

Objectives

1. Learn how people lived in ancient Sparta.
2. Discover results of the Persian invasion of Greece.
3. Understand the conflicts the Athenian empire faced.

 Target Reading Skill

Identify Contrasts When you contrast, you look at the differences between two things or events. When you read, contrasting will help you understand why things are different. Contrasting is a way of sorting out what you read.

Sometimes the contrasting information is contained in a single sentence or paragraph. Sometimes it is given in different paragraphs under a single heading. Contrasts may be signaled by words or phrases, such as *although*, *yet*, *as opposed to*, *however*, or *on the other hand*.

In this section, you will read about the Spartan people. They had many of the same elements of Greek culture as the Athenians. But they differed in other ways. As you read, list the differences between Athens and Sparta.

Vocabulary Strategy

Word Origins Many English words come from ancient Greek. Most of the Greek words used in English are spelled differently. They may also have different meanings from the original words. Some English words are based on Greek words that were originally the names of people or places. The table below lists a few.

Greek name	English word	Meaning
marathon	marathon	a long-distance foot race
Olympus	Olympic	relating to the modern Olympic games
solon	solon	a lawmaker, especially a wise one
Sparta	Spartan	like the Spartans; plain

Section 2 Summary

Living in Sparta

¹ Life in **Sparta** was harsh and cruel. The Spartans were tough, silent, and grim. Sparta's army equaled Athens' in the 400s B.C., but Sparta never came close to matching Athens' other achievements. ✓

⁵ In its early days, Sparta was much like other Greek cities. There were wars inside and outside of the city. That turned Sparta into a powerful war machine. There was one basic rule: Always put the city's needs above your own.

¹⁰ The Spartans conquered the land around their city. They turned the conquered people into **helots**. Helots did all the farm work on land owned by Spartan citizens. This left the Spartans free to wage war.

Growing up in Sparta

The government controlled Spartans from birth. Only ¹⁵ healthy children were raised. At age seven, boys began military training, which continued for 13 years.

When he was 20, a young man officially became a soldier. At age 30, he could take his place in the assembly. Only nonslave males born in Sparta were citizens.

²⁰ Girls trained and competed in wrestling and spear throwing. They were not expected to be soldiers, but Spartans believed strong, healthy girls would have strong, healthy children.

Spartan women had a somewhat better life than ²⁵ women in other Greek city-states. They were allowed to own land and even took part in business. But they had to obey men. ✓

Key Terms

Sparta (SPAHR tuh) *n.* a city-state in ancient Greece

helots (HEL uts) *n.* in ancient Sparta, the term for slaves who were owned by the state

✓ Reading Check

What type of people were the Spartans?

Vocabulary Strategy

Helot is a Greek term. It was originally the name of a town whose inhabitants were enslaved by the Spartans. One meaning of the suffix *-ism* is "the condition of being." What does the word *helotism* mean?

Target Reading Skill

Contrast the life of Spartan women to that of Athenian women.

✓ Reading Check

What was life like for the women of Sparta?

The Persians Invade

Near the beginning of the 400s B.C., Persia posed a threat to Greece. It had already gained control of the Greek colonies on the west coast of Asia Minor.

In the fall of 490 B.C., the Persians landed in Greece. They gathered at Marathon (MAR uh thahn), about 25 miles (40 km) north of Athens. The Persians outnumbered the Athenian army by at least two to one.

A surprise attack by the Athenians overwhelmed the Persians. ✓

✓ Reading Check

What happened during the battle at Marathon?

Conflict and the Athenian Empire

More battles followed. After the Persians' defeat, Athens forced other city-states to bow to its will. It supported democratic groups in other city-states, but focused on freedom for its own people.

Sparta and Athens at War

Athens began to act unfairly toward other city-states, which paid Athens tribute for protection.

Some of the city-states looked to Sparta for protection. In 431 B.C., allies of Sparta and Athens started the **Peloponnesian War**. Early in the war, Athens was struck by a **plague**, which lasted five years. It killed about one third of Athens' people.

Sparta and Persia became allies and staged a **blockade**. They closed the harbor where Athens received food shipments. Athens surrendered and never again dominated the Greek world. ✓

✓ Reading Check

How did Sparta and other city-states defeat Athens?

Review Questions

1. Describe what life was like for boys living in Sparta.

2. How did the Greeks overcome the Persian invasion?

Key Terms

Peloponnesian War (pel uh puh NEE shun wawr) *n.* (431–404 B.C.), war fought between Athens and Sparta

plague (playg) *n.* a widespread disease

blockade (blah KAYD) *n.* an action taken to isolate the enemy and cut off its supplies