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# i Think: World History

## Ancient Greece



by Kendra Corr  
and Sharon Coletti

\*\* It is the goal of InspirEd Educators to create instructional materials that are interesting, engaging, and challenging. Our student-centered approach incorporates both content and skills, placing particular emphasis on reading, writing, vocabulary development, and critical and creative thinking in the content areas.

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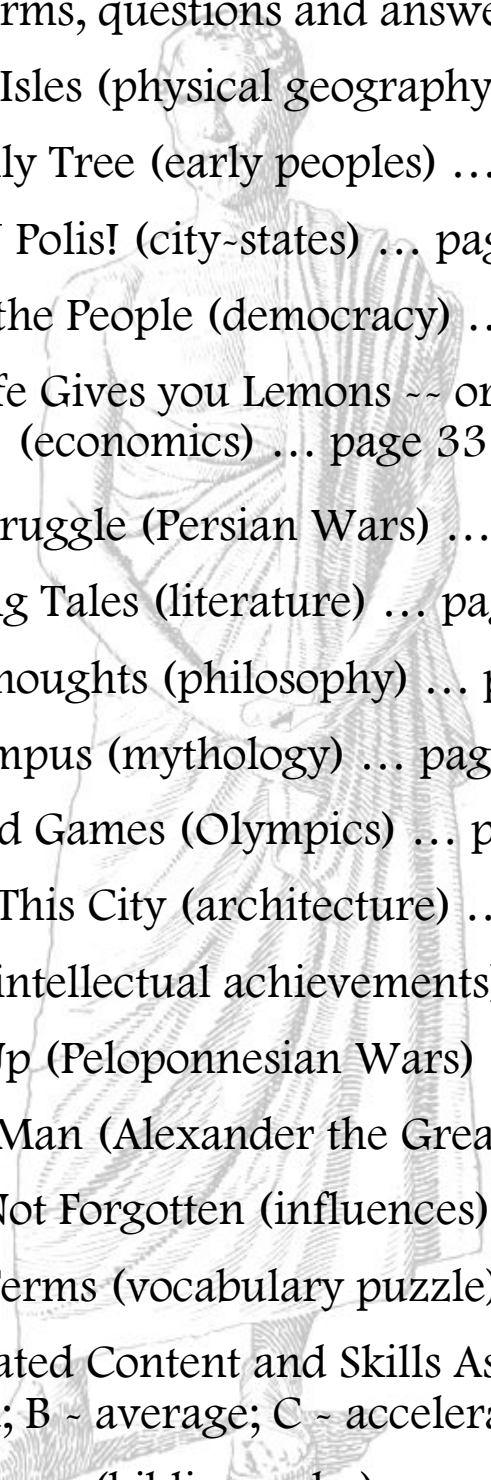
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# Ταβλε θς Cθητεης



|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Objectives (terms, questions and answers) ...   | page 6  |
| Greece 'n Isles (physical geography)...   | page 8  |
| The Family Tree (early peoples) ...   | page 14 |
| Polis! Polis! (city-states) ...   | page 23 |
| Power to the People (democracy) ...   | page 27 |
| When Life Gives you Lemons -- or Grapes?<br>(economics) ...                                   | page 33 |
| Power Struggle (Persian Wars) ...   | page 37 |
| Telling Tales (literature) ...  | page 44 |
| Deep Thoughts (philosophy) ...  | page 48 |
| Olympus (mythology) ...   | page 54 |
| Fun and Games (Olympics) ...  | page 57 |
| We Built This City (architecture) ...   | page 63 |
| Wise Guys (intellectual achievements) ...   | page 68 |
| Breaking Up (Peloponnesian Wars) ...  | page 73 |
| Macedonian Man (Alexander the Great) ...  | page 81 |
| Gone But Not Forgotten (influences)...  | page 86 |
| Reviewing Terms (vocabulary puzzle) ...   | page 90 |
| Differentiated Content and Skills Assessments<br>(A - modified; B - average; C - accelerated) | page 92 |
| Resources (bibliography) ...  | page 97 |



## Greece 'n Isles

### Springboard:

Students should read “Greece Lightning (and Other Conditions)” and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will study the geographical features and characteristics of ancient Greece.

**Materials:** Greece Lightning (Springboard handout)  
The Aegean World (handout)  
The Lay of the Land (handout)

**Terms to know:**

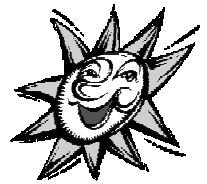
- climate** - the weather in a particular place over a long period of time
- terrain** - the surface of the ground
- civilization** - a society with a high level of social and political organization, as well as advanced levels of achievement (including writing)
- peninsula** - land surrounded by water on three sides

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson, the student(s) will examine the geographical characteristics of Greece and predict whether or not they will help this civilization grow, or hinder its progress.*
- Distribute “The Aegean World” and “The Lay of the Land.” The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to complete the handout. Remind them that they should also use information from the Springboard to complete the chart.
- Have the student(s) share and compare their answers and discuss.



# Greece Lightning (and Other Conditions)



If you were to visit the country of Greece, you would most likely have good weather since the sun shines most of the time, except during the winter months when it is more likely to be cloudy and rainy. Greece, which is located at the southern tip of the Balkan Peninsula, has what is called a “Mediterranean climate.” The term describes a special kind of climate with hot, dry summers and mild, moist winters. Since there can be dramatic differences in rainfall from year to year, the natural plant life in Greece consists mainly of drought-tolerant, woody shrubs and trees, and fall grasses. Greek crops include wheat, corn, barley, sugar beets, olives, tomatoes, wine grapes, tobacco, and potatoes.

Mediterranean climates are found mainly along the west (windward) coasts of continents, usually between 30° and 40° north or south latitude, and include the central Chilean coast, the central and southern California coast, the southern tip of Africa, portions of southwestern Australia, and of course the region surrounding the Mediterranean Sea as well as nearby Portugal and Morocco.

Which term does **NOT** describe WEATHER conditions in Greece?

- A. sunny                      B. cloudy                      C. raining                      D. mild

\_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ over a long period of time.

- A. Climate ... weather  
B. Mediterranean ... Sea  
C. Greece ... plant life  
D. Weather ... conditions

Complete the analogy:

Hot and dry is to summers, as \_\_\_\_\_.

Woody shrubs, trees, and fall grasses

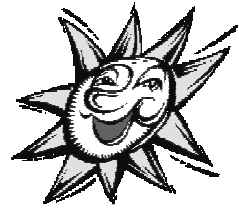
- A. require frequent rainfall.  
B. are among Greece’s crops.  
C. can live through droughts.  
D. need variations in rainfall.

All of these places have a Mediterranean climate, **EXCEPT**

- A. the coast of Chile.  
B. eastern California.  
C. southern Australia.  
D. Italy and Spain.



**Greece Lightning (and Other Conditions)  
Answers and Explanations**



If you were to visit the country of Greece, you would most likely have good weather, since the sun shines most of the time, except during the winter months when it is more likely to be cloudy and rainy. Greece, which is located at the southern tip of the Balkan Peninsula, has what is called a “Mediterranean climate.” The term describes a special kind of climate with hot, dry summers and mild, moist winters. Since there can be dramatic differences in rainfall from year to year, the natural plant life in Greece consists mainly of drought-tolerant, woody shrubs and trees, and fall grasses. Greek crops include wheat, corn, barley, sugar beets, olives, tomatoes, wine grapes, tobacco, and potatoes.

Mediterranean climates are found mainly along the west (windward) coasts of continents, usually between 30° and 40° north or south latitude, and include the central Chilean coast, the central and southern California coast, the southern tip of Africa, portions of southwestern Australia, and of course the region surrounding the Mediterranean Sea as well as nearby Portugal and Morocco.

Which term does **NOT** describe WEATHER conditions in Greece?

- A. sunny      B. cloudy      C. raining      D. mild \*

*(A-C all describe a condition on a particular day or weather. Mild describes the overall weather conditions or climate.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ is the \_\_\_\_\_ over a long period of time.

- A. Climate ... weather \*  
B. Mediterranean ... Sea  
C. Greece ... plant life  
D. Weather ... conditions

*(Climate is defined as the weather conditions in a place over a long period of time.)*

**Complete the analogy:**

Hot and dry is to summers, as \_\_\_\_\_ *mild and moist is to winters.*

*(While this was a pretty simple analogy, the trick is to make up a sentence that is true for both parts of the analogy. For example, “Hot and dry describes Greece’s climate in the summer, as mild and moist describe Greece’s climate in the winter.)*

Woody shrubs, trees, and fall grasses

- A. require frequent rainfall.  
B. are among Greece’s crops.  
C. can live through droughts. \*  
D. need variations in rainfall.

*(The term “drought-resistant” means that the plants can survive droughts. These plants are not crops, since they grow naturally.)*

All of these places have a Mediterranean climate, **EXCEPT**

- A. the coast of Chile.  
B. eastern California. \*  
C. southern Australia.  
D. Italy and Spain.

*(Though not exactly as in the passage, A and C are mentioned and students should know Italy and Spain are on the Mediterranean. Also California has no east coast.)*

# THE AEGEAN WORLD



## NOTES

- GREECE ITSELF IS FAIRLY SMALL.
- GREY SHADED AREAS ARE MOUNTAINS AND OTHER RUGGED TERRAINS.
- MOUNTAIN VALLEYS HAVE VERY FERTILE SOIL
- THERE ARE NO MAJOR RIVERS
- CIVILIZATIONS DEVELOPED ON CRETE AND OTHER ISLANDS, MAINLAND GREECE AND THE COAST OF THE ASIA MINOR.





# The Lay of the Land

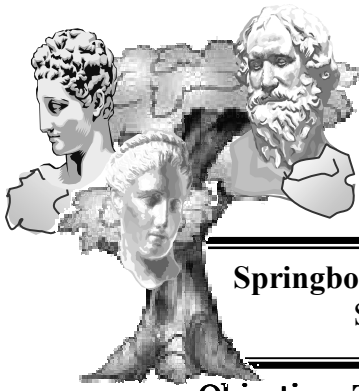
**DIRECTIONS:** Use information from “Greece Lightning (and Other Conditions)” and “The Aegean World” map. List the seven geographic features and predict what you think the impact of each would be on the development of ancient Greece.

| <b>Characteristic</b> | <b>Impact</b> | <b>Positive or Negative?</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |
|                       |               |                              |



# The Lay of the Land Suggestions for Answers

| <b>Characteristic</b>   | <b>Impact</b>  | <b>Positive or Negative?</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Mild temperatures: hot in summer, cold in the winter</i>   | <i>The Greeks enjoyed a pleasant climate without extremes in temperatures. Their crops would grow well and enable them to thrive.</i>  | <i>Positive.</i>   |
| <i>Unpredictable rainfall</i>   | <i>Have to grow crops that do not require a lot of water such as wheat, barley, olives, or wine grapes. This will affect what they produce and trade.</i>  | <i>Somewhat negative because they are limited in what they can grow.</i>   |
| <i>Peninsula and islands surrounded by water (Mediterranean Sea, Ionian Sea, Aegean Sea, Black Sea)</i>         | <i>Everyone is close to water. Easy access to the water makes it easy to travel and trade with others. They also can live off the water by fishing. The people living on islands have a fixed amount of land they can live on.</i> | <i>Both: Positive because they have a way of traveling and trading and access to food. Negative because it limits the amount of land they have.</i>              |
| <i>No major rivers or other inland water sources</i>  | <i>Once away from the coast, travel is difficult. Also, the lack of rivers, lakes, etc makes it hard to get water to their crops if rainfall is low.</i>   | <i>Negative.</i>   |
| <i>Most of the land is rugged, rough, or mountainous.</i>   | <i>Makes travel over land very difficult. Makes communications between settlements very difficult. Provides protection because the settlements are difficult to get to.</i>  | <i>Both: Negative because it's hard to get around by land so people could not easily communicate. Positive because of the protection that mountains provide.</i> |
| <i>Lots of mountain valleys which have fertile soil.</i>  | <i>Crops will thrive in fertile soil. They can grow more food and other goods to feed everyone and trade the surplus. This will help people live better and get rich.</i>  | <i>Positive.</i>   |
| <i>Settlement areas are very spread out and separated by water (islands) and/or rough, mountainous terrain.</i> | <i>The various settlements will not have a lot of contact with each other. They will develop their own identities and be independent of each other.</i>  | <i>Both: Positive because people will have a strong sense of their own communities but negative if it creates divisions.</i>                                     |



## The Family Tree

### Springboard:

Students should study the “\_\_\_\_\_” timeline and answer the questions.

**Objective:** The student will be able to identify and describe the early peoples of ancient Greece.

**Materials:** “\_\_\_\_\_” (Springboard handout)  
The Relatives (3 handouts)  
Who’s Who? (3 handouts)  
highlighters (optional)

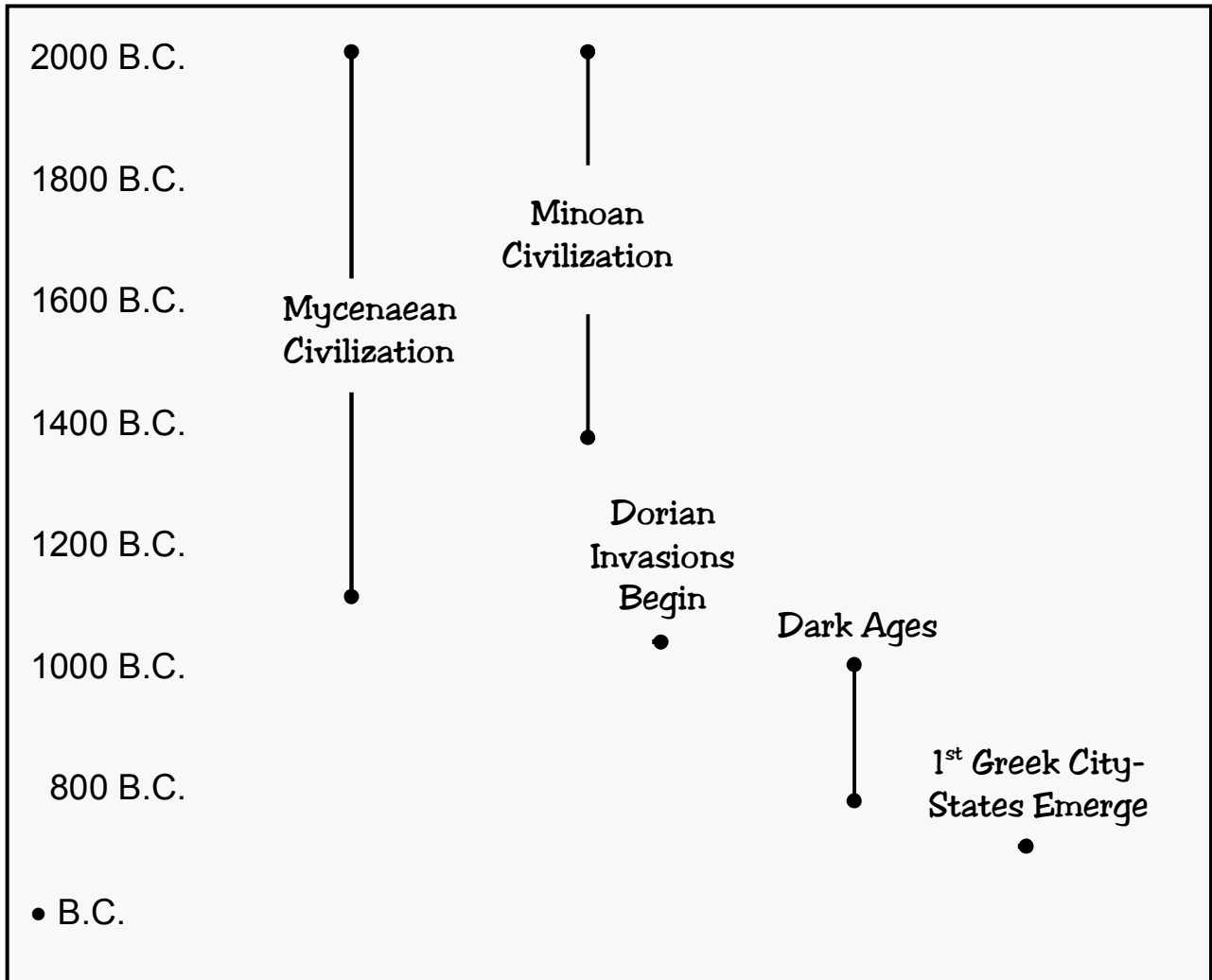
**Terms to know:** **city-state** - an independent, self-governing city and the territory around it  
**mythology** - stories of gods, goddesses, and heroes  
**archaeologist** - one who studies remains of the past  
**deity** - a god or goddess  
**ritual** - religious ceremony  
**clan** - group of families related by common ancestors  
**plunder** - rob and damage  
**culture** - way of life, shared values, and behavior of a group of people

### Procedure:

- After reviewing the Springboard, explain that *in this lesson the student(s) will learn about the three groups of people who settled the area which became Ancient Greece: the Mycenaeans, the Minoans, and the Dorians.*
- Distribute the three “The Relatives” handouts. The student(s) should work individually, in pairs, or small groups to read the three handouts, underlining or highlighting important information or passages.
- Then distribute the “Who’s Who?” handouts. The student(s) should use the graphic organizers to organize their thoughts and identify the most important points about each group. They should then create acrostic poems, describing each group with words or phrases that begin with each letter of their names. Explain to the student(s) that *the words and phrases should specifically describe points about the each of the groups.*
- Have the student(s) share and compare their poems and discuss.
- **EXTENSION:** Have the student(s) pick one of the groups and do further online or other media research about their culture and everyday life. The research could then be presented in a poster or essay.



“ ”



Which of these statements is **NOT** supported by the timeline?

- A. The Mycenaean civilization lasted longer than the Minoan civilization.
- B. The Dorian invasions began a short time before the Dark Ages started.
- C. The Dorians ruled Greece through the period known as the Dark Ages.
- D. The first city-states did not appear in Greece until after the Dark Ages.

Which of these statements is **NOT** a logical prediction based on the timeline?

- A. The Dorian invasions had a lot to do with the downfall of the Minoans.
- B. The chaos of the Dorian invasions likely led to the Dark Ages of Greece.
- C. A period of growth and stability followed a period of decline and chaos.
- D. There were at least three main groups of early peoples in ancient Greece.

A good title for this timeline would be

- A. "Wars of Ancient Greece."
- B. "Who's Who in Ancient Greece?"
- C. "The Beginning of Greek Civilization"
- D. "Good Times and Bad Times of Greece."