Year 5/6

The Historical Association's Scheme of Work for Primary History

Unit X: Ancient Greece: life, achievements and its legacy



About this unit

In this unit, children use a range of sources to find about the life and achievements of the Ancient Greeks. Through their investigations they find out about the city states of Athens and Sparta, warfare and seamanship, everyday life, beliefs, culture, and through Greek mythology, some of the key events and individuals from this period. The focus of the second part of this unit is on the continuing legacy of Ancient Greeks and the children explore their influence on education, language, architecture, government and the Olympic Games. Links can be made with other ancient civilisations and societies they have studied. The emphasis throughout the unit is on developing the children's skills of historical enquiry including how evidence is used to make historical claims, and on developing their understanding of historical concepts such continuity and change, similarity and difference, and significance.

Please note that on the HA website there is an article to accompany this unit and written specifically to help teachers who are teaching the Ancient Greeks for the first time: **Teaching the Ancient Greeks by Jerome Freeman and Jon Nichol:** https://www.history.org.uk/primary/resource/8683

Unit Structure

This unit is structured around 2 sequential history enquiries:

- 1. How can we find out about the civilisation of Ancient Greece?
- 2. Can we thank the Ancient Greeks for anything in our lives today?

How this unit links to the new national curriculum for primary history

Ancient Greece – a study of Greek life and achievements and their influence on the western world.

Children should know and understand significant aspects of the history of the wider world including the nature of ancient civilisations.

Enquiry 1: How can we find out about the civilisation of Ancient Greece?				
LEARNING OBJECTIVES	KEY CONTENT AND SUGGESTED LESSON IDEAS	SUGGESTED RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	
Children should learn:	Who were the Ancient Greeks?		Can the children:	
 about the location, physical features and climate of modern Greece to place Ancient Greece in time to locate Ancient Greece, Athens and Sparta on a map that Ancient Greece consisted of city states to carry out research using secondary sources of written information 	The purpose of these activities is to put Ancient Greece into its proper geographical and historical context and help the children understand how this ancient civilisation fits into the broader chronological framework hey have been studying during key stage 2. Start by giving the children sources containing images of modern Greece e.g. maps, postcards, brochures or ask the children to carry out an internet search for images of modern Greece. Ask them what these images tell us about some of the key features of Greece and its location — mainland Greece and its numerous islands, the physical features, climate etc. Ask the children to locate Ancient Greece on a timeline and discuss where this fits in relation to the other periods and societies they have studied. Also use this to get across the longevity of Ancient Greece and then focus in on the period known as the 'Classical Golden Age', - 500BC to 323BC which marked the height of Ancient Greek civilisation and power. Discuss or recap BC and AD.	Images of modern Greece e.g. maps, postcards, brochures and/or access to some preselected Internet sites. A large timeline covering the chronological framework for KS2 history.	 make inferences from sources about the location, physical features and climate of modern Greece place Ancient Greece in time using a timeline locate Ancient Greece, Athens and Sparta on a map and consider their geographical significance carry out research using secondary sources of written information identify some of the similarities and differences between life in Athens and Sparta and report their findings to the rest of the 	
 to identify some of the similarities and differences between life in Athens and Sparta 	Get them to locate Ancient Greece on a map and consider why its position was significant e.g. proximity to Europe, the Middle East, North Africa. Ask them to locate the city states of Athens and Sparta. Tell the children that these two city states had their own laws, money, rulers, and were rivals. In small groups ask them to carry out research into the similarities and differences between the two city states –and report back their findings under the following headings: how they were ruled; the lives of men, women and children,	A large map of Ancient Greece and surrounding countries. Information about life in Athens and Sparta e.g. BBC Schools Primary History website (Ancient Greece) or the British Museum website for Ancient Greece.	class begin to show an understanding of key terms such as democracy, civilisation, culture, laws, justice	

	warfare, slaves, culture, religion.		
	Discuss some of the key terminology that emerges from this activity e.g. democracy, civilisation, culture, laws, justice.		
to infer information from artefacts about what life was like in Ancient Greece to consider the utility and limitations of using artefacts in isolation from other historical sources	What do artefacts tell us about what life was like in Ancient Greece? Now that you have established the historical context of Ancient Greece with your class, the next 4 sub-sections of this enquiry will enable the children to engage with a variety of sources to increase their knowledge and understanding of this ancient civilisation and develop their skills of historical enquiry. Provide the children with photographs of Ancient Greek pottery and statues. These should include illustrations/representations of different aspects of Ancient Greek life including soldiers, ships, gods and goddesses, rulers, writing, everyday life. Ask them in small groups to look at specific photographs and record the details they see both in writing and through making accurate drawings. Ask them to record what the object is, what it might have been used for, what information it provides us about an aspect of life in Ancient Greece. Prompt them further by asking them questions such as What made the Ancient Greek fighters so powerful? How their boats might have attacked enemy boats? How was religion in Ancient Greece different to Christianity or other religions? How can we tell that a particular ruler was so important? What can we learn about everyday life? Get each group to report back their findings and use these to build up a picture of life in Ancient Greece. Get the whole class to identify the key characteristics. Finally get the class to speculate about what other sources they might need to get a fuller picture about life in Ancient Greece.	Photographs of Ancient Greek pottery and statues.	Infer information from artefacts about what life was like in Ancient Greece In begin to identify what other sources they might need to get a fuller picture about life in Ancient Greece Greece

Children should learn:	What do archaeological sites tell us about what life		Can the children:
 to infer information from archaeological sites about what life was like in Ancient Greece to select and combine information from different sources about life in Ancient Greece to produce structured work making appropriate use of dates and 	Provide the children with photographs and plans of Ancient Greek archaeological sites such as temples, theatres e.g. the Greek theatre at Ephesus, The Temple of Apollo at Delphi, the Parthenon in Athens. Ask them in small groups to investigate a specific site and record their findings both in writing and through making accurate drawings. Ask each group to devise a tour guide for use at their site — it might help to provide the groups with a simple template or criteria for this activity. Ask them to select some pictures of the artefacts from the previous subsection to enhance their guides. Get each group to share their tour guides and/or to take the rest of the class on a tour of their site.	Photographs and plans of Ancient Greek archaeological sites such as temples, theatres. A simple tour guide template or criteria. Photographs of Ancient Greek pottery and statues.	 infer information from artefacts about what life was like in Ancient Greece select and combine information from different sources about life in Ancient Greece produce structured work in the form of a tour guide for an Ancient Greek historical site making appropriate use of dates and terms
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to select and sequence information to produce structured work	Can we learn anything from Greek myths and legends? Explain to the children the meaning of the terms myths and legends. Explain why these were so important in Ancient Greece. Read one Ancient Greek myth to the class and ask them what it tells us about life in Ancient Greece.		 select and sequence information to produce structured work in the form of story-telling or drama
 to select and combine information from different sources about Ancient Greece 	Divide the class into small groups and give each group a photocopied text of a Greek myth/legend to read. Ask them to underline the key points of the story and discuss why they have chosen these. Each group could then retell their stories to the rest of class or re-enact it using drama.	Photocopied texts of a selection of Greek myths/legends e.g. Jason and the Argonauts; Theseus and the Minotaur; Pandora's box; Persephone in the Underworld.	 begin to assess how useful Greek myths/legends are in helping them to find out about the past show some understanding
 to show some understanding that aspects of the past have been 	Each group then has to answer the question – What evidence is there to prove that their myth/legend might be true? – by carrying out research using a range of sources including photographs of artefacts, archaeological sites, and where	Photographs of Ancient Greek artefacts, archaeological sites, maps, secondary sources (class/library school textbooks).	that aspects of the past have been represented and interpreted in different ways

represented and interpreted in different ways	helpful, secondary sources. They could also identify which parts might not have been true and give simple reasons. As an extension activity you could give some children different versions of the same myth/legend and ask them to make comparisons and speculate as to why there are differences. In a final presentation to the whole class, each group has to answer the question: Can we learn anything from Greek myths and legends?	Different versions of the same myth/legend.	
• to use different sources to identify the most important achievements of Alexander the Great giving reasons	What do we know about the achievements of Alexander the Great? Read the story of Alexander the Great to the class. Provide the pupils with a copy of the story along with a map of the Ancient Greek empire and images of Alexander the Great from Ancient Greek statues, friezes, and pottery. Ask the pupils in pairs to use these sources to identify and record the main achievements of Alexander the Great, put them in the correct chronological sequence, and then to select what they believe to be his most important achievements and provide some reasons. Get each pair to design a plaque for a statue of Alexander the Great which includes what they believe to be his most important achievements. To finish get each pair to share with the rest of the class what they have chosen for their plaques. The class could then vote on which they think were the most important reasons.	Copies of the story of Alexander the Great taken from a school textbook. A map of the Ancient Greek empire. Images of Alexander the Great from Ancient Greek statues, friezes, and pottery. To help some pupils, provide photocopies of the story of Alexander the Great so that they can highlight his key achievements, or provide them with cards outlining his achievements so that they can select which were the most significant.	use different sources to identify the most important achievements of Alexander the Great giving reasons

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- to summarise what they have learnt about the Ancient Greeks
- to appreciate that different sources can be used to find out about the Ancient Greeks
- that different kinds of sources provide different information

Final activity: What sources should we include in a museum display on the life and achievements of the Ancient Greeks?

This final activity provides the children with the opportunity to reflect on the enquiry question *How can we find out about the civilisation of Ancient Greece?* and show what they have learnt throughout the enquiry.

The children could create a class or school museum display on life in Ancient Greece. Through a whole class discussion get them to decide which aspects of life in Ancient Greece to include in the display. Then divide the class into small groups and allocate an aspect of Ancient Greek life to each one. Ask each group to select which sources they are going to include for their part of the display – try to limit them to a small number so that they have to think about which sources are most useful. Get them to produce a label for each source describing it and explaining what it tells us about life

in Ancient Greece.

Can the children:

Various primary and secondary

sources on Ancient Greece (see

previous sub-sections).

- show knowledge and understanding of aspects of life in Ancient Greece
- select appropriate sources to support their findings

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

Through completing this enquiry, children should develop their knowledge and understanding of the life and achievements of the Ancient Greeks including where the civilisation of Ancient Greece fits into the broader chronological framework set out in the programme of study for key stage 2 history.

The children should also have achieved increased confidence and competence in some of the skills and concepts for history including:

- Specialised vocabulary and terminology such as ancient, modern, civilisation, citizens, archaeology, myths and legends
- Historical interpretation
- Historical enquiry
- The nature and use of evidence
- Change, continuity, similarity and difference

Note for teachers about additional sources of information and guidance

Note that additional resources, classroom ideas, articles about Ancient Greece from the *Primary History* journal, and useful information for primary teachers about the history of Ancient Greece can be found on the Historical Association website. Simply use the search facility on the primary homepage. In particular, see the following article published in 2015 and written specifically to help teachers who are teaching the Ancient Greeks for the first time:

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Also take a look at the following websites which contain really useful background information and ideas and resources for use in the classroom:

British Museum Online Resources

https://www.britishmuseum.org/learn/schools/ages-7-11/ancient-greece

BBC Primary History Teacher's Resources

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/ks2-history/zfbwhbk

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/history/zfmi92p

How this enquiry might be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

This enquiry could be adapted for use with younger and/or less able children by:

- Focusing more time on the everyday lives of the Ancient Greeks and establishing a clear understanding of similarities and differences to the children's own lives
- Providing more structured guidance on completing the written tasks
- Modelling the process of historical investigation
- Introducing the children to a narrower range of sources and ensuring that these are widely accessible
- Introducing the children to age appropriate versions of Greek myths and legends and supplementing these with visual images

More able children could demonstrate a more in-depth understanding of Ancient Greece by:

- Carrying out investigations with more independence, including posing their own questions and organising their own work
- Using a wider range of evidence to produce conclusions and assessing the usefulness of some of that evidence such as Greek myths and legends

Enquiry 2: Can we	thank the Ancient Greeks	for anything in our lives today?	
LEARNING OBJECTIVES	KEY CONTENT AND SUGGESTED LESSON IDEAS	SUGGESTED RESOURCES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
to use a range of sources to find out about life in Ancient Greek schools and make inferences to describe similarities and differences from the past and give reasons for some of these	What are the similarities between our school and schools in Ancient Greece? This enquiry is designed to follow on from the previous enquiry and build on the knowledge and understanding of Ancient Greece that the children have already acquired. As well as introducing the children to new content, some aspects of Ancient Greek society from the first enquiry are revisited in more depth. Provide the children with a range of primary (e.g. photographs of artefacts) and secondary sources (e.g. school library books, appropriate websites) which provide evidence of life in Ancient Greek schools. Ask them use these sources to carry out research and record their answers in a table that is divided into 4 columns with the following sub-headings – key features of school life, school life in Athens, school life in Sparta and school life today. The table should also be divided into rows – each one assigned to an aspect of school life e.g. boys, girls, rich, poor, slaves, age when children start school age when	A range of primary (e.g. photographs of artefacts) and secondary sources (e.g. school library books, appropriate websites) which provide evidence of life in Ancient Greek schools.	 use a range of sources to find out about life in Ancient Greek schools and make inferences describe similarities and differences from the past and give reasons for some of these

	children leave school, subjects taught at school, sports played at school, other activities, equipment used at school, school buildings. As a whole class start to identify some of the similarities and differences between then and now before going on to explore some of the differences between schooling in Athens and Sparta. Finally, ask the children to write two paragraphs — one describing the differences between schools in Ancient Greece and today, and one explaining the differences between schools in Athens and Sparta.		
 to make inferences from a film clip about an aspect of life in Ancient Greece to use written sources to make inferences about the influence of the Ancient Greek language on modern English 	Inguage about Ancient Greece? Start by showing the children a short clip from the BBC Bitesize website entitled What did the Greeks do for us?. Ask the children what the clip tells them about the continuing influence of Ancient Greece on life today. What in particular does it tells us about Greek writing and its importance? Provide the children with a copy of the Greek alphabet with the names of the letters and how they are pronounced. In pairs ask them to identify which letters are the same as	BBC Bitesize website: CLIP What did the Greeks do for us? https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z87tn39/articles/ ztxc4xs Copies of the Greek alphabet with the names of the letters and how they are pronounced.	 make inferences from a film clip about an aspect of life in Ancient Greece use written sources to make inferences about the influence of the Ancient Greek language on modern English

	we use today and which are different. Ask them to use the Greek alphabet to work out where the word 'alphabet' comes from. Give the children a sheet containing examples of Ancient Greek prefixes and suffixes and tell them that we can use these to identify the origins of words. Ask them to write down as many school subjects they can think of and then to see which ones have these prefixes or suffixes. In pairs get them to use a dictionary to find as many words with Ancient Greek origins as possible. What does this tell them about our language?	Sheets containing examples of Ancient Greek prefixes and suffixes. Children's dictionaries.	
use pictorial sources to identify the similarities and differences between Ancient Greek and contemporary architecture, and make inferences about the influence of the latter	What do some of our buildings tell us about how we view Ancient Greece today? Provide the children with some pictures of Ancient Greek buildings along with some sticky labels denoting the key features. In pairs ask them to match the labels to the buildings. Now provide them with pictures of well-known national, and where appropriate, local buildings that have been built in the classical style. Ask them to identify which features are similar to the ones used by the Ancient Greeks. Ask them what these contemporary buildings have in common and what this tells us about what people think about Ancient Greek architecture.	Pictures/photographs of Ancient Greek buildings. Sticky labels denoting the key features of Ancient Greek buildings. Pictures/photographs of well-known national and local buildings.	• use pictorial sources to identify the similarities and differences between Ancient Greek and contemporary architecture, and make inferences about the influence of the latter

Children should learn:

- to understand and use specialised vocabulary and terminology such as ancient, modern, civilisation, citizens, democracy
- to understand how city states in Ancient Greece were ruled and how democracy in Ancient Athens is different from that in the UK today

How were the Ancient Greeks governed and are there any similarities with how we are governed today?

Refer the children back to the work they did in the previous enquiry on how the Ancient Greeks were ruled and the differences between Athens and Sparta. Ask them whether the word 'democracy' has Ancient Greek origins – ask them to look at the Ancient Greek prefixes and suffixes they used previously if necessary.

In small groups ask the children to answer the following questions either using information they gained from the previous enquiry or through additional research using school library books or an appropriate website:

Who was allowed to vote in Ancient Athens?

Who ruled in Ancient Athens?

The groups should then go on to carry out research into who is allowed to vote today and who governs using sources provided e.g. images of Parliament, 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister, local council offices, people voting, access to a web page showing who is eligible to vote. Get them to make comparisons between then and now.

You might also want to take the

School library books or an appropriate website on how Ancient Athens was ruled.

Images of Parliament, 10 Downing Street, the Prime Minister, local council offices, people voting, access to a web page showing who is eligible to vote.

Can the children:

- begin to use specialised vocabulary and terminology such as ancient, modern, civilisation, citizens, democracy
- show some
 understanding of how
 city states in Ancient
 Greece were ruled and
 how democracy in
 Ancient Athens is
 different from that in
 the UK today

	opportunity to let the children experience 'democracy 'in action through setting up a class debate and vote on an issue that is relevant to them – perhaps on an aspect of school life or on an issue of relevance to their local community.		
 to select and combine information from different sources about the recent past and Ancient Greece to identify some of the similarities and differences between life in Ancient Greece and today to present their findings in different ways 	How have the Olympic Games changed since they were first held in Ancient Greece? Provide the children with images and film clips of London 2012. Get them to design and write a short chapter for a school history book summarising the events from these Games – What sports were played? What were the main venues? How many countries were involved? How did the games open and close? What were the most memorable moments? Ask them to select two or three images that best encapsulate London 2012 and include them in their work. Tell the children that the Olympic Games originate from Ancient Greece. Set out the historical context and stress the religious significance of the Games.	Images and film clips of London 2012.	select and combine information from different sources about the recent past and Ancient Greece identify some of the similarities and differences between life in Ancient Greece and today present their findings in different ways
	Following on from this ask the groups to design a 5-day programme for the Ancient Olympic Games working from pictorial sources and writing an explanatory caption for each used. Get them to present their programmes to the rest of the class.	Pictorial sources of the Ancient Olympic Games. Investigating the Ancient Olympic Games - a case study by Jacqui Dean, Primary History 58.	

	After their presentations, give the children Judith Swaddling's Ancient Olympic 5-day programme (available free in PDF format) so that they can make comparisons with their own. Finally, as a whole class make comparisons between the Ancient and modern Olympic Games teasing out the similarities and differences.	The Ancient Olympic Games by Judith Swaddling, British Museum Press. https://www.britishmuseum.org/learn/schools/ages-7-11/ancient-greece/classroom-resource-olympic-games	
 to summarise what they have learnt about the Ancient Greeks to identify the most important legacy of the Ancient Greeks giving reasons 	Final activity: Which is the most important legacy of the Ancient Greeks? This final activity provides the children with the opportunity to reflect on the enquiry question Can we thank the Ancient Greeks for anything in our lives today? and show what they have learnt throughout the enquiry. Divide the class into groups and assign one of the main legacies covered in this enquiry to each group. Ask them to write a paragraph summarising the legacy and one setting out reasons why it was the most important – you might want to provide criteria to help the children articulate their reasons e.g. How have people's lives been affected? Who has been affected? How many? Finish off with a class debate where the class has to vote on which one was the most important.	The children's work and resources from the previous activities in this enquiry.	show knowledge and understanding of aspects of life in Ancient Greece identify the most important legacy of the Ancient Greeks giving reasons

How will this enquiry help children to make progress in history?

Through completing this enquiry, children should develop their knowledge and understanding of some of the key features of life in Ancient Greece, its continuing legacy and begin to appreciate its historical significance.

Through both enquiries they should develop an understanding of the distinctiveness of the civilisation of Ancient Greece and where it fits into the broader chronological framework set out in the programme of study for key stage 2 history.

The children should also have achieved increased confidence and competence in some of the skills and concepts for history including:

- Specialised vocabulary and terminology such as ancient, modern, civilisation, citizens, democracy, archaeology, architecture
- Historical enquiry
- Change, continuity, similarity and difference, significance

Note for teachers about additional sources of information and guidance

Note that additional resources, classroom ideas, articles about Ancient Greece from the *Primary History* journal, and useful information for primary teachers about the history of Ancient Greece can be found on the Historical Association website. Simply use the search facility on the primary homepage. In particular, see the following article published in 2015 and written specifically to help teachers who are teaching the Ancient Greeks for the first time:

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BBC Primary History Teacher's Resources

https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/z87tn39

How this enquiry might be adapted for children of different ages and different abilities?

This enquiry could be adapted for use with younger and/or less able children by:

- Focusing more time on the everyday lives of the Ancient Greeks and establishing a clear understanding of similarities and differences to the children's own lives
- Using drama and/or simulation exercises to develop their understanding of more difficult concepts such as democracy
- Providing more structured guidance on completing the written tasks
- Modelling the process of historical investigation
- Introducing the children to a narrower range of sources and ensuring that these are widely accessible

More able children could demonstrate a more in-depth understanding of Ancient Greece by:

- Carrying out investigations with more independence, including posing their own questions and organising their own work
- Using a wider range of evidence to produce conclusions and assessing the usefulness of some of that evidence
- Beginning to provide substantiated reasons to explain the historical significance of Ancient Greece