

5.3

Greek Thinkers, Artists, & Writers



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Analyze the political and ethical ideas developed by ancient Greek philosophers.
- Understand how balance and order governed ancient Greek art and architecture.
- Identify the themes explored by ancient Greek writers and historians.

Philosophers & Pursuit of Wisdom

Philosophers- Greek thinkers, word meant “lovers of wisdom”

They sought **logic**- rational thinking to problems & observations

Greek philosophers were interested in ethics & morality & debated human behavior

They developed skills in **rhetoric-the art of skillful speaking**. They used this to advance careers

Socrates!

Socrates was an Athenian stonemason & philosopher

He was a student of Plato & passed his days in the town square asking people about their beliefs

The Socratic Method- Passing a question to a citizen & challenging people to examine the implications of answers

He eventually was put on trial for “corrupting the youth” & drank poison to be put to death

Plato

Opened up a school called the Academy & emphasized the importance of reason.

Wrote the book *The Republic* & argued that the state should regulate every aspect of citizens' lives in order to provide for their best interests

Developed society into 3 classes: Workers, Soldiers, & philosophers

Thought men surpassed women but “talented women” should be educated to serve the state

Aristotle

Philosopher who developed his own ideas about government.

He favored rule by a single strong & virtuous leader

Believed that “Good conduct” meant pursuing the “golden mean” a moderate course between the extremes

Set up a school called The Lyceum & left ideas on politics, ethics, logic, biology, & literature

Architecture & Art

Greek architects loved balance & created structures like the **Parthenon**- A temple dedicated to the goddess Athena

Greek Architecture is seen today in buildings such as governmental establishments

Sculptors were interested in new techniques that emphasized more natural forms

Greek pottery showed paintings that emphasized everyday life

Greek Literature

Drama was the most important contribution to Greek literature & plays evolved out of religious festivals to Dionysus

Plays were performed in outside theaters & actors wore elaborate costumes & masks

Greek drama introduced the **Chorus- actors who sang or talked in the background**

Greek dramas were often based on popular myths & legends

Comedy & Tragedy

Two types of drama & literature were created at this time

Tragedies- plays that told stories of human suffering that usually ended in disaster.

Comedies- humorous plays that mocked people or customs

Study of History

Herodotus- “Father of History” who went beyond retelling of ancient legends

Used the term *historie* (inquiry) to define his work to describe recording & studying past events

Thucydides- Wrote on the Peloponnesian War who introduced the concept of studying both sides of an issue