

HISTORY

Introduction – Paragraph 1

As historians, we have evidence that the Ancient Greeks held drama in high esteem. Drama featured in religious festivals, city state celebrations and decorations and has stood the test of time. Not only this, the theatres themselves were huge arenas and welcomed thousands of people from all over Athens and beyond. I will now expand on each of my key points.

Paragraph 2 – legacy

Ancient Greek drama has stood the test of time.

- surviving texts
- inscriptions
- archaeological evidence

Paragraph 3 – theatre

- Open air
- Could seat up to 14,000 people
- Tiered seating so that everyone had a good view
- The altar had prime position, this was in honour of Dionysus.

What evidence do we have from antiquity that the Ancient Greeks held drama in high esteem?

Paragraph 4 – the playwrights

Aeschylus – won the Festival of Dionysus

Sophocles – backdrop

Euripides – love/drama genre

Aristophanes – nonsense words/comedies

Paragraph 5 – The Festival of Dionysus

- Held annually in March
- People travelled from all over the Greek world
- Procession for Dionysus
- Each playwright had one day to stage three tragedies and one satyr play
- The winner had their name inscribed on the wall of the theatre.

Conclusion: The Ancient Greeks viewed drama as a way of expressing themselves and their political beliefs on stage. Thousands of people would gather to enjoy comedies, tragedies and satyr plays in their large, elaborate theatres. Many aspects of Ancient Greek theatre are still seen on stage today, for example the use of backdrops and the importance of the chorus in entertaining the audience.