CHAPTER 8
Ancient Greece

SECTION 1
Geography
And
The Early Greeks
Geography Shapes Greek Civilization

• Greece is a **peninsula**.

• It's is mountainous & **rocky**.

• There are a few valley and flat coastal plains for **farming**.
Mountains and Settlements

• Greek communities saw themselves as separate countries.

• Most communities were along the coast.

• Those that were inland were separated by the mountains.
Seas & Ships

• The early Greeks turned to the seas to for food & trading.

• The Greeks were skilled shipbuilders & sailors.

• They traveled to places such as Egypt & present-day Turkey.
Trading Cultures Develop

- The two earliest Greek cultures that developed were the Minoans and Mycenaeans.

- The Minoans built their society on the island of Crete.

- The Mycenaeans built theirs on the Greek mainland.
The Minoans

• Since the Minoans lived on an island, they spent much of their time at sea.

• It’s location was perfect for traders, but it was also dangerous.
The Minoans

• In the 1600s BC, a huge volcano erupted just south of Crete.

• It caused a giant wave that flooded much of the island.
The Minoans

• The eruption threw up huge clouds of ash, ruining crops and burying cities.

• Historians think this is what led to the end of their civilization.
The Mycenaeans

• They lived in the place that is now **Greece**.

• Historians do not consider the Minoans Greek because they did not speak the Greek **language**.

• Historians consider the Mycenaeans to be the first Greek people.
The Mycenaeans

- The Mycenaeans built **fortresses** all over the Greek mainland.
- The Minoan civilization **declined** which allowed the Mycenaeans to take over Crete.
- They set up **colonies** all over Greece and Italy.
The Mycenaeans

- The Mycenaeans often attacked other kingdoms.
- In the 1200s BC, their kingdom began to fall apart.
- The decline was caused by:
  - Invaders from Europe
  - Earthquakes
- After this, Greece slipped into a period called the Dark Age.
Greeks Create City States

- The Greeks of the Dark Ages left no written records.

- After the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization, Greeks banded together in small groups for protection & stability.

- Over time, these groups set up independent city-states.
Greeks Create City States

• The Greek word for city-state is a polis.

• The creation of city-states marks the beginnings of Greece’s classical age.

• A classical age is one that is marked by many great achievements.
Life In A City State

• A Greek city was usually built around a strong fortress.

• The fortress often stood upon a high hill & was called an acropolis.

• The town around the acropolis was surrounded by walls for added protection.
Life In A City State

- Not all residents of the city-states lived inside the city walls.

- In times of war everyone would gather inside the city walls.
Life In A City State

- Life in the city often focused on the marketplace, or agora.

- It was a large open space that served as a trading and meeting place.

- People held both political & religious assemblies in the market.
Life in a City State

• The city-state became the **foundation** of Greek civilization.

• Besides providing security for its people, the city gave them an **identity**.

• People thought of themselves as **residents** of a city, not as Greeks.
City-States and Colonization

• As life became more settled for the Greeks, they started expanding by creating colonies.

• Groups from Greece went to distant lands to set up a colony.

• Once they were set up & independent they became their own city-state.
Patterns of Trade

- Items the Greeks traded:
  - Copper
  - Iron
  - Wine
  - Olive oil