



The Ancient Greeks

1A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

Domain Introduction

Tell students that they are going to hear about an ancient civilization that is still remembered today for the way its people thought and lived. Ask students to share what the word *ancient* means, and review that *ancient* means very old. So, an ancient civilization is one that is very old and was formed many, many years ago. Ask if anyone remembers what a civilization is. Explain that a civilization is a group of people living together in a well-organized way. People in civilizations build cities, have writing systems, have leaders and laws, practice religions, grow their own food by farming, and have different people doing different jobs. Tell students that groups of people around the world—in ancient times and modern times—have done these things. There have been, and still are, many civilizations.



◀ Show image 1A-5: Kings from ancient civilizations (clockwise from top left: Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Inca, Aztec)

Ask students if they remember any ancient civilizations that they have learned about. Allow them to share what they know. Point to the image and tell them that some ancient civilizations they may have heard about include the Mesopotamians, the Egyptians, the Maya, the Aztec, the Inca, and—most recently in the *Early Asian Civilizations* domain—the Chinese and the Indian.

Note: Students who have participated in the Core Knowledge Language Arts program may be familiar with these ancient civilizations from the Grade 1 *Early World Civilizations* and *Early American Civilizations* domains.

Where Are We?

Tell students that the civilization they are going to hear about developed after the ancient Chinese civilization. Tell students that this civilization developed in an area of the world across the Atlantic Ocean on the continent of Europe. Using a world map or globe, have a volunteer point to where your class lives in the United States and then point to the continent of Europe. Point to the present-day country of Greece and tell students that long, long ago, a large group of people lived together in that area in a well-organized way as a civilization. Show students *The Ancient Greek Civilization* Poster 1 (Map of Ancient Greece) included in this domain. You may wish to hang this poster in your classroom for quick reference throughout coverage of this domain.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen to find out more about this ancient civilization that developed long ago across the Atlantic Ocean on the continent of Europe.

The Ancient Greeks

- 1 [Point to each area on a world map or globe as you read the following text.]
- 2 or edges
- 3 One way to remember the three seas that formed the boundaries of ancient Greece is the acronym BAM—B: Black, A: Aegean, and M: Mediterranean.
- 4 or journeys
- 5 [Show the distance from Greece to Britain and India on the world map or globe.]



← Show image 1A-1: Map of ancient Greece⁶

- 6 This map shows the main area of ancient Greece that you will learn about. [Point out this area on your world map so students clearly understand the location in context of the surrounding area.]
- 7 or buildings and other things that were extraordinary in size or appearance



← Show image 1A-2: Rugged Greek landscape with olive tree

- 8 What adjectives would you use to describe the Greek land in this picture?
- 9 Here, *rugged* means rough and uneven. The word *rugged* can also mean sturdy and strong in construction, such as a rugged piece of furniture.
- 10 It is difficult to farm on high, sloping surfaces.
- 11 or strong

About two thousand eight hundred years ago, there lived a civilization of people called the ancient Greeks.¹ Today, we call part of the area where this ancient civilization lived the country of Greece. Long ago, however, the ancient Greeks lived on a much larger area of land. The **boundaries**² of ancient Greece spread widely to the east and west, into many areas bordering on the Black Sea to the north, and across hundreds of islands in the Mediterranean and Aegean seas.³ Expeditions⁴ by land and by ship allowed the Greeks to travel as far west as present-day Britain and as far east as India.⁵ The ancient Greeks traveled to explore far-off lands, and also to trade—or buy and sell—goods with people from other areas.

The ancient Greeks were similar to other ancient civilizations in some ways. They had writing systems, leaders and laws, religions, and different people to do different jobs. And all of these ancient civilizations—the Egyptians, Mesopotamians, Indians, Chinese, Maya, Inca, Aztec, and Greeks—discovered ways to design and build magnificent structures⁷ that can still be seen today. You will see pictures of some of these structures in another lesson.

The ancient Greeks, however, were also different from other ancient civilizations in many important ways. Unlike the Egyptians and Mesopotamians, the Greeks did not develop around a great river, like the Nile in Egypt or the Tigris and Euphrates near Babylon. The Greek land was not as fertile as the land near those wide, flooding rivers.⁸ Greece is a land of high, **rugged**⁹ mountains, and in many parts, farming for the ancient Greeks was a struggle.¹⁰ You are going to hear about one type of hardy¹¹ tree, however, that the ancient Greeks were able to grow in

12 or in great amounts [Point to the tree in the image.]



13 [Point to the boat and then to the coastline in the image.] Harbors are sheltered places on the water where ships can safely load and unload their cargo, or goods.

14 [Ask a volunteer to point to the island of Crete on Poster 1. Have students repeat the name of the island.]



15 [Point to the mountains and valley as you read the following text.]

16 The word *independently* means acting on your own or in a way that is free from the control of other people or things.

abundance.¹² In addition to being farmers, some Greeks were also shepherds who took care of sheep on this rugged land.

← **Show image 1A-3: Fishing boat and harbor**

Some Greeks built harbors near the Black, Aegean, and Mediterranean seas, and many became expert sailors and fishermen, using boats like the one in this image.¹³ The largest island in the Mediterranean Sea was known—and is still known today—as Crete.¹⁴ Because they were surrounded by water, the ancient Greeks on the island of Crete became especially skilled seafarers, a name for people who earn a living by working at sea, such as fishermen and sailors.

← **Show image 1A-4: Mountains and valley**¹⁵

The high Greek mountains also made a difference in the way ancient Greece was ruled. Because the mountains split Greece into lots of little valleys, it was very difficult to move from place to place. Many Greeks stayed in one place and married people from the same community. Each city in each valley became its own little nation, which we refer to today as a city-state. Each city-state had its own government and its own laws, which controlled the surrounding area. All the Greek city-states shared the same language, although each city-state had different dialects, or slightly different ways of speaking the language.

Sometimes the Greeks had the same ideas of how to live their lives, but they did those things **independently** of one another.¹⁶ In fact, the ancient Greeks were highly competitive, and only in an emergency would they work together. After each emergency, each city-state would go back to independently minding its own business. People in each city-state thought of themselves less as united Greeks and more as citizens of their particular city-state.



← Show image 1A-5: Kings from ancient civilizations (clockwise from top left: Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Inca, Aztec)

The ancient Greeks looked at the world around them very differently from the way other people of their time looked at things. For example, you are going to hear the story of how one city-state decided not to have a king anymore. Not only was this different from what other Greeks were doing, it was completely different from what the Mesopotamians and Egyptians had done before, and from what the Aztec, Inca, and other civilizations would do in the future.¹⁷

17 How do you think the ancient Greeks decided to organize themselves without a king?

18 The word *unique* means special or the only one of its kind.

19 Contributions are things or ideas that are shared and passed on because they are considered helpful and good.

You will hear more about this later. For now, all I will say is that the Greeks had a **unique** way of seeing and thinking about things.¹⁸ We have a lot of exciting adventures ahead of us as we learn about the unique way the ancient Greeks lived and thought about things, and how their many **contributions** are a part of our lives today.¹⁹

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

If students have difficulty responding to questions, reread pertinent passages of the read-aloud and/or refer to specific images. If students give one-word answers and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their responses, acknowledge correct responses by expanding the students' responses using richer and more complex language. Ask students to answer in complete sentences by having them restate the question in their responses.

1. *Literal* What is a civilization? (a large group of people living together in a well-organized way) What are some civilizations that you have learned about? (Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Maya, Aztec, Inca)
2. *Literal* What are the names of the three seas that formed the boundaries of ancient Greece? Hint: Think of the acronym BAM. (Black Sea, Aegean Sea, Mediterranean Sea) Ask for a volunteer to point to these three seas on the map in image 1A-1.

3. *Literal* What is the name of the largest island in the Mediterranean Sea that was part of the ancient Greek civilization? (Crete) [Ask for a volunteer to point to the island of Crete on Poster 1.]
4. *Literal* What is a city-state? (an independent city and the surrounding area it controlled)
5. *Inferential* [Ask for a volunteer to locate the area of the ancient Greek civilization on the map.] Was the area of land where the ancient Greeks lived smaller or larger than the present-day country of Greece? (larger)
6. *Inferential* Describe the terrain, or land, of ancient Greece. (rugged, rocky, not near a river, surrounded by seas, not as fertile for growing crops as land in other areas) How did this terrain affect how the ancient Greek civilization developed? (People farmed less and used the surrounding seas more for fishing, trade, and travel.)
7. *Evaluative* In the read-aloud, you heard that the city-states would only work together in an emergency. What kinds of emergencies do you think the ancient Greeks had? (Answers may vary.)
8. *Evaluative* How were the ancient Greeks unique, or special? (They looked at and thought about things differently; they had city-states that acted independently; they came up with a way not to be ruled by a king; etc.)

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

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

9. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Why do you think it is important to study ancient civilizations and their contributions? (Answers may vary.)
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: Independently

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Sometimes the Greeks had the same ideas of how to live their lives, but they did those things *independently* of one another.”
2. Say the word *independently* with me.
3. If you do something independently, you do it on your own, without the influence or help of someone or something else.
4. The mother bird feeds the baby bird until it is big enough to feed itself independently.
5. Have you ever done something independently or seen someone else doing something independently? Try to use the word *independently* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I _____ independently when . . . ”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *independently*?

Use an *Antonyms* activity for follow-up. Create a T-chart with the header “With the Prefix *in-*” in the column on the left, and the header “Without a Prefix” in the column on the right. Directions: The antonym, or opposite, of the word *independently* is *dependently*. The prefix *in-* often makes the word have the opposite meaning, just like the prefix *un-*. What do you think *dependently* means? [Prompt them to realize that *dependently* means acting in a way that is *not* free of help from someone or something else.] If you do something dependently, you are relying on someone or something else for what you need. For example, pets rely dependently on their owners when they need something, but wild animals survive independently on their own. [Write the word *independently* on the chart in the column on the left, and write the word *dependently* on the chart in the column on the right.]

Other words that have *in-* at the beginning make that word an antonym of the word without the *in-*. [Write the following words on the chart as you discuss them with students.] What does the word *invisible* mean? If you remove the prefix *in-*, the word *visible*

means the opposite. [Follow the same process with students for the words *incorrect* and *inactive*. After discussing this group of three words, ask students for other examples of words in which adding the prefix *in-* creates an antonym of the original word; add those to the chart.]



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Extensions

20 minutes

Civilization Chart (Instructional Master 1B-1, optional)

Copy Instructional Master 1B-1 onto chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Be sure to leave enough room in each square to fit several Image Cards. Tell students that you are going to create a Civilization Chart together to record examples of the five components of the ancient Greek civilization: jobs, city-states, leaders, religion, and contributions.

Ask students what different jobs people had in ancient Greece. Place Image Cards 1 (Olive Trees), 2 (Sheep), and 3 (Fishing Boat and Harbor) in the “Jobs” square. Ask students what they see in the images and what they remember about the jobs the ancient Greeks had: farming, shepherding, and seafaring. Tell students that they will learn more about these unique, hardy trees that the Greeks were able to grow in abundance.

Tell students to listen carefully to the next lessons for more components of the ancient Greek civilization that they can record on their chart.

✈ Above and Beyond: You may wish to have some students complete Instructional Master 1B-1 on their own by drawing pictures and/or writing words in each square.

Drawing the Read-Aloud

Have students draw a picture about the read-aloud. Tell them to include three things they remember about the ancient Greeks. They may wish to draw fishermen or seafarers working at the harbors or on ships; traders or travelers walking great distances on land expeditions; farmers working their crops on rugged ground; the city-states, which were located between the mountains, competing with each other and working together only in emergencies; or shepherds taking care of sheep.

You may also wish to have students create their own map of ancient Greece with the surrounding seas and islands. (Show students Poster 1 as a guide.) Allow students to share their drawings with the class. You may wish to display the images on a wall for the class to view throughout the domain.

Take-Home Material

Family Letter

Send home Instructional Masters 1B-2 and 1B-3.