

MAIN IDEAS


- 1 **Government** Instead of being a unified country, Greece was organized into separate city-states.
- 2 **Government** Different political systems evolved in the various city-states. Some governments changed because of conflicts between rich and poor.
- 3 **Government** The city-state of Athens developed democracy, which is rule by the people.

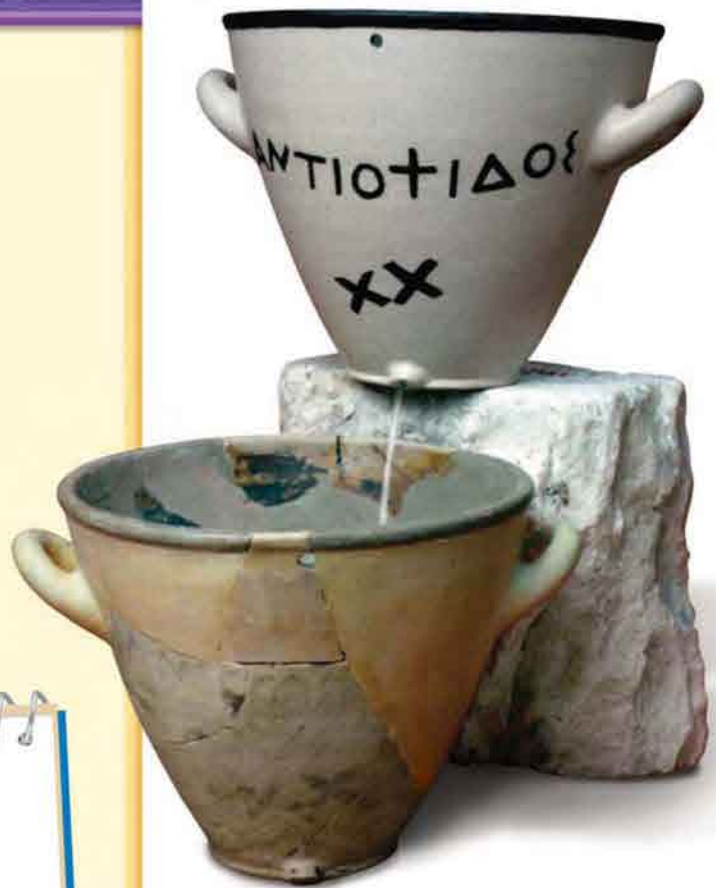
TAKING NOTES

Reading Skill: Categorizing

To categorize means to sort information. As you read Lesson 3, use your own words to take notes about types of government on a chart like this one.

Types of Government		
Monarchy	Oligarchy	Democracy

 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R6



▲ **Water Clock** A water clock was a device that used the flow of water to measure time. The Greeks used this clock to make sure that people in court kept their speeches short. (This clock runs out in about six minutes.)

Words to Know

Understanding the following words will help you read this lesson:

layout the plan or arrangement of something (page 372)

The city's layout included space for a large public marketplace.

supreme greatest in power or authority (page 373)

The upper class began to question the supreme authority of the king.

entitle to have rights and privileges (page 374)

Greek women and slaves were not entitled to many of the benefits enjoyed by free male citizens.

gradual happening little by little (page 374)

Political change sometimes occurs suddenly, but often it is gradual.

polis
aristocracy
oligarchy
tyrant
citizen
democracy

The City-State and Democracy

Build on What You Know As you read in Lesson 1, the Mycenaean civilization fell about 1200 B.C. After a decline, Greek culture gradually started to advance again. This led to the rise of Greek civilization. Like ancient Sumer, Greece was a region of people who shared a common language and common beliefs. In spite of that cultural unity, Greece was divided politically.

The Rise of City-States

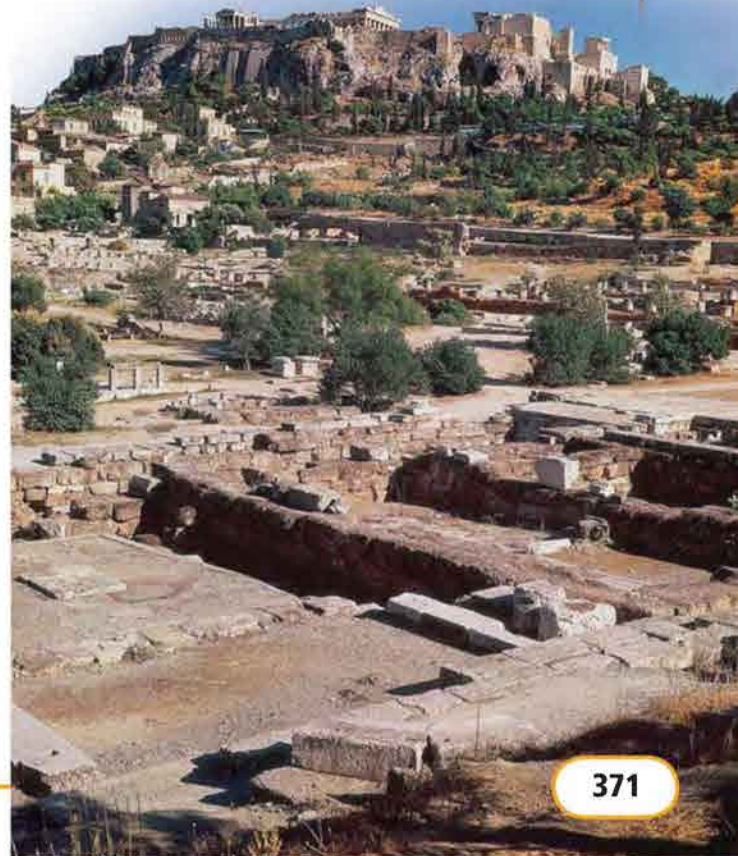
1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION How was Greece organized politically?

In Lesson 1, you learned how geography divided Greece into small regions. Because of this, the basic form of government was the city-state. A city-state is a state made of a city and its surrounding lands. The colonies founded by Greeks around the Mediterranean were also city-states.

Greek City-States City-states became common in Greece about 700 B.C. In Greek, the word for city-state was **polis**. Most city-states were small. Geographic features, such as mountains, limited their size. Athens and Sparta were the largest Greek city-states. Their lands included the plains that surrounded the center city.

Most Greek cities had fewer than 20,000 residents. Because a city-state was fairly small, the people who lived there formed a close community.

Agora Most Greek cities, such as Athens shown here, had an agora—an open marketplace that also had temples and other public buildings. Men often met there to talk politics. ►





Layout of the City The center of city life was the agora. The agora was an open space where people came for business and public gatherings. Male citizens met there to discuss politics. Festivals and athletic contests were held there. Statues, temples, and other public buildings were found in and around the agora. (See Daily Life on pages 384–385.)

Many cities had a fortified hilltop called an acropolis. The word means “highest city.” At first, people used the acropolis mainly for military purposes; high places are easier to defend. Later the Greeks built temples and palaces on the flat tops of these hills. Ordinary houses were built along the hill’s base.

REVIEW What was the role of the agora in a Greek city?

▲ Athens from the Air
A modern artist painted this watercolor showing Athens and its surrounding lands. Notice how the Acropolis is much higher than everything else.

Forms of Government

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What different political systems evolved in the city-states of Greece?

Each city-state of Greece was independent. The people of each one figured out what kind of government worked best for them. As a result, different city-states used different political systems. Some city-states kept the same system of government for centuries. Others slowly changed from one system to another.

Monarchs and Aristocrats The earliest form of government in Greece was monarchy (MAHN•uhr•kee). A monarch is a king or queen who has supreme power. Therefore, a monarchy is a government that a king or queen rules. Most Greek city-states started out as monarchies but changed over time.

Aristocracy (AR•ih•STAHK•ruh•see) is another name for the upper class or nobility. In Greece, the aristocracy were people who were descended from high-born ancestors. Some aristocrats believed that their ancestors were mythical heroes.

The Greek city-state of Corinth began as a monarchy. Later, an aristocracy ruled it. In fact, by the 700s B.C., most of the Greek city-states had moved from monarchy to rule by an aristocracy.

Oligarchy Some city-states developed a political system called **oligarchy** (AHL•ih•GAHR•kee). Oligarchy means “rule by the few.” It is similar to aristocracy because in both cases, a minority group controls the government.

The main difference between the two is the basis for the ruling class’s power. When aristocrats rule, they do so because of their inherited social class. In an oligarchy, people rule because of wealth or land ownership. In some Greek city-states, an oligarchy replaced aristocratic rule. In others, the aristocracy and the oligarchy shared power.

Tyrants Poor people were not part of government in either monarchy, aristocracy, or oligarchy. Often, the poor came to resent being shut out of power. At times, they rebelled.

Sometimes a wealthy person who wanted to seize power made use of that anger. He would ask poor people to support him in becoming a leader. Such leaders were called tyrants. In Greece, a **tyrant** was someone who took power in an illegal way. Today the term *tyrant* means a cruel leader. To the Greeks, a tyrant was simply someone who acted like a king without being of royal birth. Some Greek tyrants worked to help the poor. Some created building programs to provide jobs. Others enacted laws canceling the debts that poor people owed to the wealthy.

Tyrants played an important role in the development of rule by the people. They helped overthrow the oligarchy. They also showed that if common people united behind a leader, they could gain the power to make changes.

Vocabulary Strategy

The term *aristocracy* is from the Greek **root words** *aristos*, which means “best,” and *kratos*, which means “power.” The term *oligarchy* is from the **root words** *oligos*, which means “few,” and *arkhe*, which means “rule.”

REVIEW How were oligarchy and aristocracy similar?

Athens Builds a Limited Democracy

3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did limited democracy develop in Athens?

By helping tyrants rise to power, people in the lower classes realized they could influence government. As a result, they began to demand even more political power.

Citizenship One of the major legacies of ancient Greece is the idea of citizenship, which the Greeks invented. In today's world, a **citizen** is a person who is loyal to a government and who is entitled to protection by that government. To the Greeks, a citizen was a person with the right to take part in ruling the city-state. A citizen had to be born to parents who were free citizens. In much of ancient Greece, people of both upper and lower classes were citizens, but only upper-class citizens had power.

By demanding political power, the lower-class citizens were asking for a major change to their society. Such a change does not happen quickly. During the 500s B.C., two leaders in Athens made gradual reforms that gave people more power. Those leaders were Solon and Cleisthenes (KLIHS•thuh•NEEZ).

Solon and Cleisthenes In the 500s B.C., trouble stirred in Athens. Many poor farmers owed so much money that they were forced to work their land for someone else or to become slaves. The lower classes were growing angry with the rulers.

History Makers

Solon (c. 630 to 560 B.C.)

Solon was called one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece. Although he was the son of a noble family, he reduced the nobles' power. He is known for his political reforms and his poetry. Poetry was the way he communicated with the citizens.

About 600 B.C., Solon recited a poem to encourage the Athenians in a war. He persuaded them to resume the war and save the honor of Athens.

Solon's reforms did not make all Athenians happy. The nobles wished he had made fewer changes. Poor farmers wished that he had given them more land. Tired of having to justify his reforms, Solon left on a trip for ten years. He traveled to Egypt and Cyprus, among other places. He wrote poems about his journey.



About 594 B.C., the nobles elected Solon to lead Athens. He made reforms that helped prevent a revolt by the poor. First he freed people who had become slaves because of debts. He made a law that no citizen could be enslaved.

Solon also organized citizens into four classes based on wealth, not birth. Rich men had more power—yet this was still a fairer system than the old one that limited power to nobles. Solon allowed all citizens to serve in the assembly and help elect leaders. He also reformed the laws to make them less harsh.

Around 500 B.C., Cleisthenes increased the citizens' power even more. He took power away from the nobles. He organized citizens into groups based on place of residence, not wealth. Any citizen could now vote on laws.




Direct Democracy Athens moved toward an early form of democracy. **Democracy** is a government in which the citizens make political decisions. The Athenian style of democracy is called a direct democracy. In such a system, all the citizens meet to decide on the laws. (Indirect democracy, in which people elect representatives to make laws, is more common today. The United States is an example.)

Jury box and tokens
Juries in Athens voted by putting tokens in this box. The token with the hollow center spoke meant "guilty," and the other meant "not guilty." ▼



PATTERNS in HISTORY

Forms of Government

	Monarchy	Oligarchy	Direct Democracy
Who ruled	A king or queen ruled the government. 	A small group of citizens ruled the government. 	All citizens took part in the government (but not all people were citizens). 
Basis for rule	Many kings or queens claimed that the gods gave them the right to rule. The monarch's son usually was the next ruler.	Aristocratic birth, wealth, or land ownership gave this group the right to rule.	Neither wealth nor social status affected the right to make decisions.
Type of rule	The king or queen often had supreme power over everyone else.	The ruling group ran the government for their own purposes.	Decisions were made by voting. The majority won.

Limited Democracy Athens had a limited democracy. It did not include all of the people who lived in the city-state. Only free adult males were citizens who could take part in the government. Women, slaves, and foreigners could not take part. Noncitizens were not allowed to become citizens.

REVIEW How did reformers change the government of Athens?

- The people of Greece lived in independent city-states.
- Greek city-states had various types of government: monarchy, oligarchy, and direct democracy.
- Over time, the male citizens of Athens gained the power to make political decisions.



▲ **Ostracism** If Athenians thought someone was a danger to the city-state, they would ostracize, or send that person away for ten years. People voted to ostracize someone by scratching his or her name on a piece of pottery called an ostrakon.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Athens is often called the birthplace of democracy. Many people in today's world are seeking to replace other forms of government with democracy.

3 Lesson Review

Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of

polis	oligarchy	citizen
aristocracy	tyrant	democracy

Using Your Notes

Categorizing Use your completed chart to answer the following question:

2. In which form of government do the fewest people share power?

Types of Government		
Monarchy	Oligarchy	Democracy

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Main Ideas

3. How did the geography of Greece lead to the rise of city-states?
4. What was the role of tyrants in the development of democracy in Greece?
5. What made democracy in Athens a limited democracy?

Critical Thinking

6. **Understanding Causes** What were the key factors leading to the rise of tyrants? Explain.
7. **Drawing Conclusions** Why was the invention of the idea of citizenship important to the development of democracy?

Activity

Making a Poster Find out how a person qualifies as a citizen in the United States. How can a noncitizen become a citizen? Make a poster comparing citizenship in Athens with citizenship in the United States.

Make Vocabulary Cards

Goal: To learn English words that are based on Greek roots

Prepare

- 1 The Greek word *polis*, which you learned in this chapter, is the root of many English words, including *politics*.
- 2 Other terms from the chapter use Greek words as prefixes and roots. For example, democracy comes from word *demos*, which means "the people," and *kratos*, which means "power."

Do the Activity

- 1 Working with a partner, find other words in the dictionary that are based on the Greek word *polis*. Look up words beginning with the letters *pol* and check their origin. Word origins are given at the beginning or the end of the definition.
- 2 Look up the following types of government in the dictionary: monarchy, aristocracy, oligarchy. Note the meaning of each term and the Greek roots of the words.
- 3 Make a vocabulary card for each word that comes from *polis* and for each of the government terms. Write the English word on the front of the card. On the back, write the word's meaning and origin.

Follow-Up

Take turns quizzing each other until you know the meaning of the words.

Extension

Locating Cities on a Map Use a map of the United States to find cities that end in *polis*, such as Indianapolis. Make a list.

Materials & Supplies

- a dictionary that gives word origins
- pens or pencils
- notecards
- a map of the United States

