

THE SAME YET DIFFERENT

Comparing Ancient Athens and Sparta

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The Same, Yet Different

Comparing Ancient Athens and Sparta

Skill Level

Intermediate, 6th Grade

Learner Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

Explain the differences and similarities

between two Greek City-States

List the important contributions of each City-State

Educational Standard(s) Supported

Social Studies 6.43

Success Indicator

Learners will be successful if they:

Identify similarities and differences of Athens and Sparta

Compare and contrast information about the two city-states

Time Needed

45 Minutes

Materials List

Student Handout- The Same, yet different

Student Handout- Venn Diagram

Introduction to Content

The two rivals of ancient Greece that made the most noise and gave us the most traditions were Athens and Sparta. They were close together on a map, yet far apart in what they valued and how they lived their lives. In this lesson, students will explore the differences between these two city-states.

Introduction to Methodology

Students work in small groups to read a passage about the similarities and differences between Athens and Sparta. Students then complete a Venn Diagram outlining their findings to share with the class. The lesson concludes by having students decide on a city-state in which they would like to have lived.

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Terms and Concepts Introduction

City-State- A city with its surrounding territory that forms an independent state.

Setting the Stage and Opening Questions

Begin by showing the first minute and a half of this clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIx2g6kmJcY>

Say **“Today, we will step back in time and look at the lives of people in ancient Greece. We will focus on the lives of people in Athens and Sparta. To start, I want to know what you already know about these two places. In just a minute, I’m going to have two volunteers come to the board. One person will be a recorder for Athens, and the other for Sparta. You all will then share what you know about each City-State and our recorders will capture the information on the board.”**

Select two student volunteers to record and then allow students to share what they know about each of the locations.

After students have had a chance to share, say, **“By the end of class today, you should be able to explain the differences and similarities between these two city-states and list the contributions from each location.”**

Experience

Separate students into small groups of no more than 4. Pass out the Student Handout- The Same, Yet Different to each group and say, **“You will work in your groups to read through the information on your handout. Make sure to note any differences and similarities you find as you read through the passage.”**

Allow students time to read and discuss. Pass out the Venn Diagram Student handout and say, **“Now, you will work in your groups to fill out the Venn Diagram. Remember, in a Venn Diagram, each side corresponds to information specific to only one of the topics, and items they have in common go in the middle section.”**

Allow students to complete their Venn Diagrams.

Tips for Engagement

As students are working in groups, rotate to each group to ensure that all students are engaged. If you find that students are not engaging in the group activity, ask them questions to reengage them in the activity.

Share

Ask students to share what they included in their Venn Diagram.

For this step, it may be beneficial to draw a large Venn Diagram on the white board and fill it in as the students share.

Process

Say, **“You all raised some very interesting points about the differences between life in Athens and Sparta. In your groups, discuss those differences and decide on what you believe is the biggest difference between life in the two City-States.”**

Possible answers include Sparta was a militaristic state, they were in different locations, and had different priorities.

Generalize

After the groups have reached a consensus, have each group share what they decided was the biggest difference between the two and justify their response.

Apply

Say, **“Now, I want you to close your eyes and imagine with me. You have the opportunity to really go back in time and live in one of these two City-States. Using your new knowledge about the differences and similarities between the two, which would you choose? Take out a piece of paper and write down your choice and why you chose that City-State. Include at least three supporting sentences that justify your choice.”**

Allow students to write their response and then select students to share with the class.

Reference:

<http://www.socialstudiesforkids.com/articles/worldhistory/athenssparta.htm>

Life Skill(s) from TIPPs for 4-H

6th Grade

Understand the meaning of the information. (Head thinking)

Identify/clearly define a problem or situation. (Head thinking)

Identify the parts, steps, and necessary sequence or order to achieve a goal. (Head managing)

Use appropriate social skills to interact in group settings. (Heart relating)

Understand why knowledge of different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups are important. (Head relating)

Understand entitlements and privileges of citizenship including voting, protection, participation in government, etc. (Hands giving)

Make the needed effort to carry out a task or a plan. (Hands working)

Coordinate the interaction to complete the task (work together). (Hands working)

Supplemental Information

Educational Standards Met

Social Studies 6.43- Explain the characteristics of the major Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta, including:

- Advantages of each geographic location
- Approaches to education
- Practice of slavery
- Status of women
- Styles of government

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Athens and Sparta: The Same, Yet Different

The two rivals of ancient Greece that made the most noise and gave us the most traditions were Athens and Sparta. They were close together on a map, yet far apart in what they valued and how they lived their lives.

One of the main ways they were similar was in their form of government. Both Athens and Sparta had an assembly, whose members were elected by the people. Sparta was ruled by two kings, who ruled until they died or were forced out of office. Athens was ruled by archons, who were elected annually. Thus, because both parts of Athens' government had leaders who were elected, Athens is said to have been the birthplace of democracy.

Spartan life was simple. The focus was on obedience and war. Slavery made this possible by freeing the young men from household and industrial duties and allowing them to focus on their military duties. Young boys were trained to be warriors; young girls were trained to be mothers of warriors.

Athenian life was a creative wonderland. As an Athenian, you could get a good education and could pursue several kinds of arts or sciences. You could serve in the army or navy, but you didn't have to. However, this applied only to boys, as girls were restricted to other pursuits, not war, business, or education.

For many years, Spartan armies provided much of the defense of the Greek lands. The Spartan heroism at the Battle of Thermopylae, during the Persian Wars, inspired all of Greece to fight back with all their might against the invading Persians. Athenians and Spartans fought side by side in the Battle of Plataea, which ended Persian invasions of Greece.

One way that Athens and Sparta really differed was in their idea of getting along with the rest of the Greeks. Sparta seemed content to keep to itself and provide military strength and assistance when necessary. Athens, on the other hand, wanted to control more and more of the land around them. This eventually led to war between all the Greeks. This was the Peloponnesian War. After many years of hard fighting, Sparta won the war. In true Greek spirit, Sparta refused to burn the city of Athens. Rather, the culture and spirit of Athens was allowed to live on, as long as the Athenians no longer desired to rule their fellow Greeks. In this way, the influence of Athens remained and grew stronger. Other city-states had the same kinds of temples, buildings, and meeting-places, but it was Athens that became most famous.



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