

## 6th SS LEAP Practice Workbook

### Week 1

1. Complete each day's work.

Week 1 Day 1





## Chapter 4

### Early Humans and Ancient River Valley Civilizations

**Unit 2:** Ancient Civilizations

**Standard(s) Covered:** 6.1.1, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3, 6.6.1, 6.6.2, 6.6.3, 6.6.4

Key Term Activity at the end of the chapter

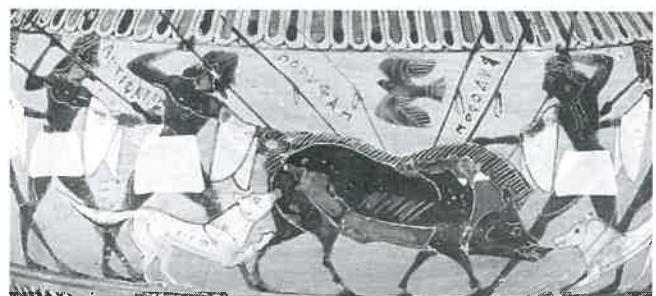
#### The Lives of Early Humans

**Civilization** refers to a human society that is in some way advanced. Generally, civilizations share six characteristics.

##### Six Characteristics of Civilizations

1. Large Population Centers
2. Monumental Architecture and Unique Art
3. Systems of Writing and Record Keeping
4. Complex Institutions
5. Specialization/Complex Division of Labor
6. Social Classes and Structures

Since we live in a civilization and see evidence of civilization all around us, it can be easy to take civilization's existence for granted. It is safe to say, though, that for most of human existence, people have *not* lived in civilizations. Instead, the earliest humans were **hunter-gatherers**. Men primarily hunted wild game, including wild goats and mammoths, and women mostly collected wild berries, nuts, and grains. Life was dangerous, and people moved around constantly because it was easy to exhaust a food source in one area in a short time.



*Boar Hunt*

Because they had to devote so much of their time and energy to obtaining food and rarely remained in one place for long, civilization was a luxury that early humans couldn't afford. It would take three great achievements to encourage the founding of major civilizations. These achievements were: mastery over fire, development of spoken language, and the invention of tools and technology.

## Mastery Over Fire

About half a million years ago, humans learned to **master fire**. Being able to build a fire helped transform the ways in which people lived their lives. They could now cook, see at night, frighten away wild predators, and—most importantly—keep warm during the winter.



A diorama showing *Homo erectus*, the earliest human species that is known to have controlled fire, from inside the National Museum of Mongolian History in Mongolia.

## The Development of Spoken Language

Spoken language began developing by necessity. Humans needed to adapt their voice sounds from grunts to calls to phonemes (sound within words), until they eventually began producing words themselves. The **development of spoken language** impacted almost every aspect of human society. For instance, hunters could now hunt more efficiently since they could communicate the locations of the best water sources to one another.



## The Invention of Tools and Technology

The earliest tools were almost exclusively used for hunting. Using stone and wood, people created hand axes and clubs. They were now able to kill large animals from safer distances. As time passed, tools became more refined. As they became more refined, their uses expanded. Blades, for instance, became smaller and smaller until someone invented the bone needle to help sew baskets, nets, and clothing.

## Impact of Human Achievements on Future Development

Perhaps most importantly, the most crucial human achievements allowed people the time and energy to develop civilization. Groups of people, which had previously been limited to 10 or 12 members since food was hard to come by, now grew much larger. As the people in these groups communicated with one another, tell-tale signs of civilization—like **religious rituals and beliefs** and **art**—began to spring up.



Prehistoric Cave Painting

## The Neolithic Revolution

Above everything else, however, the Neolithic Revolution paved the way for civilization as we know it. Occurring around 10,000 BCE, the

**Neolithic Revolution** saw people move from hunting and gathering to **agriculture** to produce the food they needed to survive. Whereas hunting and gathering could only feed so many people so much, agriculture produced **food surpluses**. With plenty of food to eat, people no longer had to be constantly on the move in search of their next meal. This led to **permanent settlements**. An abundance of food also led to an **increase in population**. Permanent settlements with large populations enabled civilizations to develop with the six key features mentioned above.

Living in a society based on farming allowed people to develop complex civilizations. There were, however, drawbacks to this reliance on agriculture. One drawback was the spread of infectious diseases. When population groups had been smaller, there was less chance of one sick person infecting a massive number of people. With population more concentrated, though, disease could spread quite rapidly.

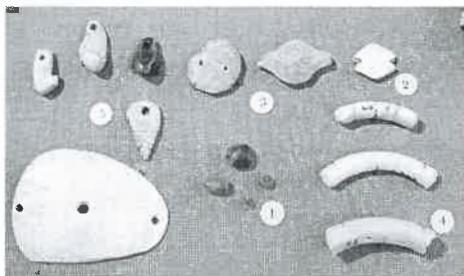
The spreading of disease was also a drawback to **domesticating animals**. In general, though, domesticating animals benefited people. Domesticated horses and oxen, for example, could transport heavy loads long distances and led to the emergence of trade.



Sculpture Depicting Horses Use in Travel

### Early Settlements of Catalhoyuk and Jarmo

One of the most significant Neolithic human settlements can be found in **Catalhoyuk** in modern-day Turkey. Dating back to around 7500 BCE, while it might not have been developed enough to be called a civilization, Catalhoyuk is the oldest example of a permanent settlement. Not only have archaeologists observed evidence of wheat and barley cultivation, but they have also observed evidence of the domestication of cattle, pottery, textiles, the burial of the dead under homes, and even built-in furniture. Catalhoyuk also had local religious shrines and a unique and dangerous sports practice involving bulls.



Personal adornments from Jarmo

The settlement of **Jarmo** is another well-preserved example of Neolithic settlement located in modern-day Iraq. Jarmo dates to sometime between 7000 to 4950 BCE. Like at Catalhoyuk, villagers at Jarmo domesticated animals, including goats and dogs, raised agricultural crops, and produced pottery. In Jarmo, the presence of obsidian objects—which were also present in a lake 200 miles away—and shells from the Persian Gulf suggest the presence of a trading network between the village and other settlements that extended for long distances.

### Practice 1: Early Humans

1. For early humans, civilization was—
  - A. something they didn't want.
  - B. a luxury they couldn't afford.
  - C. impossible due to climatic conditions.
  - D. developed millions of years ago but quickly lost.
  
2. The transition of people from being hunter-gatherers to farmers is known as the—
  - A. Neolithic Revolution.
  - B. Commercial Revolution.
  - C. food surplus.
  - D. settlement of Jarmo.

- 3.** Of the three major human achievements that most directly led to the beginning of civilization, which one do you think was most important? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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Week 1 Day 2



## Major Ancient River Valley Civilizations

The first major ancient civilizations sprung up in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and China. It is no coincidence that these civilizations were located along rivers. Rivers provided the water necessary for large-scale agriculture to thrive. Large scale agriculture, in turn, laid the foundations for highly-developed civilizations.

Now let's investigate the ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus Valley, and China. As we go along, review the six characteristics of civilization at the beginning of the chapter and be on the lookout for how these civilizations embodied them.

### Mesopotamia

Historians and archaeologists generally agree that the first civilizations sprung up in around 4000 BCE in **Mesopotamia**, a region extending across much of modern-day Iraq and parts of modern-day Iran, Syria, and Turkey. Because civilization originated in Mesopotamia, it is often called the "**Cradle of Civilization**." Because the area in between the Tigris and Euphrates River is shaped like a quarter moon and once grew a wide number of crops, it is known as "**The Fertile Crescent**".



*The Fertile Crescent*

Mesopotamia was the site of the world's first great cities, of which **Uruk** is the oldest. The most famous examples of Mesopotamian architecture are ziggurats. A rectangular stepped tower often with a temple at the top, a **ziggurat** was a dwelling place for priests and gods that was made of sunbaked bricks.

Inhabitants of Mesopotamia

also wrote things down. The script they used was called **cuneiform**, a system which incorporated wedge-shaped symbols whose meanings grew more abstract as time progressed.



*Cuneiform Tablet*

Of all the aspects of civilization it featured, Mesopotamia is perhaps most notable for its complex institutions. The most famous evidence of complex institutions existing in Mesopotamia is Hammurabi's Code. **Hammurabi's Code**, written by the Babylonian king Hammurabi in the eighteenth century BCE, was the first written set of laws in human history, and it recommended that the punishments handed out for a crime harm the criminal as much as the criminal had harmed the original victim. This is often referred to as the "eye for an eye" approach to making laws.



**Hammurabi**



**US Supreme Court Building in Washington, DC**

Mesopotamians also had a complex pantheon, or system of gods. In total, Mesopotamians worshiped over a thousand gods. Their devotion was reflected through their persistence in performing rituals and their commitment to being good citizens. Most historians generally agree that some biblical stories have common themes in Mesopotamian stories. For instance, *The Epic of Gilgamesh* closely mirrors the biblical story of Noah's flood.

Inhabitants of Mesopotamia were principally farmers. The development of civilizations there, however, did allow for **job specialization**. People who didn't farm often found work making shoes, fishing, weaving, making items out of bronze, or serving as priests. In reality, though, civilization allowed for job specialization in all the ancient river valley civilizations. Take a look at this chart to understand some of the general roles people played in these ancient economies.



**Epic of Gilgamesh**

#### Job Specialization Chart

Job Title	Job Description
<b>Farmer</b>	Representing the vast majority of people, farmers cultivated plants and raised domesticated animals to feed society. Their work allowed the remaining, unoccupied members of society to specialize in other occupations.
<b>Scribe</b>	Literate people who would carve writing and create signature seals, scribes worked in the business, law, and history arenas.
<b>Merchant</b>	Merchants were traders and shopkeepers who bought and sold goods within and between cities. Merchants created a more easy-to-understand society by agreeing on standard weights and measures. They were also largely responsible for the transmission of ideas and services, in addition to goods, between societies.
<b>Artisan</b>	Artisans were skilled workers and craftspeople from the middle class who created goods for the upper class to purchase.

<b>Engineer</b>	Participants in the first examples of urban planning, engineers specialized in the construction of buildings, roads, drainage systems, and irrigation systems.
<b>Laborer</b>	Generally working for pay but often slaves, laborers were unskilled workers who worked in households and on construction projects.

Inhabitants of Mesopotamia also invented the **wheel**, the **plow**, and **irrigation systems**. These irrigation systems cleverly used flooding—which had previously been a threat to civilization—to water crops on a massive scale. As agricultural production increased, trade began to thrive.

In its heyday, Mesopotamia was home to many civilizations, so it would be impossible to provide a detailed political history of the entire region here. However, it is worth noting that Hammurabi was not the only remarkable king in the region's history. In particular, **Sargon**, a king of the Akkad civilization, oversaw much development of the region in the third millennium BCE. Still, even under his reign, Mesopotamia was divided, and resistance to his authority was common.



*Sargon of Akkad*



### Egypt

The recorded history of **Egypt** begins around 3400 BCE, although organized farming existed there in some form since around 6000 BCE. A center of culture and trade, the city of **Memphis** was crucial to early Egyptian history. The **Nile River** was also crucial to Egyptian history, as Egyptians used it to water their crops. Like the Mesopotamians, they engineered **irrigation systems** to take advantage of this massive water source.

Ancient Egyptian architecture, institutions, and social structure were all closely intertwined. You're probably familiar with images of the Great Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx. After all, they're probably the most famous examples of ancient architecture. The **Great Pyramids of Giza**, full of underground chambers and tunnels, were both political and religious

monuments. Egyptians buried **pharaohs**, or their kings whom they considered divine, inside them. Probably constructed to honor a specific pharaoh, the **Sphinx**, with its head of a human and body of a lion, also testified to how closely the ancient Egyptians associated politics with religion. Majestic and inspiring, both the pyramids and the Sphinx speak to just how much thriving human civilizations can achieve at their pinnacles.

While ancient Egyptians worshiped pharaohs, they, like the Mesopotamians, had a large pantheon of gods.

These gods' traits and the myths surrounding them reflected Egyptians' belief that life was only a brief stint in the eternal journey of the soul. Instead of being obsessed with death, as many people today like to portray them, the Egyptians were more obsessed with the afterlife. Since the pyramids were like eternal apartments for dead pharaohs, it's no wonder the



*Egyptian Pyramid and Sphinx*



*Egyptian Mummy*

Egyptians spent so much of their resources perfecting them. It's also no wonder the Egyptians specialized in **mummification**, or preserving the bodies of important people who had died.

While the history of Egypt is long and complex, four pharaohs in particular are worth knowing. These are Hatshepsut, Amenhotep the Magnificent, Tutankhamen, and Ramesses the Great. Inheriting the throne in 1478 BCE, **Hatshepsut** was the first female pharaoh. Wildly successful, she expanded trade and building construction. **Amenhotep the**

**Magnificent** ruled from 1386-1349 BCE. A builder of magnificent temples, Amenhotep made Egypt dominant in the surrounding region, and his reign is considered something of a "golden age." In his short life of only seventeen or eighteen years, **Tutankhamen** (popularly known as "King Tut") never matched the achievements of Hatshepsut or Amenhotep the Magnificent. Instead, he is known for his elaborate, beautiful, and intact tomb. A celebrated general, **Ramesses the**



**Great** ruled Egypt from 1279-1213 BCE and greatly extended the kingdom's borders. He has become perhaps the most famous of all the pharaohs.

The Egyptian system of writing, known as **hieroglyphics**, was even more famous than Mesopotamian cuneiform. All told, there were over 1100 hieroglyphic representations. Not only were they used to adorn the walls of temples and pyramids; abbreviated forms of them were also used to conduct day-to-day business. In fact, the main reason historians know so much about Egyptian culture is because Egyptians recorded a great deal in hieroglyphics. Eventually, Egyptians began writing on material made from **papyrus**, a reed plant that grew in marshy areas along the Nile River.

*Hieroglyphics Carving Temple in Edfu, Egypt*

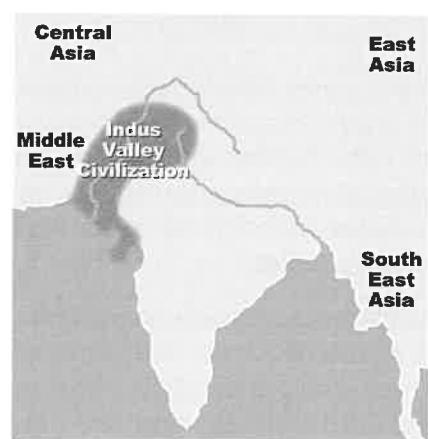
### Indus Valley Civilization

A crucial example of an ancient river civilization, the **Indus Valley civilization** spanned from modern-day Pakistan to modern-day northwest India. Organized farming began there around 3300 BCE, **irrigation systems** followed soon thereafter, and by 3000 BCE,

the civilization had begun to build **planned cities**. The most famous of these were **Mohenjo-Daro** and **Harappa**, and architecture in these cities featured houses with wells, bathrooms, and underground drainage systems. Harappa was famous for **Harrapan seals**, which were officially-imprinted pieces of clay that functioned much like coins. While the Indus Valley civilization had a system of writing, unfortunately, scholars have yet to be able to decipher it. For this reason, much about this civilization is still shrouded in mystery.



*Indus Valley Harrapan seal with fighting scene*



## China

Between 4000-3000 BCE, a permanent farming civilization developed in China's **Yellow River Valley**, as evidenced by the **glazed pottery** found there that dates back to this time. China's first ruling family, known as the **Xia Dynasty**, lorded over China from 2070-1600 BCE. While some historians believe the Xia Dynasty was a mythological creation of later Chinese dynasties, others believe it really existed. Legend contends that the Xia Dynasty was able to master the flooding of the Yellow River by developing a complex **irrigation system**.

But while the Xia Dynasty may or may not have existed, the **Shang Dynasty** certainly did. Ruling from 1600-1046 BCE, the Shang Dynasty saw China make immense cultural progress. For one thing, it saw the creation of items from **bronze** on an industrial scale. For another, it saw the creation of many **planned cities**. Perhaps most importantly, it saw the invention of Chinese writing in the form of Oracle Bone Script. **Oracle Bone Script** was pieced together from the bones of oxen or the shells of turtles and was primarily used in divination, or the prediction of the future. Gradually, however, these symbols grew more abstract in their meanings and became the basis for Chinese writing.

The relative stability and prosperity of the Shang Dynasty allowed Chinese religion to thrive. Chinese religion under the Shang Dynasty promoted both ancestor worship and the worship of kings. Like the ancient Egyptians, the ancient Chinese were heavily invested in the idea of an afterlife.



*Chinese  
Oracle Bone*

### Practice 2: Ancient River Valley Civilizations

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is the name given to the ancient Mesopotamians' system of writing.
  - A. Hieroglyphics
  - B. Oracle Bone Script
  - C. Pharaoh
  - D. Cuneiform
  
2. The ancient Egyptians built the \_\_\_\_\_, with the head of a man and the body of a lion, probably to honor a specific pharaoh.
  - A. ziggurats
  - B. Great Pyramids of Giza
  - C. Sphinx
  - D. city of Memphis

## Chapter 4 Early Humans and Ancient River Valley Civilizations

3. Which of the following did houses in the Indus River Valley cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa **not** have?
  - A. bathrooms
  - B. refrigerators
  - C. underground drainage systems
  - D. wells
4. The Shang Dynasty saw people make items from \_\_\_\_\_ on an industrial scale.
  - A. stone
  - B. iron
  - C. bronze
  - D. gold
5. Of the four ancient river valley civilizations you've studied, which **most** embodied the characteristics of civilization as defined in this chapter? Explain your reasoning.

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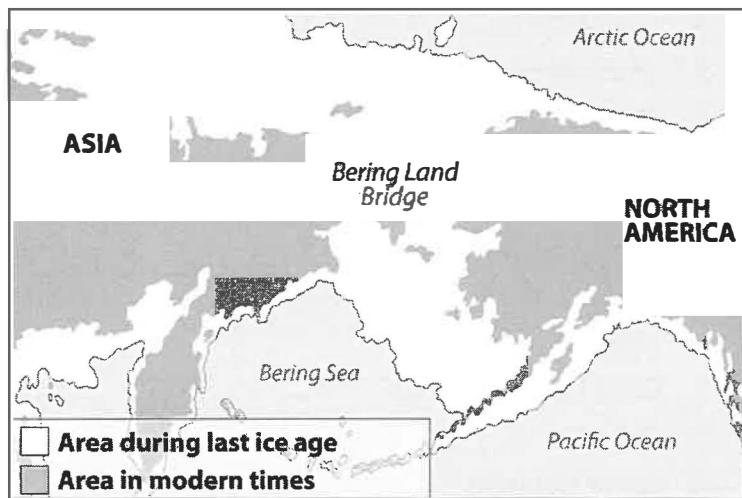
Week 1 Day 3



## Activity: How Geography Influences History

Use the maps and what you've learned in this chapter to answer the questions on your own paper.

1. Historians and archaeologists believe that human beings originated in Africa. Then, around 13,000 BCE, people whose descendants became known as Native Americans migrated to the Americas. Why do you suppose historians and archaeologists consider the Bering Land Bridge crucial to the settlement of the Americas?



2. Uruk was the world's first city, but, as you can see, many important cities sprung up in Mesopotamia soon thereafter. Why do you suppose this area promoted the founding and development of so many cities?



3. As you can see, Mohenjo-Daro was founded directly on the Indus River, but Harappa was not. Instead, it was founded on the Pavi River, a tributary, or branch, of the Indus. Why do you think people in the ancient Indus River Valley civilization **most likely** founded Harappa where they did?



4. For the duration of its history under the Xia and Shang Dynasties, China was remarkably isolated from other civilizations and cultures. Name **two** natural geographic barriers that encouraged this isolation. Then explain why barriers like the ones you chose generally discouraged mass migration in the early days of civilization.



#### Activity: Understanding Economies

Use what you've learned in this chapter, your knowledge of economics, and your critical thinking skills to answer the questions on your own paper.

1. At the dawn of civilization, instead of using money, people bartered. Why do you suppose people didn't begin using money immediately?

2. Mesopotamia had extremely fertile land, but it was otherwise resource-poor. Do you think this encouraged or discouraged Mesopotamian trade?
  
  3. Do you think the introduction of job specialization encouraged or discouraged the formation of social classes in ancient river valley civilizations? Why do you think so?
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## Chapter 4 Key Term Activity

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

Word Bank		
Egypt	hieroglyphics	Harappan seals
Oracle Bone Script	Shang Dynasty	Hatshepsut

Quentin has been assigned a report on ancient river valley civilizations. One of the civilizations he'll cover is 1. \_\_\_\_\_ . It was ruled by kings called pharaohs who were buried in pyramids. One of the most important pharaohs was a woman named 2. \_\_\_\_\_. Quentin knows that much of what we know about this civilization comes from material written in 3. \_\_\_\_\_ , the civilization's system of writing. From there, Quentin also wants to study the Indus Valley Civilization. Although historians can't decipher its system of writing, they know that citizens here used 4. \_\_\_\_\_ much like we use coins today. Finally, Quentin will turn his attention to ancient China, which used 5. \_\_\_\_\_ for writing. One of its most important ruling families was the 6. \_\_\_\_\_ , in power from 2070-1600 BCE.

Key terms are defined in the book's glossary.  
Answers to Key Term Activities and chapter reviews are found in the Teacher's Guide.

Week 1 Day 4



## Chapter 5

### Ancient Greece

#### Unit 2: Ancient Civilizations

**Standard(s) Covered:** 6.6.1, 6.2.1, 6.2.4, 6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3, 6.5.1, 6.6.2, 6.6.3, 6.6.4

Key Term Activity at the end of the chapter

#### Importance of Greek Civilization

Around 800 BCE, **Greek civilization** began to flourish like no civilization had before. By the time the Romans conquered Greece in 146 BCE, the Greeks had created a culture which would largely become the model for many of the great civilizations of the future, including the Roman Empire and the United States. It is difficult to overstate the influence of Greek culture, especially on European and American civilization. For example, values essential to most United States citizens, like a commitment to a comprehensive education, the promotion of the arts, and—above all—a love of democracy, directly reflect the values essential to many of the Ancient Greeks.



*US Capitol Building*

#### Aegean Civilizations



*Minoan Palace of Knossos*

Like all civilizations, what we think of today as classical Ancient Greek civilization didn't just spring up overnight. Instead, several other, earlier cultures in the nearby area, known as the **Aegean**, combined to influence its formation. The **Minoan civilization** (2700-1450 BCE), located on the island of Crete and other islands in the Aegean Sea, was the oldest civilization to directly influence classical Ancient Greece. Minoan culture spread and flourished largely due to the thriving of trade between Aegean and Mediterranean civilizations. Often in possession of

excessive wealth, Minoan rulers built lavish palaces. The most famous of these rulers was the legendary **King Minos**, for whom Minoan civilization is named. While the Minoans helped shape many aspects of classical Ancient Greek culture, they are especially noteworthy for their impact on the Greek language: the Minoans' written language, known as Linear A, directly inspired Linear B, the first writing system used by the Greeks and a precursor of the Greek alphabet.

The decline of the Minoan civilization, which began around 1500 BCE possibly as the result of a major volcanic eruption on the island of Thera, opened the door for the **Mycenean**



*Location of Mycenae*

Greeks to dominate trade in and spread their culture throughout the Aegean region. While the Mycenaeans' greatest contribution to classical Ancient Greece might have been Linear B, their emphasis on the military would also prove influential.

Around 1100 BCE, the **Dorians**, people from northern Greece, migrated and eventually replaced the Mycenaeans. While this became known as the "Dorian Invasion," many historians believe the Dorians didn't exactly conquer the Mycenaeans; instead, the Mycenaean civilization fell for a number of reasons. Nevertheless, the Dorians lacked the cultural development of the Minoans and Mycenaeans, and their dominance plunged Greece into a "dark age" from roughly 1100 BCE to 800 BCE.

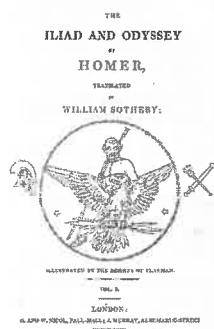
## Greece Emerges from Its Dark Age

Around 800 BCE, Greece began to emerge from its centuries-long slump. New settlements with their own governments began to pop up. Literacy, which had disappeared during the "dark age," now reappeared, as the Greeks developed their own **alphabet**. Shared cultural icons, however, were what most differentiated this new Greek civilization from older ones.

### Homer, *The Iliad*, and *The Odyssey*

A great controversy has sprung up among historians regarding Homer's identity. According to tradition, **Homer** was a blind poet who composed his greatest works sometime around 800 BCE. According to many other

scholars, though, "Homer" was simply a name used to represent a collection of people who told stories about ancient heroes. Whatever the case, the two most famous works attributed to Homer, **epic poems** called *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, played a large role in defining Ancient Greek culture.



*The Iliad*



Homer

*The Iliad* tells the story of the Trojan War. In this epic, legendary Greek rulers and warriors lay siege to Troy, a city on the coast of Asia Minor, and eventually conquer it. With its focus on Achilles, the noble and fearsome but ultimately ill-fated warrior, *The Iliad* emphasizes the Ancient Greeks' obsession with both military glory and the concept of destiny.

Even more famous and influential than *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey* recounts the Greek warrior Odysseus' decade-long attempt to return home from the Trojan War. Whereas *The Iliad* stresses the Greek's conception of fate and appreciation of military prowess, *The Odyssey* stresses their value of family, justice, and the sanctity of the home. During his journey, Odysseus dodges all sorts of dangers and temptations to return home to his wife, Penelope, and their son, Telemachus. All the while, Penelope patiently waits for her husband's return, even as other men try to pursue her hand in marriage. Eventually, Odysseus makes it back and reunites with Penelope and Telemachus. In the meantime, he kills Penelope's suitors for disrespecting his home.



Odysseus and Polyphemus

*The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* not only laid the groundwork for much of the great European and American literature to come, but, by summarizing Greek values, they also laid the cultural foundation for the Greeks' triumphs in many areas of civilization. It is probably not a coincidence that Greece emerged from its "dark age" at about the same time Homer wrote his two great epics.

## The Olympian Gods and Greek Mythology

According to **Greek mythology**, or the Greek system of traditional stories that attempted to explain the natural world, **twelve Gods** lived on a peak in Greece known as **Mount Olympus**. Homer did not invent the Greek gods, but he was the first known person to write about them at length. Like Homer's epics, Greek mythology helped define the Ancient Greeks' values and view of the world. Let's take a look at the twelve gods who the Greeks believed lived on Mount Olympus and what they represented.



Zeus

King of the gods, **Zeus**, ruled Mount Olympus. He also controlled the weather and was responsible for law, order, and justice. Zeus' many imperfections demonstrate the Greeks' appreciation that the world was not always a perfectly just place, but his unrivaled power and uninterrupted reign suggest the Greeks valued political stability and viewed it as sustainable.



Hera

The wife of Zeus, **Hera** constantly plotted against her husband to take revenge for his many extramarital affairs. Her insistence on marital fidelity and the family unit reflects the Greeks' own appreciation of family values. While husbands might fall to temptation, Hera's stories imply that dutiful wives should be there to steer them back on track and keep the family intact.



Hephaestus

The children of Zeus and Hera include the gods Ares and Hephaestus. **Ares** was the god of war. He reflected the Greeks' preoccupation with military adventures, glory, and courage. Interestingly, however, none of the other gods liked Ares. Perhaps this reflected a recognition by the Greeks that overemphasizing military prowess could be dangerous to society. **Hephaestus** was the god of blacksmiths. His presence on Mount Olympus indicates just how crucial that profession was to Greek society.



Aphrodite

Zeus had several children from his affairs with other women. These children included Athena, Aphrodite, Artemis, Apollo, and Hermes. **Athena** was the goddess of wisdom and knowledge. The city-state of Athens was named after her. **Aphrodite** was the goddess of passionate love. Her role reflects the Greeks' appreciation of feminine beauty and motherhood. **Artemis** was the goddess of hunting, archery, and virginity, among other things. The Greeks' respect for Artemis reflected their understanding that females have diverse talents. Artemis had a twin brother, **Apollo**, who served as the sun god, the god of prophecy, and the god of artistic inspiration. Zeus might have been the king of the gods, but, given the fact that the Greeks built many temples to honor him, Apollo might have been the most worshiped. The special reverence the Greeks held for Apollo reflects just how much they valued the things and ideals he represented. **Hermes** served as the messenger between the gods and humans. Known as a trickster, Hermes' characteristics show that the Greeks were grateful the gods cared enough about human affairs to communicate with them, but they were also wary of the gods having fun at humans' expense.



Apollo



Ares



Athena



Artemis



Hermes



Demeter

The presence of **Dionysus**, the god of wine, on Mount Olympus reflects the fondness of many Greeks for strong drinks. The fact that Dionysus was also associated with ecstasy, madness, and revelation reveals that the Greeks associated strong drinks with many intense experiences, both positive and negative.

Whereas Aphrodite was the goddess who embodied female fertility, **Demeter** embodied the fertility of the Earth itself. The Greeks' worship of her reflects just how much Greek society relied on good harvests.

Zeus' brother **Poseidon** was god of the sea. Perhaps more than any other god, Greeks had a healthy fear of Poseidon. His almost perpetual wrath provided the Greeks with a religious explanation of natural disasters when no scientific one yet existed.



Dionysus



Poseidon

### Significance of Greek Mythology



*The Fall of Icarus*

In addition to seeking to explain the natural world, like many stories from other religions, Greek myths attempted to teach practical lessons. Perhaps the most famous of these myths is the **story of Daedalus and Icarus**. Daedalus, an inventor for Crete's King Minos, developed a way for humans to fly by attaching wings on their backs with wax. To test his invention, Daedalus flew with his son, Icarus, over the Aegean Sea. Everything went according to plan until Icarus flew too close to the Sun, whereupon his wings melted and he crashed into the sea and died.

The myth showed that while human ambition is not bad in and of itself, unchecked human ambition can lead to getting burned and suffering a fatal crash. It was in ways like this that Greek mythology instructed the Greek populace and countless other civilizations which followed it.

### Practice 1: The Origins of Greek Civilization, Homer, and Greek Gods

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ were the first people to directly influence classical Ancient Greece.

A. Romans      B. Mycenaeans      C. Minoans      D. Dorians

2. \_\_\_\_\_ was the god of the sea in Ancient Greece.

A. Hera      B. Poseidon      C. Zeus      D. Athena

3. What do Zeus' characteristics suggest about Greek values? Select **two** correct answers.

- A. The Greeks valued political stability.
- B. All Greeks viewed being a soldier as the most noble profession.
- C. The Greeks valued law and order.
- D. The Greeks never welcomed foreigners.

4. *The Odyssey* recounts the trials and temptations of the Greek warrior  
on his way home from the Trojan War.

- 
- A. Odysseus
  - B. Achilles
  - C. Poseidon
  - D. Apollo

5. What was the significance of the story of Daedalus and Icarus in Greek mythology?

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Week 1 Day 5



## Politics in Ancient Greece

The geography of Greece, with its many rivers, mountains, and hills, made it difficult for one ruler or group to dominate all of Ancient Greece at the same time. Instead, Greece's geography encouraged the development of **poleis**, or city-states. **City-states** were cities with their own governments. While Athens and Sparta were the most famous examples of city-states, in actuality, they were only two of several hundred that filled Greece. Despite the fact that Greeks largely shared a language and culture, the city-states maintained a fierce independence for centuries.

Since there were several hundred city-states existing at the same time, governments did vary from one city-state to the next. Generally speaking, however, there were four types of government in Ancient Greece: monarchies, oligarchies, democracies, and tyrannies.

Most prominent at the time Greece emerged from its “dark age,” **monarchies** were ruled by a king who had usually inherited his role.

Gradually, **oligarchies**, or governments run by a select few, usually wealthy, people in society, began to replace many monarchies. Historians consider oligarchies to be the most common form of government in Ancient Greece, and city-states often turned to them when democracies proved ineffective.

**Democracy** is most often associated with its emergence in Athens in the fifth century BCE. Actually, however, democracy existed at some points in various other city-states. Democracy sought to include the entire body of citizens in the political process. While only a minority of people in a given city-state qualified as citizens, democracy did set the precedent for the current US government.

Finally, **tyrannies**, or governments run by “strongmen” who overthrew those who had ruled before them (usually by murder), also played a prominent role in Ancient Greece. Today, the word *tyranny* has a negative connotation; Ancient Greeks, though, did not necessarily see all tyrants as bad people—in fact, they often welcomed the law and order tyrants provided. Still, tyrannies, in which one person had all the authority, contrasted directly with democracies.

## Ancient Greece's Economy

## The Limits of Agriculture and the Expansion of Trade

Both the Minoan and the Mycenaean economies had thrived due to their ability to trade with other Mediterranean civilizations; the Ancient Greek economy was no different.

While most people were farmers, the unfavorable soil made it difficult for **Greek agriculture** to grow staple crops. Instead, the Greeks relied on food imports.

In exchange, they shipped olive oil, wine, and metalworks throughout the Mediterranean.

In exchange, they shipped olive oil, wine, and metalworks throughout the Mediterranean world. It was not a coincidence that Greece emerged from its “dark age” around the same time international **trade** was beginning to flourish.



## Job Specialization

The social class into which a person was born largely defined his or her role in the Greek economy. **Male citizens** usually had the most options. The wealthiest ones generally owned land, the poorest ones farmed it, and those in the middle served as craftsmen or merchants. **Female citizens** were generally confined to domestic duties, including raising children and weaving. While technically different, **semi-free laborers** and **slaves** performed similar roles in the Greek economy. Although their masters could appoint them to perform just about any job, most of these people worked as farmers. The most famous example of such farmers were the Spartan *helots*. Even though they were not exactly slaves, the *helots* were routinely overworked, abused, and even murdered.

## **Practice 2: The Politics and Economy of Ancient Greece**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was the most common form of government in Ancient Greece.

  - A. Democracy
  - C. Oligarchy
  - B. Monarchy
  - D. Tyranny

2. Why was Greek mythology important to the Greek people?

  - A. It showed them how to win wars.
  - B. It made good bedtime stories for children.
  - C. It showed them the importance of hard work.
  - D. It defined Greek values and helped explain the natural world.

3. Which of the following was **not** an important good exported by the Ancient Greeks?

  - A. grain
  - B. olive oil
  - C. wine
  - D. metalworks

4. What was the **most common** role of slaves in Ancient Greek life?

  - A. Most slaves were employed as teachers of the children of wealthy parents.
  - B. Most slaves worked as farmers.
  - C. Most slaves performed household duties.
  - D. Most slaves worked for a few years and were then set free.

## Athens and Sparta

Ancient Greece is most commonly—and perhaps best—understood by paying close attention to its two most prominent city-states, **Athens** and **Sparta**. While both were fundamentally Greek and sought to expand their influence, they did so in vastly different ways.

### Athens

Situated on what became known as the **Acropolis**—Greek for “high city”—Athens occupied a position that was naturally easy to defend. Athenian life centered around the **Agora**, the city’s marketplace. Over



time, Athens became remarkable for its unique government and culture. When people reference the massive influence the Ancient Greeks had on Rome and the United States, often, they are actually referencing Athens’ specific influence.

### Athenian Government

Politically speaking, Athens was most notable for the **democracy** it cultivated beginning around 460 BCE. Democracy simply means “rule by the people.” The main way Athens practiced democracy was through its **Assembly**,



which met on a hill which could accommodate up to 6,000 citizens. During meetings of the Assembly, any citizen could raise his hand and speak his mind. Once the citizens had been given their say, issues were put up for a vote. In Athenian democracy, the majority ruled.

Still, Athenian democracy was far from what modern-day Americans would consider democratic. For one thing, most people—including women, slaves, and foreigners—did not qualify as citizens. For another, a group of elites determined what would be up for discussion in the Assembly. Nevertheless, the Athenian upper class really did want all male citizens to participate in democracy and considered all those who qualified but did not participate “useless.”



It would be unwise, however, to assume that democracy in Athens could always be equated with good decisions. As critics of democracy often note even today, democracy can often lead to “tyranny by the majority,” and it can enable uninformed citizens to have a hand in dictating public policy. In Athens, decisions reached by a democratic majority would help lead to Athens’ defeat in the Second Peloponnesian War (which we will cover soon), the execution of Socrates and, ultimately, encourage a return to oligarchy.

Despite all that, though, Athenian democracy was an incredibly enlightened form of government for the time. Its many successes would promote the rise of democratic governments which culminated with the founding of the US over two millennia later.



*Locations of Greece, Athens, and Sparta*

*The Erechtheum, Acropolis, Athens, Greece*



*Athenian Politician Pericles Delivering his Famous Funeral Oration in Front of the Assembly*

qualify as citizens. For another, a group of elites determined what would be up for discussion in the Assembly. Nevertheless, the Athenian upper class really did want all male citizens to participate in democracy and considered all those who qualified but did not participate “useless.”



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*The Death of Socrates*

**Important Groups in Athenian Democracy**

Group	Characteristics and Responsibilities
<b>Assembly</b>	Made up of all male Athenian citizens, it met at regular intervals to debate and vote on decrees.
<b>Council of 500</b>	Composed of 50 elected citizens from each of the 10 tribes, it prepared the agenda for the Assembly and voted on “Preliminary Decrees.”
<b>People's Court</b>	Made up of randomly-selected citizens, it was much like a jury, hearing cases and deciding on innocence or guilt and punishment.
<b>Magistrates</b>	Judicial officers who brought cases before the People's Court, they presided over the People's Court but possessed no authority to influence its decisions.
<b>Generals</b>	Commanders of the military, they were responsible for defending the city from attack and recruiting soldiers and sailors for its defense.

**Important Figures in Athenian Democracy**

Figure	Description
<b>Draco (c. 650 BCE- c. 600 BCE)</b>	Regarded as the first democratic lawmaker, he wrote a law code enforceable by a court and known for its harshness.
<b>Solon (638 BCE-558 BCE)</b>	Regarded as having built up Athens' democratic foundation, he was chief magistrate and fought against tyrannical rulers.
<b>Cleisthenes (c. 570 BCE- c. 500 BCE)</b>	Known as the “father of Athenian democracy,” he reformed Athens’ constitution and ensured equal rights for all citizens.
<b>Pericles (495 BCE-429 BCE)</b>	Leader of Athens during its “golden age,” he promoted inclusion of the lower classes in democracy and championed the arts and philosophy.

**Athenian Culture**

The same type of thought that gave rise to Athenian democracy also gave rise to an **Athenian culture** that was unprecedentedly enlightened.

**Athenian Philosophy**

First and foremost, Athenians believed in the power of **philosophy** as an educational tool. “Philosophy” literally means “love of knowledge,” and the Athenians pursued knowledge like members of no civilization had before. The most important Athenian philosophers were Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

**Socrates** reinvented philosophy by focusing his teachings around moral and ethical questions. Indeed, when people today practice the Socratic Method, they ask strings of questions to get closer and closer to the root of a subject. Unlike many famous teachers, Socrates maintained his humility by asserting that he “knew nothing.” Still, his challenging of conventional and illogical thinking annoyed many Athenians so much that the city democratically decided to put him to death in 399 BCE.

While **Plato**, like his mentor Socrates, concerned himself with ethical and political concerns, he was preoccupied with discovering how people get knowledge and define what is “true” and “real.” Ultimately, Plato taught that the world we see is a far-from-perfect reflection of a much more “real” “world of



Plato

Ideas.” People, Plato argued, were exposed to these “Ideas” in a previous life; that’s how they could conceive of things like morality and beauty in the first place. Only by getting back in touch with these pure conceptions could people live their lives to the fullest and dictate the best course for society.

If Plato took Socrates’ ideas and developed them further, **Aristotle** took the ideas of Plato—his teacher for decades—to new arenas and new heights. In addition to the fields Socrates and Plato prioritized, Aristotle explored astronomy and mathematics and notably linked mathematical proofs to logic. Indeed, Aristotle’s system of logic would be studied by European thinkers during the Renaissance, and parts of it still go unchallenged to this day.



Aristotle

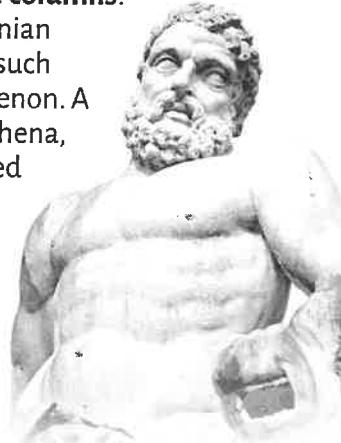
### Athenian Arts and Architecture



The Parthenon

The Athenians sought to express their unique appreciation of the individual and the world through the arts and architecture. Ultimately, **Athenian art and architecture** reflected the perfection and balance the Athenians detected in nature. Many important buildings in Athens were supported by elaborate **columns**.

The most famous Athenian building supported by such columns was the Parthenon. A temple dedicated to Athena, the **Parthenon** balanced architecture on a

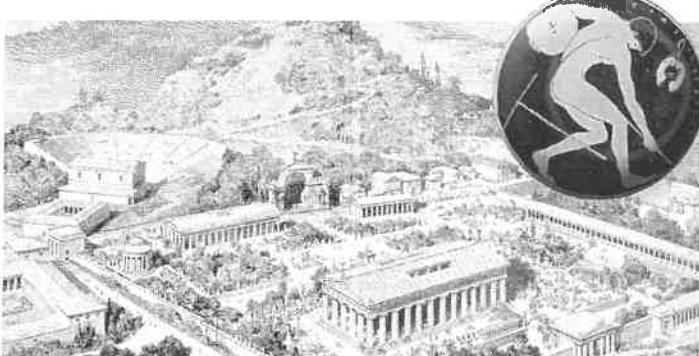


Statue of Hercules

massive scale with a fine-tuned appreciation that beauty often lies in the details.

At the same time, Greek artists began fashioning sculptures of scantily-clad or naked people. Depicting natural human beauty—or the **perfect human form**—these artists believed, was the best way to summarize the beauty of the entire world. While they are beautiful and valuable for their own sake, such sculptures of perfected humanity would influence Renaissance sculptors like Michelangelo two millennia later.

### Athenian Sports and the Olympics



Olympia in Ancient Greece

Unsurprisingly, given that they put a high value on the perfect human form, the Athenians consistently encouraged participation in sports. However, the most famous example of sports in Ancient Greece—the **Olympic Games**—originated far from Athens in Olympia. While the first Olympic Games were held in 684 BCE, they really gained momentum in the fifth century BCE, when they were extended to last five days. The games featured many athletic competitions, but the most

celebrated was probably the pentathlon, which included races, a long jump, and a discus throw.

## Sparta

Around 650 BCE, **Sparta**, located on the banks of the Eurotas River in southeastern Greece, emerged as a dominant military power. While Athens controlled the seas until the end of the Peloponnesian Wars (which we will cover later), Sparta maintained the most prominent land-based army. Sparta was the opposite of Athens in many ways. Most notably, while Athens promoted enlightened thinking, Sparta demanded military service to the state.



*Location of Sparta in Greece*

### Spartan Politics

Although it included elements of a monarchy with two kings who served a variety of functions for the state, Sparta was, from its beginning, an oligarchy. Councils of wealthy citizens gradually took power from the kings, who began to serve ceremonial roles. Like Athens, Sparta had an assembly in which every citizen could, at least theoretically, speak his mind, but unlike Athens, Sparta gave no real authority to its assembly. Ultimately, term limits on members of the oligarchic councils and a sophisticated division of power made Sparta a conservative state, especially when it came to foreign policy.

### Spartan Culture

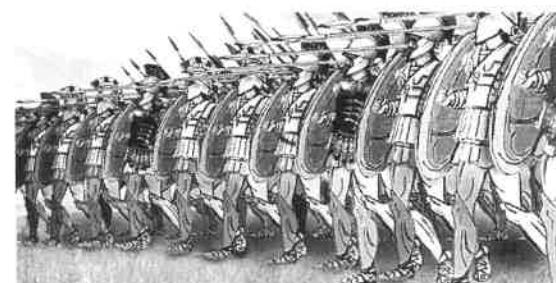


*Spartan Soldier*

**Citizens and the Military**—Sparta was first and foremost a military culture. The Spartans deliberately neglected the liberal education that the Athenians encouraged because they believed cultivating such ideals would detract from their focus on the military and could lead to the downfall of their civilization. As such, the lives of Spartan citizens were largely tough and joyless. The Spartans often killed babies that looked sickly or weak. The male children that managed to reach the age of seven were forced to participate in military training and live in barracks away from home. The goal of the Spartan state was to make every male citizen a professional soldier. While such customs seem brutal, they ensured Sparta would endure for centuries in the generally hostile environment of the ancient world.

Sparta produced the best-trained hoplites, or foot-soldiers, in Ancient Greece. Spartan **hoplites** were armed with long wooden spears and short swords and protected by bronze helmets and bronze or leather breastplates.

Hoplites traditionally fought in a **phalanx**, a formation in which men stacked eight ranks deep stood close together. Each man was responsible for guarding half of his own body and half of the body of the man to his left with his shield. The phalanx ensured that hoplites worked together. The formation enabled Sparta and other Greek city-states to win victories on many bloody battlefields.



*Greek Phalanx formation*



*Greek woman*

**The Roles of Non-citizens**—If the lives of Spartan citizens were rough, the lives of most non-citizens were even rougher. The one notable exception was the lives of women. Unlike in other Greek city-states, in Sparta, women could inherit and own property. This proved especially valuable in a society which saw many of its men killed in battle.

The *perioeci* were second-class Spartan citizens. They were not allowed to participate in government. Still, they often thrived in activities like trading and manufacturing crucial to the Spartan economy because Spartan citizens had to serve in the military and were not permitted to fill these roles.

The *helots* occupied one of the lowest rungs in Spartan society. They were practically slaves. Forced to farm the land, the *helots* had no opportunity to improve their lot in life.



*Slaves working in a Mine*

### Practice 3: Athens and Sparta

1. Ancient Athenians used \_\_\_\_\_ to support the Parthenon and other structures.  
A. the Acropolis      B. columns      C. the Agora      D. hoplites
  
  2. The philosopher \_\_\_\_\_ asserted that he “knew nothing” and was executed by popular demand in 399 BCE.  
A. Socrates      B. Plato      C. Aristotle      D. Draco
  
  3. What were **three** drawbacks of democracy in Ancient Athens?  
A. Democracy caused Athenians to overemphasize the importance of the military.  
B. Democracy enabled uninformed citizens to have a say in public policy.  
C. Democracy allowed the execution of Socrates.  
D. Democracy led to poor governmental decisions during the Peloponnesian War.
  
  4. Practically slaves, the \_\_\_\_\_ in Sparta were forced to work the land.  
A. hoplites      B. phalanxes      C. *helots*      D. *perioeci*
  
  5. How did Athenian democracy differ from the American democracy we have today?  
A. All the decisions made in Athenian democracy were good decisions, while many of the decisions made in American democracy are questionable.  
B. Only male citizens could participate in Athenian democracy, while all citizens can participate in American democracy.  
C. Decisions in Athenian democracy were made by a group of sixty people, while decisions in American democracy are made by all citizens.  
D. All male citizens were forced to participate in Athenian democracy, while citizens in American democracy can choose whether they will vote.
  
  6. Why did the Spartans neglect ideals the Athenians considered important?
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