

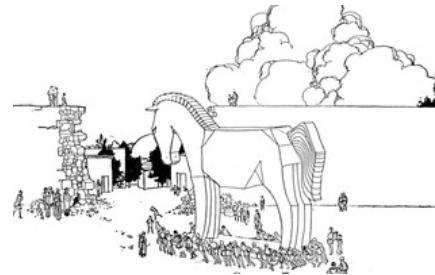
Name _____ Date _____

Ancient Greece



The ancient Greeks are remembered today for many things, among them their great contributions to art, philosophy, and literature. The history of ancient Greek culture covers several millennia, and begins around the year 2000 BC, towards the end of the Bronze Age. During the next millennium two separate Greek centers of culture developed and then disappeared: the Minoans and the Mycenaeans. The Minoans were a relatively peaceful people who made their home on the isle of Crete. They had two writing systems known as Linear A and Linear B, and created jewelry and artwork out of precious metals and stones. Volcanic eruptions destroyed most of their cities around the year 1450 BC, and over the next century their culture gave way to that of the Mycenaeans, a nearby Greek tribe.

The Mycenaeans built their own elaborate cities on the isle of Crete, and engaged in active warfare with their Mediterranean neighbors. Perhaps the most famous of these wars is the semi-mythical Trojan War, which was described some 600 years later by the poet Homer. Archeologists now believe that there was a Trojan War, and that they have found the ancient city of Troy in modern-day Turkey. By the year 1100 BC the Mycenaean civilization had crumbled, and Greece entered a period of time known as the Dark Ages of Greece.



Marked by the absence of writing and by a dwindling of skills such as painting and pottery, the Greek Dark Ages lasted until the middle of the 8th century BC, when Greece entered the period known as the Archaic Period. These years were a time of renaissance for the Greek people. They developed their own alphabet based on the Phoenician alphabet, and began writing literature, such as Homer's famous epic poems *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. The world's first Olympics were held in the year 776 BC, and Greek colonies began to appear in Southern Italy and along the Adriatic coasts. The Greek people had always lived in close contact with the sea, and advances in shipbuilding technology as well as military strength allowed them to extend their range and conquer many of the nearby lands.

Name _____ Date _____

Ancient Greece



The 5th century BC marked the beginning of Greece's Classical Age, which is often considered to be the dawn of modern Western thought. Many great philosophers, poets, mathematicians, historians, and politicians lived during this time period. The city of Athens was home to many of these great thinkers, and much of the written



material from this time period comes from Athenian scholars such as Aristotle, Plato, or Euclid. Modern democracy is based on the political structure of ancient Athens, which practiced the world's first documented democratic governance.

An important feature of ancient Greece was that there was no unified Greek government or nation. The Greek people belonged to a network of independent city-states which shared many linguistic, religious, and cultural ties. Some of the most famous and powerful of these states were Athens, Sparta, Thebes, and Argos. Wars were often fought between Greek cities-states, such as the legendary Peloponnesian War, fought from 431-404 BC between Athens and the city-states of Sparta, Thebes, and Corinth.

In the year 336 BC, Alexander the Great became King of Macedonia. The Greek city-states were absorbed into the Macedonian empire, and the Classical Age of Greece came to an end. The independent city-states lost much of their power, and in the years that followed, Greek culture was dominated by foreign influences.



Name _____ Date _____

Ancient Greece

I. Choose the word or phrase that best completes each statement.

1. The Minoans were _____.
 - a. an early Greek tribe who developed two writing systems known as Linear A and B
 - b. an early Greek tribe who is thought to have fought the Trojan War
 - c. an early Greek tribe who settled on Crete after the Mycenaeans
 - d. an early Greek tribe who founded colonies throughout the Mediterranean Sea

2. Archeologists believe they have found the ancient city of Troy in modern-day _____.
 - a. Italy
 - b. Athens
 - c. Turkey
 - d. Crete

3. The ancient Greeks developed their own _____ based on that of the Phoenicians.
 - a. shipbuilding techniques
 - b. style of epic poetry
 - c. alphabet
 - d. knowledge of mathematics

4. The city of _____ is credited with developing the world's first democracy.
 - a. Sparta
 - b. Athens
 - c. Thebes
 - d. Corinth

5. The Peloponnesian War was fought _____.
 - a. by Thebes against Sparta and Athens
 - b. by Sparta against Athens, Thebes, and Corinth
 - c. by Athens against Argos, Thebes, and Sparta
 - d. by Athens against Thebes, Corinth, and Sparta

II. Respond to the following using complete sentences.

1. Name three important developments that came into being during the Archaic Period in Greece.

2. Describe the political relationship of the ancient Greek cities. _____

Name _____ Date _____

Ancient Greece

I.

1. a
2. c
3. c
4. b
5. d

II. Students' own answers—answers will vary. Accept all reasonable responses.