Chapter 4
Ancient Greece,
1900–133 B.C.
Chapter Introduction

Section 1: Early Civilizations in Greece

Section 2: The Greek City-States

Section 3: Classical Greece

Section 4: The Culture of Classical Greece

Section 5: Alexander and the Hellenistic Era

Visual Summary
How did the Greeks shape our culture?

When you go to a theater, laugh at a comedy, or cry at a tragedy, you are using words and ideas from ancient Greece. Theaters, like the one in Taormina, Italy, shown here, were carved out of hillsides and had such good acoustics that audiences of up to 14,000 could hear the actors and chorus. In this chapter you will learn how the Greeks continue to influence our culture today.

• What impact did the Mediterranean climate have on Greek buildings?
• How do our stadiums and theaters resemble Greek theaters?
Chapter Timeline

The World

- **c. 1900 B.C.** Peak of Minoan civilization
- **776 B.C.** First Olympic Games held
- **c. 1500 B.C.** King Agamemnon ruled Mycenae
Chapter Time Line

499–479 B.C.  
Persian Wars

500 B.C.  
Height of Classical Greece

431–404 B.C.  
Spartans fought Athenians in the Peloponnesian War

323 B.C.  
Death of Alexander the Great

133 B.C.
Early Civilizations in Greece

In what ways did proximity to the sea influence the development of early Greek civilizations?
The Greek City-States

Why do some political ideas live on, while others are discarded?
Chapter 4

Section 3

Classical Greece

What leads to rivalry between nations?
The Culture of Classical Greece

How has classical Greece influenced Western civilization?
Alexander and the Hellenistic Era

What makes a great leader?
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The BIG Idea

Physical Geography  The earliest Greek civilizations that appeared in the second millennium B.C. were influenced by their physical environment.
The Impact of Geography

The mountains that divided Greece led to cultural and political divisions between Greeks. However, the seas linked Greece to the rest of the world.
The Impact of Geography (cont.)

• The mountains and the sea played especially significant roles in the development of Greek history.

• About 80 percent of Greece is mountainous. These mountains caused Greek communities to develop uniquely and independently from each other.
The Impact of Geography (cont.)

• It is likely that the small size of independent communities encouraged more of the population to **participate** in politics.

• Greece is made up of a peninsula and numerous islands surrounded by the **Aegean**, Mediterranean, and Ionian Seas.

• Access to the Aegean, Mediterranean, and **Black Seas** enabled the Greeks to make contact with the outside world.
Why is it assumed that many of the Greek people participated in politics?

A. They lived in small, independent communities.
B. They were well educated.
C. They lived by the seas.
D. They had contact with outside communities.
Minoans and Mycenaeans

**MAIN IDEA**

The Mycenaeans created the first Greek civilization.
By 2800 B.C., the **Minoan** civilization existed on the island of **Crete**.

This **Bronze Age** society influenced Greek civilization.

The first Greek state was developed by the **Mycenaeans**, an Indo-European people who lived on the mainland of Greece.
The Mycenaean Greeks were a warrior people who built fortresses and maintained loose alliances.

According to Homer, the Mycenaean Greeks conquered Troy around 1250 B.C. Scholars have debated whether this event was factual or a legend.
What event is told in poetic form by Homer?

A. Mycenaean Greeks capturing Minoa
B. Mycenaean Greeks conquering Troy
C. Mycenaean Greeks capturing Crete
D. Mycenaean Greeks suffering a devastating earthquake
Greek civilization was slow to recover from the several centuries of instability that followed the fall of the Mycenaean.
Greeks in the Dark Age (cont.)

- Following the collapse of the Mycenaean empire, Greece entered the Dark Age.
- Many Greeks left Greece for Ionia.
- Homer’s epic poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* appear near the end of the Dark Age.
- The values taught by Homer were courage and honor as shown by the *arete* of Greek heroes.
Why is Homer thought to have “created” Greek history?

A. He wrote down everything he saw.
B. He created a library to contain Greek works.
C. He taught Greeks how to read and write.
D. His literary works gave Greeks an ideal past and national heroes.
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The BIG Idea

Ideas, Beliefs, and Values  Differences between Athenian and Spartan values led to different forms of government.
Content Vocabulary

- polis
- acropolis
- agora
- hoplite
- phalanx
- tyrant
- democracy
- oligarchy
- helot
- ephor
GUIDE TO READING

Academic Vocabulary

• assemble
• implies

People and Places

• Hellespont
• Bosporus
• Byzantium
• Sparta
• Athens
• Solon
• Cleisthenes
Polling Question

Do you think most communities had a centralized area where people met for political and social activities?

A. Yes
B. No
Polis: The Center of Greek Life

The polis or city-state was the central focus of Greek life. The citizens of a polis had defined rights and responsibilities, as well as a strong identity and loyalty that kept the city-states divided.
• By 750 B.C., the polis had become the central focus of Greek life, where people would meet for political, social, and religious activities.

• The main gathering area was usually the acropolis, a fortified area at the top of a hill.

• People would assemble in the agora, which was an open area below the acropolis.
Citizens of the Greek polis had rights and responsibilities.

The military system of the ancient Greeks was based on soldiers called hoplites who fought in a military formation known as a phalanx.
What is the term for the city-state of ancient Greece?

A. Phalanx
B. Polis
C. Agora
D. Acropolis
Greek Expansion

The search for farmland and the growth of trade resulted in colonization and the spread of Greek culture and political ideas.
Greek Expansion (cont.)

- Ancient Greeks established colonies along the Mediterranean Sea and on Hellespont and Bosporus straits.

- The most notable of these colonies was Byzantium, the site of the present-day city of Istanbul.
Greek Expansion (cont.)

- The Greeks grew wealthy trading pottery, wine, and olive oil in exchange for grains, metals, timber, and slaves.

- The expansion of trade and industry gave rise to a new group of men who used their wealth to seize power. **Tyrants** were rulers who seized control yet were not oppressive, as our word for tyrant **implies**.
The age of tyrants did not last, and as a result, many more people became involved in politics.

Many of the city-states developed either democracy or oligarchy.
What was the impact of Greek colonization?

A. Wealth that bolstered the Greek economy
B. The end of the polis system
C. The end of democracy and oligarchy
D. The unification of the Greek city-states
Two Rival City-States

MAIN IDEA

Sparta and Athens developed different systems of government.
Two Rival City-States (cont.)

- Beginning around 730 B.C., the city-state of **Sparta** became a dominant military state and conquered several of its neighbors.
- These conquered peoples were known as **helots** and became serfs who were made to work for the Spartans.
- All males in Sparta spent their childhood learning military discipline joined the military at age 20. Philosophy, literature, and travel were discouraged.
Two Rival City-States (cont.)

• The Spartan government was headed by two kings, called ephors, who were elected annually and were in charge of education and the conduct of citizens.

• Around 700 B.C., Athens had become a unified polis on the peninsula of Attica. A small number of aristocrats owned the best land and headed the government as an oligarchy.
Two Rival City-States (cont.)

- **Solon** solved the economic problems of Athens by canceling land debts and freeing those enslaved due to debt.

- Another reformer named **Cleisthenes** created a council of 500 men to oversee governmental affairs. This assembly created the foundations of Athenian democracy.
Which of the following activities would have been encouraged in Spartan society?

A. Studying literary works
B. Traveling to other city-states
C. Physical fitness training
D. Studying philosophy
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The BIG Idea

Competition Between Countries  Athens’s growing power led to conflict with Sparta.
The Challenge of Persia

The Greek states of Athens and Sparta formed alliances to defeat the Persian invaders.
The Persian Empire captured the Ionian Greek cities in western Asia Minor during the mid-sixth century B.C.

The Persian ruler Darius wanted revenge against Athens for assisting a failed rebellion by the Ionian cities.
• In 490 B.C., the Persian army led by Darius was defeated by the Athenians at the battle of Marathon.

• It is said that Pheidippides had run 26 miles from Marathon to Athens to deliver news of the Greek victory.
The Challenge of Persia  (cont.)

• In 480 B.C., Xerxes led an other Persian invasion of Greece.

• Athenians, Spartans, and other Greeks united and defeated the Persian invaders in 479 B.C.
How did the Greeks defeat the Persians?

A. The use of iron weapons
B. The Spartan army
C. Forming an alliance
D. Using helots as soldiers
The Athenian Empire

During the Age of Pericles, Athens became the center of Greek culture.
The Athenian Empire (cont.)

• In 478 B.C., the Athenians created a defensive alliance against the Persians known as the **Delian League**. Its headquarters was on the island of **Delos**.

• **Pericles** became a prominent leader in Athenian politics between 461 and 429 B.C. He expanded democracy to enable all male citizens to play a role in the government.
The Athenian Empire (cont.)

• The **Age of Pericles** witnessed an expansion of the empire abroad and the creation of **direct democracy** at home.

• Historians consider this period of **classical** Athenian and Greek history as the height of Athenian power and brilliance. Art, architecture, and philosophy flourished.

Comparing Democratic Systems
The Athenian Empire (cont.)

- Under the practice of **ostracism**, any person who had their name written by at least 6,000 members of the assembly would be banned from the city for 10 years.

- The Athenian economy was based largely on farming and trade. Due to the shortage of farmland, importing grain and other crops was important to the society.
The primary function of the family was to produce new citizens by having children. Slaves and other dependent relatives were often considered family as well.
What was the main function of the family in classical Greece?

A. Involvement in politics  
B. Military service  
C. Producing children  
D. Trading for grains and other needed goods
The Great Peloponnesian War

The creation of an Athenian empire led to tensions with Sparta and, eventually, war.
The growing rivalry between Sparta and Athens led to the outbreak of war.

In 431 B.C., the Great Peloponnesian War began.

The two rivals had differing strategies on how to win the war.
The Great Peloponnesian War (cont.)

• The Spartan army surrounded Athens. Athens relied on its navy and defensive walls for protection.

• After 25 years of war, Sparta was victorious.

• While Sparta, Athens, and Thebes struggled to dominate Greek affairs, the empire of Macedonia to the north grew stronger.
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The BIG Idea

Ideas, Beliefs, and Values  Ideas from the classical age of Greece helped to shape Western civilization.
Greek Religion

Greek religion was fundamental to Greek society and is remembered today for the Olympic Games and Greek drama, which were part of religious festivals.
Greek Religion (cont.)

- Greek religion was centered around gods and goddesses who controlled the lives of the Greeks.

- The gods and goddesses were thought to live on Olympus, the highest mountain in Greece.
Greek Religion (cont.)

- To keep the gods happy, the ancient Greeks relied on **rituals**. These rituals could include festivals and athletic events.

- To learn the will of the gods, the ancient Greeks used the **oracle**.

- The most famous oracle was the oracle of Apollo at **Delphi**, where representatives of states were sent for consultation.
How did the Greeks honor their gods and goddesses?

A. Oracles
B. Military conquest
C. Rituals and festivals
D. Traveling to Olympus
Classical Greek Arts and Literature

**MAIN IDEA**

Greece produced groundbreaking art and literature that is still considered relevant.
Classical Greek Arts and Literature (cont.)

- Greek architecture was centered around principles of calmness, clarity, and freedom from unnecessary detail.

- The most important form of architecture was the temple, dedicated to a god or goddess.

- The use of marble columns was common after the fifth century B.C.
Classical Greek Arts and Literature (cont.)

- Greek sculptors sought a standard of ideal beauty, and the nude male was the favorite subject.

- The first Greek dramas were **tragedies**, and were presented in a trilogy.

- Today, the only complete tragedy we possess is called *Oresteia* written by **Aeschylus**.
Sophocles was a playwright from Athens who was noted for his work *Oedipus Rex.*

Euripides questioned traditional values and developed complex plots and characters.

Greek comedies, developed later, used puns and satire to criticize politicians and intellectuals.
Herodotus wrote *History of the Persian Wars*, which is often seen as the first real history in Western civilization.

Thucydides is often considered the greatest historian of the ancient world; he attempted to portray history fairly and accurately.
Who wrote the only complete Greek tragedy that we possess today?

A. Sophocles  
B. Herodotus  
C. Thucydides  
D. Aeschylus
Greek Philosophy

Three great Greek philosophers—Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—established the foundations of Western philosophy.
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

- **Philosophy** refers to an organized system of thought.

- Many philosophers in ancient Greece sought answers to question of the nature of the universe through rational thought.

- **Pythagoras** taught that the essence of the universe could be found in music and numbers.
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

• A group of traveling teachers, known as **Sophists**, did not believe that it was possible to understand the universe and rejected the ideas of other philosophers. They believed it was more important for individuals to improve themselves.

• Three Greek philosophers—Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—established the foundations of Western philosophy.
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

- **Socrates**
  - Sculptor whose true love was philosophy
  - Believed the goal of education was to improve the individual
  - Taught students to live their lives by a code of ethics
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

– He used a **method** of teaching in a question-and-answer format to lead students to find answers for themselves. This **Socratic Method** is still used today.
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

- **Plato**
  - Student of Socrates who was fascinated with the question of reality
  - Wrote his ideas of government in a work entitled *The Republic*
  - Considered by many to be the greatest philosopher of Western civilization
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

- **Aristotle**
  - Student of Plato who believed that people’s happiness is tied to their behavior
  - Interested in classifying and analyzing things based on observation and investigation
  - Studied natural science by making and recording observations, laying the foundations of the scientific method
Greek Philosophy (cont.)

- Aristotle
  - He did not seek an ideal state, but rather studied existing governments and favored constitutional government.
  - Often viewed as the most influential thinker in the Western world, his ideas are still studied today.
Who were the basic groups of people in Plato’s ideal state?

A. Philosophers, aristocrats, and slaves
B. Philosopher-kings, warriors, and producers
C. Teachers, students, and the uneducated
D. Government officials, warriors, and slaves
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The BIG Idea

Ideas, Beliefs, and Values  Greek culture spread to new lands.
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Content Vocabulary

• Hellenistic Era
• Epicureanism

Academic Vocabulary

• subsidizing
• founder

• Stoicism
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People and Places

- Macedonia
- Philip II
- Alexander the Great
- Alexandria
- Pergamum
- Eratosthenes

- Euclid
- Archimedes
Do you agree that America has military heroes that all citizens know about?

A. Yes

B. No
Macedonians Invade Greece

Under Alexander the Great, Macedonians and Greeks conquered the Persian Empire.
Macedonians Invade Greece (cont.)

• **Macedonia** was a rural region north of Greece.

• In 338 B.C., **Phillip II** invaded Greece and defeated an alliance of Greek states at the Battle of Chaeronea.

• **Alexander the Great** continued the plan of his deceased father Phillip II and conquered Persia after he took the throne at age 20.
Macedonians Invade Greece (cont.)

- Alexander and his army captured western Asia Minor, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.

- He built **Alexandria** as the Greek capital in Egypt.

- In 331 B.C., Alexander captured the rest of the Persian Empire. His army traveled east through what is now Pakistan and reached India.
Alexander created an enormous legacy. He extended Macedonian control over vast areas, bringing wealth and new ideas to Greece, while Greek culture spread throughout North Africa and Southwest Asia.
Which of the following areas were not conquered by Alexander the Great?

A. Egypt  
B. Palestine  
C. Italy  
D. Syria
The Hellenistic Era

As a result of Alexander’s conquests, Hellenistic cities became centers for the spread of Greek language, art, architecture, and literature.
The Hellenistic Era (cont.)

• Alexander the Great ushered in a new age, the **Hellenistic Era**, which saw the spread of Greek culture and ideas to Southwest Asia and beyond.

• Alexander’s unified kingdom did not last, and four Hellenistic kingdoms arose: Macedonia, Syria, Egypt, and **Pergamum** in western Asia Minor.
The Hellenistic Era (cont.)

- The cities of the Hellenistic Age were built in the Greek image and became centers of culture.
- Literature was highly prized, and Hellenistic leaders spent large amounts subsidizing writers.
The Hellenistic Era (cont.)

- Hellenistic scientists and mathematicians:
  - Aristarchus developed a theory that Earth revolves around sun.
  - **Eratosthenes** determined that Earth was round and calculated Earth’s circumference to within 185 miles.
  - **Euclid** wrote *Elements*, a textbook on geometry that is still studied today.
The Hellenistic Era (cont.)

• Hellenistic scientists and mathematicians:
  – Archimedes established the mathematical value of pi and created many inventions.
The Hellenistic Era (cont.)

- Two new systems of thought, Epicureanism and Stoicism, were studied in Athens.
  - Epicurus, the founder of Epicureanism, taught that people had to free themselves from public activity in order to follow their own self-interests to find happiness.
  - Followers of Stoicism believed that by living in harmony with the will of God that they could bear whatever life offered.
Which of the following was not a Hellenistic kingdom that succeeded Alexander?

A. Macedonia
B. Constantinople
C. Syria
D. Pergamum
Click the mouse button to return to the Chapter Menu.