

Geography of Ancient Greece

Activity Sheet

Vocabulary Jam!

Latitude

longitude

political map

scale bar

physical map

Directions: Working in partners or small groups, answer the following questions. Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

1. Using the political map of Greece, locate and name the surrounding countries.
2. How many seas are near and around Greece? Locate and name the seas on the maps.
3. Locate and name the major cities and the capital of Greece. What map did you use?
4. Identify the location of Athens by using the longitude and latitude lines.
5. Explain how you would travel from Athens to Knossos on the island of Crete.
6. How far it is from Athens to Knossos? Use the scale bar: measure the length of the bar and then measure off the distance between the two places. If you were to travel directly over land and by sea, how many miles is it?
7. Using the map of **Ancient Greece** and the Venn Diagram compare and contrast Ancient Greece to Modern Day Greece.
 - What looks different between the maps?
 - What do these maps tell us?
8. Where might farming take place in Greece by looking at the **physical map** of Greece?
9. Write an explanation and a short description of the different physical characteristics of Greece.

At the same time that the Shang dynasty was ruling much of the Huang He River valley and the Egyptian pharaohs were building the New Kingdom along the Nile, another civilization was beginning, along the northeastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea. The civilization was that of the ancient Greeks. In Greece, there was no great river carrying layers of fertile silt to create rich farmland.

Instead of finding themselves in an environment provided by a river valley, Ancient Greeks found themselves on a peninsula, a piece of land almost entirely surrounded by the sea, with a rocky landscape that offered few natural resources. Ancient Greece was located on the southern European mainland. The modern day country of Greece includes not only the mainland portion, but also includes hundreds of islands. The biggest of these islands is Crete, south of the mainland. Northeast of Crete is another large island called Rhodes.

Mountains and hills cover nearly three-fourths of Greece. Western Greece is the most mountainous, and there, travel by land is very difficult. The land is not very fertile, either, but farmers herd goats and sheep on the rugged hillsides. Eastern Greece has more land suitable for farming. Some of these farmlands are on the peninsula of Attica. Attica also has excellent natural harbors, or sheltered places, for ships. Peloponnesus, a large peninsula southwest of Attica, is a mountainous region outlined by a thin area of fertile soil. Here can be found several rivers, but unlike rivers in Egypt or Mesopotamia, these rivers dry up in the summer. The climate of Greece also presented a challenge for early farmers. Summers were hot and dry, and winters were wet and windy. Ancient Greeks raised crops and animals well suited to the environment. Wheat and barley were grown, and olives and grapes were harvested. The many hills and mountains provided shrubs to feed the herds of sheep, goats, and cattle.

1. Why did the people of Ancient Greece come to depend on the sea?
2. What occupations can you infer developed from this dependence?
3. What about Greece's location allowed it to become a great trading nation?



Label: Greece (yellow), Mediterranean Sea(blue), Crete (yellow)





