

Name: _____

Date: _____

Persia

Wars were common among the poli of ancient Greece, but many of the city-states united in a league to vanquish a common enemy. Persia was a powerful empire from the east that attempted to conquer the Greek peninsula. The victorious Greeks developed a sense of confidence that led to an era we now call the Classical Age of Greece.

In 499BCE, The Persians conquered a group of Greek speaking city-states in Ionia. Ionia is east of the Greek peninsula in Asia Minor, land that is now part of the modern nation of Turkey. Athens aided the Ionians in a successful rebellion against the Persians. Athenian soldiers used a battle formation called a phalanx. In a phalanx, heavily armed soldiers held overlapping shields that protected the soldiers on either side. The phalanx required soldiers to depend on one another for their safety, so Athenian warriors fought as a unit instead of as individuals. The well-trained Athenian phalanx helped the Ionians repel the Persians from Ionian land.

King Darius of Persia swore revenge on Athens. In 490BC, Persian ships carried their warriors to Marathon, a flat plain twenty-six miles from Athens. The Persians planned to use Marathon as a base from which to attack Athens, but a spy alerted the Athenians. The outnumbered Athenian army marched through the night to make a surprise attack at dawn. The frightened Persians fled to their ships and retreated from Greece.

The surprise victory over the powerful Persians was the cause for a great celebration. A messenger named Pheidippides ran to Athens without stopping to announce Athens' surprise victory at Marathon, but the runner died from exhaustion shortly after gasping out his news. A modern marathon is a foot race that is named in honor of Pheidippides' run. Modern marathons are exactly 26 miles, 385 yards. This is the distance Pheidippides is believed to have run.

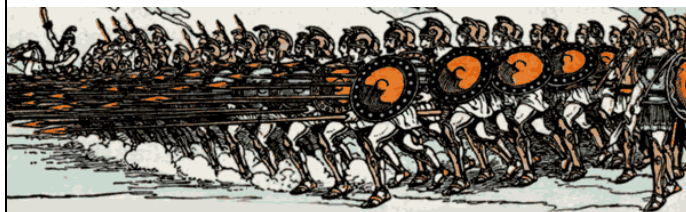
Ten years after the Persian retreat at Marathon, Darius' son, Xerxes, prepared for another invasion of Greece. Xerxes sent about

200,000 soldiers and 800 ships to fight the Greeks at the Battle of Salamis in 480BCE. The Persian king watched from a mountaintop as the Greeks again managed to destroy more than 200 ships and kill 20,000 sailors. Xerxes was so enraged that he beheaded the few Persian captains who were able to escape the wrath of the Greek armies.

Athens had twice resisted the most powerful empire in the world, but Athens was certain that Persia would make another attempt to conquer Greece. Athens asked all of the Greek poli to meet on the island of Delios where the poli formed an alliance known as the Delian League. Each member of the Delian League would contribute soldiers, ships and money to fight the Persians.

The Delian League used its powers first to punish the poli that supported Persia in the past. Then, the combined forces of the league conquered the remaining Persian territories in Ionia. The united Greeks no longer feared the Persians because the Greeks had enough military power to fend off the powerful empire in the east.

Historians call the period the followed the Greek victories over the Persians the Classical Age of Greece. During the classical age, artists, poets, sculptors and architects developed a culture that was unique to Greece. Sparta and Athens were the two most powerful poli of the Classical Age. Sparta was a disciplined military power that discouraged traveling and visitors. Athens was a port city whose merchant ships from Athens traveled throughout the Mediterranean Sea. In time, the rivalry between Sparta and Athens would lead of the end of the Classical Era.



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*This is a higher order learning question. You must answer the question to the best of your ability, but any reasonable answer will be graded as correct.

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Fill in the Blanks

Greece was a collection of c__t__s__a__es known as poli that shared a common l__n__u__ge and *r__l__g__on. The poli often fought one another, but the poli unified when Persia captured Greek-speaking city-states in Ionia. A Greek army led by A__h__ns used a military f__r__a__i__n called the p__a__a__x. In a phalanx, heavily a__m__d soldiers held overlapping s__i__l__s. By fighting as a unit instead of as i__d__v__d__al soldiers, the p__a__a__x was able to fend off the P__r__i__ns.

King D__r__us sent a P__r__ian fleet to Marathon to begin an i__v__s__on of Greece, but a surprise attack from Athens forced the Persian back to their ships. Ten years later, the s__n of K____ Darius sent a stronger force, but A__h__ns defeated the Persians in the B__t__le of S__l__m__s. Fearing another Persian invasion, Athens asked the other poli form an a__l__a__ce called the Delian L__a__ue. The combined forced of the D__l__an alliance made the Greek poli a powerful force. The years that followed the Greek *v__c__o__i__s over Persia became known as the C__a__s__c__l Age. During the classical Age, a__t__s__s and p__e__s developed a c__l__u__e that was u__i__ue to Greece.

Answer in complete sentences

*1. Why does the author suggest that Athens assisted the Ionian rebellion against Persia?

*2. Why was the phalanx the most powerful military formation of the ancient world?

3. Why are modern Marathon races exactly 26 miles, 385 yards?

*4. How did the Delian League make Greece more powerful?

*5. According to the last paragraph, explain why Athens was able to develop a powerful navy.

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