

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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# PELOPONNESIAN WAR (ATHENS VERSUS SPARTA)

**Directions:** Read and answer questions 1-3 in complete sentences.

There were many differences between the city-states of Athens and Sparta. For example, Athens had a democratic form of government. Sparta had a culture that glorified military ideals. Both wanted to be the most powerful city-state in the region. This competition led to clashes between the two city-states and their allies. Eventually, Sparta declared war on Athens in 431 B.C.

## Causes of the War

There were three main reasons war broke out. First, some city-states feared Athens because of its grab for power and prestige. Second, under the leadership of Pericles, Athens grew from a city-state to a naval empire. Third, some Athenian settlers began to move into the lands of other city-states.

The other city-states also resented how Athens spent money from the Delian League, intended for the mutual protection of all the city-states. Athens used some of the money to beautify its city. Because of this practice several city-states tried to break free of Athenian power. Pericles' policy was to punish any city-state that resisted Athens.

Sparta headed a league of city-states to stand up to the power of the Delian League. It is called the Peloponnesian League because many of the city-states were located on the Peloponnesus. Finally, in 431 B.C., Sparta declared war on Athens. This conflict was called the Peloponnesian War.

## Question 1: What led Athens and Sparta to fight a war?

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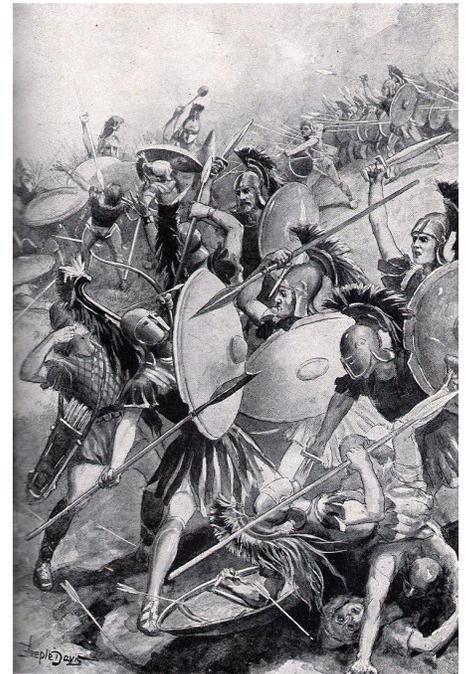
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## Strategies of War

Each side in the war had advantages and disadvantages. Sparta had the better land-based military force, and its location could not be attacked by sea. Athens had the better navy and could strike Sparta's allies by sea. These differences shaped the war strategy of each side.

Sparta's strategy was to cut off the Athenian food supply by destroying crops. The Spartans did this by taking control of the countryside around Athens.

Athens' strategy was to avoid battles on land and to rely on sea power. Pericles persuaded the Athenians to allow the Spartans to destroy the countryside. He brought people from the areas surrounding Athens inside the city walls. The people would be safe there and Athens would be supplied with food by sea.

Because of Pericles' plan to bring people into Athens, the city became badly overcrowded. In the second year of the war, an outbreak of a plague took many lives in Athens. The plague was a disease that spread easily and usually caused death. Athens lost as many as one-third of its people and armed forces. Pericles, too, died from the plague.

In 421 B.C., Athens signed a truce, or an agreement to stop fighting. Athens finally surrendered to Sparta in 404 B.C.

**Question 2: What happened during the Peloponnesian War?**

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### **Consequences of War**

The Peloponnesian War lasted for over 27 years. Cities and crops were destroyed, and thousands of Greeks died. All of the Greek city-states suffered losses of economic and military power.

To the north of the Greek city-states, King Philip II of Macedon came to power in 359 B.C. Planning to build an empire, he looked south toward the weakened Greek city-states.

**Question 3: What was the result of the Peloponnesian War?**

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