

# HISTORY

## Lesson 4: Ancient Greek Democracy



### LEARN

#### How did the election and voting system work in Ancient Greece?

The Assembly was open to all and voting was made by a show of hands. Random lotteries decided who took their place as members of the Council and Jurors within the popular courts. Random lotteries meant that both rich and poor had the same chance of being elected and that wealthy men could not get away with blackmailing others to earn their political position.



### YOUR TASK

#### Questions to consider:

1. Who made decisions before democracy was introduced?
2. Who introduced a system of democracy or 'demokratia' in Ancient Athens?
3. What was the role of the Assembly in Ancient Athens?
4. Why did the Boule (Council) hold so much power?
5. What were the benefits of using a random lottery to distribute political roles?



### LEARN

#### Who was involved in Ancient Greek politics?

Free men who were classed as Athenian citizens are allowed to vote in Ancient Athens. A woman's place in society depended on the standing of her husband and father. Women were not viewed as citizens and were absent from the democratic system. This meant that they could not have a say in any political decisions that were made. Women were not the only people who were excluded from political roles in Ancient Athens:

Slaves

Foreigners (even if they lived in Athens and contributed to their society)

Children (up until the age of 13)



### YOUR TASK

**Discussion:** Do you think women in Ancient Athens should have been given their right to vote?

Children in Ancient Athens were considered to be adults at the age of 13. This meant that boys who were classed as citizens of Athens would have been able to vote at this age.

**Discussion:**

What is the minimum age for voting in the UK? 16,18,21.

Do you think the minimum age should be lowered? Explain your reasoning.

## Ancient Democracy vs. Modern day democracy



### YOUR TASK

How democratic were the Ancient Greeks? Do you think their election and voting systems were fair?

Consider how we elect School Councilors, Eco Councilors and House Captains in school.

How do we make sure that this is democratic?

Do you think it would be fair if we used a Random Lottery to decide who won the role?

What would be the

Advantages

Disadvantages?



### LEARN

The introduction of democracy in Athens was one of the most important contributions the Ancient Greeks made to the way we live our lives today. Women were not part of the political picture in Athens. Elsewhere, however, women were viewed quite differently.

## Women of Sparta

Sparta was a Greek city-state. It is known throughout history as being a rival city-state of Athens. Both populations were constantly aiming to be the most powerful force. Sparta is perhaps most well-known for its military academy or **agoge**. Spartan boys were sent here for training from a very young age because warfare was seen as a sign of strength and power in Sparta.

Women in Sparta, unlike the women of Athens, were offered a public education. Although educated, Spartan women were unable to use their knowledge to earn money or pursue a career.

Some Spartan women owned land! The city-state of Sparta gave out land to women and their families as part of a statewide initiative. Women owning land was completely unheard of in Athens.

Spartan women are famous for their love of athletics and training. They were given the same rights as Spartan men here and they were able to exercise outdoors. As well as training, Spartan women often took part in athletics events! In contrast to this, Athenian women rarely left their household unless they were with their husbands or fathers.

Spartan law said that Spartan women should be able to reproduce and raise a family. It is often thought that they were given these exercise privileges as a way for them to stay fit and healthy so that they could raise their children.