

Classical Greece**Lesson 1**

Cultures of the Mountains and the Sea

Key Terms and People

Mycenaean member of a group who settled on the Greek mainland around 2000 BC

Trojan War war in which the Mycenaeans attacked the city of Troy

Dorian member of a group of people who migrated into the Greek mainland

Homer Greek poet who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

epic heroic story told in the form of a long poem

myth traditional story that explains why the world is the way it is

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about belief systems in ancient China and the Qin Dynasty.

In this lesson, you will read about the development of culture in ancient Greece.

As You Read

Use a chart to organize information about the roots of Greek culture.

GEOGRAPHY SHAPES GREEK LIFE**How did geography influence the Greeks?**

The lives of the ancient Greeks were shaped by the geography of their land. Greece is a rocky land with high mountains and deep valleys. These land forms were like barriers. Moving over the land was difficult. For these reasons, Greeks living in different areas could not be easily united.

Good farmland covered only about one-fourth of Greece and could not support many people. The need for more living space and the lack of good farmland may have influenced the Greeks to find new colonies.

The Greeks had easy access to the sea, however. They became excellent sailors. Trade became important because Greece had few natural resources.

The climate is mild. As a result, Greek people spent much time outdoors. They attended public events and even conducted government outside.

1. Why was sea trade important for the Greeks?

Lesson 1, *continued*

**MYCENAEAN CIVILIZATION
DEVELOPS****Who were the Mycenaeans?**

A large wave of people moved from Europe, India, and Southwest Asia. Some of these people settled on the Greek mainland around 2000 BC. They were later called **Mycenaeans**. They were ruled by powerful warrior-kings.

The Mycenaeans developed a strong culture. They borrowed from the Minoan culture of Crete. They adapted the Minoan form of writing and artistic design. The Mycenaeans also became interested in trade.

According to legend, Mycenaeans fought a long war with the people of Troy, a city in Turkey. This conflict was called the **Trojan War**.

The war was said to have started because a Trojan youth kidnapped a Greek woman. Her name was Helen. She was the beautiful wife of a Greek king. The Greek army later destroyed Troy.

2. How were the Mycenaeans influenced by the Minoans?

**GREEK CULTURE DECLINES
UNDER THE DORIANS****What was Greece like under
the Dorians?**

The culture of the Mycenaeans fell about 1200 BC. Sea raiders destroyed their palaces. A less advanced people called the **Dorians** occupied the land. For the next 400 years, Greece went into decline. No written records exist from this period. Little is known about this era.

The spoken word lived on, however. A great storyteller named **Homer** made up **epics**, or long poems, based on tales he heard. Epics are about heroes and their deeds. One of Homer's great epics was the *Iliad*. It centers on the heroes of the Trojan War. The heroes of the *Iliad* are warriors. Homer tells about their courage and noble actions in battle.

The Greeks also created a rich set of **myths**. These stories explain the actions of gods and events in nature. In Greek myths, gods often act like humans. For example, they show feelings, such as love, hate, and jealousy. Unlike humans, though, the Greek gods lived forever.

3. How did Homer keep Greek culture alive under the Dorians?

Lesson 1, continued

As you read this lesson, make notes in the chart to explain how each geographic characteristic or historical event influenced the history and culture of early Greek civilization.

| History and Culture | |
|--|--|
| 1. Location "around" a sea | |
| 2. Rugged mountains | |
| 3. Little fertile farmland | |
| 4. Moderate climate | |
| 5. Mycenaean adaptation of Minoan culture | |
| 6. The Trojan War | |
| 7. The collapse of Mycenaean civilization | |

Classical Greece**Lesson 2**

Warring City-States

Key Terms and People

polis city-state of ancient Greece

acropolis fortified hilltop in an ancient Greek city

monarchy government ruled by a king or queen

aristocracy government ruled by a small group of noble families

oligarchy government ruled by a few powerful people

tyrant powerful ruler who gained control of a city-state's government by asking the common people for support

democracy rule by the people

helot peasant forced to stay on the land

phalanx side-by-side fighting formation of Greek foot soldiers

Persian Wars wars between Greece and the Persian Empire

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about the rise of early cultures in Greece.

In this lesson, you will read about city-states and their governments.

As You Read

On a double time line, note the important events in the development of Athens and Sparta.

RULE AND ORDER IN GREEK CITY-STATES**How were city-states governed?**

The center of Greek life was the **polis**, or city-state. A polis was made up of a city and the countryside villages surrounding it. Men would gather in the marketplace or on a fortified hilltop in the polis, called an **acropolis**, to conduct business.

The city-states had different kinds of government. Some had a **monarchy**, a government ruled by a king or queen. Some had an **aristocracy**, a government

ruled by a small group of noble families. Later, some merchants and craft workers formed an **oligarchy**, a government ruled by a few powerful people.

Sometimes, the common people clashed with the rulers of the city-states. Powerful individuals called **tyrants** sometimes appealed to the common people for support. Tyrants would then rule the city-state. Unlike today, tyrants generally were not considered harsh or cruel. Rather, they were looked upon as leaders who did things for the ordinary people.

Lesson 2, *continued*

1. What types of government existed in the city-states?
- _____
- _____

ATHENS BUILDS A LIMITED DEMOCRACY**How was Athens governed?**

In some city-states, most notably Athens, the idea of representative government took hold. Reformers in Athens tried to build a **democracy**, or government by the people.

In 594 BC, a trusted statesman named Solon came to power. He gave citizens a greater voice. He made it possible for any citizen of Athens to join discussions in the assembly, which approved laws. About 90 years later a leader named Cleisthenes took power and introduced further democratic reforms.

Athenian citizens, then, were able to participate in a limited democracy. Not everyone was involved in making political decisions, though. Only free adult men were citizens. Women and slaves had few rights.

2. Why was Athens not a full democracy?
- _____
- _____

SPARTA BUILDS A MILITARY STATE**How was Sparta governed?**

Sparta was a very strong city-state in the south of Greece. It conquered its neighbor Messenia. The people of Messenia became **helots**. They were peasants forced to stay on the land they worked. They had to give the Spartans half their crops.

An assembly, the Council of Elders, and elected officials governed Sparta. Two kings ruled over Sparta's military. Sparta prized military skills. Boys joined the army at the age of seven. Spartan women ran the family estates, freeing their husbands to serve in the army.

3. What was Sparta's focus as a city-state?
- _____
- _____

THE PERSIAN WARS**Who fought the Persian Wars?**

Over the years, the Greeks developed the ability to make iron weapons. These cost less than bronze weapons, so more people could afford them. Soon each city-state had its own army. Soldiers stood side by side, each with a spear in one hand and a shield in the other. This positioning was known as a **phalanx**.

The **Persian Wars** were fought between Greece and the Persian Empire. In 490 BC, Persian ships landed 25,000 soldiers on the coast of Greece. At the Battle of Marathon, the Greeks won a tremendous victory that saved Athens.

Ten years later, the Persians returned. The Greeks lost a battle on land, despite the heroic efforts of a small band of Spartans. The Persians also burned Athens. However, the ships of Athens won a great sea battle. The Greeks followed it with another victory on land. The threat from Persia was over.

4. What was the outcome of the Persian Wars?
- _____
- _____

Lesson 2, continued

As you read about the growth of Greek city-states, answer the questions about events in the time line. (Some dates are approximate.)

| | | |
|-------------------|--|---|
| 725 BC | Sparta conquers Messenia. → | 1. How did Sparta treat the Messenians? |
| 650 BC | Spartans put down a revolt by Messenians. → | 2. What type of society did Sparta create in response to the revolt? |
| 621 BC | Draco writes the first legal code. → | 3. How did Athenians avoid major political upheavals? |
| 594 BC | Athenian aristocrats choose Solon to govern. → | 4. What economic and political reforms did Solon initiate? |
| 500 BC | Cleisthenes introduces political reforms in Athens. → | 5. What steps did Cleisthenes take to create a limited democracy in Athens? |
| 490 BC | Athenians defeat Persians in battle at Marathon. → | 6. What advantages did the Greek soldiers have over the Persians? |
| 479 BC | Greeks defeat remaining Persian army. → | 7. What were the consequences of the Persian Wars? |

Classical Greece**Lesson 3**

Democracy and Greece's Golden Age

Key Terms and People

direct democracy form of government in which citizens rule directly

Peloponnesian War war in which Athens and its allies were defeated by Sparta and its allies

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about the government of the city-states.

In this lesson, you will read about Athenian democracy and the Peloponnesian War.

As You Read

Use a chart to organize information about Athens's democracy and war with Sparta.

PERICLES' PLAN FOR ATHENS**How did Pericles change Athens?**

Pericles led Athens during its golden age. He served in this role from 461 to 429 BC. Pericles was considered honest and fair. He so dominated the life of Athens that this period is often called the Age of Pericles. Greek culture reached new heights under his leadership.

Pericles set many goals. One goal was to make Athens more democratic through **direct democracy**. This meant that citizens ruled directly and not through representatives.

Another goal was to make Athens stronger. Pericles helped build up Athens's navy. It became the strongest in the Mediterranean.

Athens was leader of the Delian League. Athens's strong navy allowed it to treat other members of the Delian League as part of the empire. But some

cities in the Peloponnesus, including Sparta, resisted Athens and formed their own alliances.

1. What were two of Pericles' main goals for Athens?

ATHENIANS AND SPARTANS GO TO WAR**What was the Peloponnesian War?**

After being rivals for many years, Sparta and Athens went to war. The **Peloponnesian War** began in 431 BC.

Sparta was the head of a league of allied city-states called the Peloponnesian League. For decades, Athens and its allies feared the military power of this league. Sparta feared Athens's navy and the spread of Athenian democracy.

Lesson 3, *continued*

Although Athens had the stronger navy, Sparta had the stronger army. Because Sparta was located inland, it could not easily be attacked by sea. The Spartans eventually marched into Athenian territory. They burned Athenians' food supply, but Athenians survived on supplies shipped from colonies and foreign states.

The conflict ended badly for Athens. In 430 BC a horrible plague killed a great many people in Athens. After several years, the two sides signed a truce. However, they were soon back at war. Finally, Athens gave up in 404 BC. Athens had lost its empire.

Sparta suffered almost as much damage as Athens did. Because Sparta's wealth and resources were so badly strained, Spartans could not keep control of Greece. A cycle of warfare followed as states struggled for power in Greece. This fighting left Greece vulnerable to attack. In the 340s BC, the Greek-speaking kingdom of Macedonia took control of Greece.

2. What was the result of the Peloponnesian War?

Lesson 3, *continued*

As you read this lesson, take notes to answer questions about Athens's democracy and war with Sparta.

| Athens During the Age of Pericles |
|---|
| 1. What kind of leader was Pericles? |
| 2. How did Pericles strengthen democracy? |
| 3. How did Pericles strengthen the empire? |
| Athens During the Peloponnesian War |
| 4. How did Athens and Sparta compare in power? |
| 5. What losses did Athens suffer? |
| 6. What was the aftermath of the Peloponnesian War? |

Classical Greece**Lesson 4**

Achievements of Greek Culture

Key Terms and People

classical art art in which harmony, order, and balance were emphasized

lyric poetry poems that were often accompanied by lyre music and dealt with emotions and desires

tragedy serious drama dealing with such themes as love, hate, war, or betrayal

comedy light and amusing play that may poke fun at serious subjects

philosopher thinker who uses logic and reason to explore life's important questions

Socrates Greek thinker who explored truth and justice and developed a method of questioning and answering

Plato Socrates's student who wrote *The Republic*, a view of the ideal society

Aristotle Plato's student who developed a method for testing and organizing ideas

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about Athenian democracy and the Peloponnesian War.

In this lesson, you will read about Greek contributions to classical art, literature, and philosophy.

As You Read

Use a chart to organize information about artistic and philosophical achievements in Athens.

GLORIOUS ART AND ARCHITECTURE

How was Greek art unique?

Pericles used money from the Delian League to buy gold, ivory, and marble to beautify Athens. He hired the greatest artists and architects to create magnificent buildings and sculptures to glorify the city.

One of the glories of Athens was the Parthenon. This temple was built to honor the goddess Athena. It is a masterpiece of art. Like other buildings and sculptures in Greece, it is an

example of **classical art**. It reflects order, balance, and proportion.

The Parthenon has doors but no windows. Tall, graceful columns were topped with marble carvings of scenes from myths. Parts of the building were painted in bright colors.

Much artwork inside the temple was created by the sculptor Phidias. Sculptors at this time wanted to create figures that were graceful, strong, and perfectly formed. Their goal was to portray ideal human beings.

Lesson 4, *continued*

1. Why was the Parthenon built?

POETRY, DRAMA, AND HISTORY
What kinds of literature did Greeks produce?

While the epic poems of Homer are the most famous works of Greek literature, the Greeks wrote many other types of poetry. The poet Hesiod wrote descriptive poetry. **Lyric poetry** was often read aloud while a musical instrument called a lyre was played. These poems do not tell stories, but instead explore emotions and desires.

Athens also became home to a group of very skilled playwrights. Some wrote **tragedies**. These plays were about the pain and suffering of human life.

Other playwrights wrote **comedies**. These plays made audiences laugh about important ideas. Some plays were critical of customs, politics, and people. Such performances showed that Athens was a free and open society.

Also, such writers as Herodotus and Thucydides pioneered the accurate reporting of events. Their works led to the development of the subject of history. Xenophon, another early historian, focused on describing famous men. Xenophon's works survive today and help us understand life in Greece during the 300s BC.

2. What was the purpose of Greek comedies?

PHILOSOPHERS SEARCH FOR TRUTH

What did philosophers contribute to Greek culture?

After Athens's defeat, this city-state became home to several **philosophers**. They were thinkers who tried to understand human life. One of these great thinkers was **Socrates**. He believed deeply in truth and justice. Yet many people did not trust him. They thought his teachings were dangerous. Socrates was brought to trial and condemned to death.

His pupil, **Plato**, recorded many of Socrates's ideas. Plato became an important thinker in his own right. Plato's student, **Aristotle**, wrote books that summarized the knowledge of the Greeks. His system of logic became the foundation of scientific thought used today.

3. Who were three important Greek philosophers?

Lesson 4, *continued*

As you read this lesson, take notes to answer questions about artistic achievements in Athens.

The Greeks created masterpieces of classical art.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. What steps did Pericles take to glorify Athens?</p> | <p>2. What ideas were important to classical artists?</p> |
|---|---|

The Greeks invented drama.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>3. What themes were common in Greek tragedy?</p> | <p>4. What do the themes of Greek comedies suggest about the men and women of Athens?</p> |
|---|---|

Greek philosophers search for truth.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>5. What was Plato's vision of the ideal society?</p> | <p>6. What is the philosophic legacy of Aristotle?</p> |
|---|--|

Classical Greece**Lesson 5**

Alexander the Great

Key Terms and People

Philip II king of Macedonia who conquered Greece

Macedonia kingdom located just north of Greece

Alexander the Great Philip II's son who established a huge empire

Darius III Persian king

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about Greek contributions to classical art, literature, and philosophy.

In this lesson, you will learn about Alexander the Great and his empire.

As You Read

Use a chart to note goals and results of Alexander's actions.

PHILIP BUILDS MACEDONIAN POWER**Who were the Macedonians?**

In 359 BC, **Philip II** became king of **Macedonia**, a kingdom located just to the north of Greece. He was a strong leader and trained his troops to be tough fighters. Philip prepared his army to invade Greece.

The Athenian orator Demosthenes tried to warn the Greeks. He told them about Philip's plans. But they united too late to save themselves. The Macedonians won. Greek independence was now over.

Philip planned to invade Persia next. However, he never got the chance. He was killed. His son Alexander became king at age 20. He became known as **Alexander the Great**.

1. How did Greek independence end?

ALEXANDER DEFEATS PERSIA**How did Alexander defeat Persia?**

Alexander was a brilliant general, just like his father. He was prepared to carry out his father's dream of world conquest. In 334 BC, Alexander invaded Persia. After Alexander's first victory, the king of Persia, **Darius III**, raised a huge army to face him. Alexander then used a surprise attack. Darius III had to retreat.

Alexander then moved south to enter Egypt. He was crowned pharaoh and founded a city that he named for

Lesson 5, continued

himself—Alexandria. He then turned back to Persia and won another great battle. It ended all Persian resistance. The empire was his.

2. What two kingdoms did Alexander defeat?

ALEXANDER'S OTHER CONQUESTS**How far east did Alexander push?**

Alexander pushed east, taking his army as far as India. He moved deep into that country. After many years of marching and fighting, however, his soldiers wanted to return home.

Alexander agreed and turned back. On the way home, he began to make plans for how to govern his new empire. Then he suddenly fell ill and died. He was not yet 33 years old.

Three of Alexander's generals divided his empire. One ruled Macedonia and Greece. Another took control of Egypt. The third became ruler of the lands that used to be in the Persian Empire.

Alexander's empire was not long-lasting. Yet it had important effects. After Alexander, the people of Greece and Persia and all the lands between mixed together and shared ideas and culture.

3. How did Alexander's power come to an end?

Lesson 5, continued

As you read about the empire-building of Alexander, note the goals and results of some of his actions.

| Action(s) | Goal(s) | Result(s) |
|--|---------|-----------|
| 1. Led soldiers across Hellespont into Anatolia | | |
| 2. Launched surprise attack against Persians near Issus | | |
| 3. Rejected Darius's peace settlement of all lands west of Euphrates River | | |
| 4. Launched a phalanx attack followed by a cavalry charge at Gaugamela | | |
| 5. Led army into Indus Valley | | |

Classical Greece**Lesson 6**

Hellenistic Culture

Key Terms and People

Hellenistic relating to the culture that blended Greek with Egyptian, Persian, and Indian influences

Alexandria Egyptian city that was the center of Hellenistic culture

Euclid Greek mathematician and pioneer in geometry

Archimedes Greek scientist, inventor, and mathematician

Colossus of Rhodes huge bronze statue created on the island of Rhodes

Before You Read

In the last lesson, you read about the military conquests of Alexander the Great.

In this lesson, you will learn about the spread of Hellenistic culture.

As You Read

Use a web diagram to list Hellenistic achievements in various categories.

HELLENISTIC CULTURE IN ALEXANDRIA**What was Hellenistic culture?**

A new culture arose—the **Hellenistic** culture. It blended Greek with Egyptian, Persian, and Indian influences. The center of this culture was **Alexandria**, Egypt. This city was located near the mouth of the Nile River on the Mediterranean Sea. Alexandria had a ship harbor. Trade was lively. Alexandria had a large population. These people were from many different countries.

Alexandria was also a beautiful city. Its huge lighthouse towered over the harbor. Its famous museum had works of art, a zoo, and a garden. Alexandria had the first true research library. It held

half a million papyrus scrolls. These contained everything known in the Hellenistic world.

1. Give two reasons why Alexandria became a center of Hellenistic culture.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**What new ideas arose in science, technology, and mathematics?**

While scholars kept what was known about science alive, others learned new ideas. Some used an observatory to look at the stars and planets. One of these

Lesson 6, continued

astronomers developed the idea that the sun was actually larger than Earth. No one had believed this before.

The thinkers in Alexandria also made advances in mathematics. **Euclid** wrote a book with the basic ideas of geometry. His approach is still used today.

Archimedes invented many clever machines. One was the pulley. Another is called the Archimedes screw. Its purpose was to bring water from a lower level to a higher one.

2. What two inventions did Archimedes make?

PHILOSOPHY AND ART

What new developments occurred in philosophy and the arts?

Two new schools of philosophy arose in these times. The Stoics argued that

people should live a good life to keep themselves in harmony with natural laws. Desire, power, and wealth led people down the wrong path. The Epicureans said that people could rely only on what they learned from their five senses. They urged everyone to live moral lives.

The arts were also important in Hellenistic times. Great achievements occurred in sculpture. Sculpture in the earlier Greek style aimed to show perfect forms. In the Hellenistic age, sculpted figures were more realistic and emotional. The largest known Hellenistic statue is the **Colossus of Rhodes**. It stood over 100 feet high.

3. How were Hellenistic sculptures different from earlier Greek sculptures?

Lesson 6, *continued*

As you read this lesson, fill in the diagram by listing the achievements of Hellenistic scholars and philosophers.

