Social Studies Day 2 – The Ancient Greeks

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Ancient Greece - The Ancient Greeks

by ReadWorks



the ancient Greek temple of Hephaestus

Greece is a country in Europe. It lies on the Mediterranean Sea. People have lived on the land since **ancient** times. The **ancient** Greeks had **ideas** about science, sports, the arts, and **government**. Many **ideas** today have even been **inspired** by the **ancient** Greeks.

In **ancient** Greece, towns were called city-states. City-states were very independent and very proud. Athens was a famous **ancient** city-state. It was named after Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and knowledge. Today, Athens is the capital of Greece. It is very different from**ancient** Athens, but some of ancient Athens continues to exist. For example, people can visit some **ancient** ruins, such as the Acropolis and the Agora.

The people of **ancient** Athens invented a new kind of **government**. It was called democracy. This meant that the citizens of **ancient** Athens were allowed to take part in their **government**. They could vote and make big decisions. This kind of government has **inspired** many of today's **governments**.

The **ancient** Greeks had their own religion. They believed in many different gods. Each god represented something specific to the **ancient** Greeks. For instance, there was a god of war and a goddess of love. They even had a god of sleep.

The **ancient** Greeks did many things to honor their gods. They put on plays. They held sporting events. In fact, the first Olympic Games were held in **ancient** Greece. Today's Olympic Games were **inspired** by the Olympic Games of**ancient** Greece.

The Olympic Games and forms of democracy today are just some of many things that have been **inspired** by the **ancient** Greeks!

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Vocabulary

ancient

adjective

definition: When something is very, very old, we sometimes call it ancient. Something that is ancient is often more than a thousand years old.

Jason's family visited some ancient places when they were in Africa. It was fun to imagine how people lived thousands of years ago.

Spanish: antiguo

ancient

adjective

definition: Something ancient is a thing that existed or happened a very, very long time ago, like an ancient kingdom or an ancient tribe of people. When you read about an ancient country, that country might still exist now--like Egypt or Greece--but you are reading about that country the way it was maybe thousands of years ago.

It's amazing that people in ancient China made paper two thousand years ago.

Spanish: antiguo

government

noun

definition: Government is the making of laws and important decisions that affect all the people living in a country, state, city, or other place. Government is the job of people like presidents, governors, mayors, prime ministers, and even kings and queens.

The old mayor was not the most popular, but he was good at government, and the city ran well when he was in charge.

Spanish: gobierno

government

noun

definition: Government is the group of people who make decisions and laws for all the people in a country, state, city, or other place.

The state government decides how fast people can drive on the state's highways.

The city government decided to build a public swimming pool.

Spanish: gobierno

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idea

noun

definition: An idea is a thought or picture that you have in your mind.
Our teacher told us to write a story, but I didn't have any ideas.

Spanish: idea

inspire

verb

definition: to stimulate or influence (someone to do something) by stirring the emotions.
My mother's kindness inspired me to write a book about her.
The captain's bravery inspired the crew to face the storm without fear.

Spanish: inspirar

forms: inspired, inspires, inspiring

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1. Before you start reading...

Here are the vocabulary words that will be in this reading. Let's see how well you already know them.

Check the box that shows how well you know each word. It's ok if you don't know them yet (this is not graded)!

	Don't know it	Have heard of it but not sure of its meaning	Know something about its meaning	Know it well
ancient				
government				
idea				
inspire				

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2. Word Matcher

Every word has other words that have similar meanings or even the exact same meaning (these are called synonyms!). Draw a line from each similar word or synonym to the vocabulary word that it matches!

antique old aged management rule charge

ancient **government** **idea** **inspire**

concept thought reaction challenge kindle invite

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3. After reading and exploring the words through some activities...

Do you know these words better? Check the box that shows how well you know each word. It's ok if you don't know them yet (this is not graded)!

	Don't know it	Have heard of it but not sure of its meaning	Know something about its meaning	Know it well
ancient				
government				
idea				
inspire				

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Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1. According to the text, where is Greece located?

A. in Europe by the Acropolis

B. in Europe on the Mediterranean Sea

C. in the ruins of ancient Athens

D. in Athens by the Agora

2. What does the author describe in the text?

A. the government of ancient Greece

B. the government of Greece today

C. the government of ancient Athens

D. the government of Athens today

3. Read these sentences from the text.

> In ancient Greece, towns were called city-states. City-states were very independent and very proud. Athens was a famous ancient city-state. . . .
>
> The people of ancient Athens invented a new kind of government. It was called democracy. This meant that the citizens of ancient Athens were allowed to take part in their government. They could vote and make big decisions. This kind of government has inspired many of today's governments.

What can you conclude based on this information?

A. Governments today may look very different if the ancient Greeks had not invented democracy.

B. The ancient Greeks were inspired by an older government to create a government of democracy.

C. Each citizen of ancient Athens took turns to make big decisions and rule the city-state for a day.

D. The founders of democratic governments today visited Greece before creating their own democracies.

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4. Based on the text, what did the ancient Greeks probably think about their gods?

A. They probably thought their gods were very old.

B. They probably thought their gods were very sleepy.

C. They probably thought their gods were very loving.

D. They probably thought their gods were very important.

5. What is the main idea of the text?

A. The ancient Greeks believed in a religion that had multiple gods for representing different parts of life.

B. Ancient Greece was a complex society that has inspired some ideas in the world today.

C. Greece is located near the Mediterranean Sea, and people have lived there since ancient times.

D. The ancient Greeks are responsible for the Olympic Games, which inspired the Olympic Games that are held today.

6. Read these sentences from the text.

> Each god **represented** something specific to the Greeks. For instance, there was a god of war and a goddess of love.

As used in these sentences, what does the word "**represented**" mean?

A. created or invented

B. wrote stories about

C. was used as a symbol for

D. voted in an election

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7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence.

Some religions have only one god, _____ the ancient Greeks believed in many gods.

A. in the end

B. but

C. because

D. therefore

8. According to the text, what inspired the Olympic Games of today?

9. How have the ancient Greeks influenced the world today? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

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