



# Year 5 and 6 Knowledge Organiser - Ancient Greeks

## Key vocab

democracy:	a system of government in which people choose who is in charge by voting in elections
citizens:	people who belong to a place
philosophy:	study of how people think and live
historical sources:	things that give information about the past
civilisations:	organised groups of humans with their own culture
democratic:	based on the idea that everyone has equal rights and is involved in making decisions
characteristic features:	particular qualities or aspects that make something recognisable
generation:	people in a group of similar age
demigods:	less important gods, usually half god, half human
techniques:	particularly skilful methods for doing something
amphoras:	two-handed narrow necked jars for oil or wine
lekythos:	flasks with a narrow neck

The Ancient Greeks were one of the most influential civilisations in history. Their legacy can be seen everywhere today, particularly in Western Europe. The English language has many words that come from Ancient Greek, and our political system was first seen in the Ancient Greek city of Athens. Ancient Greece was made up of separate city-states and conflict between them was frequent. The Peloponnesian War, for example, was between Athens and Sparta. At times these individual city-states came together to fight a common enemy, as they did when fighting the Persian army from the north. Although the Romans eventually conquered the Greeks, Greek culture and language spread far and wide. The army commander Alexander the Great and famous Roman thinkers were all influenced by this great civilisation.



## Sticky knowledge

Ancient Greece was not one single nation, but a group of hundreds of city-states. Some cities were small, some much larger, like Athens and Sparta.	In the sixth century BCE, an Athenian called Cleisthenes helped to introduce a new political structure of demokratia or 'rule by the people'.
The Athenians invented democracy, a system that allows citizens to vote on important matters.	We also have the Ancient Greeks, and people like Pythagoras, Archimedes and Hippocrates, to thank for some of the most significant discoveries in mathematics, science and medicine.
The Greek city-states shared many traditions, stories and festivals. Famous myths and legends (like Theseus and the Minotaur) told stories about gods, heroes and how the universe was created.	The Greeks told some of the greatest, most influential and powerful stories, such as The Iliad and The Odyssey, written by Homer
Scenes from these stories were often painted on beautiful pottery.	Each story told of the fantastic trials and challenges these gods or demigods had to face to show they were worthy of the title 'hero'.
The Ancient Greeks' love of athletics inspires the modern Olympic Games.	The Ancient Greeks believed in three generations of gods
Large amounts of pottery, which have survived thousands of years, are significant historical sources from Ancient Greek times.	The Ancient Greeks told many stories about their gods, demigods and heroes and used theatre to share their messages with as many people as possible.
From art to architecture, systems of government and social organisation, to science and sports, the Ancient Greek way of life can be seen everywhere today.	Greek myths and legends told people how to behave in everyday life, inspiring them to act in a particular way.
The Greeks admired physical perfection in their art but also in daily life; physical education and competitive sports were a significant part of their culture.	Greek myths and legends, portraying the adventures of gods and heroes, can be found on many of the artefacts from this time.
The influence of Ancient Greek architecture and design can be seen everywhere in modern life, particularly in the Western world.	Not only do these pieces of pottery tell us about famous gods and heroes, they also provide useful evidence of daily Greek life.

## Exciting books!

