



# Aegean Adaptability: Geography and the Ancient Greeks

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**Grade Level** 6  
**Duration** 2 class periods

## National Standards

### GEOGRAPHY

#### Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

#### Essential Element 4: Human Systems

9. The characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

10. The characteristics, distribution and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics

11. The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on the Earth's surface

#### Element 5: Environment and Society

15. How physical systems affect human systems.

## AZ Standards

### ELA

#### Reading

#### Key Ideas and Details

**6.RI.1** Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

#### Writing

#### Text Types and Purposes

#### 6.W.2

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Establish and maintain a formal style.

## Arizona Social Science Standards

**The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.**

**6.G1.1** Use and construct maps, graphs, and other representations to explain relationships between locations of places and regions. Key concepts include major landforms and water bodies, countries, cities, ecosystems, climate, languages, religion, economic systems, governmental systems, population patterns, disease, trade routes, and settlement patterns

**Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.**

**6.G2.1** Compare diverse ways people or groups of people have impacted, modified, or adapted to the environment of the Eastern Hemisphere. Key concepts include but are not limited to hunter-gatherer communities, human settlement, Neolithic Revolution, irrigation and farming, domestication of animals, and influence of climate and seasons

**Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.**

**6.G3.1** Analyze how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas. Key concepts include but are not limited to language, land and sea transportation and trade routes

### HISTORY

**The development of civilizations, societies, cultures, and innovations have influenced history and continue to impact the modern world.**

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### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

**6.W.9** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

6.H1.1 Compare the development and characteristics of historical cultures and civilizations from different global regions within designated time periods.  
6.H1.2 Explain the causes and effects of interactions between cultures and civilizations. Key concepts include but are not limited to trade, competition, warfare, slavery, serfdom, innovations, and contributions.

## Overview

The early Greeks had limited resources and adapted to their natural environment. Living on an infertile, rugged, mountainous land, which offered few natural resources, the Greeks took to the sea. They became fishers, sailors, and merchants of the sea, trading with civilizations as far away as Egypt.

## Purpose

In this lesson, students will analyze how the rugged geography of the land challenged the ancient Greeks. Students will explain how the environment caused the ancient Greeks to become sea traders.

## Materials

- National Geographic's Reading Expeditions, *Civilizations Past to Present, Greece* (a class set would be nice, but at least 6 books)
- The Geography of Greece Handout 1
- Cause and Effect Handout 2
- Ancient Greece Writing Prompt & Checklist Handout 3
- Picture books on Greece or web sites with images to demonstrate Greece's rugged, mountainous terrain and harbor-filled coastlines

## Objectives

The student will be able to:

- evaluate how geography affected the early people of ancient Greece.
- identify the causes that led Greeks to become seafarers.
- analyze a reading selection for cause and effect.
- write a summary describing how the land's limited resources caused the early Greeks to rely on the sea.

## Procedures

### SESSION ONE

1. Students read pages 6 and 7 in National Geographic's Reading Expeditions, "Civilizations Past to Present, Greece."
2. Begin a discussion about the unchanging geography of Greece using the physical maps on pages 6 and 7. If picture books or Internet sources are available, share actual photos of the rugged terrain. Ask the following questions: *What do the physical features of the map tell you about Greece's land? How could such an environment affect human life? What things did the early Greeks do to survive and to meet their basic needs?*
3. Distribute copies of The Geography of Greece Handout 1 and ask students to read it to themselves. Model for the class how to highlight/underline key points. Explain that this is a pre-writing strategy that will enable students to remember main ideas and significant details for the summary writing assignment.
4. Distribute copies of Cause and Effect Handout 2 to students. Instruct students to analyze Handout 1 for cause and effect by completing the worksheet.

### SESSION TWO

5. Distribute copies of Ancient Greece Writing Prompt & Checklist Handout 3 to students. Go over the writing prompt and checklist, discussing the criteria for the summary writing assignment. Explain that the summary will be graded in the areas of Organization, Ideas & Content, and Conventions (punctuation).

## Assessment

Summaries are assessed with the Simplified Writing Traits Rubric in the areas of Ideas & Content, Organization, and Conventions, specifically punctuation. A score of 4 or higher indicates mastery level for the particular writing trait.

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### Extensions

Even though Greece is a small country, its merchant fleet ranks high in total tonnage compared to other nations. Have students research modern Greece's shipping industry.

Venn Diagram the similarities and differences between the ancient Greeks and one of the river valley civilizations (Egyptian, Mesopotamian, or Chinese).

### Source

National Geographic's Reading Expeditions Series,  
*Civilizations Past to Present, Greece*  
Order # JK41204