

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 7-1**

**The Early Greeks** *For use with pages 336–343*

**Content Vocabulary**

**peninsula:** a body of land with water on three sides (page 337)  
**polis:** a Greek city-state (page 341)  
**agora:** an open area used for a market and meeting place (page 341)  
**colony:** settlement in a new territory that stays closely linked to its homeland (page 343)

**Drawing From Experience**

What if generations of your family lived along the coast? Chances are good that your father was a fisherman—or your grandfather fixed boats for a living.

Geography would influence their way of life.

In this section, you will learn how geography determined the rise and spread of the early Greek kingdoms.

**Organizing Your Thoughts**

Use the following 4 W’s and an H chart to track how geography influenced the early Minoans and Mycenaeans. Use details from the text to help you fill in each blank.

**WH6.4** Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Ancient Greece.  
 Focuses on:  
**WH6.4.1, WH6.4.2**

<b>Early Greeks</b>	<b>Minoans</b>	<b>Mycenaeans</b>
WHO were they?	<b>1.</b>	<b>6.</b>
WHERE did they live?	<b>2.</b>	<b>7.</b>
WHAT geographical features shaped their land?	<b>3.</b>	<b>8.</b>
HOW did geography influence them?	<b>4.</b>	<b>9.</b>
WHY did their kingdom fall?	<b>5.</b>	<b>10.</b>

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 7-1 (continued)**

**The Geography of Greece** (page 337)

**Main Idea** The geography of Greece influenced where people settled and what they did.

Greece is a **peninsula**—land with water on three sides. The Ionian Sea is in the west. The Aegean Sea is in the east. The Mediterranean Sea is in the south. In these waters are hundreds of islands. The islands are covered with mountain ridges, hills, and forests. This geography helped shape Greek history.

The nearby sea led many ancient Greeks to fish or build boats. Others sailed across the sea to trade goods with other lands. The nearby mountains and rocky soil made farming a challenge. However, warm, mild weather made it possible to grow wheat, barley, olives, and grapes.

Greece’s seas and mountains also shaped its society. They divided the land. Early Greek communities became isolated from each other. But this made them stronger. They became independent.

11. Name two ways that the sea influenced early Greeks and their societies.

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**The Minoans** (page 338)

**Main Idea** The Minoans earned their living by building ships and trading.

The island of Crete lies southeast of the Greek mainland. In 1900, a British archaeologist named Arthur Evans went there. In Knossos, he uncovered the ruins of a Minoan palace. The Minoans had developed the first civilization in the region. This palace had once been the center of Minoan life. Its ruins had private rooms for the royal family, bathrooms, storerooms, and workshops.

<b>Academic Vocabulary</b>
<b>region:</b> broad geographical area (p. 338)

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The Minoans used the oak and cedar trees from the forests of Crete. They built wooden ships that could sail as far as Egypt and Syria.

Minoan traders left port with pottery and stone vases. They returned with ivory and metals. Their island location worked well. They could control trade on the Mediterranean Sea.

By 2000 B.C., Minoan society was thriving. But by 1450 B.C., it had collapsed. Historians disagree about what caused the downfall. Some think undersea earthquakes crushed Minoan cities under giant waves. Others believe invaders from the mainland caused the destruction.

12. What helped the Minoans become great traders?

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**The First Greek Kingdoms** (pages 339–340)

**Main Idea** Mycenaeans built the first Greek kingdoms and spread their power across the Mediterranean region.

The Mycenaeans first came from central Asia. In 1900 B.C., they invaded the Greek mainland and conquered its people.

**What Were Mycenaean Kingdoms Like?** In the late 1800s B.C., the ruins of a walled palace were discovered in Mycenae. Long ago, a palace stood at the center of each Mycenaean kingdom. Built on a hill, each palace lay near farms and estates. These lands belonged to the nobles. Slaves and farmers lived there. The palace was home to artisans, government officials, and civic life.

**Power From Trade and War** Minoan traders soon visited Mycenae from Crete. The Mycenaeans learned much about Minoan culture. They learned bronze-working, ship-building, navigation, and religion. Around 1400 B.C., they replaced the Minoans as the major power on the

<p><b>Academic Vocabulary</b></p> <p><b>culture:</b> particular form or style of a society (p. 339)</p>
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**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 7-1 (continued)**

Mediterranean. However, 300 years later, earthquakes and in-fighting destroyed their civilization.

**What Was the Dark Age?** Between 1100 B.C. and 750 B.C. was the Dark Age. Farmers grew only enough to feed their families, so there was no surplus food. Poverty set in. Overseas trade slowed down. Craft skills died out. Teachers stopped teaching. And Greeks forgot their written language.

<p><b>Academic Vocabulary</b></p> <p><b>overseas:</b> across the sea or ocean (p. 340)</p>
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During the Dark Age, thousands of Greeks moved to islands in the Aegean Sea. Still others moved to Asia Minor, to what is now Turkey. This expanded Greek culture.

Meanwhile, people known as Dorians invaded Greece. They settled on the Peloponnesus peninsula. The Dorians brought iron weapons. Greeks had used bronze, but iron was stronger and cheaper. The Dorians gave Greece more advanced technology.

Over time, Greek farmers grew more food. Traders came into contact with new ways of writing. The idea for a Greek alphabet came from the Phoenicians to the east. The new, simpler alphabet helped the Greeks revive reading, writing, and storytelling.

- 13.** Name two positive changes that occurred during Greece’s Dark Age.

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**The Polis** (pages 341–342)

**Main Idea** The idea of citizenship developed in Greek city-states.

By the end of the Dark Age, Greek society had changed. Instead of kingdoms, there were city-states. Each city-state, or **polis**, was made up of a town and its nearby area. Each polis had an acropolis, or main gathering place. The fortified acropolis sat on a hill. It

**READING ESSENTIALS AND STUDY GUIDE 7-1 (continued)**

could also be a religious center. Each polis also had an **agora**. This open area below the acropolis was a market and a meeting place.

**What Was Greek Citizenship?** The Greeks were the first to develop the idea of citizenship. Each Greek city-state was run by its citizens or members of a political community who treated each other as equals and who had rights and responsibilities.

<b>Academic Vocabulary</b>
<b>community:</b> a group of people with common interests and shared rights (p. 341)

In ancient Greece, only free, native-born men who owned land could be citizens. Some city-states, such as Athens, dropped the land-owning requirement. Still, slaves and foreign-born residents were excluded. Women and children could qualify for citizenship. However, they had no citizens' rights. Citizens could choose officials and pass laws, vote, hold office, own property, and defend themselves in court.

**Citizens as Soldiers** Greek citizenship also included certain duties. Each citizen had to serve in government. They also had to fight for their polis as citizen-soldiers. Since the rise of city-states, wars were no longer waged by nobles riding horses and chariots. By 700 B.C., each polis depended on an army of citizen-soldiers called hoplites.

Hoplites fought on foot. Each soldier had a shield, a short sword, and a spear. They went into battle in rows. They used their shields as one long protective wall.

Hoplites made good soldiers because they were citizens. They took pride in fighting for their own city-states. However, this "hometown" loyalty caused division and distrust among Greeks as a whole.

14. How was citizenship in ancient Greece different from citizenship as we know it today?

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