



Marathon

8A

Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Ask students what contributions the ancient Greeks made to modern civilizations. Show them the images in the “Contributions” square of the Civilization Chart, and ask them what they remember about each contribution. Contributions discussed should include the Olympics; art (Pindar’s poems, Myron’s statue *The Discus Thrower*); architecture (style of Parthenon influenced many U.S. government buildings today, including the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.); and democracy (Athens as the birthplace of democracy, a type of government we have in the United States today).

Tell students that they are going to hear about another ancient Greek contribution in today’s read-aloud.

Essential Background Information or Terms

Tell students that they are also going to hear about another large civilization that existed in the time of the ancient Greeks. These people were called Persians and were ruled by a king named King Darius (duh-RYE-US). Point to the Persian Empire on Poster 1, and explain that this empire was very large and powerful and had conquered many areas near where the ancient Greeks lived.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Ask students to predict what happened when the powerful Persians invaded ancient Greece.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen to find out if their predictions are correct and to learn more about another ancient Greek contribution.



Marathon

◀ Show image 8A-1: Athenian soldier sounding the alarm

- 1 Why do you think the Greeks were afraid of the Persians?
- 2 or soldiers on horseback
- 3 Why did King Darius want to punish the Athenians? Remember, although the ancient Greek city-states were mostly independent, they did help each other during emergencies like invasions.
- 4 [Point to Athens and then Marathon on Poster 1, and reiterate that the distance between them was about twenty-six miles.]

“The Persians are coming!” The terrifying news raced through Athens like a rapidly spreading fire. The very name of the Persians meant terror to all the Greeks.¹ And now King Darius (duh-*RYE*-us) had sent an army of Persian foot soldiers and cavalry² to punish the Athenians. Darius was angry that Athens had helped other Greek city-states fight against Persia.³ A fleet of six hundred ships had brought as many as twenty thousand experienced Persian soldiers to a beach about twenty-six miles from Athens, near a wide, flat plain called Marathon.⁴

“There are not enough of us to face them,” moaned an Athenian army general. “Besides, no one can beat Persian soldiers.”



◀ Show image 8A-2: Miltiades addressing the generals and Callimachus

- 5 [Point to the man who is pointing to the map.]
- 6 Remember, the Athenians came up with the idea for democratic rule.
- 7 [Count the eleven men. Point to the man with the white hair and red cape.] The polemarch was not a general, but he represented the Athenian government during military discussions.
- 8 or keep away from

But another Athenian general, a man named Miltiades (mill-TIGH-uh-dees),⁵ answered, “The Persians fight for a king most of them have never seen, and who cares nothing for them. We fight for our freedom, and for the freedom of our children. That must be worth something in battle.”⁶

Now in those days, the Athenians had ten elected generals plus another military leader called a *polemarch*.⁷ Callimachus, the polemarch, gathered along with the ten generals including Miltiades to create a plan of defense. One of the generals said, “The plain of Marathon is a perfect place for the Persians to attack us. There is room for their horsemen to move around us, and there will be nowhere for us to go to **avoid**⁸ their well-organized soldiers fighting on foot.”

Another general suggested, “Let us send our fastest runner to Sparta. The Spartans are the greatest fighters in Greece. If they will help us, we might have a chance.”⁹

- 9 What do you remember about the Spartans?

10 [Show distance on Poster 1.]



But it was one hundred fifty miles from Athens to Sparta, and some of the journey included rugged mountains and streams.¹⁰ The generals knew they would need a runner who was fast and strong.

← **Show image 8A-3: Pheidippides beginning his run**

“Pheidippides (fie-DIH-pih-deez) is our man,” the generals agreed. “No one in Athens can touch him for speed over a long distance.” So they sent swift-footed Pheidippides to call on the Spartans for help.¹¹

11 Why did the Athenian generals send their fastest runner to Sparta? Will the Spartans be willing to help the Athenians fight the Persians?

Then the generals called together all ten thousand Athenian men of fighting age. In every Athenian home there were tearful goodbyes. At last, the Athenians started off toward the plain of Marathon, about twenty-six miles away.



← **Show image 8A-4: Persians**

Meanwhile, the Persians were camped on the beach near the edge of the plain. The Persian commander-in-charge told his men, “We will win such a great victory here for King Darius that the rest of the Greeks will simply surrender to us.”

12 Why was the Persian army so confident they would win the fight?

The Persians were so confident, their commander took no special steps to guard his camp other than sending the cavalry off on their horses to search the area a few times a day.¹²



← **Show image 8A-5: Pheidippides approaching Spartan kings**

As all this was happening, the strong legs and powerful heart of the Athenian messenger, Pheidippides, carried him toward Sparta. Pheidippides ran as he had never run before, stopping only a few times to drink from streams or rivers. He ran for almost three days until he reached Sparta and the two Spartan kings. “You must come with your armies at once, or it will be too late!” he explained.¹³

13 Can you imagine running for almost three days?

14 The Spartans were celebrating a nine-day festival called Karneia to honor Apollo as the protector of their cattle.

To his horror, the Spartan kings answered, “We cannot leave before tomorrow. Sparta is in the middle of a religious holiday honoring the gods, and our law says we must finish before we can leave to fight.”¹⁴

“By then the battle will be over, and we will have lost!”
Pheidippides exclaimed. He set out again to carry the news to the Athenians that they would be on their own.



← **Show image 8A-6: Greek armies gathering; Pheidippides talking with generals**

As it turned out, this was not true. As the Athenians marched toward Marathon, a thousand Greeks from another city, having heard the news, joined them. Together, the eleven thousand Greeks marched over the mountains to the plain of Marathon. As they did so, Pheidippides arrived to say, “The Spartans cannot help us.” The generals were horrified.

“The Persian army is much bigger than ours, with many more soldiers,” one pointed out fearfully.

“We should surrender and beg for **mercy!**” cried a second.¹⁵

“There will be no mercy,” said Miltiades, the general who had spoken boldly¹⁶ back in Athens. “The Persians are here because we helped other Greeks strike back against them. The Persians will not stop until they have destroyed us.”¹⁷

← **Show image 8A-7: Generals voting; turning to look at Callimachus**

The ten generals voted: Should they surrender, or should they attack? Each side won five votes.

Then Miltiades remembered something: Callimachus was allowed to vote, too. Miltiades told him, “The decision rests with you. You will decide whether we surrender and agree to serve the Persians, suffering all that this will bring, or whether we will fight and live as free people.”¹⁸

Callimachus trusted Miltiades. “What do you think?” he asked.

Miltiades answered, “If we do not fight, the people of Athens will be frightened, too, and will surrender the city to the enemy. All of Greece will follow. But if we attack before fear sweeps through our camp, I believe we will win.”

Callimachus said, “Then let us fight!”¹⁹

15 Mercy is an act of compassion or kindness.

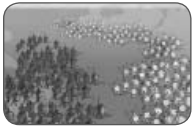
16 or with courage

17 Will the Athenians surrender to the Persians or fight for their freedom?



18 How will Callimachus vote to break the tie?

19 Were your predictions correct?



← **Show image 8A-8: Greeks attacking Persians**

20 or with deliberate planning

21 [Point to the middle of the army in yellow.]

22 Will this strategy help the Athenians win or lose the battle?

Luck was with them. The Persian commander had sent his cavalry off again to make sure no other Greek armies were approaching. While the horsemen were away, the Greeks spread out in a wide line. The Greek generals **purposely**²⁰ put more men at either end of their wide line, leaving the middle²¹ as the weakest part. Then, shouting a loud battle cry, the Greeks charged.²²

The Persians were startled. No one ever ran *toward* them. Nevertheless, they moved forward toward the Greeks. “Look how weak those fools have left their middle,” laughed the Persian leader. But the laugh was on him, for just as the Greeks had planned, the Persians moved to the middle first and pushed back the Greek line. But then the stronger Greek forces on the edges circled around and attacked from the sides, catching the Persians between them.²³

23 Were your predictions correct?



← **Show image 8A-9: Greeks victorious; Persians sailing away**

The Persians, confused and unable to defend themselves, turned and ran for their ships with the Greeks hot on their heels. In fact, the Greeks captured seven Persian ships before the Persians could even reach them. The other Persians sailed away.

“We have beaten the mighty Persians!” the Greeks told one another in amazement.²⁴ Then they remembered their families waiting for news at home.

24 or extreme surprise



← **Show image 8A-10: Pheidippides falling and announcing victory**

Legend says that Pheidippides proudly volunteered, “I shall carry the news.”²⁵ He set out again, leaving the scene of the battle at Marathon, and as he reached the gates of Athens, the people gathered around him. He was just able to gasp out one word: “Victory!” Then his great heart—which had carried him to Sparta and back—finally gave out. Pheidippides fell dead at the gates of Athens.

25 Who was Pheidippides?



← **Show image 8A-11: Photo of a marathon race today**

26 [Point to Athens and then Marathon on Poster 1.]

27 A tribute is a gift or compliment that is given to honor or remember the contribution(s) of a particular person or group. Why did the Greeks want to pay tribute to Pheidippides?

28 Today the word *marathon* can mean a twenty-six-mile race, or any long-distance race or endurance contest.

In **tribute** to Pheidippides, the Greeks measured the distance he had run from Marathon to Athens,²⁶ and those twenty-six miles became the distance of their long-distance races.²⁷

And this is why today we call a long-distance race a **marathon**—in memory of Pheidippides and all those who fought for freedom on the plains of Marathon.²⁸

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about what happened when the Persians invaded ancient Greece correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Inferential* Why did King Darius of Persia purposely send an army of soldiers to the wide, flat plain called Marathon, about twenty-six miles from Athens? (The king was upset that the Athenians had helped other Greek city-states fight against Persia.) How did the Persian army compare to the Greek army? (it was much larger and more powerful)
3. *Evaluative* Why was Callimachus's vote so important to the Athenian generals? (The ten generals were split on whether to fight the Persians; Callimachus's vote was the final decision.) How do you think Callimachus felt about being the "tie-breaker" in this decision? (Answers may vary.)
4. *Inferential* Why did the Athenian generals send Pheidippides to Sparta? (They needed to get word to Sparta as soon as possible to ask for their military help in fighting the Persians, and Pheidippides was their fastest runner.)
5. *Inferential* How did the Greeks win, despite their smaller size? (The Greeks purposely tricked the Persians into attacking their middle, and then surrounded them from the sides and drove them away.)

6. *Inferential* Why was a tribute given to Pheidippides? (He died after running twenty-six miles from Marathon to the gates of Athens to announce the Greeks' victory at Marathon.)

[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.

7. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* What contribution came from the ancient Greek Battle of Marathon against the Persians? (In memory of Pheidippides's famous run, the word *marathon* is now used for a twenty-six-mile race or any long-distance run or endurance contest.) [Place Image Card 20 (Modern Marathon) on the Civilization Chart in the "Contribution" square. You may wish to have students fill in their own chart on Instructional Master 1B-1.]
8. 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: Tribute

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “In *tribute* to Pheidippides, the Greeks measured the distance he had run from Marathon to Athens, and those twenty-six miles became the distance of their long-distance races.”
2. Say the word *tribute* with me.
3. A tribute is a gift or compliment given to honor the contribution(s) of a particular person or group.
4. Marathon races were named as a tribute to Pheidippides’s twenty-six-mile race and his role in the Battle at Marathon.
5. Can you think of a person you would like to give a tribute to? Try to use the word *tribute* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I would like to give a tribute to _____ because . . . ”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about? What part of speech is the word *tribute*?

Use a *Brainstorming* activity for follow-up. [Write the word *tribute* in an oval on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard.] Directions: What words come to mind when you hear the word *tribute*. [Write the students’ words on spokes coming out from the oval. If necessary, guide students with words like *respect*, *honor*, *compliment*, and *gift*.] Why do you think receiving a tribute from someone would be a memorable experience? Remember to answer in complete sentences and be sure to begin your response with “I think a tribute to someone would be a memorable experience because . . . ”



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



Marathon

8_B

Extensions

20 minutes

Somebody Wanted But So Then (Instructional Master 8B-1)

Copy the following blank summary chart onto chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard:

Somebody	
Wanted	
But	
So	
Then	

Explain to students that they are going to retell parts of today's read-aloud, specifically how the Athenian generals wanted help in their battle against the invading Persian army. Tell students that they are going to retell the generals' story using Instructional Master 8B-1, a Somebody Wanted But So Then worksheet.

Students who participated in the Core Knowledge Language Arts program in Kindergarten and Grade 1 should be familiar with this chart and will have seen their kindergarten and first-grade teachers model the exercise. Have these students work in pairs to orally fill in the chart together while one person acts as the scribe. If you have students who are new to the Core Knowledge Language Arts program, you may wish to work with them individually or in a small group, guiding them through the exercise.

If time allows, have students share their charts with the class. As they recount the event, you may wish to refer back to the images used in the read-aloud. As students retell the read-aloud, be sure to use complete sentences and domain-related vocabulary to expand upon their responses.

For your reference, completed charts should follow along these lines:

Somebody	The Athenian generals
Wanted	Wanted help from the Spartans in their battle against the attacking Persian army.
But	But the Spartans could not help. But other soldiers came to help from another city.
So	So the Greeks used all their battle strategies on the plain of Marathon.
Then	Then they were able to defeat the larger and stronger Persian army.

Drawing the Read-Aloud

Ask students to think about the read-aloud they listened to earlier in the day. Have students pretend that they are Pheidippides and imagine what different scenes they may see along their marathon run. Remind students that a twenty-six-mile run is a very long distance. You may wish to use local landmarks as an example to give students an idea of a twenty-six-mile distance.

Give each student a piece of paper and ask each to draw a picture of the scene they have imagined or a running scene that they remember from the read-aloud. You may want to show students images from Lessons 1–8 to remind them of the types of scenery they would experience in ancient Greece. Direct each student to write a sentence to label his or her drawing.

When students have completed their drawings and sentences, have each student come up to the front of the room and read his or her sentence aloud. Give students the opportunity to talk about their drawings with the class. As students read their sentences aloud, be sure to expand upon their ideas, encouraging the use of increasingly complex sentences and domain-related vocabulary, including descriptive language that includes adverbs and adjectives.

You may wish to post the completed drawings along a wall for students to visualize how far Pheidippides ran to complete this historic run.

Take-Home Material

Family Letter

Send home Instructional Master 8B-2.