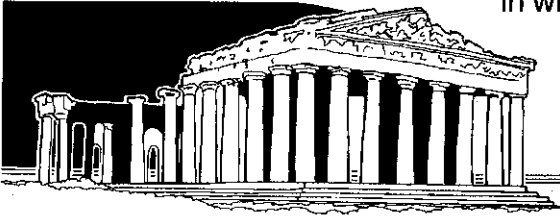


# POLIS PROFILE: ATHENS - 1

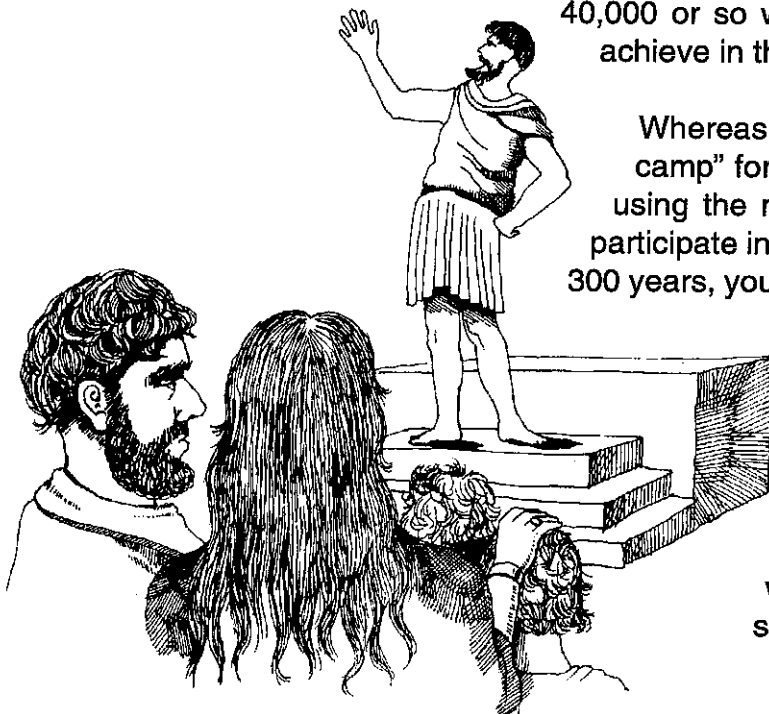
## The Greek polis

Most Greeks in the classical era of their history (700-300 B.C.) lived in a city-state called a *polis*. A polis was a city with a fortified region in which several thousand Greeks lived and to which they paid allegiance. Most of these city-states were fiercely independent and offered their citizens a full and abundant life. To most Greeks banishment from their polis was worse than death. (Socrates had the choice!) A strategic hill called an *acropolis* ("above the city") was the focal point for Greek life. It was a defensive position when the city was under attack; it was a place to discuss affairs of state; and it served as a shrine to honor and worship Greece's many gods and goddesses.

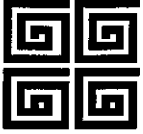


## About your polis

Your loyalty is to the polis of Athens, often called "the school of Greece." Even in ancient times your city-state clearly served as the shining example of the model polis. For it was in Athens that democracy flourished and sculptors, mathematicians, philosophers, playwrights, and common citizens lived in freedom as they produced theories, statues, buildings, and plays so wonderful that we still marvel at their genius today. No one knows for sure why Athenians turned out differently from other Greeks, like Sparta, for example. What is clear is that in Athens the glory of ancient Greece reached its zenith. You should be proud to be an Athenian citizen, one of the 40,000 or so who had the benefits and freedom to achieve in the fifth century B.C.



Whereas rival city-state Sparta became a "boot camp" for military fanatics, Athens emphasized using the mind, encouraging its free citizens to participate in state decisions. Over a period of 200-300 years, your polis went from an aristocracy (ruled by the rich and powerful) to a near-perfect democracy. There were imperfections: 50 percent of its "free" population were women, and, in those days, women were denied equal status with men. Furthermore, as high as 30,000 people in Athens were slaves and foreigners who had no say in the government.

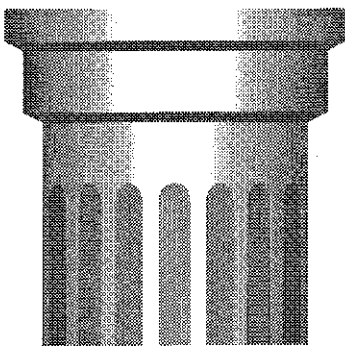


## POLIS PROFILE: ATHENS - 2

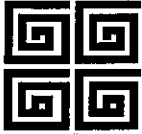
Because of the democratic institutions which developed in Athens, its citizens made history. Thousands of famous Athenians enriched Western civilizations with their work and ideas (i.e., Pericles, Phidias, Socrates, Plato, Archimedes). You and your fellow Athenians must work to continue this tradition. Let the achievements of those Athenians before you inspire you to bring honor, victory, and money to your city-state.

### **Athenian goals in this simulation**

1. The tradition to be the best of all Hellas should inspire you. Strive for victory in all activities and tasks, especially those emphasizing the mind (e.g., performing a play, map assignments, projects, etc.).
2. If Athens cannot win the most Hellaspoints in the simulation, at least try to beat Sparta, your archrival. To win, these athletic fanatics will cheat, lie, and steal. Athenians never stoop to these methods to win. Never! Therefore, prepare to work hard, cooperate, and do your best—your personal best—to win honors and drachmae!
3. Try often to use the letter **A** to your advantage. Dress alike; wear identical logos and insignias. Say clever and witty things to show the rest of the Greeks that Athenians are the most intelligent and educated.
4. Try to have perfect attendance. Whoever is chosen archon (leader) by lot for each day should make it a point to have all Athenians in class each day and on time.



Show your pride  
in being  
Athenians!



## **POLIS PROFILE: ATHENS - 3**

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### **How Athenians should act**

1. Show unity and loyalty. Creating a clever logo should help. Try to enter the classroom together (with the women following close behind). Make up a secret handshake.
2. Be courteous to all Greeks, regardless of city-state affiliation. Be especially supportive and helpful to other Athenians. Call them at home if they are absent. Encourage them to get well and return to the polis soon.
3. Give undivided loyalty and your best efforts to whoever is archon or strategoi for the day or activity. Remember you may be in a leadership position soon, and then the “table will be turned.”
4. Be prepared to cheer for Athenian victories with a clever but restrained chant or song. Sing/say it each time some Athenian among you brings honor to the polis.
5. Be model students for the teacher who has worked so hard to plan and implement the entire simulation. Your cooperation in this area will no doubt ensure a more successful and meaningful unit.