**The Westminster School, Dubai**

**ATHENS**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Learning Bay: \_\_\_\_**



Athens was the largest and most powerful Greek state. It was a city with lots of beautiful public buildings and shops.

The people of Athens lived below the Acropolis (rocky hill). The marble Parthenon, a temple, was built on the highest part of the Acropolis. Inside the Parthenon, there stood a large gold and ivory statue of the city's protector-goddess Athena. It is also known that the city got its name from Athena, the goddess of wisdom and courage.

Athens did not have a king; it was ruled by the people as a Democracy. The people of Athens chose their ruler by voting.

They held a large meeting on the slopes of a hill in Athens where any citizen could speak, and tell the government what it should be doing. This was called the Assembly, and there had to be at least 6,000 citizens at every Assembly.

Citizens also voted to get rid of politicians they did not like. They wrote the name of the person they hated on a piece of broken pottery, called an ostrakon. Any politician who got more than 600 votes was banished from the city of 10 years.

Slaves made up about a quarter of the working population on Athens. Some slaves were captured in wars. Others were born slaves.

A few slaves had special skills, such as nurses, teachers, or pottery painters. Most slaves did the hardest and most unpleasant jobs. A lucky slave might save enough money to buy his freedom.

Athens had yearly festivals for athletics, drama and religious occasions. Some laws in Athens were very harsh. Stealing bread or fruit was punishable by death!