



Ancient Greece Vocabulary

Key Terms

Frescoes: Paintings on wet plaster

Odyssey: The epic adventures King Odysseus experiences trying to get back to his wife after being at war for many years

Iliad: The epic of the Trojan War

Acropolis: A hill in the Greek polis

Myths: Stories about Greek gods and goddess that helped explain nature and the human condition

Persian Wars: Spartans and Athenians join forces to defeat the enemy

Tyranny: Government ruled by a brutal leader who illegally took power

Monarchy: Government ruled by one head chief or leader

Aristocracy: Government ruled by “the best” or noble class

Democracy: Government ruled by the people

Oligarchy: Government ruled by the few

Athens: Polis with the best Greek navy

Sparta: Polis with the best Greek army

Battle of Thermopylae: 300 Spartans vs. the Persian army

Peloponnesian War: Spartans and their league vs. Athenians and their league. Spartans win.

Polis: A Greek city-state

Agora: Marketplace in a city-state in Greece

Popular Government: Idea that people can and should rule themselves

Terracing: Carving small, flat plots of land from hillsides to use for farming

Important People

Hoplites: Standing army that was able to afford weapons

King Minos: The king of the Minoans

Minoans: Greeks who lived on the island of Crete

Mycenaeans: Greeks who lived on mainland Greece

Oracles: The way in which the gods communicated with humans

Pericles: The great leader of Athens during the Golden Age

Homer: Blind poet who lived during the 700s BC

Peloponnesian League: A group of city-states led by Sparta

Delian League: A group of city-states led by Athens