



LESSON 1

3000 B.C.

2000 B.C.

1000 B.C.

3000 B.C.
Minoan civilization
arises on Crete.

1600 B.C.
Minoan civilization
reaches its height.

1400 B.C.
Rise of Mycenae
on mainland

PREVIEW

Focus on the Main Idea

Focus on the Main Idea Surrounded by mountains and water, the ancient Greeks developed communities and traveled on the sea to trade with other peoples.

PLACES

(Watch the map below as you move your mouse over each name)



- Balkan Peninsula
- Mediterranean Sea
- [Aegean Sea](#)
- Asia Minor
- Ionian Sea
- [Crete](#)
- [Mycenae](#)

PEOPLE

- [Plato](#)
- [King Minos](#)

VOCABULARY

- [agora](#)
- [plunder](#)

The Geography of Greece



1600 B.C. Standing high on a hill, overlooking the sea, there is a huge palace. Inside, the palace has hundreds of rooms-storerooms, bedrooms, workrooms, and bathrooms. Clay pipes carry running water to the people in the palace. Brilliantly colored paintings decorate the walls.

You move into a large courtyard. There, thousands of people are waiting to watch their favorite sport- bull leaping. A teenage girl calmly waits as the bull begins to charge. A split second before the bull strikes, the girl grabs the bull's horns and swings herself over its head. If the girl is lucky, she lands with her feet on the bull's back and then jumps into the arms of another member of the team.

You think to yourself, what is this civilization that lives in such a rugged landscape and enjoys such dangerous sports?



▶ In this fresco from about 1500 B.C., an athlete leaps onto the back of a bull.



Main Idea and Details As you read, think about how the physical geography of Greece influenced the civilizations that thrived there.





A Mountainous Land

In earlier chapters, you read how the first civilizations arose thousands of years ago. Many of these civilizations formed near rivers. The people depended on the rivers to overflow in the spring and flood their fields. This helped make fertile soil.

Greece was different. It did not depend on a river to flood its banks. Greece has no great rivers to form fertile valleys. Instead, it is a mountainous land with deep valleys and rugged highlands. Because of the mountains, it does not have much land that can be used for farming.

Mountains divided the people. In ancient times, Greece was not one united, or unified, country. As you can see from the map on this page, the main part of Greece is located in the southeast corner of the continent of Europe. There, the **Balkan Peninsula** extends outward into the eastern part of the **Mediterranean Sea**. Greece is located on the southern tip of the peninsula. Greek-speaking people also lived on many islands in the **Aegean Sea**. The Aegean (ee JEE un) Sea separates Greece from the western edge of Asia known as **Asia Minor**.

REVIEW

What is the land like on the mainland of Greece?

Main Idea and Details



▶ The rugged landscape influenced the development of Greek civilization.



A Land Tied to the Sea

The seas are never far from the people of Greece. The Aegean Sea lies to the east. The **Ionian** (eye OH nee un) **Sea** on the west separates Greece from Italy. To the south, the Mediterranean Sea links Greece with Asia, North Africa, and the western part of Europe. This location places Greece squarely at the crossroads of many different cultures.

Although Greece is a small land, it has a long coastline with many bays and inlets. These bays and inlets create many excellent harbors. The sea was a big influence on Greek civilization. A famous Greek thinker named **Plato** wrote:

*“Like Frogs around a pool,
we have settled down upon
the shores of this sea.”*

Being so close to these seas helped the Greeks become great sailors and traders.

In ancient Greece, most people lived along the low coastal areas and in its few short river valleys. Here, the rich soil and mild climate were perfect for raising animals and growing Greece’s main crops—grapes, olives, and grains such as barley. The Greeks sold these crops to other lands across the seas.



▶ Grapes, olives, and other produce were both food and trade goods for Greece. Today, they are still important in Mediterranean countries.

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Trade allowed Greek ideas to spread. It also allowed the Greeks to learn from other cultures. It was through this spread of ideas that the Greeks got their alphabet and began using coins for money.

REVIEW

How did living near the sea affect both lives and ideas of the Greeks?

 **Main Idea and Details**



The Granger Collection

▶ In ancient Greece, the agora, or marketplace, was a center of activity in each city. This is the agora in Athens.

Independent Communities

Geography affected how life in Greece developed. Mountains divided Greece into different regions. In the lowlands, the land was fertile and good for farming. The hills were good for grazing animals.

Uniting the country under one government was very difficult. The people of Greece did speak the same language. They also practiced the same religion. However, mountains physically separated them. People in one region did not frequently travel to another. The people developed many small and independent communities. In time, the communities grew into cities. Each city had its own way of doing things.

Greece has a pleasant climate. Most of the rainfall occurs during the winter months. Summers are hot and dry. This allowed the Greeks to develop an outdoor way of life. Many Greeks spent their time at outdoor marketplaces called **agoras**.

The agora was a common feature in Greek cities. While women filled their pots with water in public fountains, men shopped in the marketplace. Statues of local athletes, important politicians, and, in some cases, gods and goddesses, stood in the marketplace.

Because the climate was so pleasant, the Greeks enjoyed doing activities outside. They watched plays in open-air theaters. Their political meetings and religious celebrations took place outdoors. The Greeks also developed a lasting interest in sports and athletic contests.

REVIEW

Why did Greece not develop one strong central government?

 **Main Idea and Details**

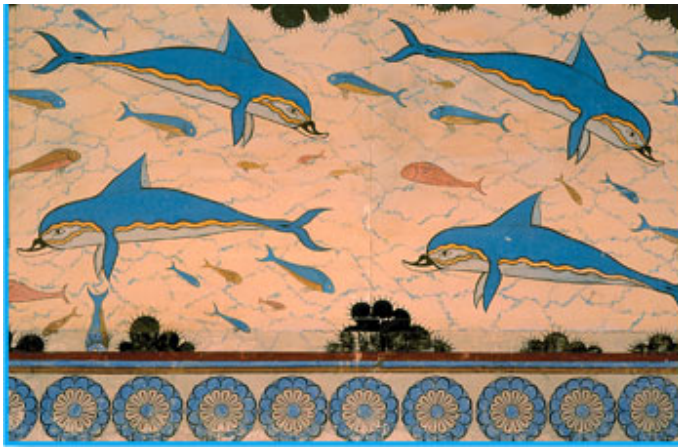




Two Early Greek Civilizations

About the same time that people settled in the Nile Valley, settlements developed on islands in the Aegean Sea. By 2500 B.C., the people of **Crete** (creeet), an island in the Mediterranean Sea, had developed a written language. They also had learned to weave cloth and make pottery and jewelry. Today, we call this the Minoan (muh NOH uhn) civilization. It is named after **King Minos** (MY nuhs). It was the Minoans who held the dangerous bull-jumping shows.

The wealth of Minoan civilization came from trade. According to Greek historians, the Minoans controlled trade with all the islands in the Aegean Sea and the cities on the coast of the Ionian Sea. We know that they traded with such lands as Syria and Egypt. They traded food grown on the island, as well as beautiful pottery and other crafts made by their artisans.



▶ Minoan artists frequently painted sea creatures, such as the dolphins in this fresco.

By 1600 B.C., the Minoan civilization was a powerful influence in the Aegean islands and the part of the Greek peninsula called Peloponnesus (pehl oh puh NEE suhs). Minoan ships patrolled the seas and protected the kingdom from invaders.



The Nok of Africa

At the same time the Greek city-states were growing, another culture was developing on a plateau in the central part of present-day Nigeria. There, the Nok people were building their own unique culture. We know very little about the Nok, because they kept no written records. We do know that their culture reached its height between about 500 B.C. and A.D. 200. We also know that they became very skilled at using iron. In fact, the Nok are responsible for the earliest known use of iron in West Africa. Iron tools allowed the Nok to clear the forest and break up the soil. The Nok settled down and built permanent towns.

In their settled towns, Nok artisans created artwork from wood and clay. They left behind beautiful clay figurines of elephants and other animals, as well as human heads.



► The people of the Nok culture created wonderfully detailed heads out of terra-cotta. These heads date back more than 2,000 years.





Then Minoan civilization grew weak. Historians and scientists don't really know why or how. Some believe that earthquakes may have destroyed the Minoan cities. New civilizations soon arose on the Greek mainland.

REVIEW

Which details explain the power of Minoan civilization?

 **Main Idea and Details**

About 2000 B.C., groups of people migrated to the Greek mainland. Over the centuries, these communities grew into cities. The cities then grew into city-states. Each one developed its own pattern of life.

The greatest of the early city-states was **Mycenae** (my SEE nee). As Mycenae grew, so did its power. It replaced Crete as the center of civilization in the eastern Mediterranean.

Mycenae could defend itself against almost any attack. Walls 20 feet thick surrounded the city. Mycenaean ships left the city to capture ships of other cities. The Mycenaens took **plunder**, or valuables seized in wartime.



);

▶ This painting of Minoan ships in the Aegean Sea is from about 1650 B.C.

The search for plunder probably led Mycenae to launch a war that would be remembered in legends throughout history. You will read more about that famous war in Lesson 2.


Summarize the Lesson

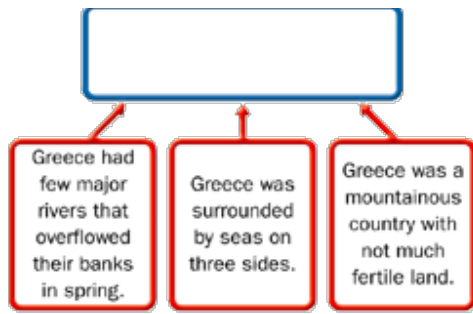
- **3000 B.C.** Minoan civilization arose on the island of Crete.
- **1600 B.C.** Minoan civilization reached its height.
- **1400 B.C.** City of Mycenae grew powerful on the Greek mainland.

LESSON 1

REVIEW

Check Facts and Main Ideas

1.  **Main Idea and Details** On a separate piece of paper, write an appropriate main idea in the box for the three supporting details shown below.



2. What was the Minoan civilization?
3. What are the three seas that border Greece?
4. What effect did mountains have on the peoples in Greece?
5. **Critical Thinking: Make Generalizations** In your own words, describe the importance of the sea to the people of Greece.

Link to



Art

Interpret a Painting The Minoans probably were the first people to use fresco painting. This means that they painted on plaster that was still wet—*fresco* means *fresh*. Look at the fresco paintings on pages 246, 250, and 251. How do you think the Minoans decided what to paint?





LESSON 2

1500 B.C.

1250 B.C.
Trojan War
takes place.

1000 B.C.

about 900 B.C.
Sparta begins
conquering its
neighbors.

500 B.C.

500 B.C.
Democracy appears
in Greece.

PREVIEW

Focus on the Main Idea

Focus on the Main Idea Surrounded by mountains and water, the ancient Greeks developed communities and traveled on the sea to trade with other peoples.



PLACES

(Watch the map below as you move your mouse over each name)

- [Troy](#)
- [Mount Olympus](#)
- [Athens](#)
- [Sparta](#)

PEOPLE

- [Homer](#)
- [Pericles](#)

VOCABULARY

- [myth](#)
- [immortal](#)
- [aristocracy](#)
- [democracy](#)

TERMS

- [oral tradition](#)
- [Assembly](#)
- [helot](#)

The Greek City-States



You feel like it's time for a good actionadventure story. Picking up a book of Greek tales, you begin to read. For a long time, the battle between the god Zeus (Zoos) and the powerful giants has raged.

Armed with thunderbolts, mighty Zeus has finally destroyed his enemies. Now, Zeus rules the gods and goddesses.

As time passes, Zeus becomes father to many new gods and goddesses. The goddess Athena is born when Zeus is struck on the head. She springs from his forehead, full grown, in full armor, and with a loud battle cry. Athena is known as the goddess of wisdom.

However, she is also a warrior goddess. Athena aids the Greeks in the most famous of legendary battles, the Trojan War. Will Athena's power be greater than that of the gods who are helping Troy?

You can hardly wait to read what happens next.



EVENTS

- [Trojan War](#)
- [Olympic Games](#)



▶ Athena was the goddess of wisdom. Athens was named for Athena after she won a contest with another god over who would become the patron of the new city.



Compare and Contrast As you read, think about how Athens and Sparta were different and similar.





REVIEW

Why do we remember the poet Homer today?

Draw Conclusions

▶ Odysseus had many adventures during his ten-year voyage home. The mythical tale the *Odyssey* includes encounters with monsters, magicians, and giants, such as the one-eyed cyclops.

The Power of Greek Myths and Legends

In the **Trojan War**, fought between the Greeks and the people of Troy, gods and goddesses helped heroes on both sides of the battle. In ancient Greece, daily life often focused on trying to keep these gods and goddesses happy.

Troy, a city on the western coast of Asia Minor, really existed. However, the story of the war is a blend of legend and myth. Legends are about heroes and their great deeds.

Myths are traditional stories that may include gods and goddesses and that often try to explain events in nature.

Greece's city-states appear in many myths. Sparta was the home of Helen, who was carried off to Troy. This started the Trojan War. Athens was named for Athena, who helped the Greeks during the war. To end the war, the Greeks built a giant, wooden horse. The Trojans thought it was a gift that showed that the Greeks had surrendered. They pulled the horse into the city. At night, Greek soldiers crept out of the horse and opened the city gates to the Greek army.

According to tradition, a blind poet named **Homer** composed two poems about this war. These poems are the *Iliad* (ILL ee ad) and the *Odyssey* (ODD uh see). The *Iliad* tells about the war itself. One of the heroes in the *Iliad* was Odysseus (oh DIH see uhs). The *Odyssey* tells Homer of Odysseus, whose ship, while sailing home, was blown off course by gods he had angered.

Before Homer composed the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, myths and legends were part of what we call **oral tradition**. That is, they were passed down, by word of mouth, from person to person. Now they are among the world's most famous stories.

Literature and Social Studies

The Aeneid

Another hero of the war was the Trojan Aeneas (ih NEE uhs). He survived the destruction of

Troy and later founded the town that became Rome. *The Aeneid*, an epic poem by Virgil, tells Aeneas' story. Here, Aeneas speaks of the war. Are these lines more myth or legend?

*Wearied of the war,
And by ill-fortune crushed, year after year,
The kings of Greece, by Pallas' [Athena]
skill divine,
Build a huge horse, a thing of
mountain size,
With timbered ribs of fir.*





The Gods of Mount Olympus

ALike most other ancient peoples, the Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses. The Greeks developed many myths. Like the Egyptians, the Greeks turned to myths to help them understand the mysteries of nature and life. The myths helped them explain birth, death, disease, storms, and victories and defeats in battle.

The Greeks believed that most gods lived on **Mount Olympus** (oh LIM pus), located in northern Greece. The Greeks believed their gods and goddesses were very much like humans. They looked and acted like humans. They argued, fought, fell in love, and were jealous like humans. But, unlike humans, the gods were **immortal**, or able to live forever. They also had special powers.

The Greeks honored their gods and goddesses in many ways. Every four years, the Greeks held athletic contests to honor Zeus, the king of the gods. Because these contests were held in the city of Olympia, they became known as the **Olympic Games**. Boxers, wrestlers, runners, and other athletes came from all parts of Greece to compete in the Olympics. The Greeks began to compete in these games about 3,500 years ago. Our modern Olympics are based on the ancient Greek games.



▶ A Greek image of women runners (at left). Below is Joan Benoit Samuelson, winner of the first women's marathon in the modern Olympic Games.

REVIEW

Why might both the Egyptians and Greeks have developed myths?

Draw Conclusions



The Greeks believed in many gods and goddesses. The most important, they believed, lived on Mount Olympus. Here are some of them:



Democracy Begins in Greece

The city-states of Greece developed many different forms of government. In some, a king ruled. In others, the government was controlled by members of wealthy, privileged families. This form of government is known as an **aristocracy**. Around 500 B.C., a new form of government developed in some city-states. This new government became known as a **democracy**, or government by the people.

Demos is a Greek word that means “common people.” *Kratos* is a Greek word that means “rule.” The Greeks believed that people could think and act for themselves. They proposed that people could rule themselves better than any king could. Democracy arose from these beliefs.

The city-state of **Athens** was the best example of a Greek democracy. At first, Athens was governed by all citizens older than 18. This gathering of citizens was called the **Assembly**. The Assembly soon became so large that it was hard to get anything done. Then, 500 citizens were selected to serve on a council for one year. These citizens were picked by choosing lots, or sticks with numbers on them. Actions of the council had to be approved by the Assembly of all citizens.

Democracy had a very different meaning to the ancient Greeks than it does today. Democracy was limited to citizens. Slaves, women, and workers born outside Athens were not citizens. They did not have the right to vote, own property, or testify in court.

Rivals: Athens and Sparta

In return for their rights, citizens of Athens had major responsibilities. They were expected to defend the city in times of conflict. They also had to take part in government by serving on juries and participating in political debates on important issues. One of the greatest leaders in Athens, **Pericles** (PEH ruh kleez), described the responsibilities of citizenship:

“We do not say that a man who takes no interest in politics is a man who minds his own business; we say that he has no business here at all.”

In many ways, **Sparta**, a city-state located in the southern part of Greece, was the opposite of Athens. The Spartans lived in a strictly ruled military state. Sparta invaded neighboring city-states, taking over farmlands and forcing the local people to become **helots**, or slaves.

Life in Sparta centered on the army.

Government officials examined newborn infants to see if they were healthy. Only healthy infants were allowed to live. When Spartan boys turned seven, they were sent to military camps to begin training for a lifetime in the army. Their training was brutal. They were given little food or clothing. They were expected to survive by stealing whatever they needed.

REVIEW

What details show that Athens developed a system of democracy?

Main Idea and Details

REVIEW

What details show that Sparta was governed differently than Athens?

Main Idea and Details



► The *dromos* was a running place or race course. The *dromos* in Sparta, shown here, was a place where young people could come and exercise.



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Women in Sparta

The state also expected Spartan women to be strong and responsible. They ran, wrestled, and played other active sports. When Spartan women sent their sons off to war, it was with this advice:

“Return home with your shield or on it.”

Spartan men spent so much time with the army that their wives did not see them very often. Spartan women spent most of their time with each other. They had more personal rights than women in other Greek city-states. They could own property and express opinions on important issues. They managed family estates while men were away at war. However, like the women of Athens, Spartan women could not take part in governing the city-state.



▶ A girl is shown exercising in this sculpture made in or near Sparta. Greeks outside of Sparta were usually horrified by the short skirts worn by Spartan women.

Summarize the Lesson

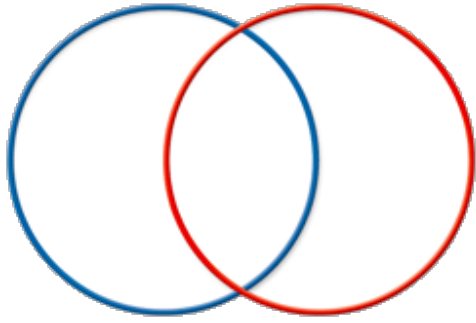
- **1250 B.C.** Troy and ancient Greece fought a long war.
- **about 900 B.C.** Sparta began conquering its neighbors.
- **500 B.C.** Democracy began developing in some Greek city-states.

Why did the state expect Spartan women to train hard and play active sports?

Draw Conclusions

Check Facts and Main Ideas

1. **Compare and Contrast** On a separate piece of paper, copy the diagram below. Compare and contrast Athens and Sparta.



2. Where did the Greeks believe that most gods lived?
3. What is an **aristocracy**?
4. What does the story about the Trojan War tell us about the Greek attitudes toward their gods and goddesses?
5. **Critical Thinking: Evaluate Information** If you had the choice, would you rather grow up in Athens or in Sparta? Why?

Link to Reading

Use a Dictionary You have learned how we got the word **democracy** from Greek words meaning “common people rule.” Look in a dictionary to find out what Greek words are used to make the word *aristocracy*.





Pericles

c. 495 B.C.–429 B.C.

When Pericles became a statesman he quickly became a friend to the common people. Pericles often invited poor citizens home to have dinner with him. He was a hard worker and left little time for himself. He is said to have attended only one party in his life, which he left early! He also encouraged a democracy in which all adult male citizens had a voice in government.

However, his policies were sometimes criticized by other Greek states and by his fellow Athenians. For example, Pericles planned to rebuild Athens. He wanted to pay for the project with defense money that was set aside to be used against the Persians. Because Greece was not at war with Persia, Pericles thought the money would be better spent for the building project. Sparta refused to support his plan. In 447 B.C., an army of Greece's finest builders and craftsmen began work on the Parthenon and several other splendid buildings. Pericles' rivals complained that the project was too costly:

"Greece cannot but resent it . . . when she sees the treasure, which was contributed by her upon a necessity for the war . . . hung round with precious stones and figures and temples, which cost a world of money."

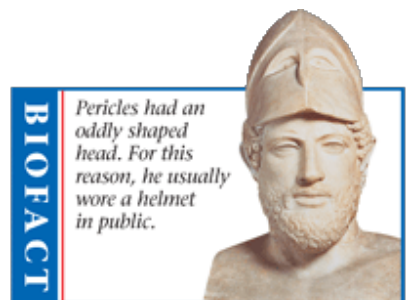
The Parthenon was completed in 438 B.C. It is considered to be one of the finest achievements in Greek architecture.



Learn from Biographies

Why do you think Pericles thought it was so important to beautify and rebuild Athens after the destruction caused by war?

For more information, go online to Meet the People at www.sfsocialstudies.com





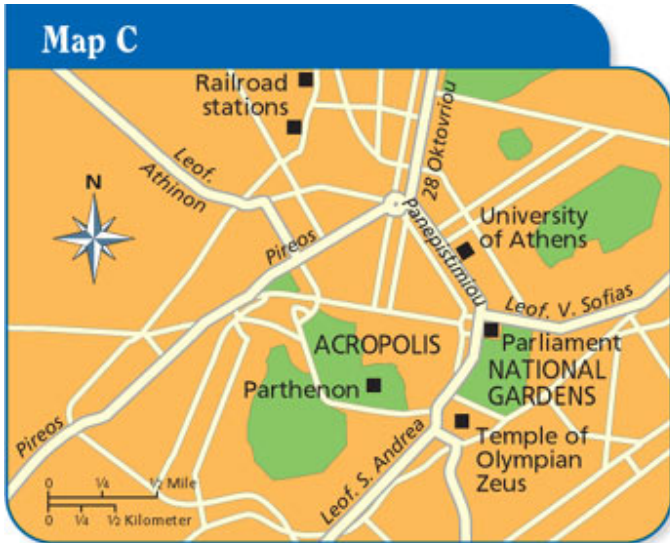
Map and Globe Skills

Compare City Maps at Different Scales

What? Different maps can have the same location at their centers, even though the maps are at different map scales. The size of the places shown will appear larger or smaller, depending on the scale. More of the surrounding area will be visible on some maps. Less of the surrounding area will be visible on other maps. The details shown on the maps will be different.

Why? Maps can contain different kinds of details. When choosing the right scale for a particular map, mapmakers consider what types of detail they need to show. To show all the streets of a city on a map, the city will have to appear very large. This makes the streets shown on the map easier to read. However, to show the surrounding land and water, the city will appear smaller on the map. This leaves room for the landforms, bodies of water, and other cities that surround the city.





How? These pages contain three different maps. Each is drawn to a different scale. Athens is at the center of each map.

Study Map A. Can you spot Athens on the map? Athens appears small so that there will be room to show the area surrounding Athens. What types of details are being shown on this map? What reasons can you think of for using a map at this scale? What other kinds of details would fit with this particular map?


Now study Map B. More of Athens is visible on Map B than on Map A. Look at the details that appear on Map B but did not appear on Map A. For example, you can see some roads on Map B. Then consider the types of detail that appeared on Map A but do not appear on Map B. For example, you can see in Map A that Italy is nearby. What are the most important facts you can learn about Athens from Map A? What other kinds of details might appear on a map with the scale of Map B?

Compare the two maps. If the word Athens were removed from both maps, what details would help you figure out how one map relates to the other? Now study Map C. This is a detailed street map of Athens. What kinds of details are shown on this map that do not appear on the other two maps? What details appeared on Map B that do not appear on Map C? What other kinds of details would make this map more useful?

Think of a giant telescope out in space. Map shows you the greatest area. Map B zooms in toward Earth. Map C moves you closest to Earth. It shows the smallest area, but has the greatest detail.

Think and Apply

1. If you were writing a paper on the empire of the Greeks in the ancient world, which map would be most useful?
2. If you were touring downtown Athens, which map would be the most useful?
3. Which map would be most useful if you needed to get to the airport?
4. All three maps are alike in certain ways. Name one way they are alike. The maps are different in certain ways. Name two ways they are different.

Internet Activity 

For more information, go online to the Atlas by [Clicking here](#).





LESSON 3

500 B.C.

400 B.C.

300 B.C.

480 B.C.
Battle of Salamis490 B.C.
Battle of Marathon404 B.C.
Sparta defeats Athens
in Peloponnesian War.

PREVIEW

Focus on the Main Idea

Focus on the Main Idea Surrounded by mountains and water, the ancient Greeks developed communities and traveled on the sea to trade with other peoples.

PLACES

(Watch the map below as you move your mouse over each name)



- [Athens](#)
- Marathon
- Salamis
- Thebes
- Macedonia

PEOPLE

- [Socrates](#)
- [Aristotle](#)

VOCABULARY

- [marathon](#)
- [philosopher](#)
- [reason](#)
- [plague](#)
- [mercenary](#)

TERMS

- [Golden Age](#)

The Golden Age of Athens



Your family and neighbors are worried. The powerful army of the Persian Empire has invaded the Greek mainland. At Marathon, a coastal plain northeast of Athens, the Persian army prepares for battle. The Athenian army is outnumbered.

In Athens you worry that your army may not be able to defeat the invaders. The Persian Empire is powerful. Then you hear that the Athenians have attacked the Persians. You wait.

In the distance you see a runner coming toward the city. He is a warrior from the Athenian army.

You can see that he has run a great distance. What news does he have?

Reaching the city, the warrior gasps:

Rejoice, we conquer.

Then he collapses.



- [Socratic method](#)
- [Delian League](#)

EVENTS

- [Peloponnesian War](#)



► Sports and physical skill were valued by the Greeks. They were so important that images of athletes were common decorations. Here, runners sprint around a Grecian vase.



Compare and Contrast As you read, think about what made the Golden Age in Athens.





The Greeks Clash with the Persians

You have already read about the Persian Empire on page 132. At the time **Athens** was growing more powerful, Persia was the strongest military power in the world. In 490 B.C., Persia attacked the Greek mainland with a huge army. The two armies clashed at a plain northeast of Athens called **Marathon**. According to legend, after the Athenian victory, the Athenian army sent a warrior named Pheidippides (fy DIHP uh deez) back to Athens with the news. He ran the entire distance—25 miles. Today, we remember this legend in the name of the longest Olympic race—the **marathon**.

The Greeks knew the Persians would attack again with an even larger army. To survive, Spartans and Athenians put aside their differences and prepared to fight the Persians together.

In 480 B.C., a Greek army held off a much larger Persian army for three days at a mountain pass north of Athens. A small force that included 300 Spartans stood its ground until almost all its soldiers were killed.

Then, in a mighty sea battle at **Salamis** (SAL uh mihs), Athenian ships trapped and destroyed the Persian fleet. The Persian invasion ended soon afterwards, in 479 B.C. Athens and Sparta, working together, had defeated the most powerful empire of its time.

REVIEW

Why did the Spartans cooperate with the Athenians?

 **Main Idea and Details**

Map Adventure

You're Leading the Spartans

You stand at attention before Leonidas, king of Sparta and commander of the army. The Persians are advancing. You must get your troops to Athens in four days or all will be lost.

You consult your map of Greece.

1. Using the map scale, how many miles in a straight line are between Athens and Sparta?
2. By land, your army must march from Sparta to Mantinea, then to Corinth and Megara, and finally to Athens. How many total miles will this march be?
3. If your army can travel 30 miles a day, how long will it take you to get to Athens? Your ships can travel about 6 miles an hour. Instead of marching the whole way,
4. would it be quicker to march to Argos, go to Piraeus by ship, and then march to



The Golden Age

After the defeat of the Persians in 479 B.C., Athens entered a period known as the **Golden Age**. During this time, the people of Athens built magnificent new temples. Artists created statues and monuments of breathtaking beauty.

During the Golden Age, **Greek philosophers** extended human knowledge. Philosophers study truth and knowledge. Greek philosophers such as **Socrates**, Plato, and **Aristotle** (see the Fact File on this page) searched for beauty and order in the world. They tried to find natural laws that explained actions in the world.

Followers of the great philosophers developed a respect for the power of **reason**, or logical thinking. They believed that it was possible to figure out an explanation for why things happened in nature. It was not just the whims of gods or goddesses. For example, the Greeks were among the first people to study the causes of sickness. Earlier societies had blamed illness on the gods' displeasure. Greek physicians tried to find natural, predictable explanations for the workings of the human body.

REVIEW

Why is the period after the defeat of the Persians considered a "golden age" for Athens?

Summarize

The Greek Philosophers

Socrates (SOK ruh tee) tried to teach people to think by asking them questions. Each question was designed to take a person step-by-step to a final conclusion. Today, this approach to teaching is known as the **Socratic method**.

Plato did not believe that democracy was the best kind of government. Rather, he proposed that a small group of wise men should run the government. He thought they could make better decisions than most people. Plato also believed that, if humans applied reason, they could create a perfect world.

Aristotle was Plato's student. He wrote more than 170 books on astronomy, physics, politics, art, and other subjects. He established a school in Athens for the study of

all branches of knowledge. This school became a model for the modern university.



▶ The Parthenon, at right, was a temple built to honor Athena. It once housed a fabulous gold and ivory statue of the goddess. The Parthenon sits on the acropolis, or high point of the city, in Athens. It is considered the ideal of Greek architecture.



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The Greeks Fight Against Each Other

During its Golden Age, Athens became the most powerful Greek city-state. After the defeat of the Persians, the leaders of Athens began to act unwisely. They formed an alliance, an agreement to work together, called the **Delian League**. Athens forced some city-states to join the alliance. It used the League's funds to put up public buildings in Athens. Athenian generals began interfering in the affairs of other city-states. Other Greeks became angry and resentful.

Sparta became the leader of the city-states opposed to Athens. In 431 B.C., war broke out between Athens and Sparta. It was called the **Peloponnesian** (pel uh puh NEEZH un) **War** after the area of Greece where most of the fighting took place.

Athens' great strength was as a sea power. Sparta was more of a land power. At first, this made it hard for either Athens or Sparta to gain a real advantage.



Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource

▶ In this vase painting, Greek warriors prepare for battle.

For example, the Spartans and their allies attacked by destroying farms and homes around Athens. By doing this, the Spartans hoped to starve the Athenians into surrendering. However, the Athenian navy was able to get food to the citizens.

A **plague**, or a fast-spreading, often deadly disease, broke out in Athens. It killed thousands of people, including Pericles. After Pericles' death, the government of Athens became unstable. Finally, in 404 B.C., an exhausted Athens surrendered.

REVIEW

In what way did the Athenians act unwisely in dealing with their allies in the Delian League?

🎯 **Main Idea and Details**



▶ Sparta defeated Athens after years of fighting in the Peloponnesian War.

MAP SKILL Use a Map Key *Which city had the most allies?*



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