

# YEAR 6 - ANCIENT GREECE FACTS

## Ancient Greek Olympics

The Greeks loved sport and the Olympic Games were the biggest sporting event in the ancient calendar. The Olympic Games began over 2,700 years ago in Olympia, in south west Greece. Every four years, around 50,000 people came from all over the Greek world to watch and take part. The ancient games were also a religious festival, held in honour of Zeus, the king of the gods. Before the games began, messengers were sent out to announce a 'sacred truce' or a peace. This meant that any wars should be called off so that people could travel safely to Olympia.

Only men, boys and unmarried girls were allowed to attend the Olympic Games. Married women were barred. If they were caught sneaking in, they could be thrown off the side of a mountain as punishment! However, women could still own horses in the chariot races at the Olympics and unmarried women had their own festival at Olympia every four years. This was called the Heraia and was held in honour of Hera, Zeus's wife. Winners were awarded crowns of sacred olive branches, the same as men. But in ancient Greece, only Spartan women were really interested in sport.



## Ancient Greek Democracy

In ancient Athens, citizens would gather together on a dusty hill called the Pnyx. Here they would decide the city's laws and who should sit on its ruling council. This was 'democracy' or 'rule by the people'.

Women and slaves didn't get a say. A citizen could speak for the time it took water to run from one jar into another. When this water clock ran out, it was someone else's turn.

A jury of 500 citizens decided if someone was guilty of law-breaking. Punishments included death. Citizens could also vote to get rid of people they disliked. Each man wrote a name on a broken bit of pottery called an 'ostrakon'.

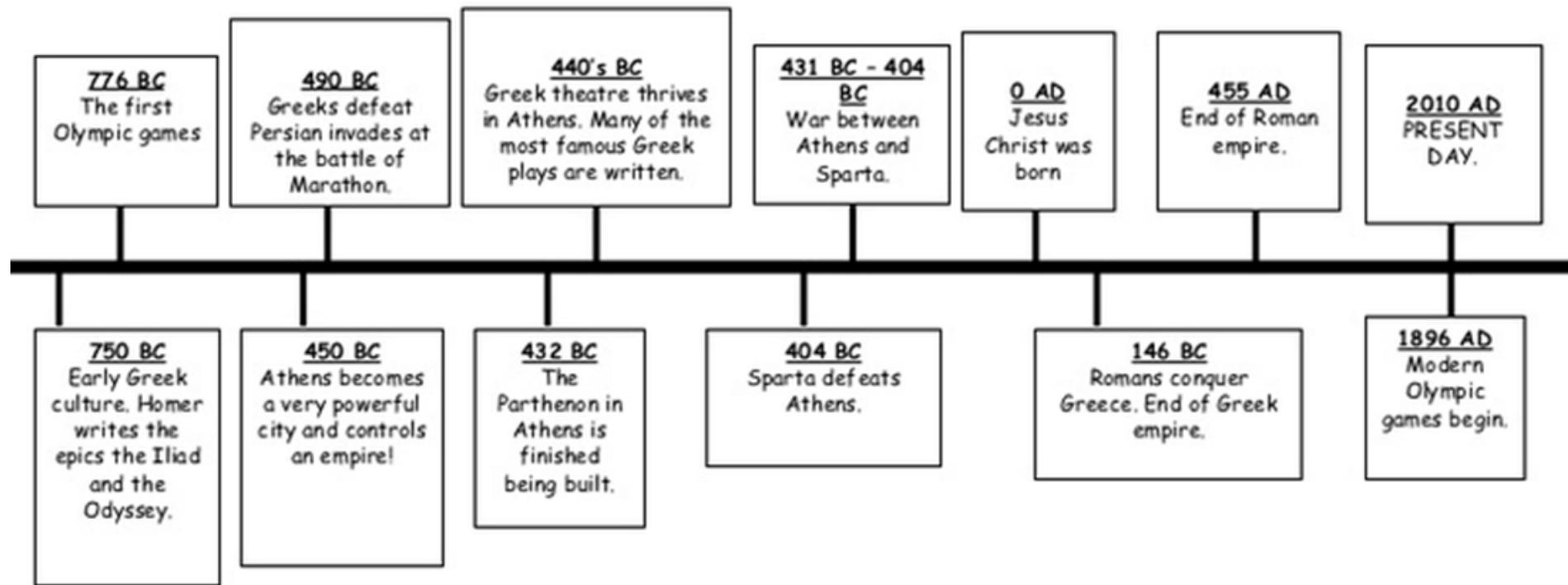
## Ancient Greek Gods & Goddesses

It was believed that the family of Greek gods lived in a cloud palace above Mount Olympus (the highest mountain in Greece). These gods were thought to have special powers, and each had control over a different aspect of life. Many of them also appear in the tales of Greek mythology.

## Ancient Greek Theatre

The ancient Greeks built open-air theatres where the public could watch performances. Often these were tragedy or comedy plays.

## TIMELINE OVERVIEW OF ANCIENT GREECE:



### Key Vocabulary for the topic.

<b>ancient</b>	Belonging to a very distant past and no longer in existence.
<b>architecture</b>	The style in which a building is designed and constructed, especially with regard to a specific period/place/culture.
<b>beliefs</b>	An acceptance/opinion that something exists or is true, especially one without proof.
<b>chronology</b>	The order in which events happened.
<b>column</b>	A vertical, cylindrical pillar.
<b>Corinthian temples</b>	An elaborate temple, usually decorated with leaves and floral patterns.
<b>democracy</b>	A fair political system. 'demos' meaning people 'kratos' meaning rule.
<b>Doric temples</b>	Doric temples were the first style of temples made from stone. The columns have no base and very simple.
<b>frieze</b>	A broad horizontal band of sculpted or painted decoration, especially on a wall near the ceiling.
<b>Ionic temples</b>	A classical architectural temple with wall, thin, decorative columns.
<b>pediment</b>	The triangular upper part at the front of a classical building.
<b>politics</b>	The activities associated with a form of Government of a country or area, especially the debate between parties having power over certain beliefs.
<b>Olympics</b>	A religious festival held every four year where people compete in different sporting events.