

Unit: Ancient Greece

Suggested Content Overview

The Essential Standards and Common Core Standards for Social Studies focus on skills and concepts and do not specify content; however, common expectations regarding academic vocabulary and background knowledge may better facilitate the students' mastery of key concepts and skills. To that end, consider including the following information while covering this unit.

Vocabulary:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| • Acropolis | • Doric | • Philosophy |
| • Alexander the Great | • Golden Age | • Plato |
| • Aristocracy | • Hellenistic | • Polis |
| • Aristotle | • Homer | • Polytheism |
| • Athena | • Ionic | • Poseidon |
| • Athens | • Monarchy | • Strait |
| • City-state | • Mythology | • Socrates |
| • Corinthian | • Odyssey | • Sparta |
| • Democracy | • Oligarchy | • Trojan War |
| • Direct democracy | • Pericles | • Zeus |

Student Understandings:

- Early Greek societies were heavily influenced by the topography and available resources of the region, leading to the development of city-states and colonies rather than an expansive empire based on a particular river valley.
- The Golden Age of Greece brought important advances in government, art, architecture, and philosophy. These advances are foundational components of Western civilization to this day.
- Greek values were eventually spread throughout the Mediterranean and Asia Minor by Alexander the Great.
- The Greek religion was polytheistic and portrayed gods and goddesses with human-like emotional states such as anger, jealousy, and joy. The Greeks believed that their deities took an active and constant role in their lives.
- Major Olympian gods/goddesses included Zeus, Hades, Poseidon, and Athena, among others.
- Greek city-states developed radically independent political and cultural systems, the most obvious example being Athens and Sparta.
- The war between Sparta and Athens weakened the city-states and opened them up to conquest by Alexander the Great and later by the Romans.
- Ancient Greek influences in today's world include democracy, art, architecture, literature, philosophy, mythology and the Olympics.

Mapping Skills:

On a map, students should be able to identify:

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| • Ionian Sea | • Crete |
| • Mediterranean Sea | • Anatolian Plateau |
| • Adriatic Sea | • Greece |
| • Aegean Sea | • Peloponnesian Peninsula |