

# Geography Activity: Greece

**Directions:** label the following items on the map below. Color in blue for ocean and green for land. Use chapter 7, starting on page 337, from the eTextbook: Discovering Our Past Ancient Civilizations.

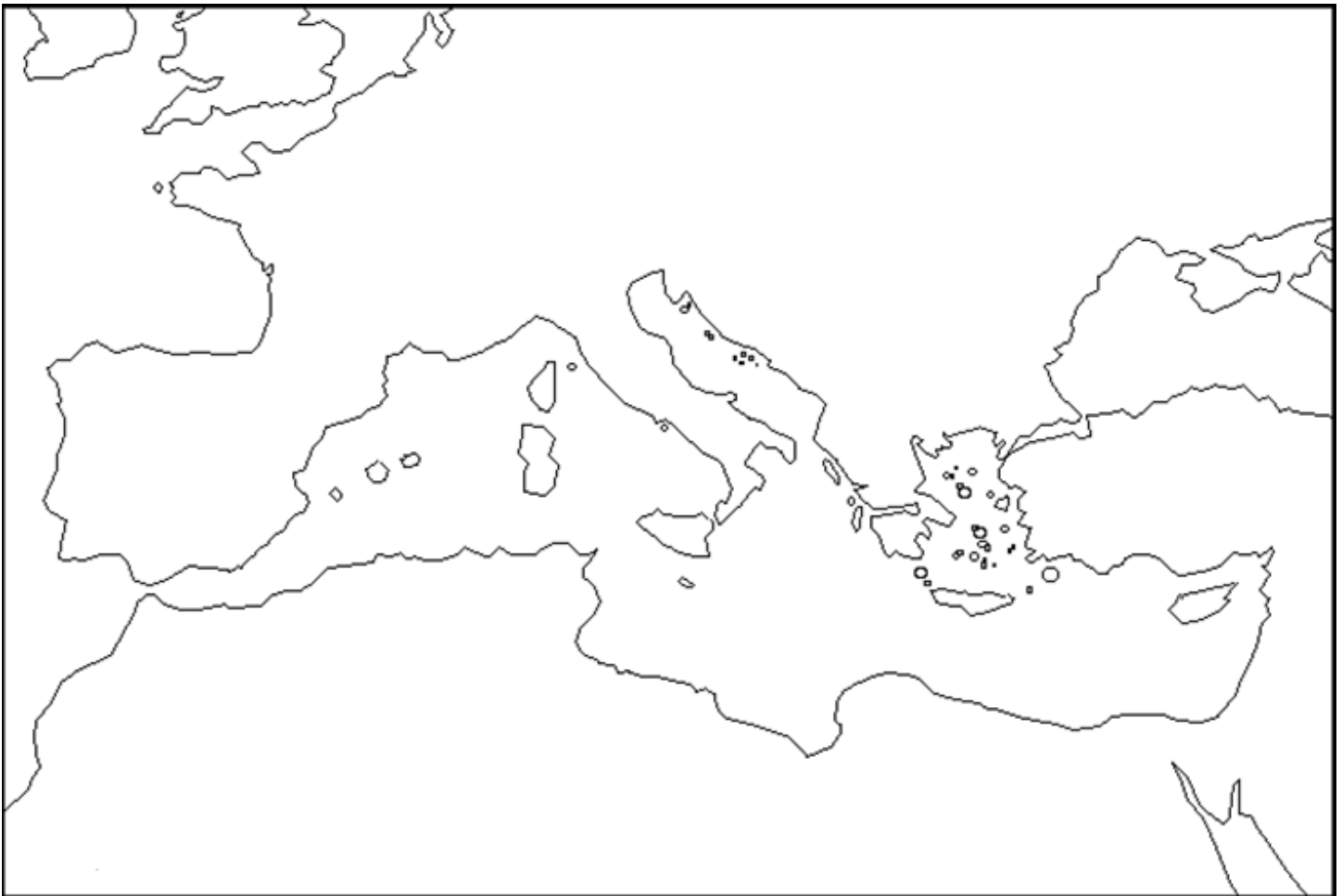
- Aegean Sea
- Balkan peninsula
- Peloponnesus
- Ionian Sea
- Asia Minor
- Mediterranean Sea
- Thebes
- Athens
- Sparta
- Troy
- Macedonia
- Crete



### Map Two:

Label the following items on the map below. Use the same pages as before. Color the water blue and the land green.

- Europe
- Mediterranean Sea
- Black Sea
- Cyprus
- Greece (circle)
- Atlantic Ocean
- Africa
- Italy
- Red Sea



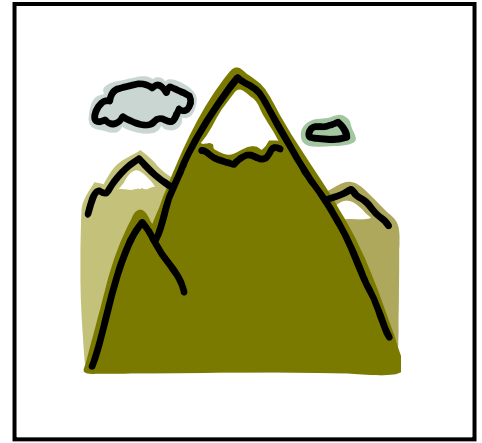
### GEOGRAPHY OF GREECE

**Arable land:** farming land

Greece consists mainly of a peninsula reaching into the Mediterranean Sea, as well as roughly 1,400 islands around the Aegean Sea. The Ancient Greek world also included the coastal regions and islands of Asia Minor, across the sea from mainland Greece.

This geography played a significant role in Greek life as many of their trade routes became “liquid highways”, meaning that trade and travel was frequently done by boat. Another reason that travel and trade took place on the seas was due to another geographical feature in Greece; its mountainous terrain. The mountainous landscape of Greece served as a divider, or separation barrier, between groups of Greeks. The rugged terrain was difficult to travel across and distances that could be covered in days in other parts of the world could take weeks in Greece. Not only did the landscape prevent overland trade, but it also led Greeks to form their own independently governed communities, which evolved into city-states. But that was not the only impact of the mountains. Since much of the land was stony or mountainous, it left only about twenty percent of Greece with arable land. Even in this fertile land, Greeks face the problem of very few rivers that were suitable for large-scale irrigation. One response to this problem was that Greece became reliant on trade from people in Egypt, the Eastern

Mediterranean, and the Black Sea. In addition, Greeks began to colonize other areas of the Mediterranean Sea. By establishing city-states outside of the mainland, Greeks solved the problems of both overpopulation, and a lack of food and resources. However, the Greeks were not always looking to leave home. The warm, sunny Mediterranean climate stimulated outdoor activities and athletic contests, such as the Olympic Games, for which ancient Greece is famous. This led to more interaction between individual Greeks, one of the reasons that a civic society developed, including the creation of the first representative (democratic) government in the world.



1. Explain the meaning of this sentence: "In one sense, the Greeks did not live *on* a land but *around* a sea." What can you predict about Greek society and civilization from this statement?
2. Why did the Greeks live in city-states instead of empires, unlike Persia or China?
3. Why did Greece never have a large population?
4. The Greeks did a lot of trading both within and outside of Greece. Where did the Greeks trade?
5. The Greeks also colonized many areas outside of their homeland. What are two possible reasons that they built so many colonies?