Geography and the Early Greeks: Chapter 8 – Section 1
(Blue Textbook p.228-233, Green Textbook p.254-259)

If YOU were there.... (Read and answer question)

What could you do to make a living here?

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Main Ideas

1. Geography helped shape early Greek civilization.
2. Trading cultures developed in the Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations.
3. The Greeks created city-states for protection and security.

The Big Idea

Greece’s geography and its nearness to the sea strongly influenced the development of trade and the growth of city-states.

Key Terms

polis

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________
classical

acropolis
Taking Notes

Listen to Ms. Delano carefully, and write down key points. Also, copy down any information she writes on the board here.

** As you read, notice how Greece’s geography affected the development of trade and city-states. Take notes on a graphic organizer like this one.
- What about Greece’s geography influenced how and what they traded?
- What about Greece’s geography influenced how their city-states developed, were organized, and how they interacted with each other?
Section 1 Assessment

1a. What kinds of landforms are found in Greece?

1b. How did the sea help shape early Greek society?

1c. How might the difficulty of mountain travel have been a benefit to the Greeks?

2a. What was the first major civilization to develop in Greece?

2b. How were the Minoans and Mycenaeans similar?
3a. What is a polis?

3b. Why do you think the Greeks built their cities around a high acropolis?
The ancient Greeks walked the earth almost 4,000 years ago in the year 1600 BC. This powerful civilization was located in the southeast part of Europe on the border of the Mediterranean Sea. Greece was divided into different regions by multiple mountain ranges. Fortunately, the surrounding sea linked the civilization's major cities together and to surrounding areas. The geography of Greece had a big impact on the Greek culture. It played a large role in allowing the Greeks to develop a society that was far more advanced than the others of their time.

One of Greece's defining features is the fact that it is a peninsula, or a piece of land that is surrounded by water on three sides. The Mediterranean Sea is the body of water that surrounds Greece on three sides. The Mediterranean Sea is divided into several smaller seas that have their own individual names. Two of the smaller seas within the Mediterranean that border Greece are the Aegean Sea and the Ionian Sea. The Aegean Sea borders Greece to the east, and the Ionian Sea borders Greece to the west. The southernmost tip of Greece actually forms a second, smaller peninsula called Peloponnese. Peloponnese is linked to the mainland of Greece by an isthmus, a narrow strip of land that connects two larger pieces of land. In addition to Peloponnese, there are thousands of other Greek islands that surround the mainland. Crete, which is located to the south of mainland Greece, is the largest of these islands.

More than three-fourths of Greece is covered in mountains. This creates natural divisions or regions throughout the country. The ancient Greeks were divided into four main geographical areas due to these mountain ranges and the lack of inland rivers in Greece. Because the peninsula of Peloponnese was only connected to the mainland of Greece by a small isthmus, it was its own region for the most part. The land in Peloponnese was a combination of plateaus and mountains. Just above Peloponnese is the region of Central Greece. This is the area of Greece that has the most mountain ranges. Northern Greece was the region to the north of Central Greece and Peloponnese at the tip of the mainland. It was almost completely surrounded by mountains. Finally, the many Greek islands that surround the mainland made up the fourth region of ancient Greece.

**FAST FACT:** Mount Olympus, which was located in Northern Greece, was the tallest mountain in Greece. It was significant because the Greeks believed it was the home of their gods.

The geography of Greece, in addition to the sheer size of the nation, explains why Greece was divided into city-states throughout most of its history. By 800 BC, the Greek Empire had grown and spread into a vast empire. Many new city-states had formed. Each city-state had its own laws, rulers, and traditions. All Greeks shared a common language and similar cultures, but each city-state had its own intricacies. Some of the most powerful and well-known city-states in ancient Greece were Athens and Sparta.

Largely as a result of its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea, the climate in Greece was mild for most of the year. Temperatures never got too hot or too cold. During the winter, temperatures only dropped to around 50 degrees Fahrenheit, and temperatures in the summer usually hovered around 80 degrees Fahrenheit. The Greeks also experienced a great deal of rain during the winter, but summers were much drier. The pleasant climate that existed year-round allowed the Greeks to spend a great deal of time outside. They participated in many outdoor activities.

Think about the impact that the geography around you has on your life. The land that you live on and around determines many things. It determines how long it takes you to get from place to place, where you go for vacation, how quickly you can access things you need, and what you wear. The same was true for the ancient Greeks. The famous civilization's development was impacted by the mountainous land that they lived on and the fact that they were surrounded by seas but had very few rivers.
Text-based Evidence Questions

Geography of Greece

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**Key Ideas & Details**

*Highlight/color the text support the color listed next to each question.*

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, explain the importance of the geography of the land to the ancient Greek civilization. **RI.1 RED**

2. Describe the major bodies of water surrounding Greece. **RI.3 YELLOW**

3. Explain why ancient Greece wasn't united under one main government. **RI.3 BLUE**

4. Describe the climate in Greece. **RI.3 GREEN**

5. List and describe the four geographic regions of Greece. **RI.2 PURPLE**

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Text-Based Evidence Questions

Geography of Greece

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

Craft & Structure

6. Explain the meaning of the term "isthmus." RI.4 ORANGE

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5

Integration of Knowledge & Ideas

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8
As wonderful as the weather is in Greece, the land lacks inland rivers for transportation. It also lacks flat, fertile land, and many important natural resources. As a result, the ancient Greeks had to find creative ways to trade amongst each other and with surrounding people groups to meet all of their basic needs. Many Greeks relied on trade to get the goods that they needed. This is why trade was essential to the development, growth, and spread of the ancient Greek civilization.

**FAST FACT:** Egypt and Italy were two of Greece’s largest trading partners.

Because the majority of the land in Greece is covered in mountains, the ancient Greeks did not exactly live on land that had the ideal geography for farming. Only around one-fourth of the land could be used for farming. The rest of the land was covered in mountains and did not have access to rivers. Despite this, the Greeks found ways to grow a few basic crops, including olives and grapes. Both grapes and olives were able to survive the rocky, hilly land of Greece. The Greeks used olives for a number of things, but their primary application of the crop was to make olive oil. Olive oil was used in cooking, to fuel lamps, as body lotion, and more. The Greeks used the delicious grapes they grew to make wine. The Greeks also grew shrubs on the sides of hills and mountains in order to herd animals, like sheep and goats. Sheep and goats produced wool for the Greek people.

Natural resources were scarce in Greece. However, the land did provide a few specific resources that the Greeks were able to either use in their daily lives or to trade with. Gold and silver could be found in the mountains of Northern Greece. The mountains also provided plenty of stone for building. Iron ore was found on several of the Greek islands. However, the Greeks still needed to trade with neighboring civilizations in order to get more metal and for crops like nuts, flax, and grains.

**FAST FACT:** In addition to being farmers, many Greeks were fishermen, sailors, and traders.

The Mediterranean Sea, which surrounded the country of Greece, was the main transportation route that linked the people of Greece to the outside world. The sea was essential for travel and for trading. Because trading was so vital to the Greek society, the Greeks became skilled sailors. In addition to using the sea as a trade route, they also utilized the massive body of water for fishing. The Greeks ate a great deal of fish, and they also traded fish for some of the other resources that they lacked. Luckily for the Greeks, the land provided many natural harbors where they could dock their ships.

**FAST FACT:** The Greek military also utilized the Mediterranean Sea to expand the Greek Empire.

The Mediterranean Sea was the most important trade and travel route for the Greeks. The harbors and trade routes that were established around the sea also allowed many outside traders to make their way into Greece. Although the Greeks weren’t able to grow many crops, they were fortunate that the crops they were able to grow produced valuable goods. Traders from all over the world desired these goods. The olive oil, wool, and wine that were produced in Greece attracted eager traders to Greece, and the trade relationships that the Greeks developed also allowed them to spread their culture around the world.
**Trade and Agriculture**

**Directions:** Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**KEY IDEAS & DETAILS** *Highlight/Color the text support the color listed next to each question*

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, why was trade essential to the Greeks in ancient times? **RI.1 RED**

2. Explain how the Greeks managed to farm their mountainous land. **RI.3 YELLOW**

3. Describe the natural resources that were found in Greece. **RI.3 BLUE**

4. Explain the importance of the Mediterranean Sea to the Greeks. **RI.3 GREEN**

5. List the three most valuable crops that brought traders to Greece. **RI.2 PURPLE**
TEXT-BASED EVIDENCE QUESTIONS

Trade and Agriculture

**Directions:** Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**CRAFT & STRUCTURE**

6. Explain the meaning of the term “essential” based on the context of how it is used in the last sentence of the first paragraph. **RI.4 ORANGE**

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. **RI.5**

**INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS**

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. **RI.8**
ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS: GREECE

Early Greek Government

The country you live in today might seem quite different from ancient Greece. While this is true in many ways, you will probably be surprised to learn that many of the ideas that your country was founded on originated with the Greeks. You can thank the ancient Greeks for coming up with the idea of democracy. Democracy is a type of government that is focused on the people in which decisions are made based on the vote of the majority of people. This type of government structure was very different from the other three types of rule that existed at the time. After learning more about other types of government, you will probably find yourself thanking the Greeks for creating democracy. Oligarchy, monarchy, and tyranny were three types of rule that are far different from democracy.

A monarchy is a form of government in which one person holds all the power. The word monarchy comes from two Greek root words. Monos means ‘single’, and arkhein means ‘rule’. Kings typically led monarchies, living luxurious lives of wealth and power. They often reinforced their power with strong military force. Kings also ruled for most of their lives and passed their power down to a son or close advisor after their death. Monarchies were prevalent in early Greek history, specifically when the Mycenaean ruled from 2000 BC to 1100 BC.

Around 1200 BC, the Mycenaean were attacked and replaced by the Dorians. The Dorians did away with monarchies and instead established a form of government called an oligarchy. An oligarchy is a type of government in which total power is held by a small group of people. The word oligarchy comes from the Greek root words oligas, which means ‘few’, and arkhein, which means ‘rule’. For the next 300 years after the Mycenaean were overthrown, small groups of people ruled over various Greek areas. This is the time period when city-states developed. A city-state is an independent city that rules itself and its surrounding area. The groups that ruled in each city-state were wealthy and powerful. As was the case in monarchies, the people that lived in oligarchies had no power and were kept in line by strong military forces.

Tyranny is a type of government in which one powerful ruler holds all of the power and makes all of the decisions. The leader, also called a tyrant, usually comes into power illegitimately by overthrowing the previous ruler. Tyrannies first arose in ancient Greece around 600 BC. People became more and more frustrated with the existing oligarchies, and they wanted to have a say in the decisions that were made by the rulers. Tyrants were an improvement over oligarchs because they were supported by the people and were thought to have the people’s best interests at heart. Unfortunately, many tyrants became cruel and greedy once they came into power. They often only ruled for a short time until the people overthrew them and replaced them with someone else.

FAST FACT: Tyrants were similar to monarchs in that both types of leaders held absolute power. The main difference between the two types of leaders was the way in which they came into power. Monarchs were typically from very wealthy families and inherited power as it was passed down. Tyrants, on the other hand, came into power by seizing control on their own. Many tyrants were middle class people who later came into wealth and used their wealth to seize control.

Regardless of whether or not they were being ruled by monarchs, oligarchs, or tyrants, life was difficult for the ancient Greeks. Greek rulers were often harsh and cared very little for the citizens that they ruled over. The citizens had no say in how the city-state they lived in was run. They did not even have the right to vote. Eventually, most of these types of rulers were overthrown by the Greek citizens. Very few still existed by the year 400 BC. Democracies replaced monarchies, oligarchies, and tyrannies in many city-states. Believe it or not, some of these oppressive forms of government still exist today. Saudi Arabia is ruled by a monarch who has total power. Russia is ruled by a leadership group that resembles an oligarchy. North Korea is ruled by a dictator who is very similar to a tyrant. Fortunately, most countries today are ruled by governments that resemble a democracy. You have the Greeks to thank for that idea!

Word Count: 737
Early Greek Government

**Directions:** Answer these questions after you read the passage. **Remember** to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**KEY IDEAS & DETAILS** *Highlight/color the text support using the color listed next to each question.*

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, what three types of government were most common in early ancient Greece? **RI.1 RED**

2. Explain what a monarchy is. **RI.3 YELLOW**

3. Explain what an oligarchy is. **RI.3 BLUE**

4. Explain what a tyranny is. **RI.3 GREEN**

5. List the countries today that still have governments similar to those that existed in early ancient Greece. **RI.2 PURPLE**

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TEXT-BASED EVIDENCE QUESTIONS

Early Greek Government

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

CRAFT & STRUCTURE

6. Explain the meaning of the term "democracy." RI.4 ORANGE

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8

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Government in Athens: Chapter 8 or 9 – Section 2
(Blue Textbook Ch. 8 p.236-241, Green Textbook Ch. 9p.262-267)

If YOU were there…. (Read and answer question)

What do you think of this new government? Why?

Main Ideas

1. Aristocrats and tyrants ruled early Athens.
2. Athens created the world’s first democracy.
3. Ancient democracy was different than modern democracy.

The Big Idea

The people of Athens tried many different forms of government before creating a democracy.
Key Terms

democracy

aristocrats

oligarchy

citizens

tyrants

Pericles
Taking Notes

Listen to Ms. Delano carefully, and write down key points. Also, copy down any information she writes on the board here.

** As you read, take notes on the various types of government the people of Athens tried. Take notes

Oligarchy

1.

2.

3.

Tyranny

1.

2.

3.

Democracy

1.

2.

3.
Section 2 Assessment

1a. What are aristocrats?


1b. How were oligarchy AND tyranny DIFFERENT?


2a. Describe the DEMOCRACY created by CLEISTHENES.


2b. How did PERICLES change Athenian democracy?


3a. What type of DEMOCRACY did ATHENS have?


3b. In what situations would a REPRESENTATIVE democracy work better than a DIRECT democracy?
After living for centuries under the leadership of rulers that had total power, the Athenian city-state came up with a new idea of government. This type of government was unlike a monarchy, oligarchy, or tyranny. Democracy, a type of government that is of the people, by the people, and for the people, was born in Athens, one of the largest city-states in ancient Greece. A democracy is essentially all about the people that it represents! The idea of democracy began in Athens and eventually made its way throughout Greece. Today, many nations have democratic governments. These governments are based on the original ideas of the Athenians that lived in ancient Greece.

FAST FACT: In 621 BC, a man named Draco was commissioned to record the laws in Athenian society. People had become frustrated with the wealthy nobles who ruled in monarchies, oligarchies, and tyrannies. Unfortunately, writing down all of the laws that existed just made things worse. People became even angrier than they already were when they saw all of the laws written out. So, changes had to be made to the rules that governed Athens!

Around 594 BC, a man named Solon was elected to power in Athens. By that time, the poor people of Athens were extremely frustrated with their living situation. Some farmers were so poor that they had to become slaves. Solon realized that he needed to make some serious changes in order to prevent the angry people from revolting and overthrowing him. So, he took action. The most major change Solon made was outlawing slavery. He also did away with the idea that government leaders should be determined by birth. Instead, he thought that leaders should be chosen by the amount of wealth they had.

Cleisthenes came into power in Athens around 500 BC. Like Solon, Cleisthenes made a number of changes to the government in Athens because he wanted to take better care of the people. Cleisthenes also changed the idea of Athenian citizenship during his reign. Instead of basing citizenship on wealth and family lineage, he based citizenship on where a person lived. He also gave every citizen of Athens equal rights. Cleisthenes established the legislative body, which was a randomly chosen group of people who oversaw law and order in Athens. Both Solon and Cleisthenes were well-liked by the majority of the Greek people because the people felt like they were empowered and supported for the first time.

FAST FACT: Once the democratic government was established in Athens, the citizens of the city-state met in meeting spaces to discuss societal issues and cast votes. Court was also held in these meeting spaces.

The democracy of the ancient Greeks was different from the type of democracy that is found in the United States today. The Athenians used a direct democracy, which means all citizens were allowed to vote and have a part in the government. Decisions are made based on the majority vote in a direct democracy. An indirect democracy, the form of democracy that exists in the United States today, is the complete opposite of a direct democracy. In an indirect democracy, leaders are elected to represent the people. These elected leaders then make most of the decisions within the government. Another way in which the Greek democracy was different than the democracy that exists in the United States today was that the Greek democracy was limited. All citizens could vote, but the definition of a citizen did not include the whole population. Only adult males were allowed to vote. Women, children, and foreigners were not given a say despite the fact that they made up the majority of the population.

The word "democracy" comes from the Greek root words demos, meaning 'people', and arkhein, meaning 'rule'. Solon and Cleisthenes made revolutionary changes to the structure of the Greek government during their time in charge of the Athenian city-state. Although democracy has changed in many ways over the years, the foundational ideas that the Athenians put in place centuries ago are still present in democratic governments today!
Athenian Democracy

**Directions:** Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**KEY IDEAS & DETAILS** Highlight/color the text support using the color listed next to each question.

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, list the four types of government that existed in ancient Greece at various times throughout history. **RI.1 RED**

2. Explain the impact that Solon's ideas had on the Athenian government. **RI.3 YELLOW**

3. Explain the impact that Cleisthenes' ideas had on the Athenian government. **RI.3 BLUE**

4. Explain the main differences between direct and indirect democracies. **RI.3 GREEN**

5. List the people who were and were not allowed to vote in the limited government that existed in ancient Greece. **RI.2 PURPLE**

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Athenian Democracy

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

CRAFT & STRUCTURE

6. Explain the meaning of the term “democracy.” RI.4 ORANGE


7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5


INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8


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ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS: GREECE

Social Structure and Life in Greece

As is the case in all societies, there were both good aspects and bad aspects of life in ancient Greece. The Greeks were fortunate in that they were part of a very wealthy and sophisticated civilization. Unfortunately, the wealth and power that was available in Greek society was typically limited to Greek men. Women had little to no rights in society. Foreigners who moved into the land had limited rights and freedoms, and slaves had even less rights and respect than women or foreigners. The role of women was very clearly defined. They did not have an opportunity to increase their independence. However, there was a chance that slaves and lower class citizens could change social classes if they worked hard enough.

The separation between men and women in ancient Greece began at a very early age. Boys were allowed to attend school, but young girls were not. Young boys began school at an early age and progressed through a series of levels from elementary to secondary school. In many ways, the education that young boys in ancient Greece received was similar to the education system that is used in the United States today. The boys learned to read, write, and do math in school. Athletics were also part of the education system. The Greeks highly valued strength and wanted their young men to go through rigorous physical training from an early age. Although the Greeks clearly valued education, they did not believe it was important for Greek girls to go to school. Young Greek women typically stayed at home where they learned household skills that would help them prepare for a domestic future.

FAST FACT: Boys from poor families would not have been able to pay for school. Instead, they would have been educated by their fathers in the family trade.

FAST FACT: Except in Sparta where young men were required to pass a challenging test before they would be admitted into the military, all free men in Greece were required to join the army. However, men were able to work in their craft or on their farms when they were not on active duty.

Like the education system, traditional Greek marriage arrangements placed an emphasis on males. Marriages were often arranged between the father and the husband-to-be. Younger girls were typically married to older men. Girls were between 13 and 16 years old and men were between 25 and 30 years old when they were married. The bride’s father would pay a dowry to the husband for taking responsibility of the daughter by marrying her. The Greeks had a great deal of pride in their marriages and their family lineage, so fathers paid as much as they could to the husbands who married their daughters. After women were married, their main focus would be on having children and raising a family. Besides their roles as mothers, women had very little rights and were typically only allowed out of the house for important events, such as funerals.

FAST FACT: Women could not vote or own land.

As is the case in many civilizations, the Greeks placed great importance on social classes. The social class of a man was mostly defined by his work. Women and children took on the same social status as their husband or father. There were four distinct social classes within the Greek society. The upper class was the smallest representation of the population and was comprised of wealthy people. This elite class of people owned slaves and were often involved in government or military affairs. The middle class was comprised of farmers, merchants, tradesmen, and other skilled workers. The lower class was made up of people who did not own land and made a living doing unskilled labor. At the very bottom of Greek social society were the slaves who had no rights at all despite the fact that they were essential to the prosperity of the civilization. Slaves were never paid or compensated for their work, but the work they did accomplished a great deal for their slave owners and the community as a whole.

FAST FACT: Slaves were often people who had been captured during war.

Word Count: 694
Social Structure and Life in Greece

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, why was life in Greece not perfect for all people? RI.1 Red

2. Describe the typical education of a young Greek boy in ancient Greece. RI.3 Yellow

3. Explain how marriage relationships were formed in ancient Greece. RI.3 Blue

4. Describe the role women played and the rights they had in ancient Greece. RI.3 Green

5. List the different social classes that existed in ancient Greece. RI.2 Purple
Social Structure and Life in Greece

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

CRAFT & STRUCTURE

6. Explain the meaning of the term “dowry.” RI.4 ORANGE

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8
Greek Mythology and Literature: Chapter 8 – Section 3
(Blue Textbook p.242-249, Green Textbook p.268-275)

If YOU were there…. (Read and answer question)

How might you explain these natural events?

Main Ideas

1. The Greeks created myths to explain the world.
2. Ancient Greek literature provides some of the world’s greatest poems and stories.
3. Greek literature lives on and influences our world even today.

The Big Idea

The ancient Greeks created great myths and works of literature that influence the way we speak and write today.

Key Terms

mythology
Taking Notes

Listen to Ms. Delano carefully, and write down key points. Also, copy down any information she writes on the board here.

** As you read, look for characteristics of Greek myths and literature. Record what you find in a graphic organizer like the one shown.

Greek Myths
1.
2.
3.
4.

Greek Literature
1.
2.
3.
4.

Section 3 Assessment

1a. What is mythology?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

1b. Why did the ancient Greeks create myths?

________________________________________________________________________
2a. What are Homer's most famous works?


2b. How are fables different from myths?


3a. In what areas have Greek myths influenced our culture?


3b. Why do you think mythological references are popular with sports teams and businesses today?


3c. Why do you think Greek literature has been so influential throughout history?
Ancient Civilizations: Greece

Impact of Greek Mythology

Greek mythology is a collection of myths about Greek gods and the world that was created by ancient Greeks. Mythology was at the very center of Greek society. The beliefs that the Greek people had about their gods and goddesses guided their lives. Stories about the gods and goddesses were often used to explain natural events. The Greeks believed that their gods controlled nature and therefore they thought that their lives were dependent on the favor of the gods. They believed that the gods resided on Mount Olympus, which was located in northern Greece, but they could also roam freely. Twelve central gods who were known as the Olympians played the most influential roles in mythology. However, the Greeks also had stories and legends about many more gods.

Godly figures are oftentimes thought of as being all powerful and perfect. Greek gods and goddesses were far from having either of these attributes. Although they did have special supernatural abilities, they also had many flaws. Greek gods were human-like in the way that they had families, fought with one another, and had emotions. Some gods were called demigods, meaning they were half-human and half-god. Others were monsters whose sole mission was to orchestrate evil. Heroes were humans who were given supernatural abilities by the gods. Each god or goddess ruled over a different aspect of life. For example, Poseidon was the god of the sea.

The Greeks believed that their gods could help them see into the future. Greek people commonly visited oracles, or spiritual places where they could gather advice about what to do next from certain gods. One of the most famous oracles was the Oracle of Delphi. The Oracle of Delphi was so important to the Greeks that there was almost always a long line of people waiting to have a chance to speak to the oracle. People traveled from all over Greece to visit the oracle.

The Greeks spent a great deal of time learning about and worshipping their gods. They believed that they would receive good fortune if they honored and pleased their gods. So, the Greeks built statues, monuments, and buildings for the gods. They also practiced rituals and presented gifts to the gods in an attempt to win their favor. The Greeks also honored their gods with festivals and other gatherings.

Greek mythology was central to Greek life because these famous myths gave meaning to the world that the Greeks lived in. The myths, stories, and legends of the Greek gods were passed down verbally for many years. Greek mythology has continued to influence art and literature throughout history. Although people today know that the myths aren’t true, many still enjoy hearing the colorful and adventurous stories about the Greek gods and goddesses.
TEXT-BASED EVIDENCE  QUESTIONS

Impact of Greek Mythology

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

KEY IDEAS & DETAILS

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, what did the Greeks believe to be true about their gods? RI.1 RED

2. Explain how Greek gods were different from gods the gods that were worshipped by other ancient civilizations. RI.3 YELLOW

3. Explain the importance of oracles. RI.3 BLUE

4. Describe how the Greeks worshipped their gods. RI.3 GREEN

5. List and describe the three types of mythical figures that the Greeks believed in besides gods and goddesses. RI.2 PURPLE

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Impact of Greek Mythology

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

**CRAFT & STRUCTURE**

6. Explain the meaning of the phrase “Greek mythology.” RI.4 **Orange**

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5

**INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS**

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8
ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS: GREECE

Athens vs. Sparta

Athens and Sparta were two major city-states in ancient Greece. While the two famous nations shared a number of things in common, including their massive size and proximity on a map, their values and the daily lives of their citizens could not have been more different. Athens was located near the Aegean Sea and was a city-state that was built on encouraging its people to travel and engage in worldly thinking. Sparta, on the other hand, was located near the southernmost tip of Greece and was isolated by mountains. The two influential city-states were a mere 150 miles apart.

The Spartans were keen to live simple lives. Their main focus was on physical strength and military power. From an early age, Spartan boys were taught to endure pain with little luxury. This was done to ensure that they would grow up to be strong and unyielding warriors. When Spartan boys they reached twenty years old, they were given a test. Men who passed were permitted to join the elite Spartan military where they would be required to serve until they were sixty years old. Unlike many other city-states in Greece, Spartan women enjoyed a great deal of independence. This was largely due to the fact that their men were usually preoccupied with war.

Both Spartan men and women were ruled by an oligarchy that was made up of two kings and the assembly. Spartans were able to elect their own leaders, and people under the rule of the oligarchy were divided into social classes. The highest social class included the smallest number of people. It was made up of wealthy Spartans and those in the military. Below the elite were the middle class, which was the Spartan working class, and the lowest class, which was largely comprised of the Helots. The Helots were people who had been brought to Sparta after the Spartans had conquered their land. They made up a large portion of the population, but had little to no rights.

Athenians valued the mind in the same way that the Spartans valued physical strength and military prowess. Education in Athens was not focused on physical training as it was in Sparta. Athenians hoped schools would develop thinkers who were ready to explore the arts and sciences. Like most other Greek city-states, only Athenian boys went to school. Boys were taught to play sports, understand the military, do math, and read. Because such a large emphasis was placed on thought life in the Athenian society, many of the most famous philosophers in the world were Athenians. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are a few famous philosophers who lived in the Athenian city-state.

FAST FACT: Athenian men were only required to serve in the military for two years.

Unlike the oligarchy that existed in Sparta, Athens developed a government that cared for all of its citizens. The idea of democracy, a government run by the people, was born in Athens. Wealthy men from long lines of rulers were no longer the people in power. Athenian leaders like Solon and Pericles outlawed slavery and expanded the definition of citizenship to include more people, including the poor. Pericles in particular advocated for more individual freedoms for individuals. All males in Athens had a say in the government. Like in Sparta, Athenians were able to elect their leaders.

FAST FACT: The social classes in Athens were similar to those in Sparta. Wealthy men and military leaders were in the upper class. Farmers and craftsmen were in the middle and lower classes. Foreigners, called metics, had little to no rights and were below the lower class.

For most of history, Athens and Sparta were fierce rivals. Eventually, the differences between the Spartans and the Athenians became so great that a war broke out between the two city-states. The Peloponnesian War lasted from 431 BC until 404 BC. By 404 BC, Sparta had formed an alliance with Persia and finally had enough strength to destroy Athens. Even though the Athenians had been defeated by the Spartans, thirty years of fighting had allowed their thoughtful lifestyle to spread into Sparta and other neighboring regions.
Athens vs. Sparta

Directions: Answer these questions after you read the passage. Remember to begin your answer by restating part of the question, use direct evidence from the text, and explain your thinking.

1. According to the first paragraph of the text, what did Athens and Sparta share in common? **RI.1 RED**

2. Explain how young Spartan boys were raised. **RI.3 YELLOW**

3. Explain how young Athenian boys were raised. **RI.3 BLUE**

4. Explain key differences between the governments in Sparta and in Athens. **RI.3 GREEN**

5. Summarize the social classes in Sparta. **RI.2 PURPLE**
TEXT-BASED EVIDENCE QUESTIONS

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CRAFT & STRUCTURE

6. Explain the meaning of the term "metics." RI.4 ORANGE

7. How is the passage organized? (Chronological, cause/effect, comparison/contrast, description, problem/solution). Use evidence from the text to explain your answer. RI.5

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE & IDEAS

8. What is the key idea that the author wants readers to understand from this text? Use evidence from the text to support your reasoning. RI.8

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