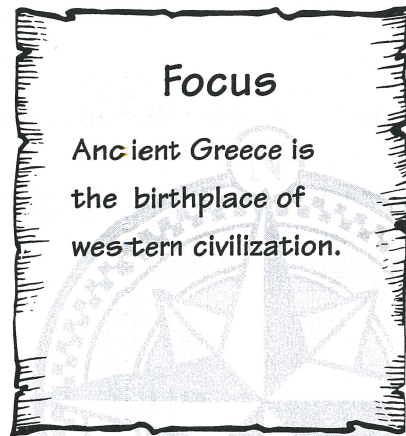


# The Legacy of Ancient Greece

## Brief #4



Ancient Greece is considered the birthplace of western civilization. This is because the ancient Greeks made so many major contributions to arts, science, politics, and philosophy. What would later become known as the Renaissance had its origins in ancient Greece.



### Mathematics

The ancient Greeks made important discoveries and developed many mathematical theories that are still used today. **One of these ancient Greek mathematicians was called Pythagoras.** He was the first person to describe the earth as being spherical. He also developed theories regarding the connection between math and music. The students of Pythagoras went on to develop the Pythagorean Theorem used with right triangles.

**Euclid was another influential ancient Greek mathematician.** In fact, it is Euclid who is credited with discovering a field of mathematics that was unknown at the time—that of plane geometry. It is over two thousand years since Euclid lived, yet students today still learn geometry using the axioms he discovered.

**Archimedes was a famous ancient Greek inventor and mathematician.** Like Euclid and Pythagoras, he developed many different mathematical theories that are still in use today. He also invented a device that is still used for raising water from a lower level to a higher level. This invention is called Archimedes' screw.



### Philosophy

Another area in which the ancient Greeks excelled and made enormous contributions to is the field of philosophy. Philosophy is the branch of learning and inquiry that seeks to discover the answers to difficult questions about truth and knowledge.

**One of the most important ancient Greek philosophers was called Socrates.** Socrates said *the unexamined life is not worth living*. He meant that all people should seek knowledge and awareness, and the truth about how the world works. Socrates was an influential teacher. He developed a method of teaching by asking students questions until they reached a final conclusion. This is called the Socratic Method. The Socratic Method is based upon using reason to discover the truth.

### Vocabulary

1. Pythagoras
2. Euclid
3. Archimedes
4. Socrates
5. Plato
6. Aristotle
7. Alexander the Great
8. Hellenistic Age
9. Hippocrates

# The Legacy of Ancient Greece

## Brief #4 (cont.)



### Philosophy (cont.)

One of Socrates' students named Plato was also a very influential ancient Greek philosopher. Like Socrates, he believed in rational thought and reason. He believed that if people lived by reason, then there would be no problems in the world.

Aristotle is the third of whom scholars call the *big three* of ancient Greek philosophy. Aristotle was a student of Plato's. He wrote many books on topics like politics, poetry, music, and biology. He is also known to be the teacher of Alexander the Great.



### Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great was the King of Macedonia, a Greek city-state in 334 B.C. He was also a brilliant military commander. Alexander conquered Persia, Syria, Phoenicia, and Egypt all before the age of thirty-three. Alexander the Great is considered to be one of the best military commanders of all time.

Alexander's rule lasted for thirteen years. **The civilization that emerged from his military conquests was a blend of Greek and Asian cultures. It is called the Hellenistic Age.** During this period in ancient history, the influence of Greek culture could be felt all over most of the known world. Alexander founded the ancient city of Alexandria in Egypt. It is here, in this port city, where the Lighthouse of Alexandria was built. This was a huge and impressive structure. Archeologists have found some of the remains of this ancient lighthouse on the floor of the surrounding harbor.



### Hippocrates

The ancient Greek doctor Hippocrates is considered to be the father of modern medicine. He took a more scientific approach to help the sick. In his time, many people thought disease could be caused or cured by supernatural forces, like the gods. But Hippocrates believed that illness had natural causes and therefore natural cures. He also wrote the Hippocratic Oath, which contains advice that doctors have been heeding for thousands of years. One of the most famous parts of the Oath reads:

*I will use dietary regiments which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgment, and I will do no harm or injustice to them.*