

City-States and Democracy

古希腊：城邦与民主 · Ancient Greece, part 1



Ancient Greece on a timeline

- **776 BC** · The first recorded Olympic Games at Olympia.
- **About 508 BC** · Athens starts a democracy.
- **447–432 BC** · The Parthenon temple is built in Athens.
- **399 BC** · The philosopher Socrates dies in Athens.



The Parthenon in Athens today, about 2,450 years old.

BC means “before Christ”: the years count *down* toward year 1. So 776 BC came before 508 BC.



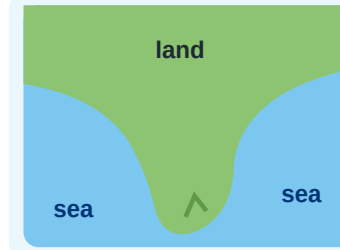
Speaker notes

Ask: which of these words do you already know in Chinese? We'll meet each one this unit.



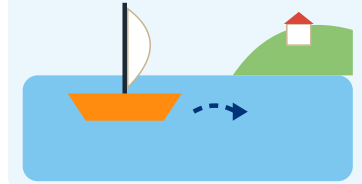
Mountains and sea

- Greece is a rocky peninsula with many islands.
- Mountains split the land into small valleys.
- Each valley grew its own city-state: one city and its farms.
- The sea connected them. Greeks traded by ship and started a colony wherever they found good land.



peninsula 半岛

Land with water on three sides.



colony 殖民地

A new town started by people from another city.

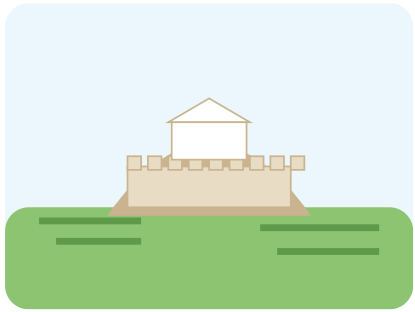


Speaker notes

Ask: why would mountains make it hard for one king to rule all of Greece? (Hard to travel, hard to send armies, people stayed in their own valley.)

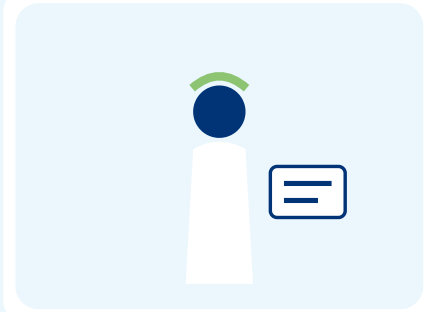


Key words: who decides?



city-state 城邦

A city and the land around it, with its own government.



citizen 公民

A member of a city-state with rights, like the right to vote.

👉 = 1 vote



democracy 民主

Government where citizens make decisions by voting.



assembly 公民大会

A meeting where citizens discuss and vote on laws.



Athens and Sparta

Athens 雅典

- A democracy: citizens voted on laws
- Famous for plays, art and philosophers
- A strong navy and lots of trade
- Boys went to school to read, write and speak in public

Sparta 斯巴达

- Two kings and a council of elders
- Life was built around the army
- Boys left home at 7 to train as soldiers
- The strongest army on land in Greece



Speaker notes

Both were city-states, only a few days' walk apart, but life was very different. They fought each other in the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC), which Sparta won.



Athens or Sparta?

Guess first, then click to see each answer.

Boys left home at age 7 to train as soldiers.

Sparta 斯巴达

Citizens voted on laws in the Assembly.

Athens 雅典

Famous for plays, art and philosophers.

Athens 雅典

Two kings ruled at the same time.

Sparta 斯巴达



Speaker notes

Fragments: each answer is hidden until you press → (or click). Ask for a show of hands first: “Athens or Sparta?”, then reveal. In the source, an answer is just `[Sparta]{.fragment}`.



How democracy worked in Athens

- The assembly met about 40 times a year on a hill called the Pnyx.
- Any citizen could stand up and speak.
- Then they voted, usually by raising their hands: vote.
- In court, juries of hundreds of citizens voted with small tokens.

Demos = people, *kratos* = power. Democracy = power of the people.



Who could vote?

Could vote

Free adult men with Athenian parents

Could not vote

- Women
- Enslaved people
- Foreigners living in Athens

Only a small part of the people living in Athens were citizens.



Speaker notes

Discussion: Was Athens a real democracy? Who would you add to the voters? How is this different from democracies today?



Think, pair, share

Would you rather live in Athens or Sparta? Why?

Use a sentence frame:

- I would rather live in _____ because _____.
- One thing I would miss about _____ is _____.

3:00

Start

Reset

+1 min



Exit ticket

Who could vote in the Athenian Assembly?



All adults living in
Athens



Free men who were
citizens



Only the king

0 votes

Show results

Reset



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