Ancient Greece
(1750 B.C. – 133 B.C.)
The Minoans

- The Minoans established a brilliant early civilization on the island of Crete.
- The Minoans traded with Egypt and Mesopotamia. They acquired ideas and technology that they adapted to their own culture.
- The Minoans helped to shape the first Greek civilization.

Fresco in the Knossos Palace on Crete
Minoan Civilization began on the Island of Crete
Minoan History

- c. 3000 B.C., Crete was settled by a people from Asia Minor
- By 2000 B.C. they lived in cities and traded with other nations in the Mediterranean.
- They had a written hieroglyphic language that evolved into a linear form.
- They built magnificent palace centers at Knossos, Phaistros, and Kato Zakros.
- Their government system was ruled by priests and consisted of bureaucratic monarchies, who served as “chief entrepreneurs” or CEOs.
- They built large navies of armored merchant ships and traded throughout Asia Minor and Egypt.
- They had large multi-room homes – even the peasants.
- They are the first civilization that appears to have “leisure time.”
Bull-Jumping Fresco at the Palace of Knossos
Downfall of Cretans

- The concentration of wealth produced a society with social equality, which was unknown in the ancient world.
- No gender inequality seems to have existed.
- Palaces had no defensive works, throughout much of their history.
- Their concentration of economic resources on mercantilism and their generous distribution of wealth among their people may have led to their downfall.
- Earthquakes and volcanoes weakened their cities.
- Eventually the Minoans were conquered by the Mycenaens.
Women in Minoan Civilization

- Crete was a class-based society with little inequality.
- Women played an important role in city public life, serving as priestesses, functionaries, & administrators.
- They participated in all the sports men did, including bull-jumping.
- They also participated in every occupation & trade available to men, including skilled crafts, entrepreneurs, bureaucracy, priesthood.

Fresco of Women at Knossos Palace in Crete
The Mycenaens

- The Mycenaens conquered the Greek mainland and Crete.
- Mycenaen civilization dominated the Aegean from about 1400 B.C. to 1200 B.C.
- They traded with Sicily, Italy, Egypt, and Mesopotamia.
- Mycenaens absorbed Egyptian and Mesopotamian influences and passed them on to later Greeks.
Mycenean Civilization
The Late Helladic Period

- Most of what we know about this culture comes from Homer’s epics.
- The archeological sites at Troy and Mycenae indicate a strong influence on their culture from the Minoans.
- There were differences. The government consisted of monarchs who ruled over large administrations.
- Mycenean kings accumulated vast wealth, but it was not shared by the rest of society.
- Mycenean kings were warlords, constantly ready for battle or invasion.
- Cities had heavy defenses.

Mask of Agamemnon
Mycenean Religion

- Early Myceneans had a sky-god, who would become Zeus.
- Later, they adopted the Minoan goddesses.
- Offerings and sacrifices were made to the gods, and may have involved human sacrifices.
The Greek Dark Ages

- Between 1200 and 1100 BC populations in cities dwindled & they could no longer support artisans and craftsmen.

- Writing was abandoned leaving no history to explain it the 500 years of mystery.

- Greeks returned to an agricultural or nomadic life in small tribal groups.

- Many Greeks took to the sea and migrated to the islands of the Aegean.

- **Dorians**, invaders from the north, soon followed bringing new weapons and tools.
The Epics of Homer

“Every man make up his mind to fight
And move on his enemy! Strong as I am,
   It’s hard for me to face so many men
   And fight with all at once. . . .
   And yet I will!”

Homer, *Iliad*

- The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reveal many of the values of ancient Greeks. Homer’s heroes display honor, courage, and eloquence.

- The epics of Homer have been inspiring writers for almost 3,000 years.
The Ancient Greeks: How Democratic?

Document 1

The Granger Collection, New York

Document 2
Ancient Greece

- Greece is part of the Balkan peninsula. Mountains divide the peninsula into isolated valleys. Off the Greek mainland are hundreds of small islands.

- The geography of the region prevented the Greeks from creating a large, united empire. Instead, they built many small city-states, cut off from one another by mountains or water.

- The seas linked the Greeks to the outside world. The Greeks became skilled sailors, traveling and trading all over the Mediterranean.
Greek City-States Develop

- The Greeks developed an alphabet based on the Phoenician’s that became the basis for all western alphabets.
- Between 750 B.C. and 500 B.C., the Greeks evolved different forms of government.
- At first, the ruler was a king, who exercised central power, or a monarchy.
- Slowly, power shifted to a class of noble landowners, who defended the king, but in time, they won power for themselves, creating an aristocracy.
- As trade expanded, a new class of wealthy merchants, farmers, and artisans came to dominate some city-states, creating an oligarchy.
### Competing City-States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATHENS</th>
<th>SPARTA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Society grew into a limited <strong>democracy</strong>, or government by the people.</td>
<td>• Rulers were two kings and a council of elders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Only free, native-born, land-owning men could be citizens.</td>
<td>• Rulers formed a military society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Male citizens over age 30 were members of the assembly.</td>
<td>• Conquered people were turned into slaves, called <strong>helots</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rulers encouraged trade with other city-states.</td>
<td>• Rulers forbade trade and travel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Women were considered inferior.</td>
<td>• Male, native-born Spartans over age 30 were citizens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Boys received education in many areas, not just military training.</td>
<td>• All boys received military training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Girls were raised to produce healthy sons for the army.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Women had the right to inherit property.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Acropolis

Athena
Unifying Forces

Local ties, independent spirit, and economic rivalries led to fighting among the Greek city-states. Despite these divisions, the Greeks shared a common culture.

- They honored the same ancient heroes.
- They participated in common festivals.
- They prayed to the same gods.
- They shared the Greek language.
- They felt superior to non-Greeks, whom they called “barbaroi,” people who did not speak Greek.

Despite their cultural ties, the Greek city-states were often in conflict with one another.

The threat of the powerful Persian empire united the Greek city-states.
The Persian Wars

- Darius I invaded Greece at Marathon in 490 B.C. with a fleet containing 20,000 soldiers.
- The Greeks waited out the Persians, attacking them as they tried to re-board their ships and won.
- Pheidippides then ran 26 miles from Marathon to Athens to tell them of the success. He told this story and died. The marathon race was added to the Olympics to commemorate the event.
- Later, Xerxes decided to attack Greece in order to take revenge for his father’s loss.
In 480 B.C. Xerxes took 180,000 troops and thousands of warships and supply vessels to attack Greece.

The Greeks joined forces to repel them.

Leonidas and his Spartan soldiers led a combined Greek army against the Persians at Thermopylae.

Athenian general Themistocles led the navy against the Persians at Salamis.

United, the city-states defeated the Persians and ended the threat of Persian invasions.
Ancient Greek Trireme
The Impact of the Persian Wars

- Victory over the Persians increased the Greeks’ sense of their own uniqueness.
- Athens emerged as the most powerful city-state.
- Athens organized the Delian League, an alliance with other Greek city-states.
- Athens used the Delian League to create an Athenian empire.
- Sparta responded by forming the Peloponnesian League.
The Ancient Greeks: How Democratic?

Document 3

The Granger Collection, New York
The Age of Pericles

- After the Persian Wars, under the leadership of Pericles experienced a golden age.

- Periclean Athens was a direct democracy. In this form of government, large numbers of citizens take part in the day-to-day affairs of government.

- This meant that Athenian men participated in the assembly and served on juries.

- Pericles hired architects and sculptors to rebuild the Acropolis, which the Persians had destroyed.

- Pericles turned Athens into the cultural center of Greece. He did this with the help of an educated, foreign-born woman named Aspasia.
Pericles Funeral Oration

- Pericles gave a speech at the funeral of Athenians slain in battle. This speech is considered one of the earliest and greatest expressions of democratic ideals.

- “Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people.”

- “We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless but as a useless character.”
# The Peloponnesian War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAUSES</th>
<th>EFFECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many Greeks outside of Athens resented Athenian domination.</td>
<td>Athenian domination of the Greek world ended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparta formed the Peloponnesian League to rival the <strong>Delian League</strong>.</td>
<td>Athens recovered economically and remained the cultural center of Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparta encouraged oligarchy, while Athens supported democracy.</td>
<td>Democratic government suffered.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Corruption and selfish interests replaced older ideals such as service to the city-state.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
After the unconditional surrender of Athens, Sparta became the undisputed major power in Greece.

The Spartan general, Lysander, replaced the Athenian democracy with an oligarchy.

Proponents of democracy fled to Corinth and Thebes, while the Spartans ruled with an iron fist.

The Peloponnesian War weakened the Greek city-states, making them easier to conquer by Philip of Macedonia.
The Glory that Was Greece

- Guided by a belief in reason, Greek Artists, writers, and philosophers used their genius to seek order in the universe.
- **Homer** wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.
- The greatest Athenian playwrights, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, wrote tragedies.
Greek Philosophers

Some Greek thinkers used observation and reason to find causes for what happened. The Greeks called these thinkers philosophers, meaning “lovers of wisdom.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>SOCRATES</strong></th>
<th><strong>PLATO</strong></th>
<th><strong>ARISTOTLE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Developed Socratic method, whereby a series of questions are posed in order to challenge implications of answers | Emphasized importance of reason  
Believed the ideal state should regulate every aspect of citizens’ lives to provide for their best interest | Favored rule by single strong and virtuous leader  
Taught that good conduct meant pursuing moderation |
Greek Architects and Artists

The work of Greek artists and architects reflected a concern with balance, order, and beauty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ARCHITECTURE</th>
<th>ART</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architects tried to convey a sense of perfect balance to reflect the harmony of the universe.</td>
<td>Early sculptors imitated rigid Egyptian poses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example: The Parthenon</td>
<td>Later sculptors emphasized natural poses that were lifelike but also idealistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paintings offer views of Greek life.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Parthenon

- The original inspiration for Greek architecture came from the Egyptians and was later passed on to the Romans.
- The columns were built to lean in toward each other so that from a distance they would look straight.

The most famous temple is the Parthenon.
Three Orders of Greek Architecture

- Simplest form of column.
- Capital made of circle topped by a square.
- There is no base.
- The shaft is plain with 20 sides.
- The frieze had simple patterns.
- The Parthenon is an example.
Three Orders of Greek Architecture

- Shafts were taller than the Doric, making them look more slender.
- Had flutes, or lines carved into them from top to bottom.
- Shafts had entasis, or a bulge, in the columns to make them look straight from a distance.
- The bases were large and looked like stacked rings.
- Capitals consist of scrolls above the shaft.

Temple of Athena Niki in Athens
Three Orders of Greek Architecture

- Most decorative of orders.
- Uses entasis to make shafts look straight.
- Capitals have flowers and leaves below a small scroll.
- The shaft has flutes and the base is like the Ionian.
- Corinthian roofs are flat.

The Temple of Sybil in Rome
Poetry and Drama

Greek dramas were often based on popular myths and legends. Through these stories, playwrights discussed moral and social issues and the relationship between people and the gods.

Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides wrote tragedies, plays that told stories of human suffering that usually ended in disaster.

Aristophanes wrote comedies, humorous plays that mocked people or customs.
Theatre in Anatalya, Turkey

Euripides, writer of Greek Tragedies
The Greeks applied reason, observation, and logic to the study of history.

**Herodotus** is called the “Father of History.”

Herodotus stressed the importance of research, while Thucydides showed the need to avoid bias.

Herodotus and **Thucydides** set standards for future historians.
Alexander the Great

- Alexander was the son of Philip II of Macedon and Olympias.
- He was taught first by Leonidas, who was a strict disciplinarian and later by the Greek philosopher, Aristotle.
- By age 16, Alexander had served as regent of Macedonia, put down a rebellion, and named a city after himself.
Philip of Macedonia conquered Greece. He was assassinated before he could fulfill his dream of conquering the Persian empire.

Philip’s son, Alexander, succeeded him to the throne in 336 B.C. at the age of 21.

Alexander won his first victory against the Persians at the Granicus River. He then conquered Asia Minor, Palestine, Egypt, and Babylon.

Alexander crossed the Hindu Kush into northern India. There his troops faced soldiers mounted on war elephants. They were forced to retreat.

While planning his next battle campaign, Alexander died of a sudden fever. Three generals divided up the empire.
The Hellenistic World

- In 334 B.C. Alexander crossed into Asia Minor to begin his conquest of Persia, the largest empire to date.

- The conquests of Alexander the Great spread Greek civilization throughout the Mediterranean world and across the Middle East to the outskirts of India.

- Greek culture blended with Persian, Egyptian, and Indian cultures to create the Hellenistic civilization, in which art, science, mathematics, and philosophy flourished.

- In 323 BC, at the age of thirty-three, Alexander fell into a fever and died in Babylon on his way back from India.
Empire of Alexander the Great

[Map of the Empire of Alexander the Great, showing key cities and regions such as Macedonia, Greece, Asia Minor, Persia, and Alexandria.]
The Legacy of Alexander

Although Alexander’s empire did not last, he had unleashed changes that would ripple across the Mediterranean world and the Middle East for centuries.

- Alexander’s most lasting achievement was the spread of Greek culture.

- Across the empire, local people *assimilated*, or absorbed, Greek ideas. In turn, Greek settlers adopted local customs.

- Gradually, a blending of eastern and western cultures occurred.

- Alexander had encouraged this blending by marrying a Persian woman and adopting Persian customs.
Great Minds of the Hellenistic Period

- Zeno founded Stoicism, which urged people to accept calmly whatever life brought.
- Pythagoras derived a formula to calculate the relationship between the sides of a triangle.
- Euclid wrote *The Elements*, a textbook that became the basis for modern geometry.
- Aristarchus theorized about a heliocentric, or sun-centered, solar system.
- Eratosthenes showed that the Earth was round and accurately calculated its circumference.
- Archimedes used principles of physics to make practical inventions, such as the lever and the pulley.
- Hippocrates studied illnesses and cures and set ethical standards for medical care.