

Suggested levels for Guided Reading, DRA™, Lexile®, and Reading Recovery™ are provided in the Pearson Scott Foresman Leveling Guide.

Social Studies

Social Studies

# Uncovering Classical Athens



Genre	Comprehension Skills and Strategy	Text Features
Expository nonfiction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graphic Resources</li><li>• Main Idea and Details</li><li>• Graphic Organizers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Heads</li><li>• Captions</li><li>• Glossary</li></ul>

Scott Foresman Reading Street 6.6.2



scottforesman.com



by Carol Talley

## Vocabulary

architecture

democracy

empire

ideal

mythology

Word count: 3,004

# Uncovering Classical Athens



by Carol Talley

Note: The total word count includes words in the running text and headings only. Numerals and words in chapter titles, captions, labels, diagrams, charts, graphs, sidebars, and extra features are not included.



Editorial Offices: Glenview, Illinois • Parsippany, New Jersey • New York, New York  
Sales Offices: Needham, Massachusetts • Duluth, Georgia • Glenview, Illinois  
Coppell, Texas • Ontario, California • Mesa, Arizona

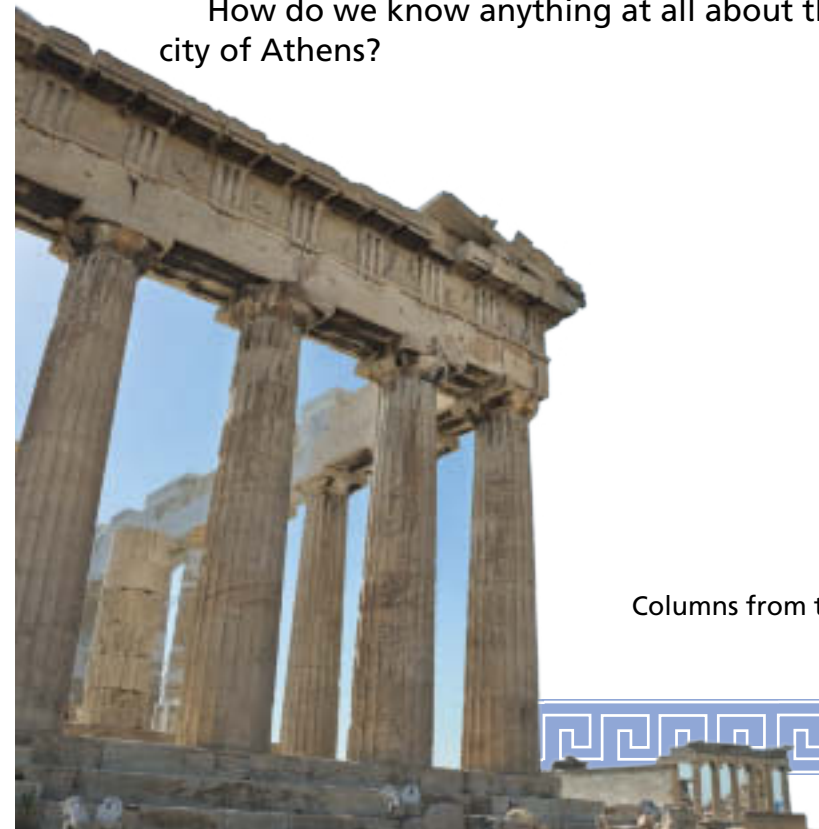
The story of Greece and its capital, Athens, go back thousands of years. Long ago, people living near the Aegean Sea led a simple life as hunters and gatherers. Gradually, they settled in small villages and began to farm and domesticate animals. Some made their homes on the hill we now call the Acropolis in Athens.

A settled way of life brought the development of art, religion, and government. As the centuries rolled by, there were times of prosperity and growth followed by dark periods.

Between the tenth and eighth centuries B.C., independent city-states, including Athens, Corinth, and Sparta, arose. The city-states established trade routes and colonies throughout the Mediterranean. They created fine pottery and poetry. They erected temples, government buildings, and monuments.

This civilization reached its height from about 480 B.C. to 323 B.C. These years are known as the classical period of Greek history. Athens became known as the birthplace of the modern world.

How do we know anything at all about this ancient city of Athens?



Columns from the Parthenon

### Photographs

Every effort has been made to secure permission and provide appropriate credit for photographic material. The publisher deeply regrets any omission and pledges to correct errors called to its attention in subsequent editions.

Unless otherwise acknowledged, all photographs are the property of Pearson Education, Inc.

Photo locators denoted as follows: Top (T), Center (C), Bottom (B), Left (L), Right (R), Background (Bkgd)

**Cover** (B) ©Royalty-Free/Corbis (C) Araldo de Luca/Corbis, (R) Denis Topal/Fotolia, (L) fottoo/Fotolia; **1** Kamira/Shutterstock; **3** Nikolai Sorokin/Fotolia; **4** Marka/SuperStock; **6** (B) ©Royalty-Free/Corbis, (T) Santi Rodríguez/Fotolia; **8** gator/Fotolia; **9** Marina Gorskaya/Fotolia; **10** (T) Bettmann/Corbis; **11** Andrei Nekrassov/Shutterstock; **12** Denis Topal/Fotolia; **13** Kamira/Shutterstock; **14** fstockfoto/Shutterstock; **15** fottoo/Fotolia; **17** Hein Nouwens/Shutterstock; **18** Araldo de Luca/Corbis; **19** Hintau Aliaksei/Shutterstock; **21** H.M. Herget/National Geographic Image Collection/Alamy Images; **22** ©Gianni Dagli Orti/Corbis; **23** DeAgostini/SuperStock.

ISBN: 0-328-13671-9

Copyright © Pearson Education, Inc.

All Rights Reserved. Printed in the United States of America. This publication is protected by Copyright, and permission should be obtained from the publisher prior to any prohibited reproduction, storage in a retrieval system, or transmission in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or likewise. For information regarding permission(s), write to: Permissions Department, Scott Foresman, 1900 East Lake Avenue, Glenview, Illinois 60025.

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 V0G1 14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 06



## Clues to the Past

One way we learn about the history and culture of classical Athens is by studying its **architecture**. Some buildings, such as the Parthenon on the Acropolis, have been preserved through the centuries. The Parthenon is a temple of the goddess Athena and was built in the fifth century B.C. The ancient buildings still stand in the midst of the modern-day city of Athens. Other buildings must be uncovered by the excavation, or digging, work of archaeologists.

Archaeologists also uncover artifacts, such as tools, weapons, pots and pans, and other objects from daily life.

Writing also provides information. Ancient Athenians and travelers who visited Athens left written accounts of their experiences. Also, words inscribed on stone and clay give us many details about Athenian life during the classical period.

Archaeologists, historians, and other scholars study these clues to help us understand a culture that existed long ago.

## Buildings and Monuments

During its long history, the city of Athens was built and rebuilt. Parts of the city were destroyed in war or were torn down to make way for new construction. Often old stone was used again. Some structures collapsed from neglect, and over the centuries, new buildings rose up on the ruins of the old ones.

In 480 B.C., a Persian army attacked and burned Athens, leaving it in ruins. When the Athenians rebuilt their city, they created some of the great masterpieces of classical Greek architecture.

Archaeologists working at an excavation site in Athens





## The Agora

The town square and the buildings surrounding it were called the Agora. During the fourth and fifth centuries B.C., the Agora was the busy heart of Athens, with its market and civic center. Later, however, the Agora was abandoned. Its buildings decayed and crumbled. Eventually, it was buried under modern-day Athens. No one knew for sure where it had been located.



Part of Athens's ancient Agora; a stoa, where citizens would gather in all weather, is a modern re-creation.

More than two thousand years later, in 1931, archaeologists began excavating. They found the remains of the Athenian Senate, the Mint, the Bureau of Standards, the prison, and the headquarters of the general staff.

They also unearthed the remains of several stoas—long narrow buildings with covered walkways along the sides.

Here, the people of Athens shopped and socialized, protected from sun and rain.

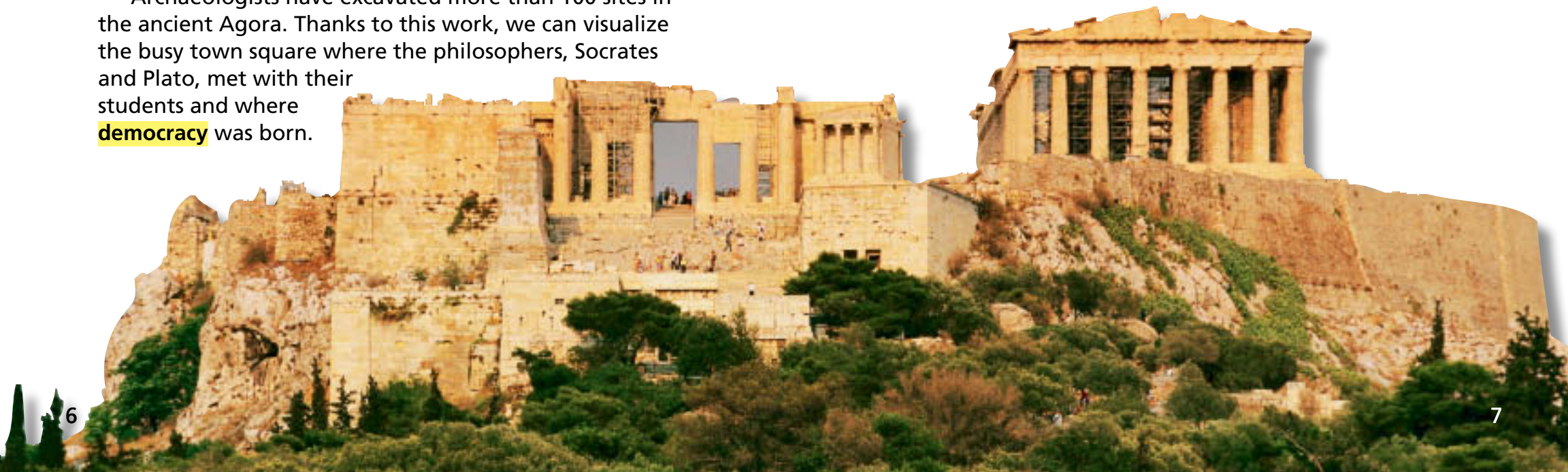
Archaeologists have excavated more than 100 sites in the ancient Agora. Thanks to this work, we can visualize the busy town square where the philosophers, Socrates and Plato, met with their students and where **democracy** was born.

## The Acropolis

Athens had its beginning on the high craggy hill known as the Acropolis. This fortified stronghold was the religious center of the city from early times. After the Persians burned the Acropolis, the Athenians let some of the ruins stand as a war memorial. Then they built three new temples honoring Athena, the city's patron goddess, and a monumental gateway to the hilltop sanctuary.

The temples and gateway still stand, so archaeologists are able to study these masterpieces of classical Greek architecture in detail. Through their investigations, we can learn about the people who designed and built the monuments, the materials they used, and their construction techniques.

Archaeologists also help us understand what these monuments meant to ancient Athenians. We can imagine a worshipper climbing the steep sides of the Acropolis and approaching the Parthenon. Visitors can see mythological and historical scenes carved in the exterior walls of the temple.



## The Temple of Hephaistos

On another hill, within the Agora, the Athenians built a beautiful marble temple called the Temple of Hephaistos. It is the best preserved of all ancient Greek temples. We know about it, however, because of the work of archaeologists and other scholars.

The temple was dedicated to Athena and to Hephaistos, god of metalworkers. During excavation near the temple, archaeologists uncovered signs that showed that Athenian bronzeworkers and ironworkers had their shops in the same location. Excavators found charcoal, metalworking tools, and fragments of the clay molds used in casting metal statues.

Archaeologists also found large clay pots sunk in the ground in rows along the sides of the temple. They believe that these are planting pots for trees or shrubs. If so, there would have been a lovely wooded grove surrounding the temple.

Temple of Hephaistos, Athens



## Classical Architecture

The lives of ancient Athenians were centered on religion; therefore it is not surprising that they built so many large and beautiful temples. For archaeologists and students of art and architecture, the temples built by the people of Athens during the fifth century B.C. serve as textbooks for studying classical design.

The Greeks developed three styles—or orders—of architecture. Each order developed its own style of column.

The Doric style is simple and sturdy. The top of the column, called the capital, is a plain circular band. The Parthenon and the Temple of Hephaistos are Doric temples.

The Ionic style is more graceful and elegant. Its capital has a scroll-like design. The Temple of Athena Nike on the Acropolis is an Ionic temple.

The third style, Corinthian, has an elaborate capital of carved leaves. This order was not used in Athens until the fourth century B.C.

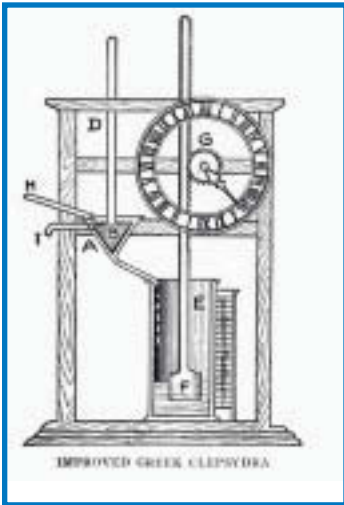


Ionic, Doric, and Corinthian styles of columns



## Artifacts

Artifacts are objects made by human hands. They can tell a lot about the daily life of a time and place. They give us an idea of the kinds of goods that were made, bought, and sold in the marketplace. They give us insight into how the people ran their **empire** and their homes.



Artifacts such as a water clock tell us about life in ancient Athens.

They tell us how they made their living and spent their leisure time. Buildings set the scene, while smaller artifacts bring the scene to life.

The Agora was the civic center of classical Athens, and artifacts found there reveal many details about the world's first democracy. Near the site of ancient law courts, archaeologists found a water clock, called a *klepsydra*, that was used among other things to time speeches in the courts.

The water from one vessel flows through a tube into a second vessel. When the first vessel is empty, time has "run out" for the speaker. Workers also found a container made of drain tiles. In it were six bronze disks. The inscriptions on the disks identify them as jurors' ballots. To vote for the plaintiff, or person who brings charges, a juror dropped a disk with a pierced center into a jar or basket. A disk with a solid center meant a vote for the defendant.

Artifacts unearthed at other sites give us more clues about life in ancient Athens. Thirteen thimble-sized clay medicine bottles were found near the site of a prison. Fragments of pottery dishes found near a government building are marked with the Greek letters for "public property." These dishes must have been official dining sets, used by Athenian politicians. Containers found near another government building are marked as official measures. These would have been used to check that merchants measured and weighed their goods fairly.

From Athenian homes, excavators have uncovered everything needed for a well-equipped kitchen. Their findings include clay pots and pans, grills, ovens for cooking over charcoal, black-glazed dinnerware, and mortars for grinding grain. They also found bathtubs and water pipes, oil lamps, perfume bottles, and the clay weights from looms used by women to weave cloth for their family's clothing.

Artifacts unearthed from Athenian homes reveal details of daily life in ancient Athens.



## Red-figured Pottery

None of the products from Athenian workshops were more important than pottery. Beds of red clay were located north of the city. From this clay, Athenian potters and painters made beautiful glazed pots painted with detailed scenes of Greek life. At first, scenes were painted in black on a red clay background, a style known as black-figured pottery. Around 530 B.C., the process was reversed. The background was painted black and the figures were left in natural red. This style, red-figured pottery, lasted about 200 years.

Pottery made from baked clay can break, but otherwise it is quite sturdy. For this reason, archaeologists have found thousands of pieces of red-figured pottery. The detailed scenes on the pottery provide windows into everyday life in ancient Greece.

One pot, for example, shows the potters themselves busy in their workshop. Older men form clay into vases, while young boys turn the potter's wheels. Another figure carries a vase to a kiln, into which a slave is putting fuel. An older man supervises the whole process. On a separate red-figured vessel, we see another part of the production process:

The painter is shown applying his brush to a pot. His paint sits on a stool beside him, and other tools hang nearby.



Red-figured pottery shows Athenians in all walks of life. One example portrays a metalworker casting a bronze statue.

Another depicts a sculptor at work. We see a blacksmith working with hot iron, a leatherworker making boots, and a carpenter making a wooden door. One piece of pottery shows a man cutting a fish steak for a customer, and another shows a man selling perfume to a woman.

Red-figured pottery also shows Athenian citizens engaged in civic and religious activities, such as voting, putting on arms and armor in preparation for war, and making sacrifices at the altars of their gods and goddesses.

Many vases are illustrated with the simple furnishings of Athenian homes, including chairs, stools, cushions, couches, tables, and various kinds of chests, boxes, and baskets. Other vessels portray women enjoying the fresh air of their courtyards, preparing and serving food and wine, weaving cloth on looms, playing musical instruments, and caring for children. Men are shown hunting and riding horses.

Glazed pots and red-figured pottery show scenes of everyday life in Ancient Greece.



## Written Evidence

Much of Athens's long story was preserved in oral tradition for centuries before it was written down. Without written evidence, our information must come from the archaeological studies of physical remains. It also comes from the **mythology** and traditions passed down by word of mouth from generation to generation.

The alphabet and writing came to Greece in the eighth century B.C., during the time when the city-states were first developing. By the classical period, the written word had become an important way of recording information and ideas in Athens.

## Ancient Authors

In ancient Athens (as in our own time), poets, playwrights, historians, and philosophers were busy observing and commenting on the lives of their fellow citizens. Their words help us understand the Athenian culture that existed 2,800 to 2,400 years ago.

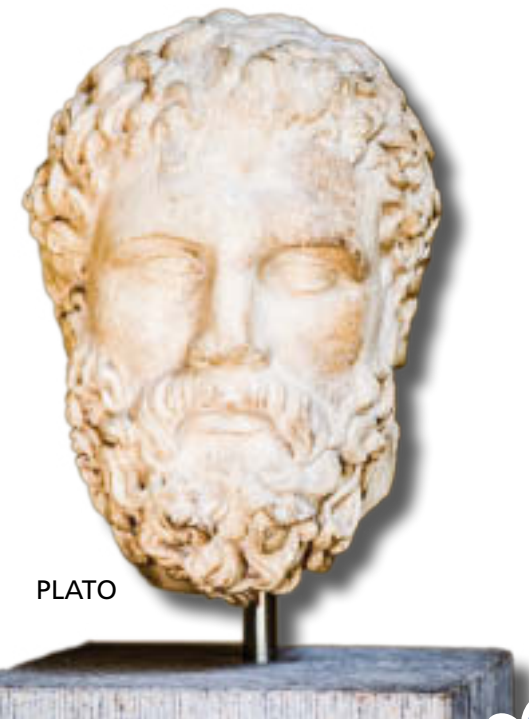
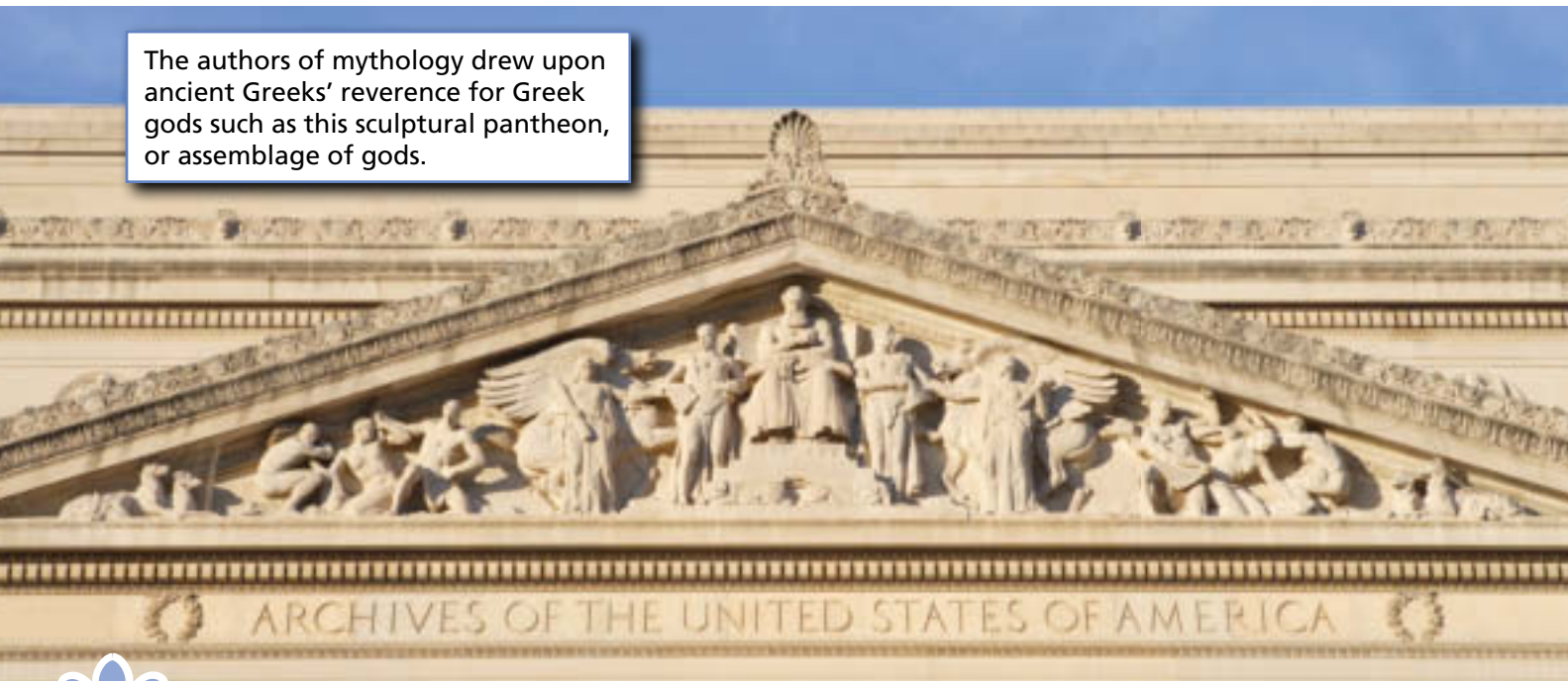
The writings of historians and playwrights sometimes give important clues about the uses of ancient buildings. We learn where philosophers met with their students, where new magistrates took their oaths of office, and where lawsuits were tried.

From the philosopher Aristotle, we learn about the structure of the government. We learn, for example, that the duties of the archon, or ruler, of Athens included responsibility for organizing all torch races, administering traditional sacrifices, resolving disputes between priests, and coordinating city-wide festivals.

Other writers recorded events in the lives of important Athenians. Plato described the trial and execution of his teacher, the philosopher Socrates.

The historian Thucydides wrote the first histories, recounting dramatic events, such as the mysterious mass vandalism of sacred sculptures one night in 415 B.C. and a plague that swept through overcrowded Athens in the fifth century B.C.

The authors of mythology drew upon ancient Greeks' reverence for Greek gods such as this sculptural pantheon, or assemblage of gods.



PLATO

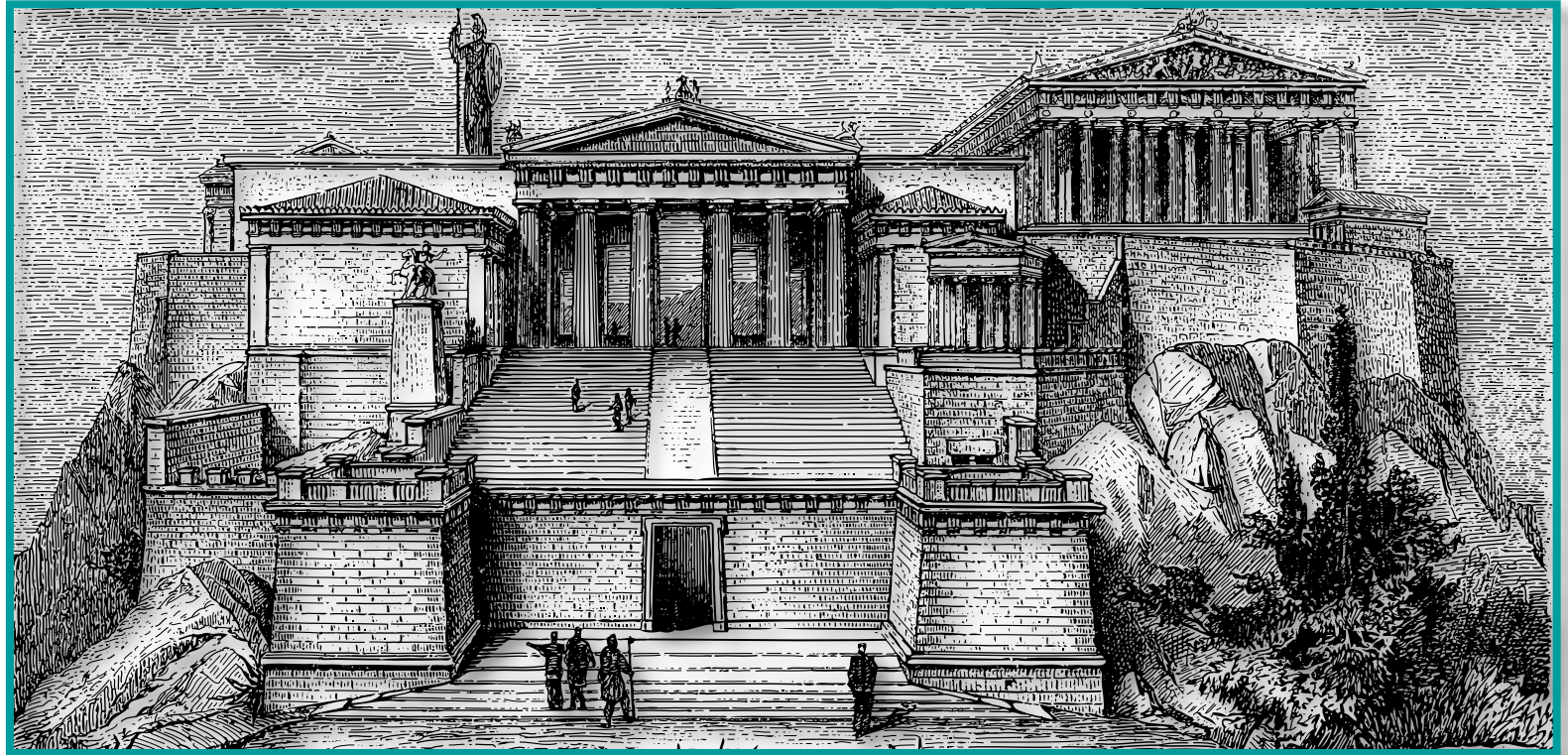
### Pausanias, the Travel Writer

Pausanias was a traveler who visited Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and other countries of the eastern Mediterranean. He spent several years traveling through Greece and wrote a tourist's guidebook, *Description of Greece*, between A.D. 150 and 175, which included descriptions of Greek antiquities already several hundred years old by the time he visited them.

Athens was one of the places he visited. His description of the city included a short history, as well as details about the daily life of the people, their rituals, ceremonies, and mythology. He also discussed all the important buildings, temples, and monuments, including how they were furnished and decorated, and their importance to Athenians.

The orderly way Pausanias described the plan of the city and the precise location of buildings is especially helpful to archaeologists. Many of these buildings were already ancient in his time. Without his book, archaeologists would have a hard time identifying the ruins of those that survive today.

Pausanias was especially interested in the artistic and cultural achievements of classical Greece. He described the temples of the Acropolis and the great gold and ivory statue of Athena in the Parthenon. He devoted many pages of his guidebook to the Agora, discussing each building, and describing the architecture, portraits, and inscriptions he saw. He listed paintings and statues



Pausanias's guidebook to ancient Athens includes many details about the Agora.

of gods and Athenians who had lost their lives in battles, and he identified the artist of each work. He also described a collection of bronze shields taken from defeated Spartans during a battle fought during the fifth century B.C. These shields had been on display for more than 600 years when Pausanias saw them. Archaeologists since have found only one.



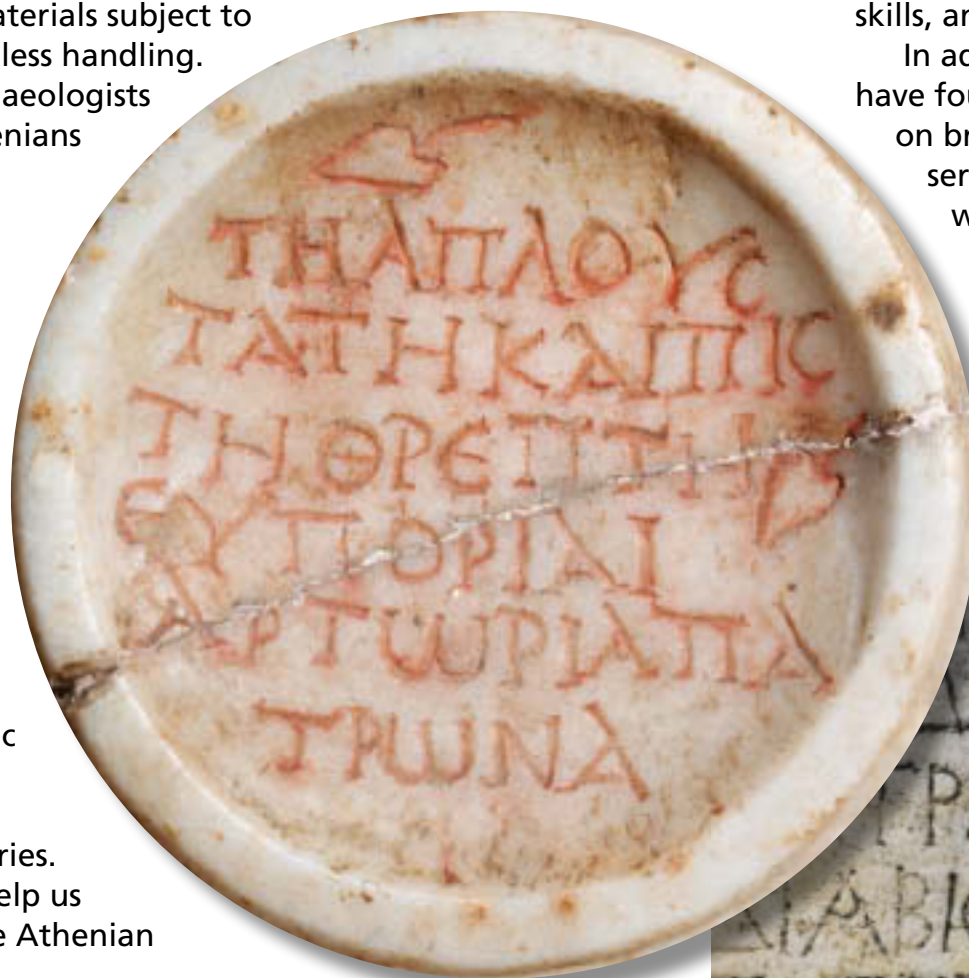
## Inscriptions

The Athenians kept many records of their governmental, legal, military, commercial, and ceremonial activities. Many of these documents have not survived because they were handwritten on papyrus or other materials subject to fire, decay, and careless handling.

Fortunately for archaeologists and historians, Athenians often made more permanent copies of important documents, inscribing them in stone slabs that were displayed in public places for all to see.

These official inscriptions include laws, records of lawsuits, lists of military personnel and public officials, treaties, financial accounts, and temple inventories. These inscriptions help us understand how the Athenian city-state operated.

For example, archaeologists have found stone slabs recording the building accounts of the Parthenon. These records tell us when and how the temple was constructed, who worked on it, and how much it cost the people of Athens.



A large group of inscriptions records the property of a prominent Athenian general. The inventory lists his houses, furniture, pots and pans, as well as the figs, grapes, and olives waiting to be harvested in his fields. They tell us about his slaves, their country of origin, their skills, and the price paid for each one.

In addition to these formal inscriptions, archaeologists have found thousands of inscriptions scratched or painted on broken pieces of pottery. These pottery fragments served as scratch paper for ancient Athenians, who used it for practicing their letters, making shopping lists, and writing notes to friends.

Inscriptions on stone slabs were used for many purposes such as keeping records, treaties, general information and laws, and even for writing notes.





## Ostracism and Ostraka

The people of Athens had a special way of dealing with officials who were corrupt or too ambitious. They were ostracized—banned from the city.

Once a year, citizens voted on whether anyone was becoming too powerful. If a majority voted yes, they met again in two months to cast a second vote. Each voter brought a piece of broken pottery (an *ostrakon*) on which he scratched the name of the man he wanted ostracized. The man who received the most votes was sent away from the city for 10 years.

After the ostraka were counted, they were tossed away. Archaeologists have found more than 1,000 ostraka in the Agora with the names of prominent Athenians scratched on them.

A group of 190 ostraka are all inscribed with the name Themistocles. Archaeologists who studied the handwriting found that 14 people wrote all 190 pieces. It seems that Themistocles' enemies prepared the ostraka to get people to vote against him.

By studying the ostraka, archaeologists and historians learn about political rivalries in ancient Greece. They also learn about the development of the Greek alphabet and the level of education of Athenian citizens.

An ostrakon, or inscribed piece of pottery, held the name of a man to be ostracized.



Themistocles powerfully led the attack against the Barbarians in the famous battle of Salamis but was later ostracized due, it was said, to his arrogance and to his alleged willingness to take bribes.



## The Case of Simon the Shoemaker

Using evidence from excavations, art and artifacts, and ancient writings and inscriptions, archaeologists can learn about the lives and deeds of famous thinkers, artists, and politicians. But could they learn anything at all about a certain shoemaker named Simon who lived in Athens during the fifth century B.C.? It's possible!

Among the dozens of public buildings and houses that archaeologists have excavated in Athens is a small house located on the edge of the Agora. Workers digging in the dirt floor of the house found many artifacts, including iron hobnails like those used to make shoes and several bone eyelets for shoelaces. Just outside the door of the house they found a drinking cup with the name *Simon* scratched on the bottom. These artifacts are evidence that a shoemaker named Simon may have lived and worked in the house.



Shoes seen as evidence of the work of Simon, a shoemaker, in ancient Athens



Many stone carvings show how people worked in ancient Greece.

We can learn more about what went on in Simon's workshop by reading the ancient writer, Xenophon. He described a shoemaker's routine activities—cutting and stitching leather and assembling a shoe. We can also learn from a fourth century B.C. scene carved in stone, showing a boy, a young man, and a balding grandfather making sandals. A scene on a red-figured pot shows a leatherworker making boots.

Writings of the time mention Simon the shoemaker's shop as a meeting place for the philosopher Socrates and his pupils. Furthermore, the philosopher Diogenes mentions that Simon recorded more than thirty of their discussions on scraps of leather, but they are not known to exist today.

The case of Simon the shoemaker is an **ideal** example of how clues from the past can tell us about people and places of long ago.

# Glossary

**architecture** *n.* the art of designing and constructing buildings

**democracy** *n.* a form of government in which the people rule, either by voting directly or by electing representatives to manage the government and make the laws

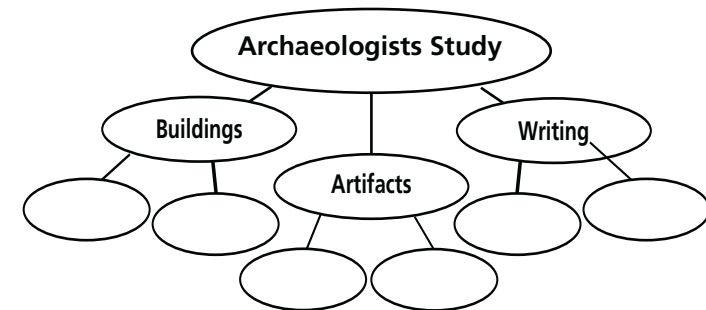
**empire** *n.* a political unit like a city-state or a country with a large territory or number of territories under one ruler with total authority

**ideal** *adj.* existing only in the mind; perfect

**mythology** *n.* a collection of stories about the gods and heroes of a people

# Reader Response

1. The illustration on page 9 shows the three orders of Greek architecture. Find words from the text that would help you identify each of these orders and point to the parts of the illustration that the text is describing.
2. You have read about how archaeologists and other scholars learn about the past. Use a chart like the one below to give details about different kinds of evidence they use.



3. After reading this book, you are familiar with these three nouns: *architecture*, *democracy*, *mythology*. Use your knowledge of these words to write sentences using the adjective forms: *architectural*, *democratic*, *mythological*.
4. Sometimes a writer presents a main idea followed by a number of supporting details. Find places where the author of this book does that.