Lesson Objectives

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

✓ Define the term *civilization*
✓ Describe the city-state Athens
✓ Describe how the Athenians worshipped Athena
✓ Explain what the Parthenon was
✓ Define the term *democracy*
✓ Identify Athens as the birthplace of democracy
✓ Explain how Athenian boys and girls were educated
✓ Explain that women did not have as many rights as men in Greek society
✓ Compare/contrast life in Sparta and Athens
✓ Describe how the contributions of the ancient Greek civilization have influenced the present

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

✓ Compare and contrast orally the city-states of Athens and Sparta. Compare and contrast orally the contributions from other civilizations they have previously learned about that are still in our lives today *(RI.2.9)*
✓ Write a persuasive piece that expresses and supports opinions on how a city-state should best be set up and governed using “Athens: The Birthplace of Democracy” (W.2.1)

✓ Discuss personal responses to having an idea that was completely different from what everyone else was doing or thinking and connect those to the Greeks in the story “Athens: The Birthplace of Democracy” (W.2.8)

✓ With assistance, categorize and organize facts and information on the ancient Greek civilization (W.2.8)

✓ Prior to listening to “Athens: The Birthplace of Democracy,” identify orally what they know and have learned about the city-states of Athens and Sparta

Core Vocabulary

achieve, v. To do something successfully, especially after a lot of effort
Example: Some goals take a lot of determination and hard work to achieve.
Variation(s): achieves, achieved, achieving

architecture, n. The art of designing buildings and other structures; the style in which buildings and other structures are designed
Example: When my mother traveled to Egypt, she took pictures of the ancient pyramids to show us their unique architecture.
Variation(s): none

assembly, n. A group or meeting of many people
Example: The students were invited to the assembly to welcome their new principal.
Variation(s): assemblies

debated, v. Discussed or argued different points of view
Example: Tom debated with his father about staying up a little later now that he was older.
Variation(s): debate, debates, debating

democracy, n. A way of governing, or ruling, that gives the people the power to choose their leaders and help create their own laws
Example: Many countries, including the United States, have governments based on the idea of democracy.
Variation(s): democracies
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Introducing the Read-Aloud

What Have We Already Learned?

- Show image 5A-3: Spartan army

- Show image 6A-5: People choosing Athena as their patron

  Ask students what they see in the images and what they remember about these city-states of ancient Greece. Tell them that they are going to hear more about the city-state of Athens and how it was very different from the city-state of Sparta. Remind students that in the last story, the goddess Athena said to the people of Athens, “And I tell you this as the goddess of war: The olive branch will become the symbol of peace. Pray to me when you are in danger, and I will protect you.”

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen to learn more about the city-state of Athens and about a very important contribution that it gave to the world.
Hiero (HERO) and Dion were on their way to Dion’s home, passing through the central marketplace of Athens, where people spent as much time conversing\(^1\) as they did shopping. The two young men stopped to buy some olives at a farmer’s booth that stood beneath the branches of two old olive trees. As they stepped out into the sunlight again, Dion turned to look up at the top of the high hill.

“Really, Hiero,” Dion asked, “is there a more beautiful spectacle anywhere than the Parthenon?\(^2\) My father and I traveled to many wonderful places on our trading voyage around the Mediterranean—but I never saw anything equal to it.”\(^3\) Hiero agreed as he looked up at the magnificent temple.

Just as the city-state of Sparta focused on self-discipline and training for battle, the Athenians focused on their love of art, beautiful architecture, and sculpture.\(^4\) The Athenians filled their remarkable city-state with graceful buildings that were pleasing to the eye. Inside these buildings, and in the public spaces around them, famous artists created statues for all to enjoy—statues that even today are considered some of the finest ever made.\(^5\)

The Athenians were wealthy enough to cover a forty-foot-high statue of Athena in gold before setting it in the Parthenon. The ancient Greeks showed their devotion to Athena by visiting her statue and offering her prayers and gifts.\(^6\)
At the same time that the arts were the glory of Athens, Athenian scientists were making discoveries that would become the basis for modern science. For example, one scientist you will learn about was a great observer whose ideas and classifications are still used today. Other ancient Greeks contributed inventions that the next civilizations developed more fully, including the gear, screw, watermill, and catapult; plumbing; using furnaces to melt and shape iron; and using air, water, or steam for central heating.

Athenian merchants such as Dion and his father were trading as far west as Britain and as far east as India. These merchants brought back goods and even more knowledge from distant lands. This is another way that Athens differed from Sparta; as you heard earlier, Sparta was a “closed” society, meaning that most of the people were not allowed to travel outside of the city for trade or exploration.

At the heart of all these remarkable achievements was the Athenian belief that human beings could achieve almost anything they set their minds to, and in whatever they could not achieve, they could at least fail with grand grace. It was this belief in the benefit, or good, of independent thinking, or thinking for oneself, that led to the greatest of all the Athenian gifts to the world—greater than the art, the architecture, or the Olympic Games—the gift of democracy.

As Hiero and Dion continued walking on that sunny afternoon so long ago, they glanced ahead and saw a face that they knew well. “It’s Pericles (PAIR-uh-klees)!” Hiero exclaimed.

All Athenians knew the man whom they had elected to run their government year after year. Pericles held great power both as an army general and as the leader of their government. However, like all Athenian leaders, he had to be reelected to his office every year, and if the Athenians did not like the job he was doing, they could vote him out of office, or right out of Athens for up to ten years!
It had not always been this way. In the past, Athens had been ruled by a king. Then, several nobles started to rule in place of the king. Finally, a new leader came along who thought every citizen should be able to take part in his government.

Originally, only men who were born in Athens—and who were considered wealthy enough—were allowed to be citizens. These citizens had the right to vote, to be a part of a jury that made decisions in a court of law, and to serve in the assembly, a large group of men who debated and created the laws. Over time, even poor men—and some merchants who were not born in Athens but who lived and traded there—were allowed to take part in the assembly.

However, because there were too many citizens (over 5,000!) participating in this assembly, it became too difficult to manage the meetings and allow everyone to have their say. Eventually the Athenians decided to have some citizens from each area come to the assembly to represent the people from their area, so that the group could be smaller and easier to manage. Every citizen still had the right to choose who would represent them in the smaller assembly.

Women, however, did not have the rights to do any of these things, although they could own land and have their own money. Athenian girls also did not have the right to attend school as the boys did. For Athenian women, it was more important that they learn to cook, sew, and clean. However, all well-educated young ladies learned at least enough mathematics at home to be in charge of a household budget, and some who had learned reading and writing at home were widely admired for their intelligence and learning.

Most Athenians knew that the best woman friend of Pericles, leader of the Athenians, wrote many of his famous speeches for

15 Under the rule of a king, are the people allowed to help create the laws or choose who rules them? Which city-state that you learned about had not only one king, but two? (Sparta)

16 Nobles were wealthy men who were related to the king.

17 or discussed or argued their different points of view

18 Do you think this was fair?

19 or a plan for how money will be spent at home
him. Yet she was not permitted to listen to him speak those words in the assembly, nor to vote for the laws he suggested.  

Seeing Pericles up ahead now, Dion asked Hiero, “Who are those two men with him?” Hiero peered above the heads of others in the crowd. “Only one of the greatest writers in the world, and the artist who designed the statue of Athena!” Hiero answered. He smiled. “Only in Athens could you witness a conversation among the greatest living political leader, a world-famous writer, and such a celebrated artist. Don’t you wonder what those great men are talking about?”

“Whatever it is,” Dion responded, “I’m sure it is a most fascinating conversation.”

Discussing the Read-Aloud  

Comprehension Questions  

1. **Literal** What structure did Dion describe as “the most beautiful spectacle” in Athens? (the Parthenon) What was the Parthenon? (a temple dedicated to the goddess Athena)

2. **Literal** What is a democracy? (a way of governing which gives the people the power to choose their leaders and to help create their own laws)

3. **Inferential** How did Athens come up with the idea of democracy? (They believed in the benefit, or good, of independent thinking, or of people thinking for themselves.)

4. **Inferential** What are some of the contributions or achievements that Athens made to modern civilizations? (art, architecture, sculpture, science, inventions, democracy)

5. **Evaluative** What was the group of citizens called who met together to debate and create the laws? (the assembly) Were women allowed to be a part of the assembly? (no) How do you think they felt about this? (Answers may vary.)
6. **Evaluative** What two main city-states have you learned about? (Sparta and Athens) **How were they similar?** (Both were city-states; believed in gods/goddesses; had battles; only allowed boys and men to go to school and take part in government; etc.) **How were they different?** (Sparta focused on battle training, whereas Athens focused on art, architecture, and independent thinking; Athens was a democracy, whereas Sparta had two kings; Athenians traveled, whereas Spartans stayed in their closed society; etc.)

7. **Evaluative** Which city-state would you have preferred to live in—Athens or Sparta? Why? (Answers may vary.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a couple of questions. I will give you a minute to think about the questions, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the questions. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

8. **Evaluative** *Think Pair Share*: Have you, like the ancient Greeks, ever had an idea that was completely different from what everyone else was doing or thinking? How did other people react to it? (Answers may vary.)

9. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these remaining questions.]
Word Work: Democracy

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “It was this belief in the benefit of independent thinking that led to the greatest of all the Athenian gifts to the world—greater than the art, the architecture, or the Olympic Games—the gift of democracy.”

2. Say the word democracy with me.

3. Democracy is a way of governing, or ruling, which gives the people the power to choose their leaders and to help create their own laws.

4. The United States is a democracy because its citizens have a say in the way things are done in their government.

5. Do you think our classroom is an example of a democracy? Why or why not? Try to use the word democracy when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I think our classroom is/is not a democracy because . . . ”]

6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word democracy?

Use a Making Choices activity for follow-up. Directions: I am going to read several scenarios. If what I describe is an example of a democracy, say, “That is a democracy.” If what I describe is not an example of a democracy, say, “That is not a democracy.”

1. a classroom where the teacher makes all of the decisions (That is not a democracy.)

2. a student-government meeting where every student votes (That is a democracy.)

3. the citizens of the United States voting on Election Day (That is a democracy.)

4. representatives from every state helping to create the laws (That is a democracy.)

5. a kingdom ruled by a king who makes all of the laws himself (That is not a democracy.)

Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day
Extensions

Civilization Chart (Instructional Master 1B-1, optional)

Show students Image Card 18 (Athenian Assembly), and ask them what they see and what was special about the city-state of Athens. Prompt students to recall that Athens was the birthplace of democracy, a type of government we have today. Ask students which square this image should go in. Have a volunteer place the Image Card in the “Contributions” square.

Show students Image Card 19 (Pericles), and ask them what they see and what they remember about this leader. Ask students which square this Image Card should go in. Have a volunteer place the Image Card in the “Leaders” square.

Review with students what is already on the Civilization Chart, and have them discuss what they remember about each image. Remind students that a civilization is a group of people living together in a well-organized way. Remind students that they are studying different aspects of the ancient Greek civilization, including jobs, city-states, leaders, religion, and contributions.

▲ Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students complete Instructional Master 1B-1 on their own by drawing pictures and/or writing words in each square.

Choosing a Government

Have students form groups of two or three. Tell them that they have been given the task of setting up a new city-state and that they need to decide how they want the city-state to be governed, or ruled.
Write these three choices on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard:

• Their city-state may be governed by a monarch, or king or queen, who rules because s/he is royalty and makes all of the decisions on his or her own.

• Their city-state may be governed by a direct democracy, in which all citizens debate about and decide on every law and elect every official themselves.

• Their city-state may be governed by a representative democracy, in which citizens vote on some issues and elect some officials themselves, but choose a group of people to represent them in creating the laws and making decisions.

Allow students to discuss the three options. Tell them that they are to write two to three sentences explaining why they chose their form of government for their city-state. (Have one student act as the scribe.) Tell students to also create a name for their group’s city-state. Allow the groups to share their sentences with the class and explain why they chose that type of government. Ask students which form of government the United States has today. (representative democracy) Ask them why they think a direct democracy would not work for the United States.

 Above and Beyond: You may wish to take this writing piece through the formal writing process for some or all students.
Note to Teacher

You should pause here and spend one day reviewing, reinforcing, or extending the material taught thus far.

You may have students do any combination of the activities listed below, but it is highly recommended you use the Mid-Domain Student Performance Task Assessment to assess students’ knowledge of ancient Greek civilization. The other activities may be done in any order. You may also choose to do an activity with the whole class or with a small group of students who would benefit from the particular activity.

Core Content Objectives Up to This Pausing Point

Students will:

- Identify the area of ancient Greece on a map
- Describe the terrain of ancient Greece and how it affected development
- Locate Crete, the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, and the Mediterranean Sea on a map
- Define the term civilization
- Define the term city-state
- Explain that the ancient Greeks worshipped many gods and goddesses
- Identify Mount Olympus as the place the ancient Greeks believed was the home of the gods
- Identify ancient Greece as the site of the original Olympic Games
- Describe the Olympic Games of ancient Greece
- Describe how the contributions of the ancient Greek civilization have influenced the present
Describe the city-state Sparta and the Spartan way of life
Explain that Athens is named after the goddess Athena
Describe the city-state Athens
Describe how Athenians worshipped Athena
Explain what the Parthenon was
Define the term democracy
Identify Athens as the birthplace of democracy
Explain how Athenian boys and girls were educated
Explain that women did not have as many rights as men in Greek society
Compare/contrast life in Sparta and Athens

**Student Performance Task Assessment**

**Venn Diagram**

**Materials: Instructional Master PP-1**

Tell students that they are going to use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast some of the things they have learned thus far about the ancient Greeks. Remind them that to *compare* is to tell how people or objects are similar, and to *contrast* is to tell how people or objects are different.

Write the following list on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Have students choose something from the list to compare and contrast.

- the area of ancient Greece and the country of Greece today
- the terrain of Greece and the terrain where you live
- an ancient Greek city-state and a state in the United States today
- Zeus and Hera
- Poseidon and Athena
- the first Olympic Games and the Olympic Games today
- the city-states of Sparta and Athens
- a democracy and a monarchy
• a boy’s life and a girl’s life in Athens or Sparta

Note: You may wish to have students draw a picture to accompany their diagram. For assessment, students should complete Instructional Master PP-1 individually; however, you may wish to have students complete it in groups or as a class.

Activities

Image Review

Show the images from the Tell It Again! Flip Book for The Ancient Greek Civilization, and have students retell the read-aloud using the images.

Image Card Review

Materials: Image Cards 1–19

In your hand, hold Image Cards 1–19 fanned out like a deck of cards. Ask a student to choose a card but to not show it to anyone else in the class. The student must then perform an action or give a clue about the picture s/he is holding. For example, for Mount Olympus, a student may pretend to be climbing a mountain or to be one of the Olympian gods or goddesses who were believed to have lived there. The rest of the class will guess what is being described. Proceed to another card when the correct answer has been given.

Using a Map

Materials: The Ancient Greek Civilization Poster 1; world map or globe

Ask a volunteer to point out the area of ancient Greece on a world map or globe. Using Poster 1, review the geography of ancient Greece. Have students point out the Black, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas. Ask students why these seas were so important to the ancient Greeks. Prompt them to recall that they were used for fishing, trading, and exploring. Have a volunteer point to the island of Crete, and ask students what job most Greeks had on this island. Prompt them to recall the term seafaring. Remind students that many different people doing different jobs is a component of a civilization. Point to Athens and Sparta, and ask students what they recall about
these city-states. Point out Mount Olympus, and ask students why this mountain was important to the ancient Greeks. Point to the sacred city of Olympia, and ask students what important event happened there every four years, and in whose honor these games were performed. Prompt them to recall that the first Olympic Games were held in honor of Zeus, the king of the gods and goddesses.

**Civilization Chart**

**Materials:** Civilization Chart from previous lessons; Instructional Master 1B-1; drawing paper, drawing tools

Review with students the five components of the ancient Greek civilization that they have learned about: jobs, city-states, leaders, religion, and contributions. Ask students what they see in the images and what they remember about each component. Have students form five groups. Assign one square to each group, and have every group draw a picture and write a sentence about the image(s) in their square. Allow the groups to share their drawings and sentences with the class.

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**Above and Beyond:** You may wish to have some students complete Instructional Master 1B-1 on their own.

**Writing Prompts**

Students may be given an additional writing prompt such as the following:

- How was life in Athens different from life in Sparta?
- What is democracy?
- How are the Olympic Games today different from the first Olympic Games? How are they similar?

**Class Book: The Ancient Greek Civilization**

**Materials:** Drawing paper, drawing tools

Tell the class or a group of students that they are going to make a class book to help them remember what they have learned thus far in this domain. Have the students brainstorm important information
about ancient Greece, the city-states of Sparta and Athens, the Olympian gods and goddesses, and the first Olympic Games. Have each student choose one idea to draw a picture of, and ask each to write a caption for the picture. You may choose to add more pages upon completion of the entire domain before binding the book.

**Domain-Related Trade Book or Student Choice**

**Materials: Trade book**

Read a trade book to review a particular concept or event; refer to the books listed in the domain introduction. You may also choose to have students select a read-aloud to be heard again.

**The Parthenon**

**Materials: Image Cards 16 and 17**

Show students Image Card 16 of the Parthenon. Have them look at the image while they answer the following questions:

- **What do you see?** (the Parthenon)
- **What is this building made of?** (marble, a type of stone)
- **Where is this building?** (on a high hill in Athens, Greece)
- **When do you think this building was made?** (Answers may vary.) [Prompt students to recall that the ancient Greek civilization existed more than two thousand years ago.]
- **What was this building used for?** (It was a temple to the goddess Athena.)
- **Where else have you seen a building with columns like these?** [Show students Image Card 17 and prompt them to recall the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Remind them that the Parthenon is a contribution to the architecture, or design, of many of our buildings today.]

**Write Your Own Ode**

**Materials: Chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard**

Remind students that Pindar was a famous Greek poet from Thebes. Share with students that he wrote poems called odes
that were sung at special occasions like banquets and festivals, accompanied by music, instruments, and dancing.

An ode is a poem that admires something ordinary or shows the importance of something that is usually overlooked. An ode does not have to rhyme, but it should have detailed descriptions and observations. As either a class or in small groups, have students write odes. To scaffold this activity for students, use the following steps:

1. Brainstorm what you could write about. Think about things you see and experience everyday that you don’t usually notice. Examples might include chocolate, shoes, teachers, friends, flowers, sleep, books, love, school, toothbrush, computers, etc.

2. Once you pick your topic, brainstorm why it is important. What does it do? Why is it important? What would happen without it? How do you feel about it? Put these details into parts or sections in your description.

3. Write your ode as a class or as a small group. Keep the lines short and use as few words as possible.

4. Revise and rewrite, as time permits.

Here are some guidelines for odes:

- Describe the subject using at least two different senses (touch, taste, sight, sound, smell)
- Show how much you admire the subject.
- Use words and phrases more than sentences.
- Explain the importance of your subject.
- Have a clear rhythm.

**The Olive Tree**

**Materials: Image Cards 1, 5, and 14; olives and olive oil**

Show students Image Cards 1, 5, and 14, and ask them what they see. Ask students if they have ever eaten an olive or had food cooked or prepared with olive oil. Allow them to share what they have learned about the olive tree and its fruit. You may wish to
bring in a variety of olives or olive oil and bread (for dipping) for students to sample.

**Note:** Be sure to follow your school’s policy in terms of bringing food into the classroom.

Prompt students to recall that the ancient Greeks grew olive trees in groves as an important part of their farming and trade. Ask them to recall, according to the ancient Greek legend, who the Athenians believed gave them the gift of the olive tree. Remind students that the rugged terrain of Greece did not make farming easy for the ancient Greeks, but that they were able to grow olive trees in groves because these trees are hardy and able to grow in difficult environments. Tell students that many groves of olive trees still grow in Greece today.

**The Olive Branch**

**Materials: Dollar bill**

Show students a dollar bill, and ask them if they can see a type of plant on it. Point out the olive branch, and explain that this branch symbolizes peace. Ask students if they remember the legend about who gave the olive tree to the people of ancient Greece. Remind them that, in this story, Athena told the people of Athens that the olive tree would not only bring them abundance as a food and through other uses, but that it would also become a symbol of peace. Ask students why peace may be important to a civilization. Tell students that today the saying “extend an olive branch” means to offer peace to someone instead of continuing to fight.

**The Discus Thrower**

**Materials: Flying disc**

Show students Flip Book image 4A-7 of *The Discus Thrower*. Have them look at the image while they answer the following questions:

1. **What do you see?** (It is a statue called The Discus Thrower, and it was first made by the sculptor Myron.)

2. **What is this figure doing?** (He is trying to throw a discus as far as possible. The discus was made of stone and took tremendous strength to throw.)
3. Do you think he will throw the discus far? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)

4. When you throw something heavy, does your face look like this? (Answers may vary.) [Explain that the Greeks preferred to make humans look calm and thoughtful; this was part of their idea of beauty.]

5. What would your body look like if you were throwing a ball or a flying disc? (Answers may vary.) [Have a few volunteers hold a flying disc and pose like the athlete in the sculpture. Be sure to explain that the stone disc was much heavier and was very difficult to throw.]

6. Are there any details that might suggest this is a sculpture from ancient Greece? (Answers may vary.) [Explain that the ancient Greeks didn’t wear clothes when they competed in the Olympic Games. Share that the discus throw is still an Olympic sport today.]

7. Do you think that the sculptor Myron accomplished his goal to capture the look and feel of the athlete as he was throwing the disc? (Answers may vary.) [Explain that although this sculpture is accurate in the anatomy and pose, it is not meant to be an exact portrait, because it does not show any strain in the expression of the athlete. Explain that, instead, it is meant to capture an ideal expression of the Olympic spirit and of Greek beauty.]

**Olympic Games**

You may wish to coordinate with the P. E. teacher in your school to set up a simple Olympics day for your class with contests and prizes.