

The Abbey Hill CURRICULUM

How groovy were The Greeks?



Achieving our dreams together





How Groovy were The Greeks?

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Key Idea:



From inventing democracy to founding the Olympic Games, their influence is still felt all over the world. Travel back to a land of over 2,000 islands, where powerful city-states like Athens and Sparta clashed, and thinkers like Socrates and Aristotle shaped science, medicine and philosophy. Discover how the Ancient Greeks built a society based on ideas of justice, knowledge, and culture that still inspire us today.

We will:



Organise and host our very own Olympic fun day.

Core Text:



Percy Jackson and the Lightning Thief
Rick Riordan



Core Knowledge



1. Greece has over 2,000 islands, with Athens as its capital, named after the goddess Athena.
2. The Classical Age saw Greece thrive in art, architecture, philosophy, and theatre
3. The Greeks invented democracy.
4. E&D: **Eunomia (Εὐνομία):** This concept refers to good governance or the rule of law, emphasizing the importance of laws that serve the public good.
5. Ancient Greece founded the Olympic Games, which continue today.
6. Greek medicine, led by figures like Hippocrates, shaped healthcare and standards for treatment.
7. Athens and Sparta were both city-states, but they had very different ways of living and organizing their society.
8. Alexander the Great spread Greek culture, science, and philosophy.
9. Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle laid the foundations of philosophy, maths and science.

Disciplinary Knowledge

Being a Historian:



Know that continuity is the idea that many aspects of everyday life stay the same over time.

Know that some key events caused great change for large numbers of people e.g. the introduction of democracy.

Know that decisions can have positive and negative consequences.

Know that sources can be useful for particular tasks and should be evaluated for this.

Know that there can be similarities and differences in everyday life for different groups of people e.g. men and women, rich and poor, rulers and ordinary people

Know that historically significant people may be viewed differently by different groups



















? Lesson 1: How did Athens get its name?

Heading	Detail
🎯 Learning Intention	To understand how Athens got its name through the myth of Athena. <i>(History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world)</i>
🧠 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that historically significant people may be viewed differently by different groups. Know that continuity is the idea that many aspects of everyday life stay the same over time.
📖 Key Knowledge	Greece has over 2,000 islands, with Athens as its capital, named after the goddess Athena.
👩‍🏫 What the teacher does	Tell the myth of how Athena and Poseidon competed to become the patron of the city — Athena gifted the olive tree, Poseidon offered a saltwater spring. Model how to break this into comic strip panels. Provide outline templates of Athens or the Greek mainland for comic shape.
👦 What the pupils do	Listen to the myth. Discuss why the Athenians chose Athena. Create a comic strip of the myth inside a map outline of Athens or the Greek mainland. Use captions and speech bubbles to show understanding.
📸 How the lesson will be evidenced	Comic strip retellings shaped like Athens or the Greek mainland.
🔧 Adaptation	Dual Coding – Combining myth, speech, and visual storytelling to support understanding.










? Lesson 2: What made Athens and Sparta so different?

Heading	Detail
 Learning Intention	To understand what a city-state is and explore how Ancient Greece was organised. (<i>History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world</i>)
 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that there can be similarities and differences in everyday life for different groups of people e.g. men and women, rich and poor, rulers and ordinary people.
 Key Knowledge	Athens and Sparta were both city-states, but they had very different ways of living and organizing their society.
 What the teacher does	<p>Begin with AFL task using familiar context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Do we have one government or lots of separate ones?” • “Do cities in the UK make their own rules?” • “What would happen if London was its own country?” <p>Move into → In Ancient Greece, there were city states: a city that rules itself like its own country.</p> <p>Then introduce a map of Ancient Greece and unpick its complex geography. (mountains, islands, seas) separated people, leading to many independent city-states. Explicitly connect back: “This is why Greece wasn’t one country like the UK or like the Greece we know today”.</p>
 What the pupils do	<p>Move to map task. Label these 7 city states on map but add also on a sentence reflecting their significance:</p> <p>Athens  <i>Democracy</i> – people (men) could vote and share ideas</p> <p>Sparta  <i>Warriors</i> – famous for its powerful army and strict training</p> <p>Corinth  <i>Trade hub</i> – busy with ships and trade between seas</p> <p>Thebes  <i>Strong army</i> – defeated Sparta in battle</p> <p>Olympia  <i>Olympic Games</i> – site of the first Olympic Games</p> <p>Delphi  <i>Oracle</i> – people visited for advice from the gods</p> <p>Knossos  <i>Ancient palace</i> – linked to early Greek civilisation (Minoans)</p> <p>Pupils can find and label each on own map or label existing map.</p>
 How the lesson will be evidenced	Completed labelled map
 Adaptation	Visual aids – Icons could replace captions for pupils.



? Lesson 3: Would you rather be an Athenian or a Spartan?

Heading	Detail
 Learning Intention	To understand the contrasting ways of life and government in Athens and Sparta. (<i>History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world</i>)
 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that there can be similarities and differences in everyday life for different groups of people (e.g. men and women, rich and poor, rulers and ordinary people).
 Key Knowledge	Athens and Sparta were both city-states, but they had very different ways of living and organizing their society.
 What the teacher does	<p>Introduce and display key headline contrasts. Frame the discussion through decision-making prompts, modelling how to turn each into an argument:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Would you rather have a voice in decisions or be told what to do?” (democracy vs strict rule) • “Would you prefer learning, arts and discussion or physical training and discipline?” • “Would you rather grow up at home with family or leave home at 7 to train as a soldier?” • “Do you think it’s more important to be free or to be strong and protected?” • “Would life be fair for everyone in each city?” (men, women, children) <p>Model one example response (e.g. “I would choose Athens because I value... however Sparta might be better for...”). Set up structured debate (pairs/groups), ensuring pupils must justify and respond to others. Guide discussion using probing questions and challenge superficial answers.</p>
 What the pupils do	In pairs/groups, use the prompts to prepare arguments for Athens or Sparta. Take part in a structured debate , responding to others’ views. Finally, decide individually: “Would I rather be Athenian or Spartan?” and justify their choice.
 How the lesson will be evidenced	A single, clear final justification (written sentence or short recorded response) showing their choice and reasoning.
 Adaptation	Resources and Aids – Sentence stems and prompt cards aligned to the teacher questions to support structured responses.





? Lesson 4: How did the Greeks change the way we are ruled?

Heading	Detail
🎯 Learning Intention	To understand how democracy was invented in Ancient Greece. <i>(History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world)</i>
🧠 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that some key events caused great change for large numbers of people e.g. the introduction of democracy. Know that decisions can have positive and negative consequences.
📖 Key Knowledge	The Greeks invented democracy.
👩‍🏫 What the teacher does	Organise a simple class vote on a relevant issue (e.g. "Should playtime be longer?"). Support two groups to present key arguments. Take photos during the debate. Model how to structure a PicCollage summarising both sides and the outcome.
👦 What the pupils do	Take part in the vote and debate. Use photos taken during the activity to create a PicCollage. Their PicCollage includes a summary of each argument and a final caption explaining which side won.
📷 How the lesson will be evidenced	PicCollage summarising the democratic vote, with photos and text explaining both sides and the outcome.
🔧 Adaptation	Resources and Aids – Provide PicCollage templates and sentence starters to support structure and content.

? Lesson 5: How did Greek thinkers change the way we understand the world?

Heading	Detail
🎯 Learning Intention	To explore the influence of Greek philosophers on knowledge and learning. <i>(History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world)</i>
🧠 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that historically significant people may be viewed differently by different groups. Know that sources can be useful for particular tasks and should be evaluated for this.
📖 Key Knowledge	Greek philosophers like Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle laid the foundations of philosophy, maths and science.
👩‍🏫 What the teacher does	Introduce Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle with funny facts and quirky stories in a Horrible Histories style. Provide examples of humorous biography posters. Guide pupils in creating their own funny, fact-based poster bios.
👦 What the pupils do	Choose one philosopher and create a Horrible Histories–style funny poster bio with cartoons, jokes, and key facts.





📷 How the lesson will be evidenced	Humorous poster bios combining humour and facts, displayed in class or digitally.
🔧 Adaptation	Dual Coding – Use humour and visuals to make complex info memorable and engaging.

? Lesson 6: How did Alexander the Great spread Greek culture?

Heading	Detail
🎯 Learning Intention	To understand how Alexander the Great spread Greek culture, science, and philosophy across his empire. (<i>History NC: Learn about Ancient Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world</i>)
🧠 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that some key events caused great change for large numbers of people; know that historically significant people may be viewed differently by different groups.
📖 Key Knowledge	Alexander the Great spread Greek culture, science, and philosophy.
👤 What the teacher does	Present an overview of Alexander’s conquests and cultural impact using maps and images. Lead a discussion on the positives and negatives of his empire-building.
👦 What the pupils do	Create a timeline or digital story (using iPads) showing key moments of Alexander’s conquests and how Greek culture spread. Pupils also write a brief paragraph reflecting on whether Alexander’s impact was more positive or negative.
📷 How the lesson will be evidenced	Digital timelines or stories and written reflections collected digitally or printed.
🔧 Adaptation	Chunking – Break the complex story into key events and ideas for clarity.

? Lesson 7: How did Ancient Greek culture spread and influence the world today?

Heading	Detail
🎯 Learning Intention	To understand how Ancient Greek culture spread and what influences from Ancient Greece still affect the world today. (<i>History NC</i>)
🧠 Disciplinary Knowledge	Know that some key events caused great change for large numbers of people; know continuity over time; understand historically significant people may be viewed differently by different groups.
📖 Key Knowledge	“Alexander the Great spread Greek culture, science, and philosophy.” and “The Classical Age saw Greece thrive in art, architecture, philosophy, and theatre.” and “Ancient Greece





	founded the Olympic Games, which continue today.” and “The Greeks invented democracy.” and “Greek medicine, led by figures like Hippocrates, shaped healthcare and standards for treatment.”
👩‍🏫 What the teacher does	Introduce key elements of Greek culture that spread widely: democracy, philosophy, Olympics, theatre, medicine. Use examples connecting to modern life. Facilitate discussion on pupils’ observations of Greek influences today.
👦 What the pupils do	Create a visual double-page spread or digital presentation showing how Greek culture spread and examples of its influence today, using images, keywords, and short explanations.
📷 How the lesson will be evidenced	Completed double-page spreads or digital presentations showing understanding and connections.
🔧 Adaptation	Dual Coding – Combine images and text for stronger understanding.



Knowledge Organiser

HOW GROOVY WERE THE GREEKS?

Were the Ancient Greeks really groovy? What made them so cool that we still talk about them today? In this topic, you'll travel back over 2,000 years to explore a civilisation full of bold ideas and powerful achievements. Did you know they invented the Olympic Games and the idea of voting? Would you prefer the creative life of Athens or the tough training of Sparta? From great thinkers to exciting traditions, the Greeks were true trendsetters, how Groovy were the Ancient Greeks?

KEY KNOWLEDGE

- Greece is a European country with over 2,000 islands. Its capital, Athens, was named after the goddess Athena.
- The Classical Age (500–336 BC) was a golden period when Greek art, architecture, philosophy, and theatre flourished and influenced Western civilisation.
- Ancient Greeks created democracy, giving citizens a voice and influencing modern governments.
- The Greeks introduced trial by jury, helping shape fair justice systems used today.
- Ancient Greece founded the Olympic Games, a famous sporting event that still brings countries together.
- Greek doctor Hippocrates helped develop medicine and ethical rules still used by doctors.
- Landmarks such as the Acropolis, Parthenon, and Temple of Olympian Zeus show advanced Greek engineering.
- Alexander the Great spread Greek culture widely, while Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle shaped Western thinking.

POP!E TIMELINE

- 776 BCE – The first Olympic Games are held.
- 447 BCE – Construction of the Parthenon begins.
- 146 BCE – Greece becomes part of the Roman Empire.



GLOSSARY

- City-state** – An independent city with its own government.
- Democracy** – A system where people vote on decisions.
- Philosophy** – The study of wisdom, knowledge, and life.
- Empire** – A large area of land controlled by one ruler.
- Acropolis** – A high area in Athens where important buildings were built.
- Parthenon** – A famous temple in Athens.
- Olympics** – A sporting competition that started in Ancient Greece.
- Mediterranean** – A type of climate with hot summers and mild winters.

FAMOUS 3



Alexander the Great – A military leader who spread Greek ideas across his vast empire.



Socrates – A famous philosopher who asked deep questions about life and knowledge.



Hippocrates – Known as the 'Father of Medicine,' he created ideas still used in healthcare today.



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