

DBQ: Ancient Greek Contributions

Part A

Directions:

The task below is based on documents 1 through 9. The task is designed to test your ability to work with historical documents. Look at each document and answer the questions that follow. Use your answers to the questions and background knowledge to help you write the essay.

Historical Background:

The ancient Greeks laid the foundation for the modern world. Many of their contributions in government, arts, architecture, and medicine continue to influence our lives today.

Task:

For part A, read and study each document carefully and answer the document questions. Then read the directions for part B and write your essay.



Document One

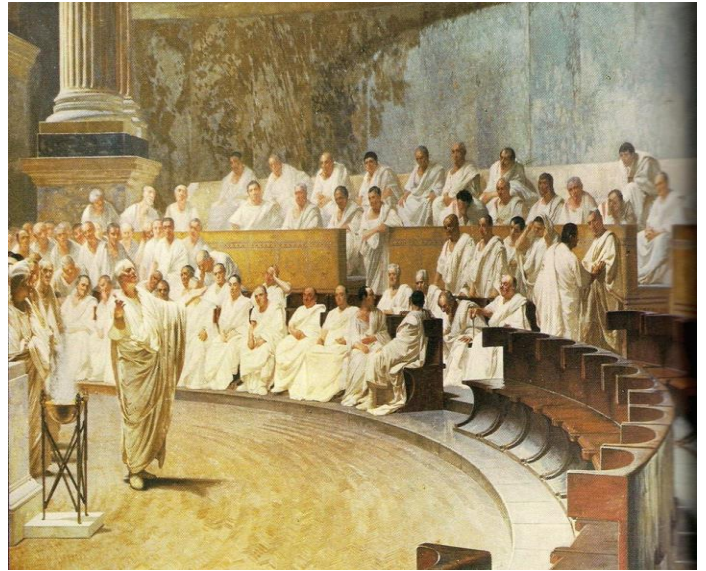
Athens had courts of law with trial by jury. Juries were much larger than today, with several hundred members. They used from 500 to 1501 people, in part as protection against bribes: who could afford to bribe 500 people? After listening to the evidence, jurors voted by placing metal discs into one of two jars - one for guilty, one for not guilty. Punishments were decided by the court, and included the death penalty.

All jurors were required to swear this oath by the gods of Zeus, Apollo, and Demeter:

"I will cast my vote (according to) the laws and decrees passed by the Assembly and by the Council, but, if there is no law, then (according to) my sense of what is most **just**, without favor or **enmity**. I will vote only on the matters raised in the charge, and I will listen **impartially** to the accusers and defenders alike."

just - fair
enmity - hatred
impartially - fairly

Source: BBC - Schools - Ancient Greece Athens
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ancientgreece/athens/guilty.shtml>
Criminal Procedure in Ancient Greece and the Trial of Socrates
<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/trials/socrates/greekcrimpro.html>



1. Why did Athens have so many people on their juries?
2. List **two** promises that jurors made by taking the oath.
3. List **one similarity** and **one difference** between jury trials in Athens and jury trials today.
Similarity:
Difference:

Document Two

Ancient Greek civilization was at its peak during the 400's BC. During this period of time, sick people went to the temples dedicated to Asclepius, the Greek god of healing. They were seeking magical cures. At this time, a man name Hippocrates began teaching that every disease had only natural causes. He is known as the great Greek physician. Hippocrates was the first physician known who actually considered medicine to be a science, and to be separate from religion. He wrote the Hippocratic oath, an oath that every new doctor-to-be still says to this day. It reflected Hippocrates's high ideals. Hippocrates created the field of medicine as we know it today. The effect of this ancient Greek physician is truly unbelievable. Thousands of people every year are reminded of that when they take his oath. Modern medicine is based on the assumption made by Hippocrates that a well-trained physician can cure illness with knowledge gained from medical writings or experience. Hippocrates is the most famous person in ancient medicine, and is often called the "Father of Medicine".



Source: <http://members.tripod.com>

1. How did Hippocrates's beliefs change the way Greek people viewed illness?
2. Explain why Hippocrates's ideas are important in today's medical world.

Document Three

Following is an excerpt from the Hippocratic oath. Hippocrates, creator of this oath, lived from about 460 to 377 B.C.

' I will follow that treatment which, according to my ability and judgement, I will consider for the benefit of my patients, and abstain from whatever is harmful. I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such advice...'

1. What was Hippocrates promising to do?

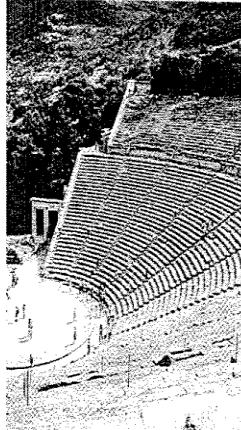
Document Four

Tragic and comic plays began in Athens around 500 B.C.E. Greek theaters were built on hillsides in the open air and could often hold more than 18,000 people. The theaters were built in a semi-circular shape, and in the center of the theater was a circular dancing floor for the chorus. The stage was a raised area within this circle.

At each performance there would be three serious plays, with a short break, then an amusing play. Tragedies were often about the past, while comedies were usually about everyday life. All the actors in the plays were men. They wore large masks, and the expression on the mask showed what type of character the actor was playing. When they needed to play the part of women, the actors wore wigs. Actors in comedies wore bright colors, and actors in tragedies usually wore black.

If the audience enjoyed the play, they would whistle and stamp their feet. If they didn't enjoy the play, then they would boo and perhaps throw rocks.

Source: Anglia Campus
<http://www.angliacampus.com/public/pri/history/greeks/page26htm>
Ancient Greece for Kids
<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/Homework/Greece.html#theatre>
ELAC Guide to Greek Theatre
<http://www.perspicacity.com/elactheatre/library/greektheatre/>
<http://www.globalquestphoto.com/>



1. Describe one part of the Greek theater shown in document 3 and explain what it was used for.
2. Give **two** ways in which the performance of a comedy was different from a performance of a tragedy.
3. List **one similarity** and **one difference** between theater performances in Athens and those of today.

Similarity:

Difference:

Document Five

The following is an excerpt from the play *Antigone* by Sophocles, written about 441 B.C. In this play, Antigone defies the king's order and buries her brother, who was killed while leading a rebellion.

Creon: And still you dared to overstep these laws?

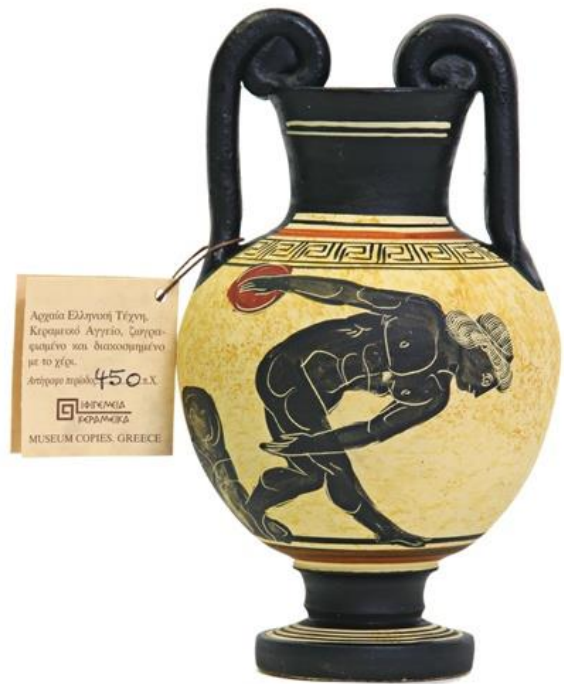
Antigone: For me, it was not Zeus who made that order. Nor do I think your orders were so strong that you, a mortal man, could overrun the gods' unwritten and unfailing laws... I know I must die... but if I left my brother dead and unburied, I'd have cause to grieve as I grieve not.'

1. What values are expressed in this Greek play?

Document Six

The Olympic Games

The Greeks believed that having a physically fit body was a way of honoring the gods. The Olympic games were held in Olympia once every four years in honor of Zeus. They lasted five days, and people came from all over Greece. Wars were even postponed for three months so that people could travel safely to see the games. The events included boxing, long jumping, running, chariot races, wrestling, the pentathlon and the discus. Winning athletes were treated like heroes.



Source: *Ancient Greece*, World Almanac Education

1. What is pictured on the vase in document 4?
2. Give **two examples** of how the Greeks showed the importance of the Olympic games in Greek society.
3. Name **one similarity** and **one difference** between the ancient Olympic games and modern Olympic games.
Similarity:
Difference:

Document Seven



The Parthenon



The Jefferson Memorial

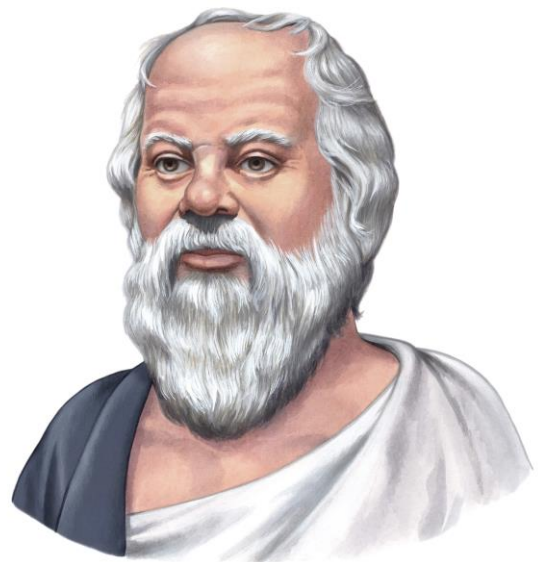
1. Give an example of how Greek architecture influenced buildings constructed in modern time.

Document Eight

The following quote is from Socrates, a philosopher who lived from about 470 to about 399 B.C.:

‘An unexamined life is not worth living.’

1. What was Socrates suggesting in this quote?



Document Nine

The following quote is from Aristotle, another philosopher who lived in Greece from 384 to 322 B.C.:

‘Since human reason is the most godlike part of human nature, a life guided by human reason is superior to any other ... For man, this is the life of reason, since the faculty of reason is the distinguishing characteristic of human beings.’

1. What did Aristotle believe about human nature?



Part B – Essay

The ancient Greeks laid the foundation for the modern world. Many of their contributions or inventions in government, arts, architecture, and medicine continue to influence our lives today.

‘What were some of the contributions to Western Civilizations from the ancient Greeks?’

Write a well-organized essay using the documents, the answers to the questions in Part A, and your social studies knowledge. Describe **three** ancient Greek contributions that continue to influence our lives today. Explain how they affect our lives, including *details*, *examples*, and *reasons* in developing your ideas.