

The Trojan War took place in approximately the 13th century. The ancient Greeks defeated the City of Troy. The Trojan War started after an incident at the wedding feast of Peleus, the king of Thessaly, and Thetis, a sea goddess. All the gods and goddesses of Mt. Olympus had been invited except Eris, the goddess of discord. Eris was offended and tried to stir up trouble among the guests at the feast. She sent a golden apple inscribed "For the most beautiful." Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite each claimed the apple as their own. Paris judged the quarrel and awarded the apple to Aphrodite because she had promised him Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world. Helen was already married to King Menelaus of Sparta but when visited by Paris, she fled with Paris to Troy. Menelaus organized Greek war against Troy to get Helen back. The Greeks battled for ten years but could not defeat Troy. The fall of Troy occurred when the Greeks built a large hollow horse and placed it outside the walls of Troy. The Trojans took the horse inside and thought they had won the war and the horse was a gift from the Greeks. Later that night, the Greeks stormed from the horse and opened the gates to allow their fellow warriors in and the Greeks conquered the City of Troy.

Ancient Greece was the birthplace of Western civilization about 2500 years ago. Greek civilization consisted mainly of small city-states. A city-state consisted of a city or town and the surrounding villages and farmland. The Greek city-states were independent and quarreled often with one-another. These city states established the world's first democratic government. The Greeks believed that certain gods and goddesses watched over them and directed their daily lives. Families would try to please these gods by offering sacrifices, gifts, and ceremonies. Greeks flocked to oracles to consult priests and priestesses to answer questions and fore-tell the future. Greek men enjoyed drinking, talking, and dancing at parties. They also like sports and religious festivals. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle are the most important Greek philosophers. Socrates taught by carefully questioning his listeners to expose the weaknesses of their ideas and arguments. Plato explored such subjects as beauty, justice, and good government. Aristotle summed up the achievements of Greek philosophy and science. His authority on many topics remained unquestioned for more than 100 years. Most Ancient Greeks were suspicious of philosophers and their theories. They continued to believe in superstitions and in myths. In 399 BC, an Athens jury sentenced Socrates to death for showing disrespect to the gods. Greek architects, sculptors, and painters made great contributions to the arts. They were trying to create ideal beauty based on equal proportions. Greek sculptors portrayed figures of gods, goddesses, and human beings. The most famous Greek sculptors were Phidias, Praxiteles, Lysippus, and Myron. Music often was played with Greek plays. Melody was common and harmony was not. The government of Athens was headed by Pericles for most of the Golden Age. An assembly of all male citizens would pass the laws, at the height of its power, Athens had the most advanced democracy in Greece. The Parthenon in Athens is a Greek Temple. Athena was the goddess of wisdom and warfare. Apollo the god of the sun and of poetry represented the ideal young man.

The ancient Greeks built Athens upon a great plateau upon a great hill. The flat hill covers about ten acres. Athens became known as the Acropolis. The Greek words akro and polis mean high city. The Athenians built temples and public buildings on the Acropolis. By 1200 BC the Athenians had built a wall around most of the city. The Athenians built a temple to Athena on the hill. Pericles also began the Propylaea in addition to the Parthenon. The Propylaea was never completed. All citizens except those of the city's poorest class were eligible for the council and for all other offices. Women were not citizens and could not vote or hold office. All public officials were chosen annually by drawing lots. Generals were elected. Unpopular government officials could be banished for ten years by vote of the people.

The Coliseum is one of the chief landmarks of Rome. Romans watched gladiators fight each other or animals. Forums were the center of public life in

he city. Public meetings were held here and many important buildings and statues stood there.

The Parthenon is an ancient Greek temple in the city of Athens. It stands on a hill called the Acropolis overlooking the city of Athens. The Parthenon is dedicated to the goddess Athena. The best Greek sculptors and designers erected the Parthenon between 447 and 432 BC. When the Turkish people owned the Parthenon, they filled it with gunpowder which exploded and destroyed the central part of the building. The Parthenon was built entirely of Pentelic marble. One room in the Parthenon contained a huge gold and ivory statue of Athena. Around the top of the outer wall above the columns of the Parthenon was a set of small sculptured panels called metopes.

Athens was a city known to protect people from the Athenians. The Greeks living in Athens were people with a passion for perfection. Artists excelled in beautiful works of love, beauty, and passion. Pericles was leader of the Athenians and built Acropolis to honor Athena. 39 foot high statue of Athena sits in the town. Many people and small countries looked to Athens for protection. Athens was completed in 50 years. Sculptors such as the great Fidius designed statues to display in Athens. We as Americans took so much from the Greeks. Politics, Rhetoric, biology, geology, first to calculate atom, position of heavenly bodies, all were first done by the Greeks. Great Philosophers included Socrates, Plato, Hypocrates, Pythagorean, Pindler, Escelus. Athens had the worlds first democracy. The citizens participated males only in the government. We took the Greek form of Government and applied it to American Government. Our founding fathers knew Latin and Greek and realized the importance of the language. The Greeks erected many statues to honor their gods and one was found in 1928 by divers. The found statue, one dedicated to Poseidon, god of the sea was probably stolen by the Romans but the ship sunk and the statue was under water for hundreds of years. Sea at Sunneam was the name of a temple built in honor for Poseidon. Zeus, the father and leader of the Gods liven on Mt. Olympus. Delphi was an important Greek Temple for Apollo.

The Greek people were highly educated and built stadiums and offered sacrifices to uphold their high religion. The oracle of Delphi, was a well known oracle. The theater originated as a place for religious festivals. Amphitheater was for plays about woman. The Olympics were every four years. The competitors competed naked and their were cheering sections along the side of the competition area. 770 BC was the first Olympic Games played. Physical Beauty was a great thing for Greeks. Sculptors tried to capture great eye-pleasing physiques for their statues. Homosexual activity was accepted between men and boys. A plague in Athens wiped out Pericles and many Greek people.

The Greek people inspired cultures and countries for years to come and we are all in debt to the Greek people for the knowledge and wisdom they showed to invent new theories, laws, ideas, and ways of life. The Greek people were very advanced for their time and without them we would not know many of the things we know now. Pythagorean helped us to develop math skills and Socrates as well as other philosophers taught us theories of science and evolution.

