

Section Reading Support AW 48

Ancient Greece, Section 1

The Rise of Greek Civilization

Geography

- Greece is made up of islands and a peninsula made up of peninsulas
- Mountains are a major landform
- Greek islands are tops of mountains
- Only one fifth of the land is good for growing crops
- Greeks were islanders—some lived on real islands, some lived on peninsulas, others lived on land separated by mountains
- Greek communities thought of themselves as different countries
- Each community developed its own customs and beliefs
- There was much fighting among the Greeks

Origins

- Minoans on Crete developed a sea trade network and a vibrant culture, then declined in the middle of the 1400s B.C.
- After the Mycenaean came to power, focus moved to the mainland
- Around 1400 B.C., the Mycenaean controlled the Aegean Sea and parts of the Mediterranean Sea
- Mycenaean wrote and spoke an early form of modern Greek
- Mycenaean conquered others
- During Dark Ages, writing forgotten
- Family farms developed into villages

Government

- Around 750 B.C. villages joined together to form city-states with their own governments and laws
- Most city-states were controlled by aristocrats
- Middle classes eventually took over government of the city-states
- Around 594 B.C., Solon reformed the laws of Athens
- Athens became the leading democracy of the ancient world
- Only men with Athenian parents could be citizens in Athens