shepherds. He likes to play practical jokes.

Vocabulary

1. Polytheism
2. immortal
3. Mount Olympus
4. Trojan War

Greek Mythology

Brief #3 (cont.)



Heroes and Legends

Greek Mythology is full of stories about the lives of heroes and legendary events and people. One of these events is the Trojan War. The Trojan War is a legendary war that was fought between the ancient Greeks and the people of Troy in the 12th or 13th century B.C. According to Greek legend, the gods took sides in the conflict and helped mortals on both sides. The most famous books about the Trojan War are epic poems written by Homer in about the 8th or 9th century B.C. These books are called the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

• The Trojan Horse

One of the most well-known episodes of the Trojan War concerns something called the Trojan Horse. According to the legend, the Greeks were trying to find a way to get inside of the walled city of Troy. They built a huge horse made of wood. The inside of the horse was hollowed out. Greek soldiers hid inside of the horse. Other Greek soldiers sailed away on ships. When the Trojans saw the Greeks vessels leaving, they thought that they were out of harm's way. They didn't know that there were other Greek soldiers hiding within the horse. The Trojans brought the horse into the city of Troy. Once inside, the Greek soldiers sprang from the horse and attacked the city.

Fast Fact

The Olympics began as a way for ancient Greeks to honor their gods.

• Persephone

Persephone is the daughter of Demeter, the goddess of the harvest. One day, while Persephone played outdoors in the sunshine, she was kidnapped by Hades, the god of the underworld in the land of the dead. Hades took Persephone to his underground world because he wanted Persephone to be his wife. Persephone grew sadder and sadder every day that Hades kept her in the underworld. She refused to eat or drink anything.

The whole time that Persephone was in the underworld, her mother had no idea where she was. She frantically looked for her everywhere, but couldn't find her. Finally, Demeter asked her brother Zeus for some help. Zeus knew that Persephone was with Hades and ordered him to return her to the land of the living. Hades refused. Finally, Hades agreed to return Persephone only if she had not eaten or drunk anything from the underworld. Although Persephone didn't eat much, she did have six pomegranate seeds.

An agreement was made that because Persephone had eaten six pomegranate seeds that she would spend six months out of the year with him and six months out of the year with her mother. For the six months that Persephone spends with Demeter the crops grow in warm sunshine. But when Persephone has to go back to the underworld, Demeter grows sad, and her sadness brings winter and the death of the crops.

The Legacy of Ancient Greece

Brief #4

Focus

Ancient Greece is the birthplace of western civilization.

Ancient Greece is considered the birthplace of western civilization. This is because the ancient Greeks made so many major contributions to arts, science, politics, and philosophy. What would later become known as the Renaissance had its origins in ancient Greece.



Mathematics

The ancient Greeks made important discoveries and developed many mathematical theories that are still used today. **One of these ancient Greek mathematicians was called Pythagoras.** He was the first person to describe the earth as being spherical. He also developed theories regarding the connection between math and music. The students of Pythagoras went on to develop the Pythagorean Theorem used with right triangles.

Euclid was another influential ancient Greek mathematician. In fact, it is Euclid who is credited with discovering a field of mathematics that was unknown at the time—that of plane geometry. It is over two thousand years since Euclid lived, yet students today still learn geometry using the axioms he discovered.

Archimedes was a famous ancient Greek inventor and mathematician. Like Euclid and Pythagoras, he developed many different mathematical theories that are still in use today. He also invented a device that is still used for raising water from a lower level to a higher level. This invention is called Archimedes' screw.

Vocabulary

1. Pythagoras
2. Euclid
3. Archimedes
4. Socrates
5. Plato
6. Aristotle
7. Alexander the Great
8. Hellenistic Age
9. Hippocrates



Philosophy

Another area in which the ancient Greeks excelled and made enormous contributions to is the field of philosophy. Philosophy is the branch of learning and inquiry that seeks to discover the answers to difficult questions about truth and knowledge.

One of the most important ancient Greek philosophers was called Socrates. Socrates said *the unexamined life is not worth living*. He meant that all people should seek knowledge and awareness, and the truth about how the world works. Socrates was an influential teacher. He developed a method of teaching by asking students questions until they reached a final conclusion. This is called the Socratic Method. The Socratic Method is based upon using reason to discover the truth.

The Legacy of Ancient Greece

Brief #4 (cont.)



Philosophy (cont.)

One of Socrates' students named Plato was also a very influential ancient Greek philosopher. Like Socrates, he believed in rational thought and reason. He believed that if people lived by reason, then there would be no problems in the world.

Aristotle is the third of whom scholars call the *big three* of ancient Greek philosophy. Aristotle was a student of Plato's. He wrote many books on topics like politics, poetry, music, and biology. He is also known to be the teacher of Alexander the Great.



Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great was the King of Macedonia, a Greek city-state in 334 B.C. He was also a brilliant military commander. Alexander conquered Persia, Syria, Phoenicia, and Egypt all before the age of thirty-three. Alexander the Great is considered to be one of the best military commanders of all time.

Alexander's rule lasted for thirteen years. The civilization that emerged from his military conquests was a blend of Greek and Asian cultures. It is called the Hellenistic Age. During this period in ancient history, the influence of Greek culture could be felt all over most of the known world. Alexander founded the ancient city of Alexandria in Egypt. It is here, in this port city, where the Lighthouse of Alexandria was built. This was a huge and impressive structure. Archeologists have found some of the remains of this ancient lighthouse on the floor of the surrounding harbor.



Hippocrates

The ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates is considered to be the father of modern medicine. He took a more scientific approach to help the sick. In his time, many people thought disease could be caused or cured by supernatural forces, like the gods. But Hippocrates believed that illness had natural causes and therefore natural cures. He also wrote the Hippocratic Oath, which contains advice that doctors have been heeding for thousands of years. One of the most famous parts of the Oath reads:

I will use dietary regimens which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgment, and I will do no harm or injustice to them.

Ancient Greece

Sentence-Completion Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Read each sentence carefully. Fill in a word or statement that best completes the sentence.

1. Greece is located along the Aegean Sea, the _____ Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea.
2. A region in ancient Greece with its own government is called a _____.
3. The Minoan civilization existed in about _____ B.C.
4. A painting done on a plaster wall is called a _____.
5. A male citizen of ancient Greece was called a _____.
6. The _____ were ancient Athenians who did _____ labor.
7. Government by a few is called an _____.
8. The Spartans expected their male children to _____ food and clothing in order to teach survival skills.
9. Physical _____ was highly prized in Sparta.
10. A Spartan slave is called a _____.



Ancient Greece

Sentence-Completion Assessment (cont.)

11. Athens and her allies formed the _____ League.
12. Sparta and her allies formed the _____ League.
13. The conflict between Athens and Sparta was called the _____ War.
14. _____ wrote a detailed history of the Peloponnesian War.
15. _____ is the worship of many gods.
16. Greek soldiers surprised the people of Troy by jumping out of a
_____.
17. The Greek mathematician _____ is most associated with geometry.
18. The _____ is a teaching method
that relies on question to reach a conclusion.
19. The _____ is the period of ancient
Greek history associated with Alexander the Great.
20. Ancient Greece is considered to be the birthplace of _____
civilization.



Ancient Greece

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