

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

Athenian Democracy

Historical Context:

Athens had tried other forms of government before it developed into a democracy. Solon, an achron famous for his wisdom, greatly aided in the growth of democracy. He improved Athenian government through the 570's. By the 5th century BCE, most male citizens of Athens could participate firsthand in making major decisions. Such a government was called a direct democracy.

Document #1: Aristotle, 352 BCE

"In a democracy the poor will have more power than the rich, because there are more of them, and the will of the majority is supreme."

Document #2: Pericles' Funeral Oration from Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, 431 BCE

"Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. Our government does not copy our neighbors', but is an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while there exists equal justice to all and alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognized; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit....As for education, the enemy subjects their children from their earliest boyhood to the most laborious training in manly courage. We, with our unrestricted way of life, are just as ready to face the dangers as they are."

Document #3: Athens, 450 BCE

Adult male citizens with the power to vote.....	40,000
Citizens without political power.....	80,000
Foreign born residents of Athens.....	80,000
Slaves.....	250,000
Total Population-----	450,000

*Citizens were considered to be only male, property owners

Document #4: Plato, *The Republic*, 327 BCE

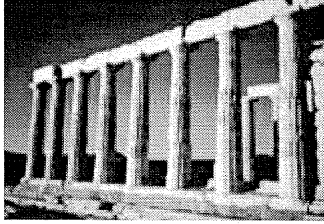
"We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as harmless, but as useless character."

1. Based on Documents 1-3, was everyone included in Athenian democracy?
2. What groups were excluded?
3. Based on this information, was Athens truly democratic? Explain your answer



4. Based on Document #4, under what circumstances were men considered useless? Why?

Spotlight: Analyzing Athenian Democracy



Among the enduring contributions of the Greek empire to Western society is the foundation of democratic society. But what did the development of Athenian democracy actually involve?

Task

1. Form groups of two.
2. One partner will read article 1, other partner will read article two.
3. Answer the following questions based on the articles. Please note that some of the questions are addressed in both articles, while some questions are only addressed in one of the articles.
4. Individually, student should complete the Critical Reflection and upload paragraph to the class web page.

Article	Title	Article
1	Critics and Critiques of Athenian Democracy	http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/greeks/greekcritics_01.shtml
2	The Democratic Experiment	http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/greeks/greekdemocracy_01.shtml

Questions (Pairs)

1. Describe the characteristics of Athenian democracy.
2. What are the major criticisms of Athenian democracy?
3. What was 'tyranny'? Was Athenian democracy effective in eliminating tyranny in ancient Greece? Explain.
4. What was the policy of ostracism? Was this effective? Why or why not?
5. How did Greek philosophers view democracy? Explain.
6. What are the major similarities between Athenian democracy and modern democracy?

Critical Reflection (Individually)

Based on the two articles and discussion with your partner, what is your assessment of the effectiveness and validity of democracy in Athens? The critical reflection must be completed individually.

Level Four (80–100%)	Level Three (70–79%)	Level Two (60–69%)	Level One (50–59%)
<p>✓The paragraph uses critical thinking skills with a high degree of effectiveness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ including a topic sentence that clearly establishes a point of view ❑ supporting arguments with sound historical evidence ❑ ensuring that each reference to the government systems clearly and effectively supports the point of view set out in the topic sentence 	<p>✓The paragraph uses critical thinking skills with considerable effectiveness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ including a topic sentence that attempts to establish a point of view ❑ supporting arguments with historical evidence ❑ ensuring that each reference to government systems makes a connection to the point of view set out in the topic sentence 	<p>✓The paragraph uses critical thinking skills with some degree of effectiveness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ including a topic sentence, but point of view is not clear ❑ supporting arguments with some historical evidence ❑ ensuring that some connection is made 	<p>✓The paragraph uses critical thinking skills with a limited degree of effectiveness by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ not including a topic sentence ❑ supporting arguments with limited historical evidence ❑ making limited connection