

The Battle of Marathon

Your knowledge of Athens and Sparta from the previous lesson should come in handy here! Have you ever wondered when the first ever 'marathon' took place? Read on to find out!

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Aim

- I can write an account of the Battle of Marathon from the point of view of a key eye witness.

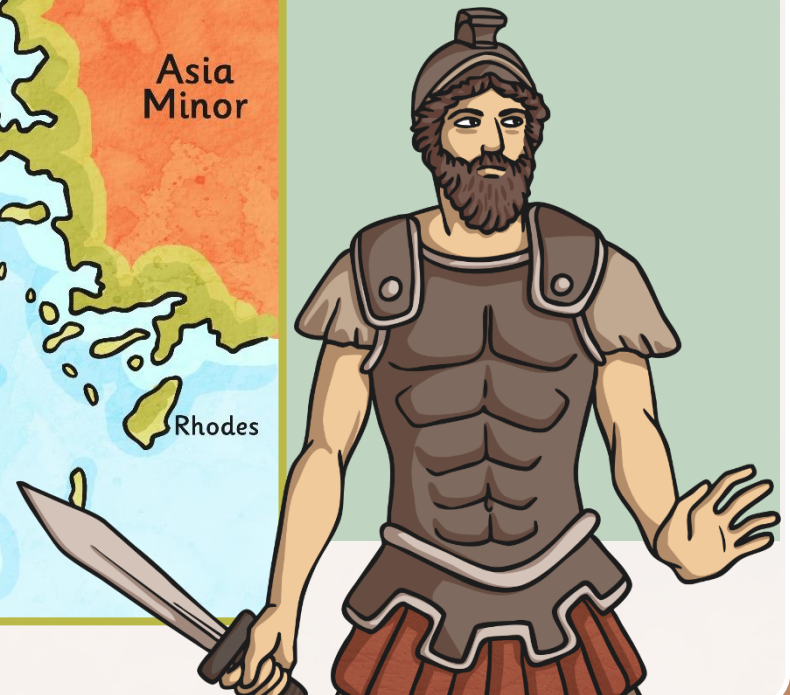
Success Criteria

- I can order events of the Battle of Marathon.
- I can write the events of the Battle of Marathon from the point of view of someone involved in the battle.

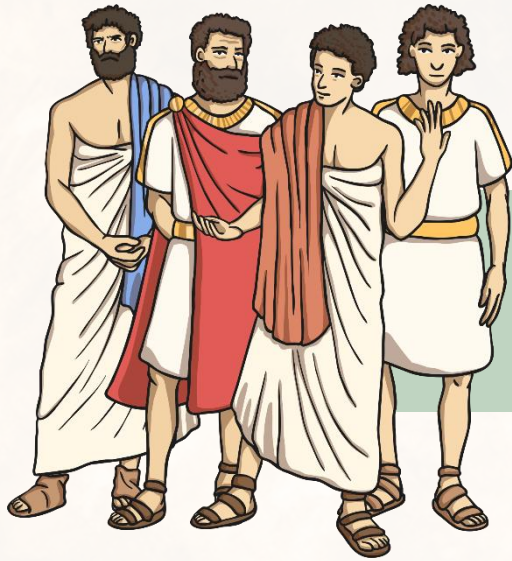
Athens and Sparta



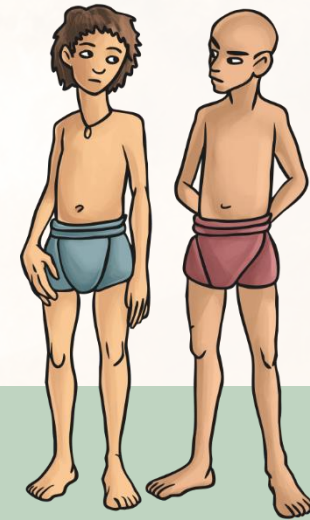
As you know, Athens and Sparta were both Greek city states. They were very different.



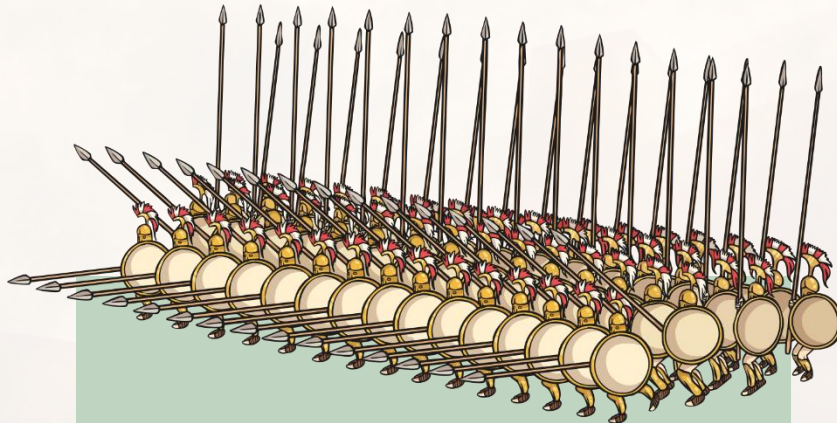
Athens



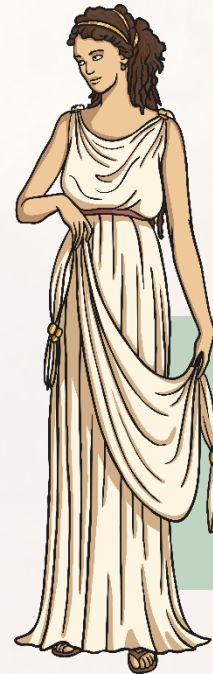
Athens was ruled by a democracy and believed the city should be run fairly.



They believed in education but only for boys.

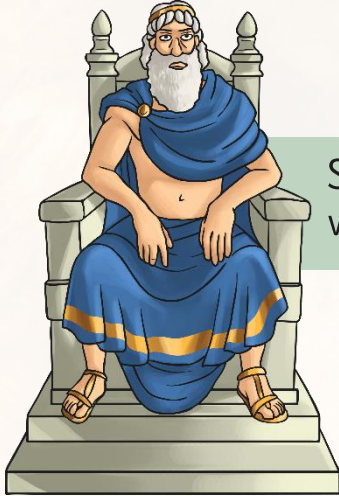


The Athenians wanted to expand their lands which led to many battles.



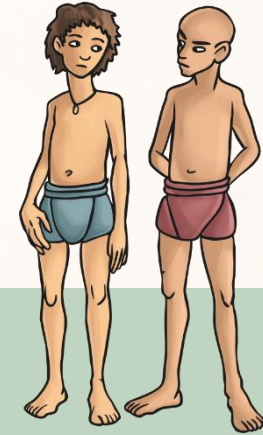
Women and girls didn't have the right to an education and couldn't participate in business. Wealthy girls could be educated at home.

Sparta

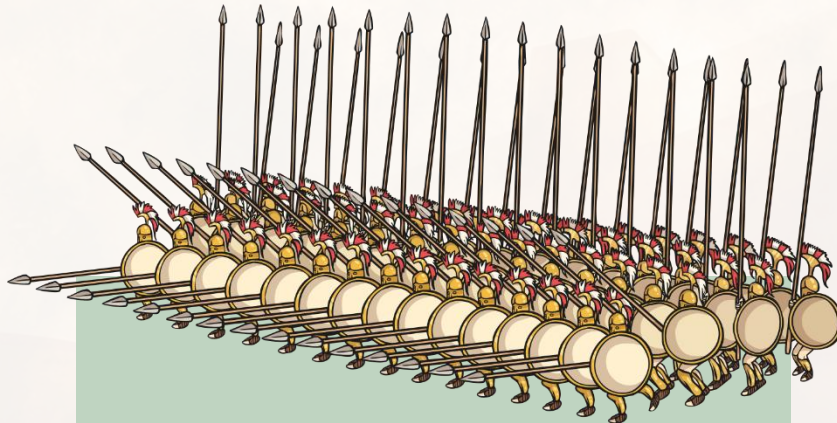


Sparta was ruled by two kings who made all of the decisions.

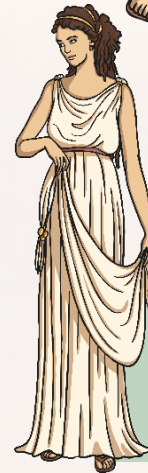
Their army was famous in Ancient Greece because it was so powerful.



Spartans were raised to be in the army. Boys would learn to train from a young age. It was very strict.



Sparta did not try to invade other cities or claim more land.



Women were not allowed to join the army but had to train and had to be fit and healthy.

The Greek and Persian Empires

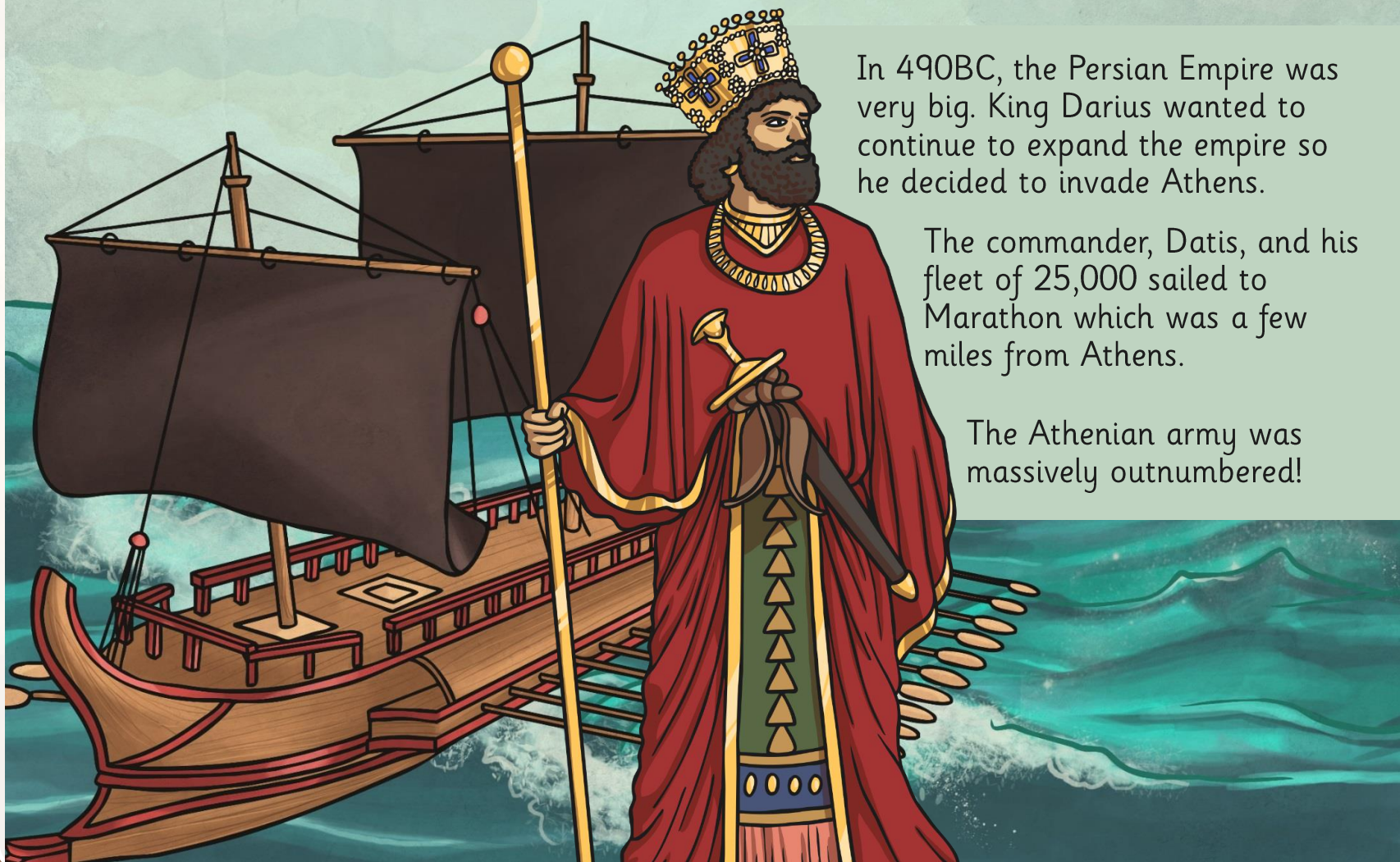


The Battle of Marathon

In 490BC, the Persian Empire was very big. King Darius wanted to continue to expand the empire so he decided to invade Athens.

The commander, Datis, and his fleet of 25,000 sailed to Marathon which was a few miles from Athens.

The Athenian army was massively outnumbered!



Help!

The Athenians needed to ask for help! So they decided to ask the Spartans. Although they often fought against each other, when faced with an outside enemy the Greek city states usually joined forces. The Spartan army was very famous and would have been very useful to the Athenians. They sent a runner, Pheidippides, to Sparta to ask. He ran for 2 days and nights from Athens to Sparta, running 240km in total.

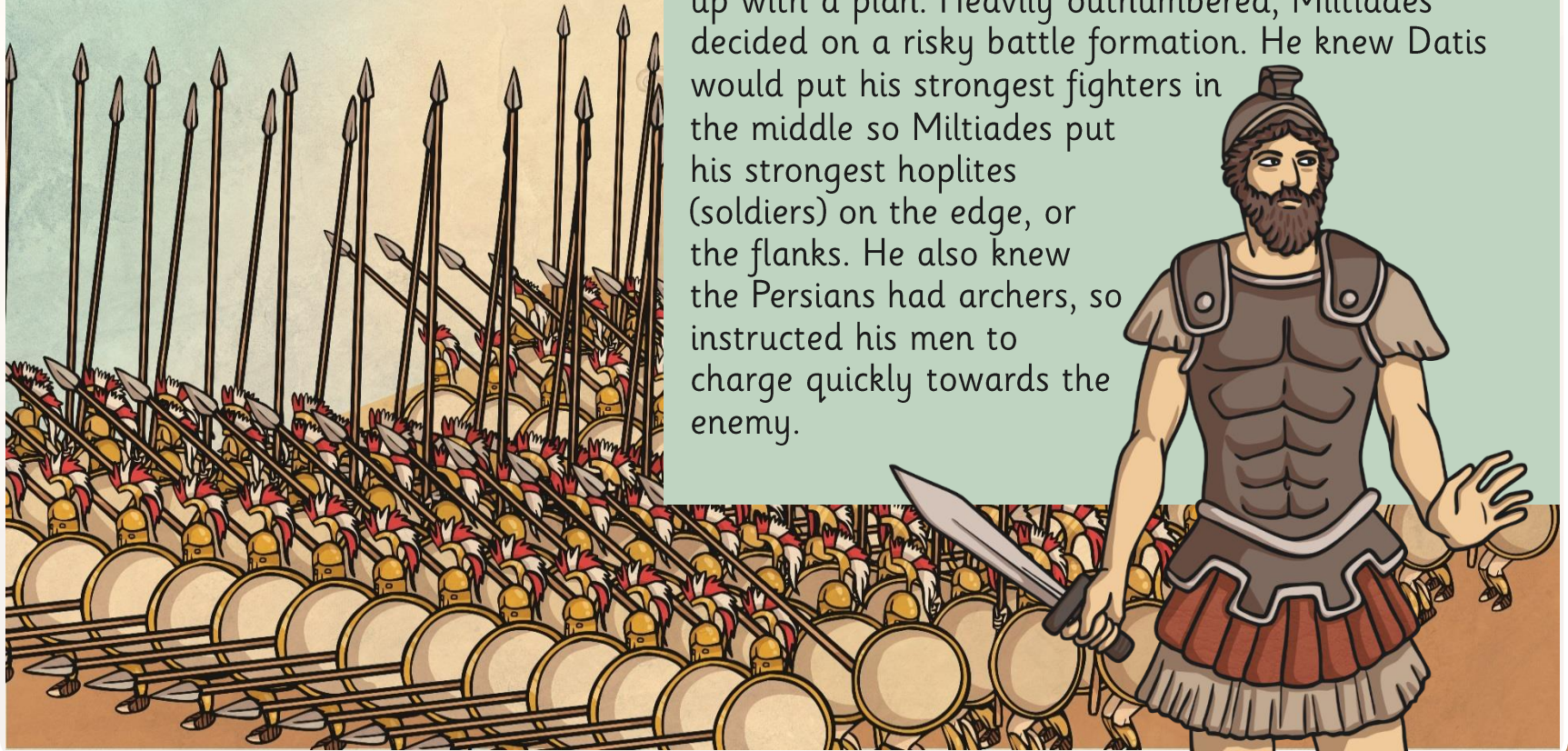
The Spartans were celebrating a festival and so said they would help, only once the festival was over. Pheidippides then ran back to Athens with the news that they would need to wait!



In pairs, role play the conversation between the Athenians and the Spartans. Why didn't the Spartans help? How do the Athenians feel about the Spartans' reason for not helping?

Let Battle Commence!

The Athenian army, led by General Miltiades, tried to wait for the Spartan army but they knew they would have to fight on their own. He had to come up with a plan. Heavily outnumbered, Miltiades decided on a risky battle formation. He knew Datis would put his strongest fighters in the middle so Miltiades put his strongest hoplites (soldiers) on the edge, or the flanks. He also knew the Persians had archers, so instructed his men to charge quickly towards the enemy.





Surprise!

The Persians were shocked at this strategy and Athenian hoplites quickly ran past the line of arrows flying towards them. They charged straight at the Persians! The stronger fighters on the flanks quickly attacked the much weaker Persian soldiers on their flanks. This left the Athenians free to close in and trap the rest of the Persian army.

The remaining Persians then ran away to their ships!

The Persian army lost over 6,000 soldiers compared to only 192 Athenians!

Pheidippides then ran 26 miles to Athens to tell of their victory, and also to warn them of a possible second Persian attack.

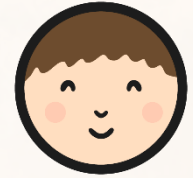
He shouted out:

'Joy to you, we've won!'

As he said these words, he died.



Ordering Events



Can you order this set of events?

Cut and stick the events from the table, putting them in the right order.

Battle of Marathon

Cut out the statements and put them in the correct order.

The Athenians surrounded the Persians. Many Persians died.	The Athenians were not trained fighters but followed orders to run to the Persian army.
Pheidippides arrived in Sparta, but the Spartans refused to help. He then ran 150 miles back to Athens.	The Athenians began to prepare after seeing King Darius' ships approaching.
Pheidippides, who was a runner, was sent to Sparta to ask for help as they were legendary fighters. It took him 2 days.	King Darius of Persia wanted to invade Athens to increase his empire.
6400 Persian soldiers died, while only 192 Athenian soldiers died.	Pheidippides ran all the way back to Athens and the Athenians they had won the battle so sadly died.

Battle of Marathon

Cut out the statements and put them in the correct order.

The Athenians were worried but ran right into the Persian army lines as they were trying a new strategy.	Pheidippides then sadly dies.
Pheidippides' last job was to take the victory message back to Athens. He told the city that they had won the battle.	The Athenians began to prepare after seeing King Darius' ships approaching.
The Persians knew they were losing so completely defeated, they went to Athens to attack the unprotected city. The Athenians managed to get back in time to defend their city.	Pheidippides ran to Sparta and asked for help as they often supported Athens, but Sparta said they could not help for two more days as they were celebrating a religious festival. He ran 150 miles back to Athens to report the news.
The Persians were not prepared for this new strategy. They nearly pushed through the Athenian lines but did not succeed. They lost many soldiers.	Pheidippides ran to Sparta to ask for assistance as the two city states often joined together to fight mutual enemies. It took him 48 hours to run 150 miles to Sparta.
6400 Persian soldiers died, but only 192 Athenians died in the famous battle.	Marathon ready to attack. The much smaller Athenian army waited anxiously for help from their allies, the Spartans. When no help arrived, they had to think of a new plan.
King Darius of Persia wanted to invade Athens to increase his empire.	The Persian soldiers arrived at Marathon.

Ordering Events



Did you put them in the correct order?

King Darius of Persia wanted to invade Athens to increase his empire.	The Persian soldiers arrived at Marathon.	Pheidippides ran to Sparta to ask for assistance as the two city states often joined together to fight mutual enemies. It took him 48 hours to run to Sparta.
Pheidippides ran to Sparta and asked for help as they often supported Athens, but Sparta said they could not help for 2 more days as they were celebrating a festival. He ran back to Athens to report the news.	The much smaller Athenian army waited anxiously for help from their allies, the Spartans. When no help arrived they had to think of a new plan.	The Athenians were worried but ran right into the Persian army lines as they were trying a new strategy.
The Persians were not prepared for this new strategy. They nearly pushed through the Athenian lines but did not succeed. They lost many soldiers.	The Persians knew they were losing so withdrew. They went back to their ships.	6,400 Persian soldiers died, but only 192 Athenians died in the famous battle.
Pheidippides last job was to take the victory message back to Athens. He told the city they had won the battle.	Pheidippides then sadly died.	

Your final activity is to imagine that you were a key witness at the Battle of Marathon! Use the template to create a blog of your experience.

