

What were the greatest achievements of the Ancient Greeks?



The Parthenon

The Parthenon was built between 447 BC and 432 BC during the reign of Pericles. The temple, which sits on the Acropolis (rocky hill) in Athens. It was built as a temple for Athena who was the goddess of wisdom and war and the patron of Athens.

Vocabulary

Acropolis = A fortress within a large city, usually on top of a hill. The Acropolis in Athens is the most famous one.

Agora = A meeting place in the centre of Ancient Greek cities.

Athens = A powerful Greek city-state and where Democracy was born.

City state = A city along with surrounding areas that rules independently (Athens and Sparta are two examples).

Civilisation = An advanced state of society.

Culture = The ideas, customs/habits, and public behaviour of a particular people or society.

Oligarchy = A type of government where power is held by a few people.

Olympics = A sporting event held by the Ancient Greeks every four years.

Sparta = A powerful Greek city-state and rival to Athens, Sparta's culture was based around warfare and battle.

Stadion = The original Olympic event, the stadion was a running race the length of the stadium.

Titans = The Titans were the first Greek gods. They were overthrown by their children, the Olympians.

Trade = This is the buying and selling of goods.

Tyrant = The ruler of a Greek city-state, a tyrant was like a king. Today the word tyrant is used to describe a ruler who rules unfairly or unjustly.

Important People

Alexander the Great was the king of Macedonia or Ancient Greece. He is considered one of the greatest military commanders in history. He conquered much of Asia and Europe.

King Philip II was the father of Alexander the Great. He was a powerful leader and united all of Greece.

Aristotle is the earliest natural historian whose work has survived in some detail. He made many of the first observations of the plant and animal kingdoms.

Plato thought about and discussed what makes people human and what is human nature. Plato believed that men and women had the same intellectual powers.

Many ancient Greeks considered Socrates to be a very wise man. He did not want to answer questions on the universe like all the other philosophers have done previously he wanted to question things like "what is friendship" or "what is courage". He had a very inquiring mind, which unfortunately resulted in his death.

Key Questions

1. What can early excavations tell us about early Greece?
2. What was life like in early Greece?
3. How did the Minoans trade in early Greece?
4. What was life like in Athens and Sparta?
5. How did the city-states overcome the Persian invasion?
6. What was life like in the city-states after the Persians retreated?
7. How did King Philip II grow the Macedon Empire?
8. Who was Alexander the Great and what made him a significant leader?
9. What were the greatest achievements of Ancient Greece?

Golden Threads

Civilisation	
Trade	
Settlement	
Empire	
Monarchy	



Greek Amphitheatre



Greece is made up of the mainland and many islands. Its position by the sea meant that Greeks were a seafaring people.

776BC	750BC	570BC	508BC	450BC	432BC	336BC	146BC
The first Olympic Games takes place	Early Greek culture thrives Homer writes The Iliad and The Odyssey.	Pythagoras is born He makes major breakthroughs in science and maths	Democracy begins in Athens , giving greater power to the people	Athens becomes a powerful city and controls an empire	The Parthenon , the most famous building in Athens, is completed	Alexander the Great is king and helps the Greek Empire expand further	Rome conquers Greece, making it part of the Roman Empire



The Olympic Games

The ancient Olympic Games were originally a festival, or celebration, of and for Zeus; events such as a footrace, a javelin contest, and wrestling matches were added later. The Olympic Games were a series of athletic competitions among representatives of city-states and during the celebration of the games, an Olympic Truce was made so that athletes could travel from their cities to the games in safety. The games were held every four years, or Olympiad, which became a unit of time in historical chronologies.



The Acropolis in Athens

Greek Geography

Greece, which is in Europe, is made up of the mainland and many islands.

It's position by the sea meant that the Greeks were seafaring people.

City-States (polis) were created and trade happened between each of the city states.

Greece is a warm country, but winds from the Mediterranean, and rains from the north, kept temperatures liveable and created fertile farming conditions.

Greek Society

Greece was divided into city-states (polis) that each had their own laws and way of life, but that spoke the same language. Two of the most well-known city-states were Athens and Sparta.

In Athens, Greek styles of art, architecture, philosophy and theatre were developed – these helped shape our modern society along with science, language and maths.

Athens had a democratic government – this means that the people who lived there made decisions by voting, like we do in Britain.

In Sparta, life was very different; all that was important was being able to defend Sparta in battle.

The first Olympic games were held in 776 in the city-state Olympia.

Religion was very important in ancient Greece. They were polytheists – they believed in different gods and goddesses that were in charge of different parts of their lives, such as a god of the sea and a goddess of wisdom. Temples were built in their honour and they features heavily in the stories of Greek mythology.

A polis consisted of an urban centre, often fortified and with a sacred centre built on a natural acropolis (citadel) or harbour.



Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great (356BC-323BC) was the king of Macedonia or Ancient Greece. He is considered one of the greatest military commanders in history.

Alexander the Great named over 70 cities after himself, and one after his horse. Alexander the Great's favourite book was The Iliad, written by Homer.