

Caroline Haslett Primary School – History

Topic: Ancient Greeks

Year 5

Civilisation

Knowledge

Prior Knowledge

Greece is a country in the continent of Europe. The climate of Greece is slightly different to that of the UK. An understanding of British history including knowledge of the Roman invasion.

New Knowledge

Greece was divided into city-states (polis) that each had their own laws and way of life, but that all spoke the same language. Two of the most well-known city states are Athens and Sparta.

In Athens, Greek styles of art, architecture, philosophy and theatre were developed - these helped shape our modern society along with science, language and maths. Athens had a democratic government – this means that the people who lived there made decisions by voting, like we do in Britain. In Sparta, life was very different; all that was important was being able to defend Sparta in battle. The first Olympic games were held in 776 in the city-state Olympia.

Religion was very important in ancient Greece. They were polytheists - they believed in different gods and goddesses that were in charge of different parts of their lives, such as a god of the sea and a goddess of wisdom. Temples were built in their honour and they featured heavily in the stories of Greek mythology. A polis consisted of an urban centre, often fortified and with a sacred centre built on a natural acropolis (citadel) or harbour. Greeks were a seafaring people. Greece is a warm country, but winds from the Mediterranean and rains from the north kept temperatures liveable and created fertile farming conditions.

Vocabulary

- **Acropolis** – the citadel of an ancient Greek city
- **Archaeologist** – someone who studies the past by exploring old remains
- **Citadel** – a strong building in or near a city, where people could shelter for safety
- **Deity** – a god or goddess
- **Fertile** – rich in nutrients to support the growth of many plants
- **Merchant** – a person who buys or sells goods in large quantities
- **Mythology** – a group of myths, especially all the myths from a particular country, religion or culture
- **Philosophy** – the study or creation of theories about basic things such as the nature of existence, knowledge, and thought, or about how people should live
- **Polis** – an ancient Greek city – state
- **Polytheists** – the worship or belief in more than one god
- **Seafaring** – working as a sailor or travelling regularly on the sea

Timeline

