

Greece The Persian Wars Activity

Charting the Course of War

Instructions: Use your reading and classroom notes to complete these charts about the Persian Wars. When done, be sure to check your answers and add details you may have missed.

Timeline	499 BCE - 477 BCE
<p>Causes for the Persian Wars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through its sea trade Greece had established colonies throughout the Mediterranean region. • Rulers from Cyrus the Great to Darius expand the Persian Empire. By 500 BC the Persian Empire stretched from India in the East to North Africa. The Empire also included Anatolia, modern day Turkey, an area the Greeks had previously colonized.. • By this time, the Persians had conquered and were ruling the Greek Colonies in Turkey • In 499 BC, Greeks in Anatolia revolted against Persian rule and Athens sent troops and ships to help them • The Persians won that battle but did not forgive Athens for interfering • Under the rule of Darius, in 490 BC, • Persia, attacked Greece by water and landed • on the Marathon plain
<p>Major Players</p>	<p>Persians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darius - attacked at Marathon in 490 • Xerxes (Darius's son) - Wages all out campaign against a union of Greek City States led by Athens and Sparta <p>Athenians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themistocles - commands the Greek navy <p>Spartans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leonidas - leads 300 Spartans at Thermopylae

Important Battles - Marathon

Marathon

- Darius, angered over the involvement of Athens in a revolt on Persian land, sails for Greece in 490 BC, ready to attack
- Seeing Persian ships off the coast, the Greeks send a herald named Phidipedes to Sparta to ask for Spartan assistance in defending Greece. The Spartans begin a religious festival the next day and don't send any help.
- The Greeks lure the Persians into close, hand to hand combat where their metal armor and long-shaft spears are more effective against the Persian's leather armor and their arrows
- The smaller Greek force defeats the mighty Persians and Darius retreats
- Phidipedes runs the 26 miles to Athens to share the news of the great Greek victory. Upon arrival, he collapses, dies and gives birth to the modern "marathon," which is still a distance of just over 26 miles.

Important Battles - Thermopylae

Thermopylae

- In 480 BC the Persians, led by Darius's son, Xerxes, plan another attack on Greece. Xerxes puts together such a large force that his troops must take an overland route to reach Athens.
- In order to reach Athens, the Persians must march through a narrow mountain pass at Thermopylae
- Despite regularly battling among themselves, this time Greek city-states unite against the Persian threat. Chief among Athens' allies are the Spartans who are charged with stopping the Persians at Thermopylae.
- Leonidas leads 300 Spartans against the massive Persian force. They battle the Persians for two days before the last Spartan dies in battle.
- Despite the Spartan loss, by delaying the Persians, the Athenians have time to evacuate their city and prepare for the Persian attack.
- With Athens empty, the Persians burn the city to the ground.

<p style="text-align: center;">Important Battles - Salamis</p>	<p>Salamis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salamis is an island in a gulf near Athens. • The Greek naval fleet totaling about 300 ships retreated there to assist with the evacuation of Athens. • Greeks consult the Oracle at Delphi. The Oracle tells them "many mothers' sons will die" in their battle with Persia. It also says, however, that the Greeks can win behind a "wall of wood." • Greek leader, Themistocles, interprets the "wall of wood" to mean the ships of the Greek navy. • Xerxes is so confident in his powerful navy that he has a chair set up on a cliff overlooking the Bay so that he can watch with amusement as his navy slaughters the Greek force. • At Salamis Themistocles uses a force of 300 small Greek ships to defeat a Persian naval force of over 600 ships and loses over 400 of those ships in battle. Humiliated again (!), the Persians begin a long retreat and by the 477 BCE have fought their last battles against the Greeks
<p style="text-align: center;">Outcomes of the Persian Wars</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pericles becomes the leader of Athens and commands the rebuilding of Athens. At the same time he is rebuilding the city he enlarges its navy and turns the city state of Athens into an empire. • For Pericles, the Persian wars offer the lesson that if one possesses ability and ambition one can achieve great things. Pericles uses this lesson to reshape society in Athens. • Under Pericles, "Western Culture" is born. • Think of how different America would be today if Persia had been victorious. In very many ways, this is still the American ideal – a good idea and hard work will lead to success. 	<p>Delian League</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the defeat of the Persians, in 477 BC Athens assembles a "league" of other Greek city-states to guard against any future threat by the Persians. The league is headquartered on the island of Delos. • In order to pay for their combined protection, League members each contribute fees to the league treasury • Athens is the largest contributor to the league and, therefore, moves the league treasury to Athens. <p>The Rise of Athens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Delian League treasury now on Athenian soil, Athenian leaders regularly raid the bank to pay for rebuilding Athens after the Persian wars. <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Resentment grows among other league members, but by raiding the bank Athens gets even stronger and becomes a superpower able to dictate policy on its terms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much of the money is used by Pericles to rebuild the Acropolis. He turns the Acropolis into a complex of temples dedicated to Athena and honoring the gods • This leads to resentment among League members and, eventually, Sparta forms a <i>confederation</i> of city-states that fight together to overthrow Athens. These conflicts are called the Peloponnesian Wars. <p>The Golden Age of Greece</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With its increased wealth and numerous rebuilding projects, Athens attracts engineers, scientists, artists, writers and career politicians and transforms itself into the intellectual and artistic center of the Mediterranean.