

## Summary: Ancient Greece

### The Geography of Greece

Greece is a peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea. The land has steep mountains and fertile valleys.

Greek civilization began more than 3,000 years ago. People settled in the valleys near the sea. Farmers grew olives, grapes, barley, and raised pigs, sheep and goats. They traded for goods they did not make.

Some villages grew into city-states. The mountains kept people separate. Each city-state had its own laws and customs.

### Life in Athens

Athens was an important city-state. Rich men ruled most city-states. Starting in 508 B.C.E., Athens tried a different kind of government. Athens had a democracy, or rule by the people. All men citizens over the age of 20 could vote. Every voter had a say in the laws. Women, people born in another place, and enslaved people had no say in the laws.

Most men were farmers. Rich women worked at home making cloth and taking care of their houses. Poor women worked for other people.

### Ancient Greek Culture

Ancient Greeks had ideas about government, art, science, and math. They used an alphabet to write down their ideas. They made statues of marble and bronze. They performed plays. The period from 479 to 431 B.C.E. is called the Golden Age of Greece because of all its achievements.



#### Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

**city-state** *noun*, a city or town and the land that surrounds it

**alphabet** *noun*, a set of symbols that stand for spoken sounds



#### After You Read

**REVIEW** What effect did mountains have on ancient Greeks? Circle the sentence that tells how mountains affected city-states.

**REVIEW** In what ways was Athens unlike other city-states? Circle the sentence that tells about a different kind of government in Athens.

**REVIEW** What were some advances of ancient Greek culture? Highlight two sentences that tell about the Greeks' ideas and how they wrote them down.