



The Great Thinkers of Greece

10_A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes



What Have We Already Learned?

◀ Show image 9A-2: Persians crossing giant ship bridge

Ask students to describe what they see in the picture. Prompt further discussion with the following questions:

- Why was there a battle at Thermopylae?
- What was the ship bridge used for?
- Which army was victorious?



◀ Show image 9A-9: Victorious Greeks; Persians retreating

Ask students to describe what they see in the picture. Ask them how this picture shows another contribution of the ancient Greeks. Point to Image Card 21 (Greeks' Victory) on the Civilization Chart, and prompt students to recall that because the Greeks were brave and fought against the much larger Persian army, they are remembered today as heroes and have been written about in many stories.

Essential Background Information or Terms

Read the title of the read-aloud to students. Ask students what they think it means to be a “great thinker.” Tell students that throughout time, many people have wondered about the world and have tried to understand and explain its relationship with the people who live in it. Ask students if they have ever heard the word *philosophy*. Ask students if they remember learning about Confucius’s philosophy in the *Early Asian Civilizations* domain. [Remind students that Confucius wanted China to be a place where people could live in peace without wars. He spoke about how changes for a better world should begin in the home with families. He spent his life teaching others to treat one another with

kindness and respect.] Tell students that *philosophy* means a set of ideas or beliefs relating to a particular activity or study.

Explain to students that the word *philosophy* actually comes from the Greek language and means “love of knowledge or wisdom.” Tell them that people who study philosophy and seek to understand people and the world they live in are called philosophers. Tell students that the great thinkers—or philosophers—they are going to hear about, spent their entire lives pursuing a love of knowledge about the wonders of the world and how people lived their lives in that world.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to find out who these great thinkers of ancient Greece were and what contributions their work provided to the rest of the world.



The Great Thinkers of Greece

◀ Show image 10A-1: Socrates in Athens

1 A philosopher is someone who studies life, knowledge, and truth.

2 [Point to the older man in the image.] Let's say this philosopher's name together: *Socrates*.

3 [Show Athens on Poster 1.]

He was the most famous **philosopher** who ever lived.¹ His name was Socrates (*sock-ruh-teez*),² and he lived in the city-state of Athens over two thousand years ago.³

The stories about Socrates describe him as the most down-to-earth fellow you could ever meet. These stories, written by his friends and students, tell us all we know about him, for Socrates never wrote anything down himself. According to these stories, there was no one more clever, no one more loyal to his friends, no one so willing to poke fun at himself, and no one as glad to share everyday activities with you.

But the one thing that made Socrates such a great philosopher was that he kept asking questions about why people did such everyday things.⁴

4 Do you think asking questions is a great way to learn about things?

5 What does *engaged* mean? (busy, involved)

In the stories about Socrates, we hear about him sitting beneath a shady tree, or walking with friends—always engaged in curious conversation.⁵



◀ Show image 10A-2: Wealthy Athenians conversing at dinner party

6 [Point to the man in the foreground without the beard.]

In one story, many guests are waiting for him to arrive at a dinner party. The guests and their host, a man named Agathon,⁶ are wealthy, well-educated young Athenians who talk about sports, politics, and the latest plays. Some help run their family's large farms or travel to faraway lands on business trips as merchants. Some are political leaders in Athens. A few are soldiers. None of them, however, spend their lives like Socrates, just thinking and asking questions to answer other questions.

In this story, Socrates is older than the rest of the guests at this party, has almost no money to his name, wears the same outfit day and night, and generally walks about without shoes. Yet in this and other stories, we hear politicians, landowners, and soldiers speak of him with great **affection**⁷ and respect.

7 or liking



← **Show image 10A-3: Socrates with wealthy Athenian in the market**

At the dinner party, one Athenian says, “One day, Socrates and I were passing through the marketplace. I bought a number of items for myself, and knowing Socrates has little money, I offered to buy him whatever he wanted. Socrates said, ‘One reason for human unhappiness is that people always want more things than they need. When they get those things, they still want more. I think the happiest people are the ones with the least number of things. Just look at all the **marvelous** things in this marketplace that I don’t want!’”⁸

- 8 Why doesn’t Socrates want any of the marvelous, or wonderful, things from the marketplace? What does this Athenian’s story tell us about the kind of person Socrates was?



← **Show image 10A-4: Socrates as a soldier**

Another dinner guest shares a very different memory of Socrates. “During the war, when we were soldiers together in that icy, cold winter, everyone else bundled up in as many clothes as possible. But Socrates gave another man his coat and boots saying, ‘You need these more than I do.’ He marched barefoot, even over the ice, yet he out-marched the rest of us. And when we ran low on food, he still shared his food with others. Yet during the battle, he was the strongest of us all.”⁹

- 9 Why was Socrates such a strong soldier? Do you think his philosophy helped Socrates to be a stronger person?

“And though I received honors for bravery that day, Socrates was the real hero. Yes, I led the charge, but I became surrounded by enemy soldiers. Just as one of them knocked my sword from my hand, Socrates burst through them, scattering them left and right. Then he glared at them so fiercely, they ran away. He found me another sword and then said, ‘If I had known that making ugly faces could drive the enemy away, I could have won the battle for us—for heaven knows I am ugly enough for that.’”¹⁰

- 10 Does it sound like Socrates had a sense of humor?



← **Show image 10A-5: Socrates arriving at dinner party**

As the guest finishes this retelling, Socrates himself finally arrives for the party. Agathon, the host,¹¹ insists, “Sit next to me, Socrates, so I can hear your words of wisdom.”

- 11 [Point to the man who is sitting in the image.]

Socrates laughs, “I fear you’ll go thirsty, Agathon, for I have no wisdom for you to hear. I have only questions, not answers.”¹²

- 12 Why did Socrates only have questions? Do you think a great philosopher can have answers, too?

In all of the stories about Socrates, we read that his method of learning and teaching was to ask others questions like “How do you know?” and “What do you mean?” For example, someone might say to him, “The way to lead a good life is to give to others,” to which Socrates might respond, “How do you know?”



← **Show image 10A-6: Socrates asking questions**

By asking these questions, Socrates really wanted to cause people to think about their lives and why they do certain things. “Otherwise,” he would say, “we will just repeat the same old mistakes everyone else has made. And when we end up doing good things, shouldn’t we try to understand *why* they are good so that we can do more good things?”

Somehow it was always in his company that people had moments of enlightenment.¹³

Of course, some people did not like Socrates. They said he was wasting their time or confusing them by trying to change their minds. Socrates protested, “But I cannot change your mind. Only you can do that.” Then he would go on his way.

← **Show image 10A-7: Plato learning from Socrates; taking notes**

Many of Socrates’s friends went on to become great leaders of Greece, and many of his students became widely known and respected. One such student was an intelligent young fellow named Plato (*PLAY*-toe).¹⁴ Poet, champion athlete, and brave soldier, Plato paid close attention to what Socrates said. Later in his life, Plato wrote books reporting those wonderful discussions. But as years passed and Plato became famous himself, he wrote more about his own ideas about the world and less about Socrates.¹⁵

13 What is enlightenment?

(*Enlightenment* means the act of being aware of problems or concerns.) Do you remember another individual who searched for and is said to have achieved enlightenment? (Siddhartha Guatama, the Buddha)



14 [Point to the man seated with a paper and writing tool, and ask students to repeat his name.]

15 So did Plato also become a philosopher like Socrates?



← **Show image 10A-8: Plato’s academy in olive grove**

Finally, Plato opened a school near a grove of olive trees called “the grove of Academe” (*ACK*-uh-deem). The school became famous as “The Academy,” a word we still use today for some

schools. Here, Plato offered classes in all sorts of subjects: history, mathematics, music, literature, law, politics, and more. He would always ask: “What do we know about these things? How can we be sure we are correct? How can our knowing lead to greater happiness?”¹⁶

16 Do you remember who else asked these same types of questions (Socrates)?

But by the time Plato taught at The Academy, Athens had changed. It had gone through a long, terrible war. A terrible disease had swept through the city, a disease that today we might be able to treat with modern medicine. Without such medicine, many Athenians died from this illness. Many of the happy young men and women of Plato’s youth did not survive. Life was no longer so easy or happy for him. He then began writing books that asked questions like, “Wouldn’t life be nicer if we could only . . . ?” and continued to try to find **proof** to back up his ideas.¹⁷

17 In this case, *proof* means evidence or facts that support something is true. The word *proof* can also mean to proofread for mistakes in your writing.



← Show image 10A-9: Aristotle

18 [Point to the man in the image and ask students to repeat his name.]

Among Plato’s students was a young man named Aristotle (air-ih-STOT’l).¹⁸ Aristotle, too, wanted to understand people and things, but he looked at them in a way more like Socrates than Plato. Aristotle thought, “Instead of looking for facts to prove what we already think is true, let us first study the facts and then try to understand what they mean.”¹⁹

19 So Aristotle studied the facts, or things he knew were true, and tried to find out more about them.

That simple idea would change the world. Aristotle would become the first great observer, studying things he could see and experiment with, such as plants, animals, human beings, and the stars and planets.²⁰ Aristotle’s ideas and classifications, as you heard referenced earlier, are still used in science today.

20 What is Aristotle observing in this image?

Aristotle also believed in the importance of having balance in life. He thought doing or having too much of one thing—such as staying up too late, eating too many unhealthy foods, or even studying too much—did not allow time for other things you may need to do.²¹

21 So Aristotle thought that too much of anything wasn’t good, and that it was important to have a balance of different things.

22 So Aristotle became a philosopher like his teacher, Plato, before him, and his teacher's teacher, Socrates, before that.

23 or surprisingly amazing

Aristotle, like his teacher, Plato, also opened a school in Athens. Aristotle's students, and the books he wrote, spread across Greece and beyond, carrying Greek ideas to distant lands.²² Among Aristotle's students was an **astonishing**²³ boy who would carry these ideas the farthest of all. His name was Alexander, who you will learn about in the next read-aloud.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Literal* What is a philosopher? (someone who studies life, knowledge, and truth)
2. *Literal* Who were the three famous philosophers of ancient Greece? (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle) How were they connected? (Plato was a student of Socrates; Aristotle was a student of Plato.)
3. *Literal* How do we know about the ideas of Socrates? (from stories that were retold orally and written down by his student, Plato) [Place Image Card 22 (Socrates) on the Civilization Chart in the "Contributions" square, and tell students that people today still read the wise words of Socrates. Remind students that the word *philosophy*, meaning love of wisdom, is also a contribution of the ancient Greeks. You may wish to have students fill in their own chart on Instructional Master 1B-1.]
4. *Literal* What word for school did we adopt from the works of Plato? (*academy*) [Place Image Card 23 (Plato) on the Civilization Chart in the "Contributions" square. You may wish to have students fill in their own chart on Instructional Master 1B-1.]
5. *Inferential* How are Aristotle's studies important to science today? (Scientists use Aristotle's studies and classifications of many different types of plants and animals in their studies today.) [Place Image Card 24 (Aristotle) on the Civilization Chart in the "Contributions" square. You may wish to have students fill in their own chart on Instructional Master 1B-1.]

6. *Inferential* Which city-state was the setting of this read-aloud, Athens or Sparta? (Athens) Why were philosophers more likely to be found in Athens? (Sparta was focused on military power, but Athens was focused on independent thinking.)
7. *Evaluative* What method of learning did Socrates use? (He believed in asking questions but never gave answers; he believed people should discover their own truth and the reasons why they did certain things.) What are some questions you could ask to learn more about people and the world around you? (Answers may vary.)
8. *Evaluative* The philosophy of keeping a balance in life was important to Aristotle because he believed that too much of one thing could take away time from other things. What are some things you could have too much of in your life? What proof would you need to have to know this is true? (Answers may vary.)

[Please continue to model the *Question? Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

9. *Evaluative Who? Pair Share:* Asking questions after a read-aloud is one way to see how much everyone has learned. Think of a question you can ask your neighbor about the read-aloud that starts with the word *who*. For example, you could ask, “Who did you hear about in today’s read-aloud?” Turn to your neighbor and ask your *who* question. Listen to your neighbor’s response. Then your neighbor will ask a new *who* question, and you will get a chance to respond. I will call on several of you to share your questions with the class.
10. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these remaining questions.]

Word Work: Marvelous

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard Socrates say, “Just look at all the *marvelous* things in this marketplace that I don’t want.”
2. Say the word *marvelous* with me.
3. *Marvelous* means excellent or wonderful.
4. My aunt’s restaurant has many marvelous dishes to eat.
5. Try to think of things that you would describe as marvelous. Try to use the word *marvelous* when you tell about them. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “_____ is marvelous.”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *marvelous*?

Use a *Making Choices* activity for follow-up. Directions: I will describe a situation. If what I describe is an example of something you think is marvelous, say, “That’s marvelous.” If what I describe is not an example of something that is marvelous, say, “That’s not marvelous.” (Answers may vary for all.)

1. eating a hot fudge sundae
2. losing your favorite sweatshirt
3. your first day of school
4. riding on a roller coaster
5. celebrating your birthday
6. a new baby brother or sister



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Extensions

20 minutes

Sayings and Phrases: Practice What You Preach

Proverbs are short, traditional sayings that have been passed along orally from generation to generation. These sayings usually express general truths based on experiences and observations of everyday life. Although some proverbs do have literal meanings—that is, they mean exactly what they say—many proverbs have a richer meaning beyond the literal level. It is important to help students understand the difference between the literal meanings of the words and their implied or figurative meanings.

Ask students if they have ever heard anyone say, “practice what you preach.” Have students repeat the proverb. Ask them what they think this proverb means. Explain to students that the literal meaning of this proverb is that you should behave or live your life in the same way that you tell others they should act.

Tell students that the three Greek philosophers they have learned about in today’s read-aloud are all examples of this saying. Remind students that Socrates was a philosopher who said that one reason for human unhappiness is that people wanted more things than they needed. Remind students how Socrates practiced what he preached when he gave his boots away to the soldier, wore the same clothes every day, and did not buy anything for himself at the marketplace, even when his friend offered to do so.

Ask students if they think it is easy or hard to “practice what you preach” and why they think it is important. Expand upon their responses with more complex vocabulary. Look for more opportunities to use this saying in your classroom.

Writing a Fictional Narrative: Plan (Instructional Master 10B-1)

Tell students that together you are going to write a narrative paragraph. Explain that a narrative is a story. For example, the stories they heard about Hermes being a messenger and Lysander going away to battle camp at age seven are narratives. Remind students that a narrative, or story, has the following elements: characters, setting, and plot. Explain that the narrative you are going to write together will be much shorter than the ones they have heard because they are still learning the writing process.

Tell students that your narrative, or story, is going to tell about someone living in the time of ancient Greece. On chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard, brainstorm together about all of the different kinds of people who would have lived during this time. (child or adult; male or female; warrior in the Spartan army; Olympian athlete or observer; merchant; seafarer from Crete; citizen or leader in the Athenian assembly; philosopher; sculptor; poet; etc.) Have students think about what each character does every day. (goes to school; has a job; stays at home; trains in a military camp; travels; fishes; creates art; etc.) You may also choose to have students write their narrative about a fictional character from this time, such as a god or goddess living on Mount Olympus.

Copy Instructional Master 10B-1 onto chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. With students' help, choose a character from the list and write it in the center oval. On the surrounding spokes, write words and phrases about the character—what they do every day, the view from where they live, the sounds they hear, etc. Remind students that when they brainstorm, they do not need to write in complete sentences, but instead they should write down whatever comes to mind about the topic. Once you have written down everything the students can think of about the chosen character, tell them that they will begin the next step of this fictional narrative the next time you meet.

✈ Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students use Instructional Master 10B-1 to complete this exercise on their own.