

Western Civilization

ATHENS and SPARTA: Making Comparisons

In a small group of 5-6, make a graph to compare Athens and Sparta in one of the following areas. Use your text as your primary source with additional information supplied by other sources. You will be expected to share your research with the class.

Group 1: Rise and Fall

Describe the rise to power of each Polis and hypothesize why it may have become a dominant player in Greek politics during the Classical age. What military innovations did each polis develop to its advantage? Who were their allies? Describe the ultimate decline and downfall of each.

Group 2: Political System

How and why did the political systems of each polis develop as it did? Who made the decisions and who could participate? What terms were used for government offices and institutions? How did these institutions change over time? What were the roles of individuals and group within the governments?

Group 3: Geography/Economics

Compare the physical geography of each city. How might geography have impacted other systems? What were the economies of each polis based on? What types of work did citizens and non-citizens do? Did they have leisure time? What did they produce?

Group 4: Social Structure

What was the population of each polis? What are the classes, who is a citizen? What was the history of the development of each class? What was the role of women? Was there social mobility? What were the living conditions of slaves, agrarian workers, townspeople etc.?

Group 5: Culture/Values/Education

What were the overarching values of each society? What art forms existed in each? What is their cultural legacy to us? How was the "value of a man" defined in each polis? What differences in religion existed? Who was educated? When did they begin their education? What was the curriculum (what was taught)?

All Groups:

1. Define or identify the following:

Lycurgus, Spartiates, Perioeci, Helots, Ephors, Draco, Solon, Archons, Pisistratus, Cleisthenese.

2. Based on your area of research, which would you prefer to be, an Athenian or a Spartan? Why?