

The Great Greeks Knowledge Organiser – Year 5 Summer Term 1

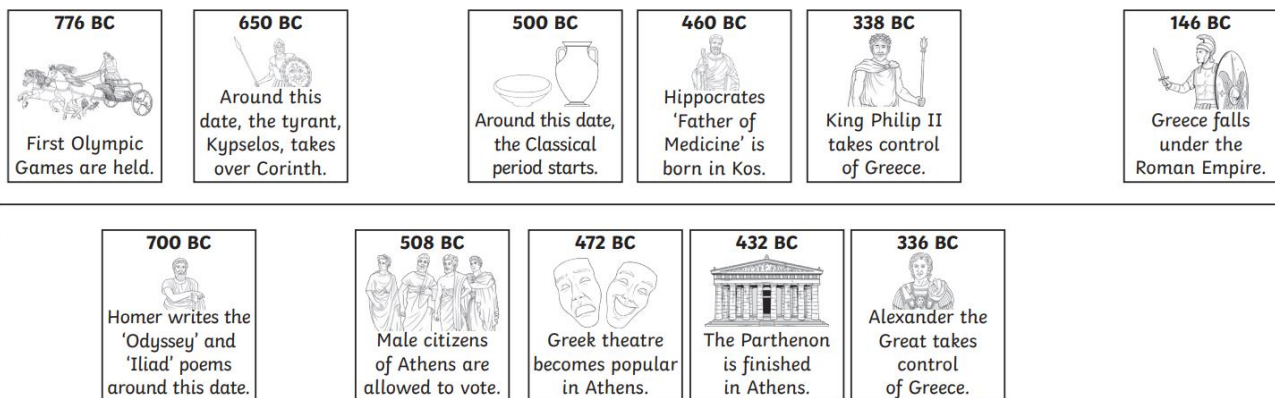
Section 1 – Key vocabulary

Key Vocabulary	
ancient	Something from a very long time ago
civilisation	In this context, the word 'civilisation' is used to describe a human society with well-developed rules and government, often where technology and the arts are considered important
city states	Small areas that ancient Greece was divided into, each with their own governments, laws and army.
empire	A group of countries or states that is ruled by one ruler or country.
legacy	Something that lives on after someone dies or after a civilisation or event ends.
democracy	A system where the citizens of a country or state are involved in the way it is run.

Section 2– Who were the Ancient Greeks?

When we talk about the **Ancient Greek civilisation**, we usually mean the period of time between **800 BC** and **146 BC**.

BC stands for **Before Christ** and refers to any date before the year Christians believe Jesus was born.



The **Ancient Greeks** lived in mainland Greece, in the Greek Islands and in other colonies around the Mediterranean area.

The **mountains** in Greece made it very **difficult to move around** and trade with other settlements by land so the **sea was the main way people travelled** and traded with **city states** and countries.

Greece was divided into small **city-states**, such as **Athens, Sparta** and **Olympia**. Each of these ruled itself, with its own laws, government and army.

There were lots of **battles** between the **city-states**, but sometimes they joined together to fight against a bigger enemy.



Section 3 – The Legacy of the Ancient Greeks

The **Ancient Greeks** may have lived **over 2000 years ago**, but they left a lasting **legacy** that still affects the way we live today. A **legacy** is **something important that is handed down from one period of time to another**.

Democracy - Athens in Greece was the first city to use the idea of **democracy**, where people were allowed to **vote** for the government they wanted.

Theatre - The Greeks introduced the idea of **comedy and tragedy** to be performed by actors for **entertainment**.

The Olympics - The Greeks loved **sport and competition**, and came up with the idea of this popular sporting competition.

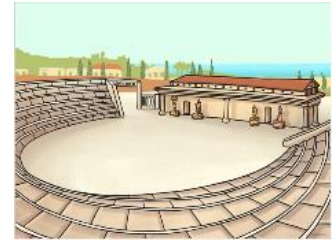
Philosophy - The Greeks began thinking about the world and how we fit into it. **Philosophy** translates as "love of wisdom."

Section 4 – Democracy

Democracy is a **fair system of government** where the people of a country are able to choose who is in charge of the decision making.

The idea of **democracy** began in Ancient Greece.

Different **city-states** such as Athens, Sparta and Olympia had different ideas for how **democracy** should work.



In Athens, ordinary citizens were able to vote on military decisions and changes to the law. All **male citizens** were expected to attend the 'assembly', a meeting where they **voted on all the laws** by putting their hands up.

Women, foreigners, slaves and children were banned from attending the 'assembly', so they did not get a vote.



The **UK government** is a **democracy** – adults (people aged 18 and over) can **vote in elections** to choose their government. Improvements have been made to the Ancient Greek system as, in the UK, since 1928, women also have the right to vote.

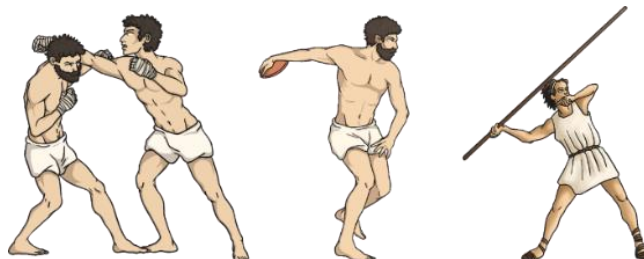
Section 5 – The Ancient Greek Olympics

- The Greeks loved sport and the **Olympic Games** were the most important event in the Ancient Greek Calendar.
- The Olympics games were held in the **city-state** of Olympia, in southwest Greece and were **held every four years**.
- The very first Olympic Games were held in **776BC** and there was only one event – a running race!
- They were **held in honour of Zeus**, the King of the Gods.

In Ancient Greek times, there were no medals awarded, but winners were given a **wreath made from olive leaves**.



Sports included chariot racing, wrestling, running and discus throwing – all sports linked with the skills needed in battle.



Athletes would travel to **Olympia** from many different Greek **city-states** and sometimes from far away Greek colonies to compete.

In order to participate, athletes had to be a **free man** (no slaves) who spoke Greek.

Women were not allowed to compete.

It is a well-known fact that competitors usually competed totally naked!

The final ancient Olympic games were held in AD 393.