



The Impact of Ancient Greece

By: Lori McDonald
Elementary school teacher; Ed.D. in School Leadership/Administration

Social Studies
Grades 6–8



Introduction

This is one lesson from a sixth grade unit that is designed to help students understand the impact of Ancient Greece on modern-day culture. Included in this lesson are engaging activities that emphasize aspects of Greek culture such as drama, sport, and intellectual pursuits. This lesson includes many options for extension and ideas for further study.

Learning Objectives

[\(1. Culture; 3. People, Places, and Environments; 6. Power, Authority, and Governance\)](#)

- Identify and explain the importance of the following key characteristics of civilizations:
 - Culture
 - Government
 - Religion
 - Social structure
 - Stable food supply
 - Technology
 - Writing
- Explain the characteristics of the major Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta, including:
 - Advantages of each geographic location
 - Status of women
 - Approaches to education
 - Styles of government

Materials Needed

- [Warm-up video](#) on Ancient Greek history
- Copies of the graphic organizer (below) for each student

Procedure

Warm up – Students will watch the video on Ancient Greek history. This is an excellent, short video for introducing students to Ancient Greece. It gives a very concise overview of the highlights and influencers of Ancient Greek culture.

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1. Present students with the essential questions for today: **Why and how did Ancient Greek culture leave a legacy in our modern world? What are some examples of things we enjoy or take part in today that originated in Ancient Greece?**
2. Before pursuing ideas regarding those questions, discuss the meaning of the word **legacy** – something (as memories or knowledge) that comes from the past or a person/people of the past
3. To help students make the connection, discuss what kind of legacy they would hope to leave or that they would hope their generation would leave.
4. Discuss some of the ideas presented in the video and how our modern world reflects the legacy of Ancient Greece.
5. Then, allow students to work with a partner. Ideally, students would have either a computer or tablet on which they can review the video again. If that is not possible, have copies of bullet points from the video to give to students to review with their partner. Have them complete the graphic organizer with their partner.
6. After students have been given time to work with their partner, allow them to share some of the ideas they've considered to be a legacy of Ancient Greece with the rest of the class.
7. Have students go back with their partners to research why the Ancient Greek culture was so successful for so long. Tell them to pay special attention to information regarding the geographical advantages of Ancient Greece.
8. When students have completed this activity, have them share ideas from their research with the class.
9. Students will then work independently to create an outline map of Ancient Greece, labeling at least 10 important locations.

Evaluation

Students will complete the following writing prompt as a formative assessment.

Write a paragraph describing why the Ancient Greek culture had such success and how we see evidence of that today. Give at least four specific examples of the success of the culture and/or evidence of that success that can be seen today.



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The Legacy of Ancient Greece (Graphic Organizer)

Idea/Activity from Ancient Greece	Modern-day Version of that Idea/Activity