

Ancient Greek city states

The purpose of this lesson is:

to consider a map of ancient Greece and to investigate city states and the way they were governed.

Learning objectives

Children should learn:

- about the geography of ancient Greece;
- that ancient Greece consisted of city states;
- that different city states were governed in different ways.

Class objective:

- to discover how ancient Greece was organized.

Learning outcomes

Children should be able to:

- recognize that ancient Greece was organized into city states;
- know that Athens and Sparta were city states;
- understand that there are different models of government.

Programme of study

- 1a** place events, people and changes into correct periods of time;
- 1b** use dates and vocabulary relating to the passing of time;
- 2a** characteristic features of periods and societies studied, including the ideas, beliefs, attitudes and experiences of men, women and children in the past;
- 2b** social, cultural, religious and ethnic diversity of societies;
- 4a** find out about events, people and changes from an appropriate range of sources of information, including ICT-based sources;
- 4b** ask and answer questions, and select and record information relevant to the focus of the enquiry;
- 5a** recall, select and organize historical information.

Prior learning

This lesson builds on the introduction to Greece in **Lesson 1**. It will be helpful if the children understand the meaning of the term '**government**'.

Vocabulary

aristocracy, Athenian, Athens, city state, Corinth, democracy, government, oligarchy, Sparta, Spartan, tyranny

Resources

- **Resource sheet RS2.1:** *Character labels*
- **Activity sheet AS2.1:** *Map of ancient Greece*
- **Activity sheet AS2.2:** *Different forms of government in ancient Greece* (also made into an OHT)
- Chairs/stools set out in large horseshoe shape

- OHP
- One large rope to make a circle

Cross-curricular links

- **Geography:** Key skills (maps and mapping)
- **ICT:** Unit 6D *Using the Internet to search large databases and to interpret information*
- **Citizenship:** KS2 Guidelines – Preparing to play an active role as citizens

Differentiation

Some less able children may need help from an adult when completing **Activity sheet AS2.1**: *Map of ancient Greece*.

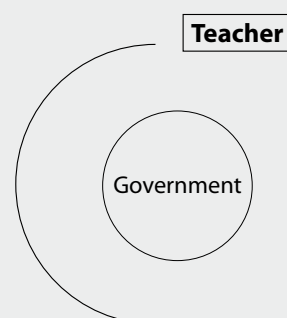
Assessment opportunities

Each child's understanding of this lesson can be assessed through an analysis of his/her completed activity sheet and his/her contribution towards the discussion in the government game.

Advance preparation

You may wish to allocate extra time for this lesson.

Activity 3: The government game requires use of a large space, such as the school hall. Set out stools/ chairs in a horseshoe shape (as below) and place the large rope in the centre in the shape of a circle.



Where possible, set up an overhead projector in the area, showing a copy of **Activity sheet AS2.2**: *Different forms of government in ancient Greece*. Prepare enough copies of **Resource sheet RS2.1**:

Character labels for each child to have a character label. You will only need to give out one **King** and one **Tyrant** label.

Introduction

- Begin the lesson by sharing the class objective: **to discover how ancient Greece was organized**. Tell the children that in ancient times Greece was not one country as it is today; it was made up of many small city states. The Greeks called a city state a **polis**; write this word on the board.

Activity 1 Map of ancient Greece

- Give out to the class **Activity sheet AS2.1**: *Map of ancient Greece*. Read through the instructions with the children. Check that all the children understand the task set.

Activity 2 How were they governed?

- Explain to the children that each Greek city state had its own system of government. Check that the children understand the term '**government**' (a means of organizing a state).
- Give out **Activity sheet AS2.2**: *Different forms of government in ancient Greece*. Read through this with the children. As each form of government is mentioned, write each word on the board. Tell the children that the government of a city state made the rules that the people had to live by.

Activity 3 The government game

- Take the children to the space that you have prepared for this game. Where it has not been possible to use an OHP, ensure that children have **Activity sheet AS2.2**: *Different forms of government in ancient Greece* with them.
- Ask the children to seat themselves in the horseshoe. Give each child a character label. Explain to the children that as you call out the name of a type of government, anyone who thinks that s/he is involved in this type of government must get up and stand in the circle.
- Call out the types of government in the same order in which they appear on the sheet. After calling out each type of government, give the children some time to discuss whether they think the right people are in the circle.
 - Monarchy**: only the king
 - Tyranny**: only the tyrant
 - Oligarchy**: any three men (no women, children, slaves, foreigners or any poor men)
 - Aristocracy**: only members of the aristocracy (no educated men, women, children, slaves, poor men or foreigners)
 - Democracy**: no women, children, slaves, foreigners or poor men
- At the end of this game, tell the children to return to their seats and ask the following question: **Which form of government do you think was the fairest?** When the children have discussed this, tell them that one of the largest and most powerful city states was Athens. Athens was a democracy; any educated Athenian man could take part in governing the city state.

Plenary

- Remind the children of the class objective: **to discover how ancient Greece was organized**. Select one or two children to answer the question: **How was ancient Greece organized?**
- When the children have done this, explain that the type of government that they had in Athens (a democracy) was the beginning of the type of government that we have in our country today.
- Ask the children: **How was the Athenian democracy different from ours today?** Where necessary, explain to the children that our country is governed by parliament which is made up of elected members of parliament from each area of the country. The Queen and the royal family are figureheads who do not have power over what happens in the country.

Homework

- Ask the children to research and write down some information on the two city states of Athens and Sparta.

Character labels

Resource sheet 2.1

Woman

Poor man

Child

Slave

Foreigner

(person from outside the city state)

King

Aristocrat

(man from the highest class in society)

Educated man

Tyrant

(cruel ruler who seizes power)

Map of ancient Greece

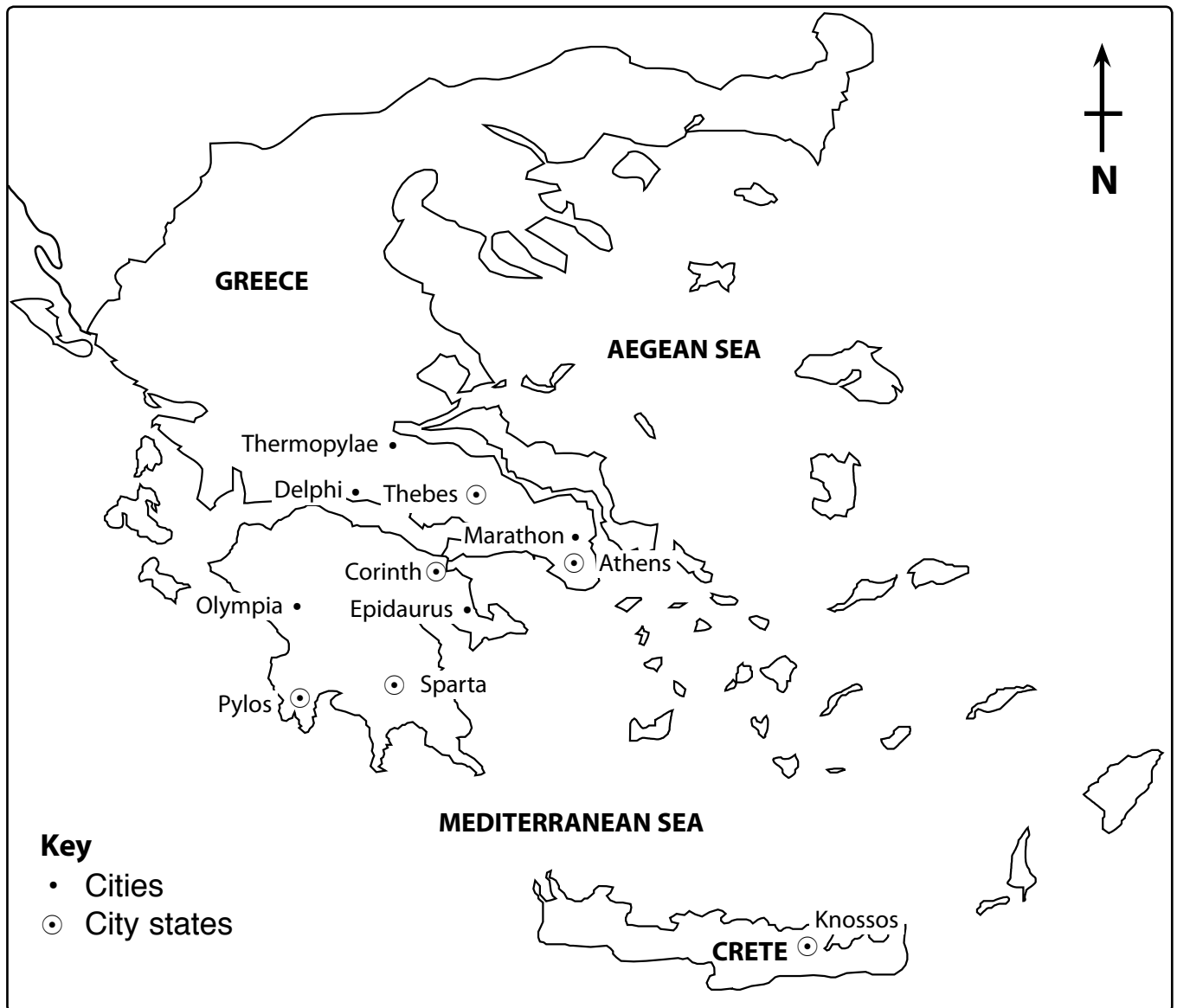
Name:

Activity sheet 2.1

Ancient Greece was not one country as it is today, but divided up into several city states.

Athens and Sparta were the two most powerful city states.

Draw a ring around Athens and Sparta on your map.



Write down the names of some of the other city states.

Different forms of government in ancient Greece

Activity sheet 2.2

Name: 

Monarchy: In a monarchy one person – the king, rules the state. (In the Greek language **monos** means 'one' and **arkho** means 'to rule'.)



Tyranny: In a tyranny the state is ruled by one man, a tyrant, who has seized the power.



Oligarchy: In an oligarchy the state is ruled by a few men. (In the Greek language **oligoi** means 'few' and **arkho** means 'to rule'.)



Aristocracy: In an aristocracy the state is ruled by the 'best' people. (In the Greek language, **aristos** means 'best' and **kratos** means 'power'.)



Democracy: In a democracy the state is ruled by all its citizens. (This did not include women, children, foreigners, slaves or poor people in ancient Greece.)
(In the Greek language **demos** means 'the people'.)