

POPULATION

The first evidence of people living in Ancient Greece comes from around 8000BC. The period that most people class as Ancient Greece began much later, in roughly 800 BC. The civilisation came to an end in around 140BC when the Romans invaded.

Working out the exact population is nearly impossible, but at its peak it seems to have been between 10million and 13million citizens.



MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Myths and legends were an integral part of Ancient Greece and were used to pass on stories from one generation to another. They often involved gods and goddesses or other famous heroes.

Many of the myths were filled with adventures to different cities around Greece. There would sometimes be a moral, as with Icarus and his wax wings, but sometimes they were stories about defeating evil, just like Theseus and the Minotaur.

TIMELINE

There were three main periods during what most of us think of as Ancient Greece. Each period had its own key events and styles.

ARCHAIC PERIOD

This is when Ancient Greece started to form its government and cities such as Athens and Sparta emerged.

800 BC

480 BC

CLASSICAL PERIOD

Democracy first became a reality in the Classical Period. Athens and Sparta went to war and Alexander the Great conquered most of Europe.

323 BC

146 BC

HELLENISTIC PERIOD

Once Alexander the Great had died, the power of Greece waned throughout the Hellenistic Period. Eventually, they fell to the Romans.

OLYMPIC GAMES

In 776BC, the Ancient Greeks introduced the Olympic Games as a way for different cities to compete against each other.

These first games were held in the city of Olympia, named after Mount Olympus. The mountain had been named after Olympia, the place where Ancient Greek gods and goddesses were said to live. The twelve main gods and goddesses were called the Olympians.

Events in these ancient games were very different to modern Olympics. For a start, most events were competed naked. Most early events were simple running races, though there was also chariot racing and wrestling.

Just like today, the early Olympics were held every four years.



RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. During which period in Greek history did Sparta and Athens go to war?
2. Who conquered most of Europe?
3. Where were the early Olympic games held?
4. According to evidence, when were the first people living in Ancient Greece?
5. Find an example of a Greek myth with a moral.

VIPERS QUESTIONS

S

What were the three periods of Ancient Greece?

V

Find a word that means “important or vital”.

I

Why do you think the main gods and goddesses were called Olympians?

V

What does the word “integral” tell you about myths and legends in Ancient Greece?

E

How does the visual timetable help the reader to understand the length of each period?

Answers:

1. The Classical Period
2. Alexander the Great
3. Olympia
4. 8,000BC
5. Icarus (and his wax wings)

S: Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic

V: Key

I: Because they lived on top of Mount Olympus

V: They were very important to their lives

E: Each section is a different length/it is easy to see that the Archaic Period was the longest and the other two roughly the same length