

# Classical Civilisation

## Topic: Foundation Stories

**This topic covers the following:**

- 1 Greek Festivals:  
The Great Panathenaia**
- 2 Greek Festivals:  
The City Dionysia**
- 3 Roman Festivals:  
The Lupercalia**
- 4 Roman Festivals:  
The Saturnalia**

**Name:**

# Scheme of Learning: Festivals

## Topic Sequence:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Gods and Goddesses	Religion in the City: Temples	Heracles: The Universal Hero	Myth and the City	<b>Festivals</b>	Myths and Symbols of Power	Death and Burial	Journey to the Underworld

## Topic Overview:

This is the fifth topic of the GCSE Classical Civilisations course, and the aim is to provide pupils with a thorough understanding of how festivals played such an intrinsic part in Greek and Roman life. Unlike modern times, Ancient Greece and Rome did not have weekends, but did have 140 days a year set aside for religious festivals and celebrations. Religious festivals are a major feature of the ancient world's calendars, and is the first real opportunity for pupils to study ancient society. The pupils will study two Greek festivals: the Great Panathenaia and the City Dionysia; and two Roman festivals: Lupercalia and Saturnalia. Pupils will study the purpose of each festival, what happened during each festival, and why they were such an integral part of religious and societal life. The topic very much builds on the knowledge about Athena and Dionysus, and their knowledge about temples such as the Parthenon. Pupils will study the Parthenon in even greater depth by studying the ionic frieze. The pupils are also introduced to new Roman gods and festivals.

## Lesson Sequence:

The lessons have been sequenced carefully to build pupils understanding of the festivals before applying this knowledge to analysing temple decorations. The first lesson, similarly for all topics, asks pupils to gain a general understanding of the two Greek festivals: the Great Panathenaia and the City Dionysia. They do this through exploring the knowledge map that accompanies this topic and forms the backbone of the topic's lessons. The aim is for pupils to gain an initial understanding of the festivals origins and content. It will also introduce the pupils to some key Tier 3 vocabulary.

The next sequence of lessons will focus on learning about the Great Panathenaia in greater depth. The first lesson looks at the sporting contests in the Great Panathenaia, and once pupils have an understanding of them they apply this knowledge to the analysis of Greek amphorae, the prizes awarded at the festival. There is also an opportunity to bring in an extract from the Iliad by Homer by examining the chapter on the funeral games of Patroclus which contain similar sporting contests to the festival. Pupils will develop an understanding of just how brutal some of these sporting contests were.

The sequence of lessons then move to the other contests within the Great Panathenaia, and then to the procession and how it involved the entirety of Athens. Once pupils have a knowledge of the procession, they then examine the impressive ionic frieze of the Parthenon which depicts the entirety of the procession, culminating in the presentation of the peplos to Athena.

It is at this stage that the course switches to look at the second Athenian festival: the City Dionysia. Similarly to how pupils developed their knowledge of the Great Panathenaia, pupils will learn about its origins and then the events of the festival. The festival is very different in terms of content to the previous one, with the focus of the festival is theatre and performance. Pupils will learn the difference between comedy and tragedy, and learn of key Greek playwrights such as Aristophanes.

The final sequence of lessons focus sees a switch to the Roman festivals of Lupercalia and Saturnalia. Pupils will learn the origins of each festival and the key events of each one. They will understand that they were very different to the grand festivals of Athens, but they still carry such immense importance. There is a need for pupils to be able to compare Greek and Roman festivals. At the end of this topic, pupils should have a greater understanding of how religion and society were so intrinsically linked, and how the Gods and Goddesses of Greece and Rome formed the basis of ancient leisure time.

## Sequence of Lessons:

1	Festivals Lesson 1 – Greece (Overview)
2	Festivals Lesson 2 – Panathenaia (Amphorae)
3	Festivals Lesson 1 – Panathenaia (Sporting Contests)
4	Festivals Lesson 4 – Panathenaia (Contests)
5	Festivals Lesson 5 – Panathenaia (Procession)
6	Festivals Lesson 6 – Panathenaia (Panathenaic Frieze)
7	Festivals Lesson 7 – City Dionysia (Origins)
8	Festivals Lesson 8 – City Dionysia (Plays)
9	Festivals Lesson 9 – Rome (Overview)
10	Festivals Lesson 10 – Lupercalia
11	Festivals Lesson 11 – Saturnalia
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## Topic Resources:

Knowledge Map:	9. Knowledge Map: Festivals (Ancient Greece)	Prescribed Sources:	5. Prescribed Sources: Festivals
	10. Knowledge Map: Festivals (Ancient Rome)		

## Assessment:

Knowledge:	19 question knowledge test
Application of Knowledge:	Three exam questions: one on identifying a god/goddess, one on Heracles labours, and one on festivals (totalling 17 marks)

## Supportive Reading:

The Iliad Homer	Funeral Games of Patroclus
	2

# Knowledge Map: Myth and Religion: Festivals (Greece)

In this topic, you will study some of the key festivals that took place in Greece and Rome. For Greece, you will examine the Great Panathenaia that was held to honour the city's patron goddess Athena. You will also study the City Dionysia held in honour of Dionysus, god of wine and revelry. For Rome, you will study the Lupercalia held in honour of Lupercus and the Saturnalia held for Saturn. When examining these festivals, you will need to draw comparisons between their origins, officials, the sacrifices that took place and the people who attended the festival.

## Festivals in Ancient Greece and Rome

1	Festivals in the Greek and Roman World	Greeks and Romans had a twelve month year but did not divide their week into seven days. In Greece, they set aside 140 days of the year for religious celebrations, festivals, and entertainment days.												
<b>City Dionysia</b>														
2	Origins of the Festival	The origins lie in a town called Eleutheræ in Attica, that united with Athens. Originally, they presented a wooden statue of Dionysus to them, but it was rejected by Athens. A plague on Athens forced the Athenians to think they had upset Dionysus so they readily accepted the statue and built a festival of theatre and revelry to honour him.												
3	Sanctuary of Dionysus	The sanctuary of Dionysus was built to the south side of the Acropolis. It contained an altar and temple but also a theatre in which plays would be performed.												
4	The Eponymous Archon	The organisation of the festival was undertaken by the Eponymous Archon, an elected official. He would select three tragic playwrights and five comic playwrights who would have to write plays, seventeen in total. He would also have to choose choregos to finance the plays.												
5	Dithyramb	The dithyramb competition saw 100 members from each of Athens' tribes take part in a choral dance in honour of Dionysus.												
6	The Grand Procession	The procession took place before the first day of the festival and recreated the events of Eleutheræ and the wooden statue. The statue would be brought from a shrine just outside the city to the sanctuary.												
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8	Pompe	The pompe was a grand procession that took place on the first morning. The statue of Dionysus was carried from the outskirts of the city to the sanctuary of Dionysus with drinking and dancing. Model phalluses were also carried in respect of Dionysus being the god of fertility. 												
9	Dithyrambic Contests	After the pompe, the dithyrambic competitions took place and were a choral song danced to by the tribes in honour of Dionysus. 												
10	Komos	The komos happened in the evening of the first day and saw only Athenian men present leather phalluses to present to the god. The komos involved lots of drinking and dancing. 												
11	Opening Ceremony	The opening ceremony involved the priest of Dionysus sacrificing a piglet followed by each of the ten generals of Athens pouring a libation (a drink) in honour of the twelve Olympian gods. 												
12	Theoric Fund	The contests were not free to watch so Athenians set up a Theoric Fund to help the poor attend a festival. 												
13	Comedy Plays	The themes of the comedy plays were usually war, politics or social life, and reflected the political freedom of Athens. Slaves and masters would often swap roles in plays, and politicians were openly mocked. The only surviving comedies we have of the time come from one playwright, Aristophanes. 												
14	Tragedy Plays	Unlike comedies, tragedies were performed in a trilogy. For this reason, a day was devoted to three playwrights. This suggests tragedy took prominence over comedy. Tragedies were usually based on well-known historical or mythological events. It focused on human suffering and sought to ask questions about human nature. We have surviving plays from three playwrights: Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. 												
15	Satyr Plays	The satyr play accompanied the tragic trilogy. It was often intended as a comic respite from the previous tragedy. It did not have to be related to the tragedies performed. 												
16	The Judgement	The plays were all judged and the prize giving was awarded on the last day. The playwright with the most votes won a garland of ivy, a symbol of Dionysus. 												

## The Great Panathenaia

17	Panathenaia	An annual festival in Athens celebrating Athena's birthday. It marked the most important part of the year for Athenians as she was the patron goddess of Athens and involved athletic and literary competitions.																		
18	Great Panathenaia	An Athenian festival to Athena that took place every four years and contained more athletic and literary competitions than the annual Panathenaia. It lasted eight days.																		
19	Founded by Theseus	The festival was believed to have been founded by Theseus in an effort to unite the regions of Athens.																		
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21	Rhapsodic Contests	A rhapsode is someone who recites poetry. The verses recited were chosen from Homer's <i>Iliad</i> and <i>Odyssey</i> . Rhapsodes would have to have an excellent memory. 																		
22	Musical Contests	There were four main musical competitions based around two Greek musical instruments: the aulos, and the kithara. 																		
23	Sporting Events	Three of the eight days were given over to sporting events for Athenians to take part in. Women were not permitted to take part. The prizes for winning were worth a great deal. 																		
24	Panathenaic Amphorae	The winners of the sporting contests would receive a Panathenaic Amphorae which would have a picture of Athena on one side, and a picture of the sporting event it was won in on the other. It was usually filled with olive oil. 																		
25	The Stadion	This is a running event in which the competitors would run the length of the stadium. 																		
26	Wrestling	It is suggested that Theseus introduced wrestling after he defeated King Cerceyon. The aim in wrestling was to get your opponent to 'fall' onto their back or shoulders. To make it harder, contestants were covered in oil. 																		
27	Boxing	Unlike modern boxing, Greek boxing did not involve protective head gear, and rather than gloves, hands were wrapped in leather. The aim was to knock out your opponent. 																		
28	Pankration	Pankration means 'all strength'. The pankration was a mixture of boxing and wrestling with the addition of kicking moves. It had only two rules: no biting or eye-gouging. 																		
29	Pentathlon	The ancient pentathlon consisted of the discus, javelin, long jump, stadion, and wrestling. 																		
30	Equestrian Events	These events included a four-horse chariot race and a mounted javelin contest where contestants had to hit targets while riding horses. 																		
31	Apobates	The greatest of the equestrian events was the Apobates, which means <i>dismounter</i> . The race involved fully armoured charioteers dismounting their chariots whilst racing and running alongside their horses, before mounting them again. 																		
32	Tribal Contests	All Athenians were divided into ten tribes and competed against each other in: strength trials, a boat race near the port town of Piraeus, and a war-dance competition. 																		
33	All-Night Celebration and Procession	An all-night celebration took place the day on the Acropolis before the procession the next day. It involved a torch race, followed by singing and dancing. The procession the next day involved the peplos, a greek dress, presented to Athena Parthenos.																		
34	The Sacrifice	The procession is followed by the sacrifice at the altar of Athena Polias. No expense was spared, and up to one hundred oxen (a hecatomb) and other animals were sacrificed. The sacrificial meat was then shared amongst the Athenians.																		
35	Parthenon	The Panathenaic procession is depicted on the Ionic frieze of the Parthenon. The procession starts on the western part of the temple and follows two routes down the northern and southern sides of the Parthenon.																		

In this topic, you will study some of the key festivals that took place in Greece and Rome. For Greece, you will examine the Great Panathenaia that was held to honour the city's patron goddess Athena. You will also study the City Dionysia held in honour of Dionysus, god of wine and revelry. For Rome, you will study the Lupercalia held in honour of Lupercus and the Saturnalia held for Saturn. When examining these festivals, you will need to draw comparisons between their origins, officials, the sacrifices that took place and the people who attended the festival.

Festivals in Ancient Greece and Rome				The Saturnalia													
1	Festivals in the Greek and Roman World	Greeks and Romans had a twelve month year but did not divide their week into seven days. In Rome, they set aside 159 days of the year for religious celebrations, festivals, and entertainment days.		19	Dedicated to Saturn	The Saturnalia was a festival that was dedicated to the Roman god, Saturn.											
<b>The Lupercalia</b>				20	Reasons for Celebration	As Saturn was the god of sowing and seed, the festival celebrated the end of the winter sowing.											
2	Lupercus	The festival derived from a festival of purification and fertility in honour of the god Lupercus.		21		The festival began at the Winter Solstice and celebrated the coming of new light, rebirth, and the promise of a positive future.											
3	Lupus	In Latin, the word <i>lupus</i> means 'wolf' and so the festival also celebrated Rome's founder, Romulus. Romulus was originally known as King of the Shepherds.		22		Saturn was believed to have ruled the earth during the Golden Age, a time when gods and men lived together in harmony and as equals. The festival brought hope of a return to this Golden Age.											
4	Origin of the Festival (1)	There are various versions about how the festival originated. One version, from Plutarch, links the festival with Archadian Lycaea, the feast of wolves. This was in connection to an ancient god who protected herds from wolves.		23	Participants	The Saturnalia was considered unique amongst festivals as it involved all levels of society, including men, women, children, and slaves.											
5	Origin of the Festival (2)	The second version is from Ovid, who links the festival to the Greek god, Pan. Pan was the god of the wild, shepherds, and flocks.		24	Dates	At its longest it lasted from 17th to 23rd December. During the reign of Augustus Caesar it was shortened to three days, before being extended to five days under Claudius.											
6	Changing Focus of Festival	As Rome developed into an Empire, it lost its identity as a nation of farmers, and the importance of the shepherd decreased, so the festival became more associated with celebrating its founder, Romulus.		25	Christmas	The Saturnalia remained very popular throughout the Roman period, even when Christianity became the dominant religion. The Saturnalia was incorporated into Christmas.											
7	Date	The festival was always celebrated on the 15th February each year.		26	Officials	The priests of the Temple of Saturn in the Roman Forum, provided the priests for the Saturnalia. As religious officials were elected each year, the possibility of leading the Saturnalia was a real prospect for many leading Romans.											
8	Officials	The priests were called the Luperci. They were chosen especially for the day from the noble (upper class) male population.		27	Finance	The responsibility for the public feast fell to the Senate and state money was used to pay for it.											
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10	Lupercal	The Lupercal was a cave in the Palatine Hill that was believed to be the place where Romulus and Remus were suckled by the she-wolf. The priests gathered in this cave at the beginning of the festival.		29	National Holiday	From day one, all business was suspended and the period declared a national holiday. This meant the whole city was free to take part in the festivities of singing, playing music, feasting, socialising, and giving gifts.											
11	Altar to Lupercus	The cave contained an altar to Lupercus. The Luperci were divided into two teams and underwent a sacrifice in honour of the gods. Once the sacrifice had taken place, the two teams took part in a race around the Palatine Hill.		30	Decorations	During the period, people decorated their homes with wreaths and other greenery.											
12	Sacrifice	On entering the cave, the Luperci sacrificed dogs and goats to Lupercus. These animals are known for their virility and suited a sacrifice to the god of fertility.		31	The Sacrifice	Unlike normal Roman sacrifices, the priest took part in the sacrifice with his head uncovered in the Greek style.											
13		The animals were sprinkled with mola salsa on their heads, in order to help them give their acceptance to the sacrifice. They then had their throats slit.		32		On the first day of the festival period, a sacrifice took place at the Temple of Saturn. A young pig would be publically sacrificed.											
14		When the animals had been killed, a knife was dipped in the blood, which was then dripped onto the foreheads of the participants. The blood was then wiped off with wool soaked in milk.		33	Public Feast	After the sacrifice, the state paid for a huge public feast that took place throughout the streets of Rome, and lasted for several days.											
15		A haruspex would then read the entrails of the animals for positive signs. If positive, the participants would eat the sacrificial meat and drink large amounts of wine.		34		At the table, a statue of Saturn was expected to be sat to signify the god's presence at the festival.											
16		The Luperci would then cut the skins from the animals into strips, and used to cover parts of the body, while other parts were used in the race.		35		Equality	The festival promoted equality, which meant that slaves and their masters were equals for the duration of the festivities.										
17	The Race	The race was the public part of the festival and involved the participants running around the foot of the Palatine Hill and through the Roman Forum.		36	Clothing	To support this equality, masters would not wear their traditional togas, and all would wear colourful clothes known as synthesis.											
18		As the runners (the Luperci) raced they whipped spectators with their leather strips to grant great fertility to those struck.		37	Gifts	Throughout the period, gifts would be given to loved ones. Wax candles were common gifts as they represented new light. On the last day known as Sigillaria, Romans gave their loved ones small terracotta figurines known as signillaria.											

# Glossary: Festivals

	<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Panathenaia</b>	Annual Athenian festival celebrating Athena's birthday
<b>2</b>	<b>Great Panathenaia</b>	Four-yearly Athenian festival celebrating the birth of Athena
<b>3</b>	<b>Rhapsode</b>	Someone who recites poetry at a festival competition
<b>4</b>	<b>Panathenaic Amphora</b>	Storage jar containing olive oil given as a prize at the Great Panathenaia
<b>5</b>	<b>Apobates</b>	A chariot race in which the rider would dismount and remount his chariot
<b>6</b>	<b>Peplos</b>	A traditional Greek dress
<b>7</b>	<b>Eleutherae</b>	A town on the northern border of Attica
<b>8</b>	<b>Eponymous Archon</b>	An Athenian magistrate elected for one year and organised the City Dionysia festival
<b>9</b>	<b>Choregos</b>	Means Chorus Director – the financial backer of a set of plays at the City Dionysia
<b>10</b>	<b>Dithyramb</b>	A Choral dance in honour of Dionysus
<b>11</b>	<b>Pompe</b>	A grand procession
<b>12</b>	<b>Komos</b>	A party involving only men that took place in the streets of in honour of Dionysus
<b>13</b>	<b>Libation</b>	A drink offering poured in honour of a god(s)
<b>14</b>	<b>Theoric Fund</b>	A supply of money that was used to pay for the poor to attend the theatre
<b>15</b>	<b>Lupercus</b>	A Roman god of fertility and purification
<b>16</b>	<b>Luperci</b>	A priest of Lupercus
<b>17</b>	<b>Noble</b>	A member of the upper class in Rome
<b>18</b>	<b>Lupercal</b>	The cave in the Palatine Hill of Rome where the Lupercalia took place
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# Festivals in the Ancient Greek and Roman World

Although the Greeks and Romans divided their year into twelve months, they did not divide their week into seven days. In fact, they did not even have weeks, and therefore no weekends. To gain their rest days, the Greeks and Romans scattered their months with numerous holiday days, in which they watched games and took part in religious festivals. Some festivals lasted just one day, while others could be much longer. For example, the Athenian festival, the Great Panathenaia, lasted eight days.

Our seven-day week, gives us roughly 104 days off per year. In Classical Athens around 140 days of the year were given over to religious celebrations, festivals and entertainment days; in Rome it was around 159 days.

Festivals in both the Greek and Roman worlds were important religious events, but also were as equally important social events. Whilst all festivals would be associated with a particular god or goddess, or perhaps even a group of deities, there would also be activities and entertainment provided by the organisers. What must not be forgotten though, is that this entertainment is often still connected to the god or goddess the festival is dedicated to. For example, Dionysus is worshipped in the festival called the City Dionysia and as the god of theatre, the main entertainment of the festival is centred around the performance of plays.

Festivals would be quite unique to a particular city, especially in Greece, and were an essential part of the year's social calendar. Important figures would be seen attending them, and being part of the festival was considered a great honour. Rivalry between cities, again especially in Greece, played a part in such festivities as they often drew foreigners to witness the events, which offered the city the chance to present itself at its finest.

## Ancient Greece:

We will examine two important Greek festivals:

- The Great Panathenaia
- The City Dionysia

These two festivals will be explored through two key visual sources:

- The Parthenon's Ionic Frieze
- Various Panathenaic Amphoras



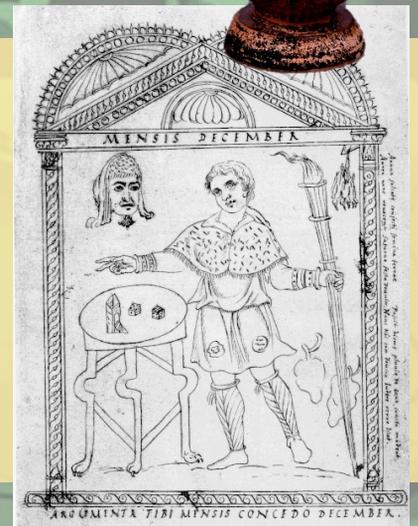
## Ancient Rome:

We will examine two important Roman festivals:

- The Lupercalia
- The Saturnalia

These two festivals will be explored through two key written sources:

- An extract from Ovid's *Fasti* about the Lupercalia
- A drawing from the Calendar of Philocalus about the Saturnalia





# THE GREAT PANATHENAIA

The Panathenaia was for all Athenians, and only Athenians and resident foreigners could take part. As Athena was the patron goddess of Athens, the celebration of her birthday marked the most important part of the year for the city.

Theseus was believed to have founded the yearly Panathenaia festival in honour of Athena.

From 566BC every four years the Panathenaia was expanded to an eight-day festival called the Great Panathenaia, which contained more athletic and literary competitions, and it is this festival that we study.

**Task:** Read the following information.

## The Great Panathenaia

The **Great Panathenaia** started with a procession, a **pompe**, that gathered by the Dipylon Gate on the outskirts of the city. This procession grew to be so big over time that a special building, the Pompeion, was constructed. The surviving building dates to around 400AD, and measures 70 by 35 metres. The size indicates just how important and grand the procession was. The procession started at the Dipylon Gate, processed through the kerameikos, an area of the city which contained the ancient cemetery, through the agora and up to the Acropolis via the Propylaia.

The road they walked on was called the Panathenaic Way and it was ten metres wide to accommodate the large crowds, cavalry, and a boat, which was rolled up to the foothills of the Acropolis.

The procession was considered to be such a significant part of the Athenian religion and civic life that it was an inspiration for the frieze of the Parthenon. The sculpture includes the gathering of horsemen, who represent the aristocracy of Athens, elder citizens, women, animals for sacrifice, and ritual objects. This range of participants indicates how unifying the festival really was and how polis religious events caused civic pride. It even shows the climax of the festival, the presentation of the **peplos** to Athena on the central part of the eastern side, the side from which one enters the Parthenon.

The twelve Olympian gods are depicted on either side of this presentation scene, the recipients of all this worship. This was the first time that a scene portraying a real-life event was depicted on a temple, a fact which further highlights just how significant this procession and festival was for the Athenians.

This festival marked the birthday of Athena Polias, Athena of the city, and the focal part of the celebration was the presentation of her birthday gift; she was given a **peplos**, a style of dress she was always depicted in. The Ergastinai, maidens with aristocratic families, wove it each year. The saffron-dyed **peplos** was decorated with a scene showing Athena's duel with the giant Encelados, whom she defeated in the battle between the gods and the giants.

The **peplos** was thereafter presented to the goddess and was draped on the olive-wood cult statue of Athena Polias that stood in the east room of the Erechtheion. For the **Great Panathenaia**, a second, much larger peplos was woven by professional male weavers and it showed Athena and Zeus together. This bigger **peplos** was used as a sail on a wooden ship that was rolled up to the Acropolis during the procession. Athens' naval power and strength was hereby celebrated and associated with the patron goddess. This bigger **peplos** was perhaps used to drape Pheidias' chryselephantine (gold and ivory) statue within the Parthenon. This votive dedication symbolised the city's thanks to the goddess for her help and protection. This gift unified all members of Athenian society in a way no other festival or occasion did.

After this presentation, the polis celebrated and honoured Athena with sacrifices with a hecatomb being the most impressive. A hecatomb is a large sacrifice of some 100 oxen. A civic decree from 335AD recorded that the cattle bought with rent from the land sacred to Athena were sacrificed on the great altar of Athena on the Acropolis, and the best parts were kept for sacrifice on the altar of Athena Nike. Civic officials such as the Archons, the treasurer of the goddess, sacrificial officials, generals, and Athenians who participated in the procession, and the maidens who carried the vessels were given their portions of meat on the Acropolis. Civic officials dined in special rooms inside the Pompeion and perhaps also in the Pinakothike, the room in the north wing of the Propylaia, on the Acropolis.

The distribution of the remaining sacrificial meat occurred in the kerameikos, an area on the outskirts of the city, among men of the various tribes, who participated in the procession and sacrifice. These sacrifices were paid for either directly by the city or by rich Athenians. The distribution of sacrificial meat is reflective of the democratic nature of Athens; all citizens were entitled to a portion, all at public expense. This was doubtless highly valued and prized considering that meat was not a regular part of an Ancient Greek diet because it was so expensive. Honouring the goddess by sharing meat sacrificed to her was hereby another unifying civic experience as communal eating brings people together in shared enjoyment.

**Task:** Answer the following questions using the information about the Panathenaic Procession.

1. What does the Greek word 'pompe' mean?

2. In your own words, describe the Panathenaic Procession?

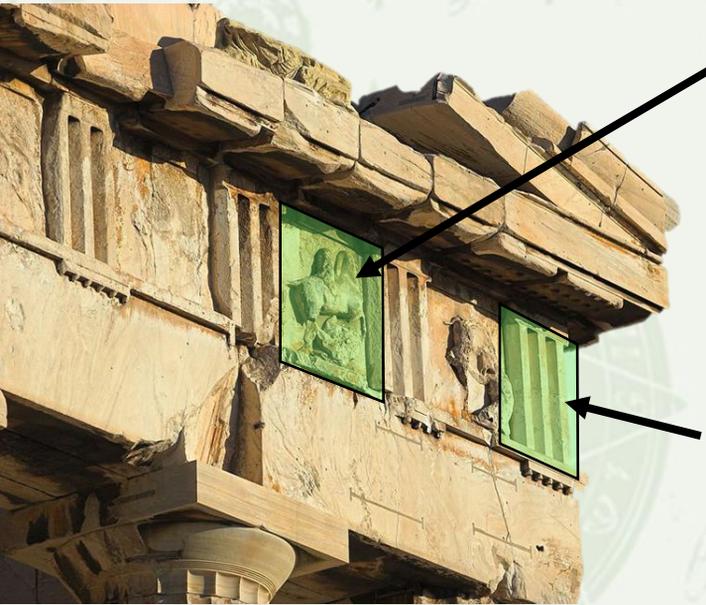
3. What was the 'peplos'?

4. In the Great Panathenaia, there are two peplos' created. Describe each one and how they are used differently in the procession?

5. What is a hecatomb?

6. Describe what happens to the meat from the sacrifice, and why it is so important to Athenians?

All temples have a frieze, and they are found below the roof and above the tops of a colonnade of columns. The frieze is one area where relief sculpture would be displayed. The sculpture displayed would be chosen specifically to project an image or message to the people viewing it. Doric temples friezes were divided up into sections called metopes, whereas ionic temple friezes would have one continuous scene. The image below shows one corner of the Parthenon frieze which is dor.



## metope

A square-shaped panel decorated with relief sculpture (where the sculpture remains attached to the background). These panels would decorate the space between the bottom of the roof and the tops of the columns of a Greek temple.

## triglyph

A series of three vertical grooves separating metopes.

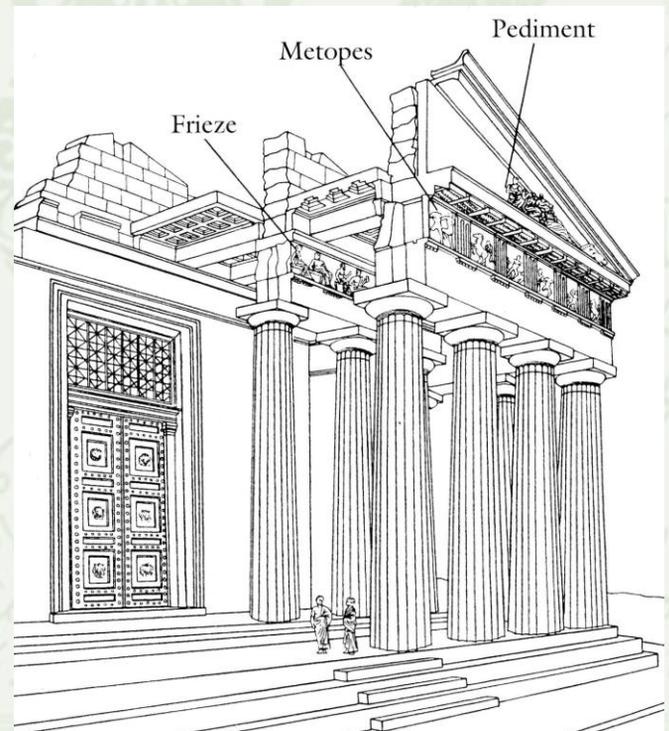
The Parthenon is most unusual though in that it differs from the usual style of temples. Whilst the temple is dor, it also has an ionic frieze as well; this is due to the size of the Parthenon and it needing a further internal set of columns to support the large roof. Therefore, this frieze is not split into individual metopes but is rather one continuous frieze. Rather than having individual metopes with individual moments depicted on each one, the frieze has all the moments blended into one long, continuous image.

The Parthenon is also unusual as the ionic frieze is the only frieze to represent a real-life human event rather than a myth; it depicts the Panathenaic Procession.



## Ionic Frieze

a broad horizontal band of sculpted or painted decoration, especially on a wall near the ceiling.



Yet, irrespective of whether or not the frieze is dor or ionic, the criteria for judging its success is still the same:

- (1) The scene is recognisable;
- (2) The scene is dynamic and contains movement/action;
- (3) The potential blank space is cleverly filled.

## The Parthenon Ionic Frieze: The Panatheniac Procession

When studying the frieze, it is worth bearing in mind how inaccessible it was. The location of the frieze was behind the metopes and colonnade that surrounded the temple. If a viewer stood within the peristyle, the colonnade that surrounded the temple, they would have to strain their necks to see it. Outside the peristyle, however, only the columns would have interrupted their view of the continuous frieze. It is very different from the current layout and visibility in the British Museum.

The Ionic frieze was 160 metres long and just over a metre tall. It contains about 378 human and divine figures and at least 220 animals, though substantial parts of the frieze are lost. It is entirely unique in its choice of narrative because it shows a human event: the Great Panatheniac Procession, an event that took place every four years in honour of Athena. During the procession, Athenian men and women showed their devotion to their patron goddess through sacrifice and offerings. The climax was the presentation of a **peplos** to the statue of Athena outside the Erechtheion. The frieze was planned by Pheidias, who also sculpted the chryselephantine statue of Athena inside the temple.

The procession gathers and starts from the west side and walks along the north and south sides to the presentation of the **peplos**, probably shown on the east side. This route was not coincidental; visitors to the Acropolis would have seen the west side of the Parthenon first, and they too would have walked along the north and south sides to reach its entrance, which was on the east. The figures of the sculptures hereby accurately mimic the real-life worshippers.

Individuals on the west side are shown gathering by their horses. Some are standing; others are on horseback, signalling more to join. Each figure is shown as an individual, different to the others around them. The sculptors have accurately portrayed their youthful bodies, and their poses are realistic depictions of movement. The horses too are distinct; some are galloping, other stand calmly, others are neighing. They have been made smaller in proportion to the men so as to leave as little empty space in the composition as possible.

Women are also taking part in the procession. They are shown fully clothed, indicating their respectable and modest nature, but their drapery and poses are all different. While they wear a chiton (pronounced Kiton) covered in a himation (a mantle or wrap), the clothing falls differently over their bodies, and the folds are neither repetitive, not symmetrical.

They each carry their own offerings or contributions to the festival; one carries an incense burner, another a jug, another a **libation** bowl. Just as men are depicted distinctly, so are the women.

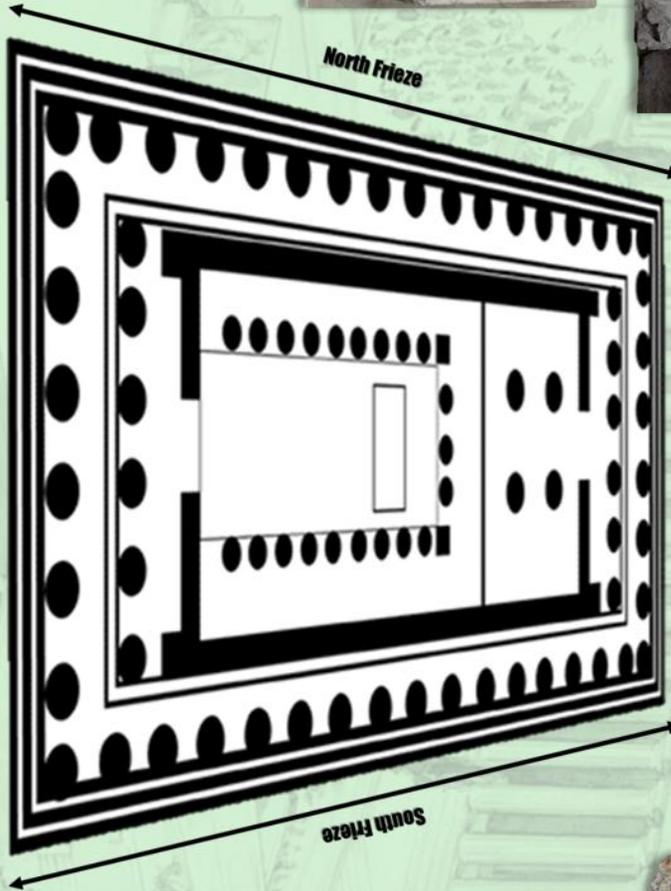
The east side of the frieze shows the climax of the festival. In the central part, the presentation of the **peplos** is shown. Framing this are the gods, who sit, watching the procession around them. They have their backs turned to the central dedication, which makes us question to what extent they really care about this moment, but they are facing the parading worshippers.

On this part of the frieze, Hermes, Dionysus, Demeter and Ares sit together. As with the mortals, there is no repetition in the depictions or poses of the gods. Each one is identified by certain attributes: Hermes has his traveller's hat and winged sandals; Dionysus leans on his now missing thyrsus; Demeter has her torch, and Ares would have a bronze spear resting on his right shoulder.

Hera and Zeus sit next to each other, reflecting their status as a married couple. Hera is making the bridal gesture she saw Hippodameia make on the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, as she plays with her veil. Her thin chiton falls naturally around her body. Zeus sits facing his wife, relaxed, leaning casually on the back of his seat with his left arm. They appear to be deep in conversation, paying no attention to the dedication of the **peplos**, which occurs to the right of Zeus.

It is not likely, however, that the Greeks thought their gods did not care about the offerings, but rather it might indicate their different planes: the mortals on Earth, the Gods on Olympus.

**Festivals: Panathenaic Frieze**



**East Frieze**

**North Frieze**

**South Frieze**

# Parthenon Frieze: Panathenaic Procession

Your task is to (1) analyse each relief carefully, (2) identify the what aspect of the procession it depicts, (3) and what makes it a successful frieze by referring to our criteria..



**Identified Aspect  
of the Procession**

**What makes the frieze successful?  
Refer to our criteria of (1) recognisable, (2) dynamic, (3)  
blank space filled effectively.**



The Great Panathenaia balanced the important religious aspect of the festival – after all, it was dedicated to Athena – with the entertainment aspect of the festival.

The entertainment provided to people during the festival is a really important aspect, after all, people wanted to enjoy themselves at a festival as much as pay their respects to the god in question.

In the Great Panathenaia, the main entertainment centred around competitions, both athletic and musical competitions. The festival was set out in the following programme.

Day	Event
1	Rhapsodic and Musical Contests
2	Boys' and Youth's Athletics
3	Men's Athletics
4	Equestrian Events
5	Tribal Contests
6	All-Night Celebration, Procession (pompe), and Sacrifice
7	Apobates and Boat Race
8	Prize-Giving



**Sporting Events**



**Musical Contests**



**Religious Events**



We will focus on the sporting events first. Four of the eight days of the Great Panathenaia were taken up by sporting events. The Great Panathenaia offered a wide variety of athletic events. While these events were almost exclusively for Athenians, there were a small number of events for non-Athenians to take part in, including many of the athletics events. As such, many competitors across Greece took part in these games.

The prizes for the sporting events were worth a great deal. Winners would receive a varied amount of Panathenaic Amphorae.

The amphorae would have a picture of Athena on one side and a picture of the event in which they were awarded on the other. This reinforced the importance and honour paid to Athena through the sporting competitions.

The amphorae would be filled with olive oil, which was a valuable commodity in Greece as it was used for a variety of things such as cooking and cleaning.

An example of an Amphora (singular) can be seen on the left which clearly has Athena on the front; the back would carry a picture of the sporting event that the competitor had won.

**Task:** Read the following information on the different sporting events in the Great Panathenaia, and use it to answer the questions that follow.

Event	Description of the Event
<b>The Stadion</b>	Running event in which competitors run the length of the stadium
<b>Wrestling</b>	Fighting event in which competitors grapple to get their opponent down onto their back or shoulders, which was called a 'fall'. Three falls and the contest was over. Opponents were allowed to trip one another but no biting, kicking, or punching allowed.
<b>Boxing</b>	Ancient boxing would see opponents not wear protective headwear and would wear leather straps around the knuckles instead of modern-day gloves. The objective was to knock your opponent out. There were no rounds or time limit to the contest.
<b>Pankration</b>	The term pankration means 'all strength' and was a fighting contest which was a mixture of boxing and wrestling, with the addition of kicking moves. The competition had only two rules: no eye-gouging and no biting.
<b>Pentathlon</b>	The ancient Pentathlon consisted of five events: discus, javelin, long jump, stadion (see above), and wrestling.
<b>Equestrian Events: Chariot Racing</b>	Equestrian events all involved the use of horses as part of the competition. The chariot racing included a two and a four-horse chariot race.
<b>Equestrian Events: Mounted Javelin Race</b>	Another equestrian event that saw riders have to throw javelins at targets, all whilst riding their horses.
<b>Equestrian Events: Apobates</b>	The greatest of the equestrian events that took place on the seventh day of the festival. It means 'dismounter' and involved fully armoured charioteers dismounting their chariots while racing, running alongside them for a period of time, then mounting them again.

1. Which event requires the competitors to run the length of the stadium?

2. What Greek term means 'all strength'?

3. What protective equipment would boxers wear in Ancient Greece?

4. How does a competitor win a wrestling match?

5. What are the five events in a pentathlon?

6. What are the only two rules that competitors must abide by in Pankration?

7. Describe what competitors must do in a mounted javelin contest.

8. Describe what competitors must do in an Apobates contest.

9. Read the extract from Homer's *Iliad* on the next page. It describes a boxing match that takes place during the funeral games of Patroclus. Whilst the boxing match is not from the Great Panathenaic games, the event itself is no different in terms of how it is conducted and the brutality of it.

What impression do you have of the boxing match from the extract? Explain your answer fully, using evidence from the extract to support your answer.

## BK XXIII:651-699 THE BOXING MATCH



When he had listened to *Nestor's* [p. 667] words, *Achilles* [p. 517], son of Peleus, made his way through the crowd of spectators and set out the prizes for the boxing-match. For the winner he fetched a six-year old mule, broken-in, and they are hardest of all to break, and tethered it in the arena. For the loser there was a two-handled drinking cup. Then he announced the contest: 'Atreides, and all you bronze-greaved Achaeans, I want to see our two best boxers raise their fists and fight for these prizes. He whom *Apollo* [p. 547] grants true endurance in our eyes will return to his hut leading this sturdy mule, while the loser shall have this fine cup.'

At this a tall and powerful warrior stood up, a champion boxer, *Epeius* [p. 601], son of *Panopeus* [p. 682]. He placed his hand on the mule, saying: 'Whoever wants the cup, step forward. No man will beat me with his fists, and take the mule, since I'm the best boxer, I say. I may not be the greatest warrior, a man can't be best at everything, but this thing is for sure, whoever I fight I'll tear his flesh to ribbons and break his bones. I hope his kin are here to take him away when I've felled him.'

A silence fell at his words. Godlike *Euryalus* [p. 607] alone stood up to fight him, the son of King *Mecisteus* [p. 653], *Talaus'* [p. 723] son, who at the funeral games for *Oedipus* [p. 673], in *Thebes* [p. 728], defeated every *Cadmeian* [p. 569] opponent. *Diomedes* [p. 590], the spearman, eager to see him win, helped Euryalus to prepare, and gave him encouragement. He buckled on his belt, and bound the ox-hide thongs carefully on his hands. When the two contestants were ready, they stepped to the centre of the arena, and raising their mighty arms, set to. Each landed heavy blows with their fists, and they ground their teeth, as the sweat poured over their limbs. Euryalus sought an opening, but noble Epeius swung and struck his jaw, and he went straight down, his legs collapsing under him. Like a fish that leaps in the weed-strewn shallows, under a ripple stirred by the North Wind, then falls back into the dark wave, so Euryalus leapt when he was struck, but the big-hearted Epeius, lifted him and set him on his feet, and all his friends crowded round, and supported him from the ring his feet trailing, his head lolling, as he spat out clots of blood. He was still confused when they sat him down in his corner, and had to fetch the cup, his prize, themselves.

## Prizes: Sporting Events

First and second prizes were awarded and these were olive oil presented in a Panathenaic Amphora.

**Panathenaic Amphorae** were the prizes awarded at the Panathenaic Festival. An 'amphora' is a jug or a vessel for storing liquids. Though there were many types of **amphorae**, each used for different purposes and contexts, the Panathenaic Amphora was a specific type. It always had a black-figure image of a striding Athena on one side and an image of the event the competitor won on the other side.

The prizes varied between competitions; the winner of the youths' wrestling, for example, was awarded **40 amphorae**, worth about 480 drachmas. This is very different from the musical and rhapsodic awards, which were purely monetary; olive oil was not only used for cooking but was also applied by athletes to help them in their competition and as protection from the sun.

As we saw on page 16, four days of the festival were given over to sporting events. However, two days were dedicated to other non-sporting contests. The first events to take place in the Great Panathenaia were the rhapsodic and musical contests.

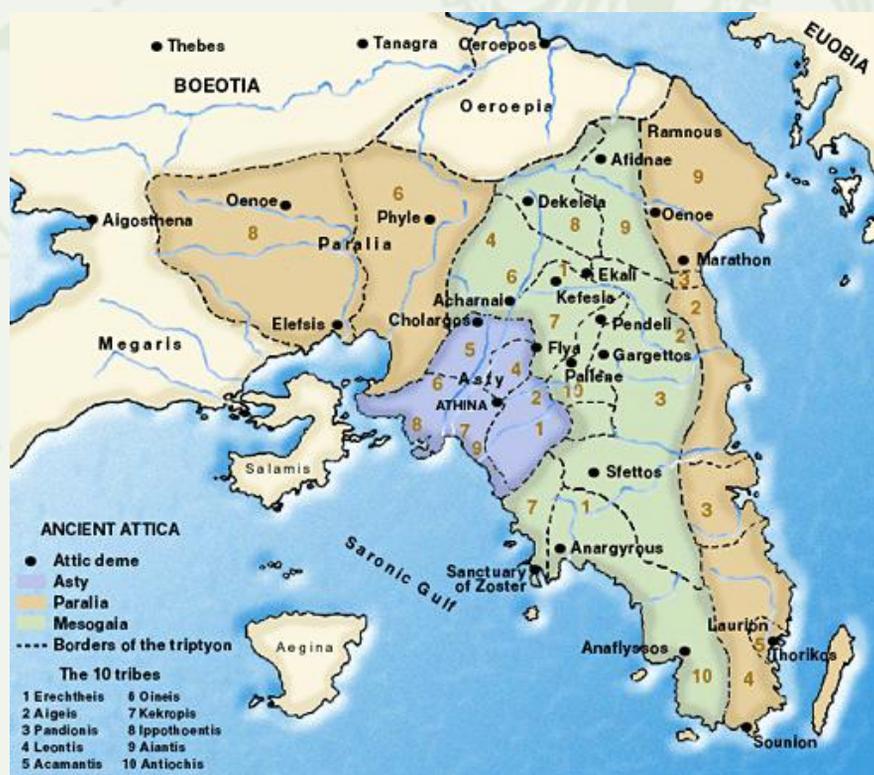
A rhapsodic contest was where verses from Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were performed for accuracy, expression, and performance. The musical contests revolved around two popular Greek instruments: the aulos (an oboe-like instrument) and the kithara (a harp-like instrument).

There were other contests that were termed 'tribal contests' that promoted the concept of democracy and a sense of unity.

Each Athenian citizen from Athens and the surrounding Attica area, were divided into ten tribes.

Each tribe was expected to enter all the contests during the Great Panathenaia, and to be selected for your tribe was considered a great honour.

The ten tribes came about in 508BC when an Athenian statesman called Cleisthenes reformed the constitution of Athens by changing its tribal system. Prior to his reforms, Attica was divided into four tribes, which were united by familial ties. These ties of blood fragmented the Athenian political system as tribes sought to progress the prestige of the family rather than for the good of Athens as a whole. To stop this, Cleisthenes divided Attica into ten tribes based on region rather than family and these regions were varied in their location (see diagram). Each tribe was named after a hero of Athens.



**Task:** Read the following information on the other contests in the Great Panathenaia, and use it to answer the questions that follow.

## The Rhapsodic and Musical Contests

The Panathenaic Festival included contests in honour of the goddess, Athena. First, musical and rhapsodic contests took place before the procession and sacrifices any may have lasted between one to three days. These only took place during the **Great Panathenaia**. The rhapsodic contest consisted of sung recitations of Homer's Iliad and Odyssees, a strong indication of the significance and respect these works had centuries after they were composed. The musical contests were divided between boys and men, and included a range of instruments, such as the lyre and the aulos, a double-reeded instrument, similar to an oboe.

There were four main competitions in the musical contests, which revolved around two popular Greek instruments: the Aulos and the Kithara (a harp-like instrument). The first of these were singers accompanied by the aulos, the second was soloists on the aulos, the third were singers accompanied by the kithara, and the fourth was soloists on the kithara.

The prizes for the musical contests were very precious and valuable; in the 4th century, the winner of the lyre competition was awarded a golden olive crown worth 1,000 drachmas, at a time when the daily wage for a skilled worker was 1 drachma.

## Tribal Contests

Tribal contests were held next: the euandron and the Pyrrhic Dance. The euandron was a contest judging the most beautiful male figure, who would lead the procession. The term euandron literally means 'fine manliness'. Doubtless, the euandron, encouraged a sense of tribal spirit and comradeship, as well as national pride and celebration.

In ancient Greece, men were valued for being beautiful, kalos, and good, agathos. Both attributes were credited to the gods. The Pyrrhic Dance was another military-inspired event and involved groups of twenty-four men dancing naked with a shield on their left-arm and wearing a light helmet. It was thought that Athena danced the Pyrrhic Dance after her victory over the Giants, again showing the religious element of the competition. As such, the prize was an ox sacrifice.

The Torch Race was the final competition before the procession and sacrifices. Men ran from Piraeus, the main harbour of the city, up to the Acropolis carrying a burning torch, passing it on to other members in their team at specific distances, like modern relay races. The team of the first man to successfully light the altar on the Acropolis won. This tribal event demonstrated teamwork and athleticism, all with a religious aim and purpose. It combines athletic, democratic and religious nature of Athens.

After the sacrifices, a boat race took place in the bay of Piraeus. It only took place every four years. The event was in honour of both Athena and Poseidon, god of the sea, who had rivalled Athena for patronage of the city. This was another tribal event that celebrated Athens' naval power and skill and thanked the appropriate gods for their success and strength.

The contests showcased the best of Athens; they celebrated their musical and literary talents, their athletic strength and agility, their military and naval power and their democratic organisation. All these centred around the goddess Athena, whom they credited with these talents and strengths and in whose honour they competed. The other Olympian gods would doubtless also have been honoured and worshipped in this festival, but Athena was clearly the central focus. As with the rest of the festival and indeed with Greek religion as a whole, it is hard to distinguish civic life from religious practice.

**1. What was a rhapsodic contest?**

**2. Describe the different musical contests that took place during the Great Panathenaia.**

**3. How valuable were the prizes in the musical contests? Give one example.**

**4. What was the Euandrion contest?**

**5. What was the inspiration for the Pyrrhic dance?**

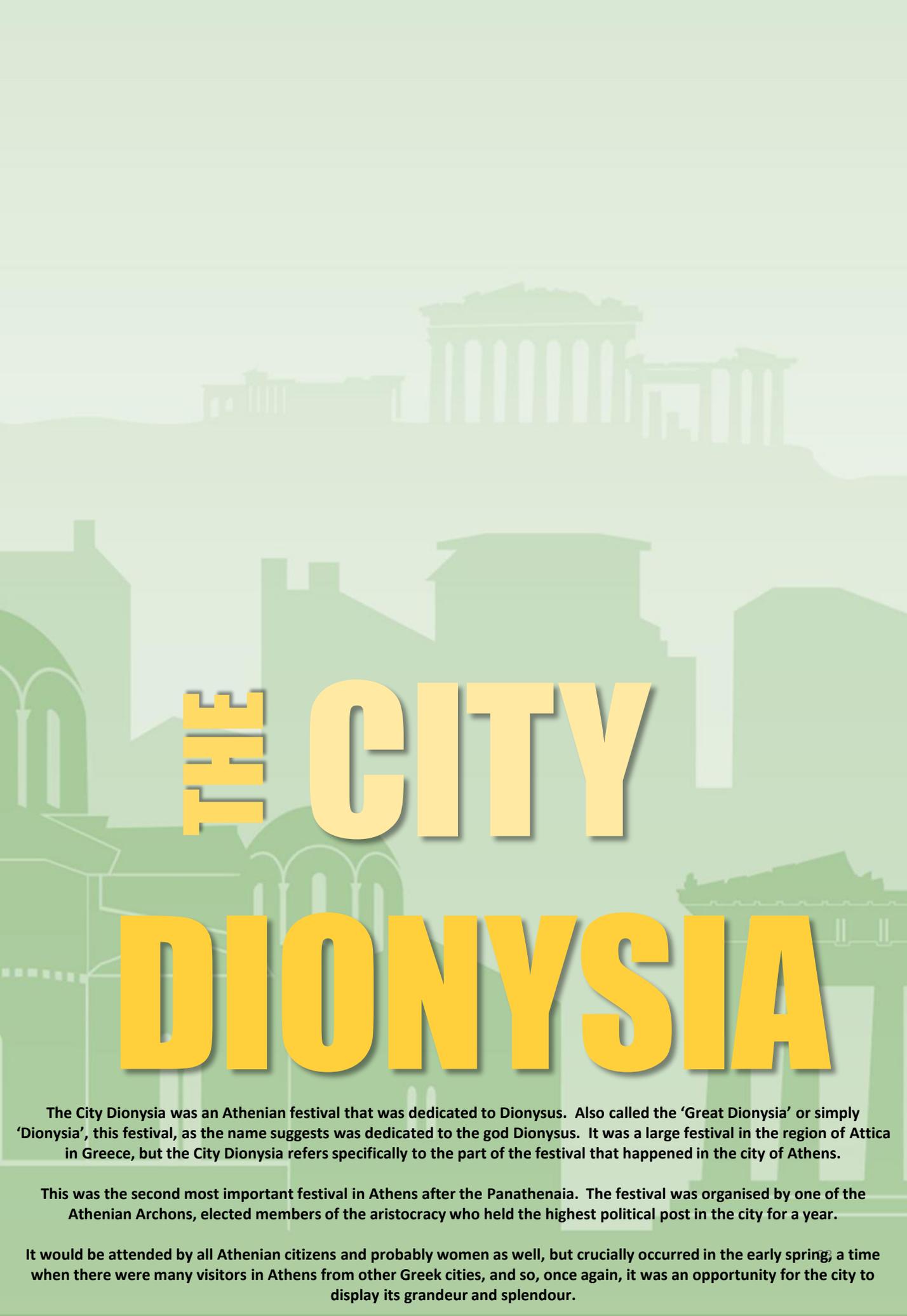
**6. Describe the Torch Race.**

**7. What was the Boat Race that took place every four years celebrating?**

**"The Great Panathenaia was more about entertainment than religious practice."  
How far do you agree with this statement?**

<b>Evidence that entertainment was main focus:</b>	<b>Evidence that religious practice was main focus:</b>

**Conclusion:**



# THE CITY DIONYSIA

The City Dionysia was an Athenian festival that was dedicated to Dionysus. Also called the 'Great Dionysia' or simply 'Dionysia', this festival, as the name suggests was dedicated to the god Dionysus. It was a large festival in the region of Attica in Greece, but the City Dionysia refers specifically to the part of the festival that happened in the city of Athens.

This was the second most important festival in Athens after the Panathenaia. The festival was organised by one of the Athenian Archons, elected members of the aristocracy who held the highest political post in the city for a year.

It would be attended by all Athenian citizens and probably women as well, but crucially occurred in the early spring, a time when there were many visitors in Athens from other Greek cities, and so, once again, it was an opportunity for the city to display its grandeur and splendour.

**Task:** Read the following information.

## The Origins of the City Dionysia Festival

Although an exact date is not known the City Dionysia, or Great Dionysia, was founded in the sixth century BC. The date coincided with the alliance between **Eleutherae** and Athens. As Pausanias wrote:

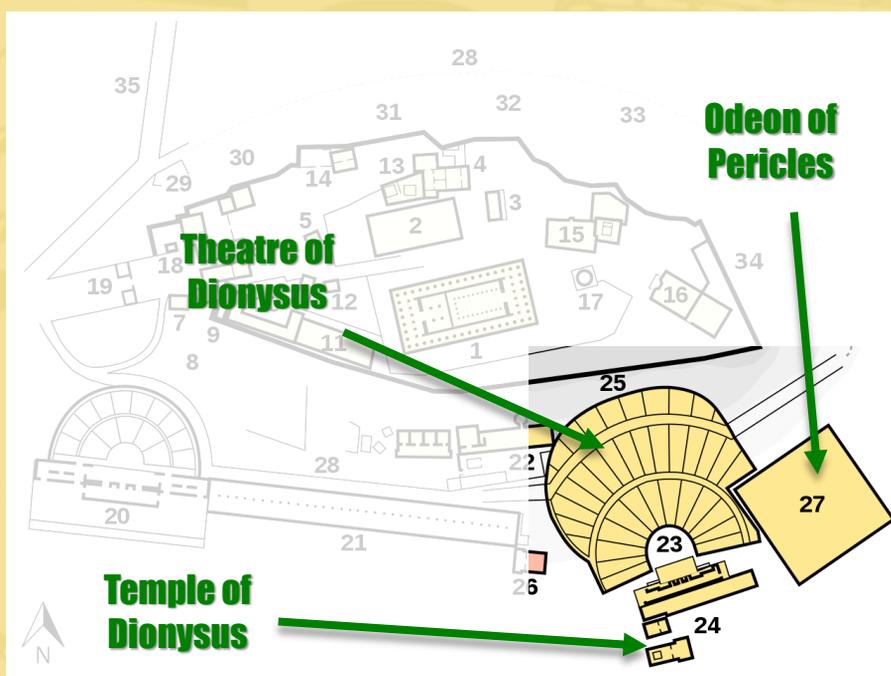
The reason why the people of **Eleutherae** came over was not because they were reduced by war, but because they desired to share Athenian citizenship and hated the Thebans. In this plain is a temple of Dionysus, from which the old wooden image was carried off to Athens.

*Pausanias, Description of Greece, 1.38*

When the statue originally came from **Eleutherae**, the Athenians rejected it. Soon after this, the city was hit with a plague that effected men's genitals. Linking the two events the Athenians accepted Dionysus into the city and from that point honoured him with drama and revelry and initiated the Great Dionysia. It was believed that as soon as they accepted Dionysus into the city the men were cured of the disease. As the god of revelry, wine, and drama, the Athenians honoured the god through their favoured form of entertainment: theatre. Due to the god being associated with rebirth, the festival took place in the spring over five days in mid-march. Although it started with a parade from the gates of Athens, the majority of the festival took place in the sanctuary of Dionysus.

## The Sanctuary of Dionysus

The sanctuary of Dionysus was built to the south side of the Acropolis. It contained the usual features of any Greek sanctuary; the temple and altar were surrounded by a short-wall. The sanctuary shows the communal importance of the altar as it sat in the centre of a large open area. The temple was relatively small and situated in the north-west corner of the sanctuary.



## The Organisation of the Festival

The organisation of the festival reflected the democratic nature of the city. One of the most important administrative jobs was under-taken by the **eponymous archon**, an elected official who had various administrative responsibilities over the year. The archon would select three tragic playwrights and five comic playwrights who would have to write plays, seventeen in total. After the playwrights were chosen the archon had to choose a **choregos** to finance the plays.

**1. Describe the events that led to how Athens came to worship the god Dionysus each year.**

**2. How did the festival celebrations reflect the roles and responsibilities of Dionysus?**

**3. Describe the sanctuary to Dionysus, including its location, using the information and the accompanying map.**

**4. Who was the Eponymous Archon and what responsibilities did they hold?**

**5. What was the Choregos in the City Dionysia?**

The City Dionysia balanced the important religious aspect of the festival with the entertainment aspect of the festival.

The entertainment provided to people during the festival is a really important aspect, after all, people wanted to enjoy themselves at a festival as much as pay their respects to the god in question.

In the City Dionysia, the main entertainment centred around the performance of plays within a competition. The festival was set out in the following programme.

Day	Event
1	Pompe, Dithyrambic Contests, and the Komos
2	Opening Ceremonies, Performance of five Comedies
3	Performance of three Tragedies and one Satyr-Play
4	Performance of three Tragedies and one Satyr-Play
5	Performance of three Tragedies, and one Satyr-Play
	Judging and Prize Giving



**Theatre Competition:  
Tragedy**



**Theatre Competition:  
Comedy**



**Religious Events**

Unlike how we approached the study of the Great Panathenaia by examining the different contests in turn, we will analyse the City Dionysia by following the programme of events day-by-day.

### Day One: Pompe, Dithyrambic Contests, and the Komos

The night before the festival a torchlight procession took place. The procession recreated events that took place in the sixth century BC when **Eleutherae** allied with Athens with the wooden statue of Dionysus being brought into the city. As the statue travelled from a shrine just outside the city, to the city, it was accompanied by military cadets.

On the morning of the first day the **pompe**, or grand procession, took place. The procession accompanied the wooden statue of Dionysus in a boat on wheels from the city gates to the sanctuary of Dionysus. The procession resembled that of a carnival with drinking, dancing and general revelry taking place in honour of Dionysus.

After the **Pompe**, the **Dithyrambic competitions** took place; these were choral singing contests. This competition saw 100 members from each of Athens tribes take part in a choral dance in honour of Dionysus. This meant that 1000 amateurs each year took part in the celebrations and shows how the City Dionysia tried to break down barriers of elitism.

The final stage of the first day was the **Komos**, which was exclusively for men. As Dionysus is very much connected to fertility, and bearing in mind the origins of the festival, a central symbol of the **Komos** was the phallus, and participants were encouraged to bring leather phalluses to present to the god. This celebrated Dionysus as a god of fertility. The **Komos** involved lots of singing, dancing, and the drinking of wine.

## Day Two: The Opening Ceremony and the Comedy Plays



At the beginning of the second day was the opening ceremony. To start the proceedings the priest of Dionysus would sacrifice a piglet. Following this each of the ten generals of the Athenian tribes poured a **libation** to the twelve Olympian gods.

Once the opening ceremony had been completed the five comedy plays would be performed and each play performed would be about an hour and a half.

Comedy as a style of performance developed much later than tragedy and perhaps reflected the greater political freedom that was present in Athens during this time. It was seen as acceptable to mock or make fun of those who were in charge of Athens; comedy was used as a way to comment on the state of society. For this reason the themes of comedy were usually war, politics, or social life. The characters in these plays would often have reversed roles, slaves would act superior to their masters, women controlled men, and politicians were openly mocked. With this in mind, comedy offered relief from the everyday world of Athens. It also allowed a playwright a chance to voice their feelings about contemporary issues in Athens. Although many playwrights wrote comedy, we only have eleven surviving plays from one comic playwright called Aristophanes.

## Day Three – Five: The Performing of Tragedy Plays and a Satyr-Play



Unlike comedies, tragedies were performed in a trilogy plus a satyr-play. For this reason, a day each was devoted to three playwrights. This also suggests an emphasis on tragedy over comedy at the Dionysia.

Tragedy was inspired by well-known mythic and historical events of the past. As a genre, tragedy focused on human suffering and sought to ask questions about human nature. What makes a man great? What causes men to suffer? To what extent can a man control his own fate? With this in mind the audience was meant to consider how what they were watching was reflected in their own lives, be it as an individual or as a city as a whole. Of the surviving plays we have plays by three great tragic playwrights: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides.

The Satyr-play formed part of four plays that were written by one playwright. It was intended as a comic respite after the three tragedies had been performed. The theme of the play was mythological and did not need to relate to the three tragedies.

## Day Five: The Judging and Prize-Giving



At the end of day five, the judging took place. The system for this was randomised to avoid bribery and corruption. The judges voted on the winning tragic and comic playwright in a process which ran as follows:

- Before the festival began, the Athenian Council drew up a list of names from the ten tribes of the city. The names from each tribe were sealed in an urn and the ten urns stored on the Acropolis.
- On the first morning of the plays, the ten urns were placed in the theatre and **eponymous archon** drew out one name from each urn – one name for each tribe. These ten citizens swore an oath of impartiality and sat as judges for the competition.
- On the fifth day of the festival each judge wrote down his order of merit on a tablet. All ten tablets were placed in a single urn. The **eponymous archon** drew out five of the ten tablets at random and the playwright with the most votes was declared the winner.

**1. What events occurred on the first day of the festival?**

**2. What was the Komos that occurred on the first day?**

**3. How does the Komos represent the roles and responsibilities of Dionysus?**

**4. What was the subject matter of many of the comedy plays performed on the second day of the competition?**

**5. Give some examples of how comedy plays challenged the state of society or particular political norms?**

**6. How many tragedy plays were performed across days three to five of the City Dionysia?**

**7. How did tragedy plays differ to the comedy plays?**

**8. What processes did the Athenians build into the judging process to make the judging of the plays fair? Give examples.**

**"The City Dionysia was more about entertainment than religious practice."  
How far do you agree with this statement?**

**Evidence that entertainment was main focus:**

**Evidence that religious practice was main focus:**

Empty space for writing evidence that entertainment was the main focus.

Empty space for writing evidence that religious practice was the main focus.

**Conclusion:**

Empty space for writing the conclusion.



# THE LUPERCALIA

The Lupercalia was a Roman festival and as the name suggests was dedicated to the god Lupercus. It was a one-day festival in the region of the Palatine Hill in Rome.

This was an important festival in Rome and very much connected to Romulus and centred around the founding of Rome.

**Task:** Read the following information.

## The Origins of the Lupercalia Festival

Although the origins of the Lupercalia were debated by ancient writers, the festival, as it had developed as Rome expanded, was originally derived from a festival of purification and fertility in honour of the god **Lupercus**. In Latin, the word *lupus* means 'wolf' and so the festival also honoured Rome's founder, Romulus. Indeed, when Romulus first founded Rome, he was known as the 'King of the Shepherds'. As Rome lost its identity as a nation of farmers, the importance of the shepherd decreased, and the festival became more associated with the city's founder. The festival took place annually on the 15<sup>th</sup> February.

## The Officials

The priests who organised and ran the Lupercalia, were called the **Luperci** and were chosen especially for the day from the **noble** [upper class] male population.

## The Location: The Lupercal

At the beginning of the festival the priests gathered in the **Lupercal**. This was a cave in the Palatine Hill that was believed to be the place where Romulus and Remus were cared for by the she-wolf after they had been thrown in the River Tiber.

Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who lived at the time of Emperor Augustus, described the cave:

This place the Romans call the **Lupercal**...Now, it is true, since the district about the sacred precinct has been united with the city, it has become difficult to make out by conjecture the ancient nature of the place. Nevertheless, at first, we are told, there was a large cave under the hill overarched by a dense wood; deep springs issued from trees. In this place, they raised an altar to the god and performed their traditional sacrifice, which the Romans have continued to offer up to this day in the month of February, after the winter solstice, without altering anything in the rites then performed.

*Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Roman Antiquities, 1.32*

The cave contained an altar to **Lupercus**. The **Luperci** were divided into two teams and underwent a sacrifice in honour of the god. Once the sacrifice had taken place the two teams took part in a race around the foot of the Palatine Hill.

## The Sacrifice and the Race

On entering the cave, the **Luperci** sacrificed dogs and goats to **Lupercus**. These animals were known for their virility [strength] and suited a sacrifice to a god of fertility. The animals were sacrificed by sprinkling mola salsa on their heads. Once the animals had bowed their heads in acceptance, their throats were slit. When the animals had been killed, a knife was dipped in the blood of the animal, which was then dripped onto the foreheads of the participants. The blood was then immediately wiped off with wool soaked in milk. At this point the **Luperci** were expected to let out a laugh.

Following the killing of the animals a haruspex would read the entrails for positive signs. If the entrails were positive, the participants would eat the sacrificial meat and drink large amounts wine. Once the feast was consumed, the **Luperci** cut the skins from the animals into strips; some of these were used for covering parts of the body, while others were used during the race.

The reasons for the race and participants' lack of clothing was explained by the Roman poet Ovid:

‘Why, you ask, do the **Luperci** run, and since it’s their custom, this running, why do they strip their bodies naked? The god himself loves to run swiftly on the heights, and he himself, suddenly takes to flight. The god himself is naked, and orders his servants naked, since anyway clothes were not suited to that course.’

*Ovid, Fasti, 2.283-288*

The race was the public part of the festival and took place at three key areas of Rome: the **Lupercal** cave, the Palatine Hill, and the Roman Forum. The race was run by the **Luperci** in front of the public crowd. It involved them leaving the cave, with the vast majority of the race taking place at the foot of the Palatine Hill. As they ran round the hill, their route would take them into the Roman Forum, the heart of Roman business and politics.

As they raced, the participants [the **Luperci**] would be encouraged to whip spectators with the leather strips they had made from the earlier sacrifices. As a festival that originated in fertility, the belief was that being whipped by the **Luperci** would increase one’s chance of either falling pregnant or having a safe delivery of a baby. Many women during this race would purposely get in the way of runners to be whipped. As Plutarch wrote:

‘Many women of rank also purposely get in their way, and like children at school, present their hands to be struck, believing that the pregnant will thus be helped to an easy delivery, and the barren to pregnancy.’

*Plutarch, Caesar, 61.2*

**Task:** Using the information you have just read, complete the chart below in as much detail as you can.

# The Lupercalia Festival

**1** The Festival will take place on:



Blank space for writing the date of the festival.

**3** There are a number of versions about how the festival came to be:



Blank space for writing different versions of the festival's origin.

**2** Who is in charge of the festival?



Blank space for writing who is in charge of the festival.

Blank space for writing who is in charge of the festival.

**4** The Sacrifice



Large blank space for writing details about the sacrifice.

**5** The Race



Large blank space for writing details about the race.

**The Lupercalia was more about entertainment than religious practice.”  
How far do you agree with this statement?**

<b>Evidence that entertainment was main focus:</b>	<b>Evidence that religious practice was main focus:</b>

**Conclusion:**



# THE SATURNALIA

The Saturnalia was a Roman festival and as the name suggests was dedicated to the god Saturn. It was, at one point, a five-day festival and celebrated all over Rome in the month of December.

This was an important festival in Rome and very much connected to the importance of the coming harvests and celebrating Rome's agricultural roots.

## The Origins of the Saturnalia Festival

The Saturnalia was held in honour of the Roman god Saturn. The festival celebrated three important things:

- As Saturn was the Roman god of sowing and the seed, the festival celebrated the end of winter sowing.
- The festival celebrated the start of the Winter Solstice and symbolised the coming of new light, rebirth, and the promise of a positive future.

The following third reason it is celebrated is slightly different to the previous two that were very much connected to harvest and rebirth.

- Saturn was believed to have ruled the earth during the 'Golden Age', a time when both men and gods lived together in prosperity as equals. The festival brought a hope of a return to this 'Golden Age'.

The Saturnalia was considered unique amongst festivals because all levels of society took part, including men, women, children, and slaves. At its longest the festival lasted from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 23<sup>rd</sup> December. However, during the reign of Augustus (28 BC – 14 AD), the festival was shortened to three days, before then later being extended to five days during the reign of Claudius (41 AD – 54 AD). The festival remained popular throughout the Roman period right through to the fourth century AD, when it became incorporated into the Christian celebration of Christmas.

## The Officials

In 497BC the Temple of Saturn in the Roman Forum was dedicated during the Saturnalia, and it was the priests of this temple that provided the religious officials. Religious officials were often elected for a single year and so the possibility of leading the sacrifice at the Saturnalia was a prospect for many leading Romans. The responsibility for the public feast fell to the Senate and state money was used to pay for it.

## The Programme

Despite the Saturnalia being the most popular festival in Rome, it has been poorly documented. For this reason, we know what happened, just not when it happened within the festival. The only thing about the order of events that we know is that the sacrifice took place on the first day. Unlike normal Roman sacrifices, the priest took part in the sacrifice with his head uncovered in the Greek style. This no doubt alluded to the relationship between Saturn and Cronos, the Greek father of Zeus.

From the first day of the festival all business was suspended, and the period declared a national holiday. This meant that the whole of the city was free to take part in the festivities. All Romans took part, and even slaves were allowed to take part in the festivities. Romans undertook activities such as feasting, playing music, singing, even gambling. People would decorate their homes with foliage, much like we do at Christmas now.

Another feature of the Saturnalia was gift giving. Much like our Christmas presents, Romans would give numerous and varied gifts to each other. Common gifts were candles as they symbolised the return of the light after the winter solstice. On the final day of the festivities, many Romans would give their family and friends small terracotta figurines [Sigillaria] of gods as presents as well.

## The Public Feast

After the sacrifice the state paid for a public feast that took place throughout the streets of Rome. Given that all levels of society took part, this would have been an enormous expense to the Roman state and could have lasted several days. The feast included a statue of Saturn that would sit at the banquet table to signify the god's presence at the festival.

## The Private Feast

The private aspect of the Saturnalia provided another unique experience. The festival promoted equality, which meant that slaves and masters were equal for its duration. To support this, masters would remove their togas, and all would wear party dress. Additionally, men would wear the small felt cap called a pileus as a symbol of freedom.

An ancient writer called Macrobius explained the benefits to slaves:

Meanwhile the head of the slave household, whose responsibility it was to offer sacrifice to the Penates, to manage the provisions and to direct the activities of the domestic servants, came to tell his master that the household had feasted according to the animal ritual custom. For at this festival, in houses that keep to proper religious usage, they first of all honour the slaves with a dinner prepared as if for their master; and only afterwards is the table set again for the head of the household. So then, the chief slave came in to announce the time of dinner and to summon the masters to table.

*Macrobius, Saturnalia, 1.24.22-23*

In the fourth century a calendar was made depicting the important events of each month. Below is a copy of this calendar entry and a breakdown of what each part represents or symbolises.



**Task:** Using the information you have just read, complete the chart below in as much detail as you can.

# The Saturnalia Festival

**1** The Festival will take place on: 

**2** Who is in charge of the festival? 

**4** Programme of Events 

**3** What was the festival celebrating? 

**5** The Sacrifice 

**6** The Public Feast 

**7** Equality 

**"The Saturnalia was more about entertainment than religious practice."**

**How far do you agree with this statement?**

**Evidence that entertainment was main focus:**

**Evidence that religious practice was main focus:**

**Conclusion:**



**EXAM**

# QUESTIONS

Source A: Pottery depicting Poseidon



Study Source A:

**1a** Give **one** detail from **Source A** that identifies this god as Poseidon.

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**(1)**

**1b** Give **one** responsibility that Poseidon had.

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**(1)**

**1c** Why was this responsibility important to the Greeks?

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**(1)**

**2** With which goddess did Poseidon compete for the naming of Athens?

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**(1)**

**3a** What gift did each god give to try and win the competition?

■

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■

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**(2)**

**3b** Why was the goddess's gift more useful?

-----

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**(1)**

Source C: A Panathenaic Amphora



Study Source C:

8 (a) Who is shown on the amphora in Source C?

----- (1)

(b) Give **one** way you know this.

----- (1)

(c) What was shown on the other side of a Panathenaic amphora?

----- (1)

9 (a) What was put in a Panathenaic amphora?

----- (1)

(b) What did the Greeks use this material for?

----- (1)

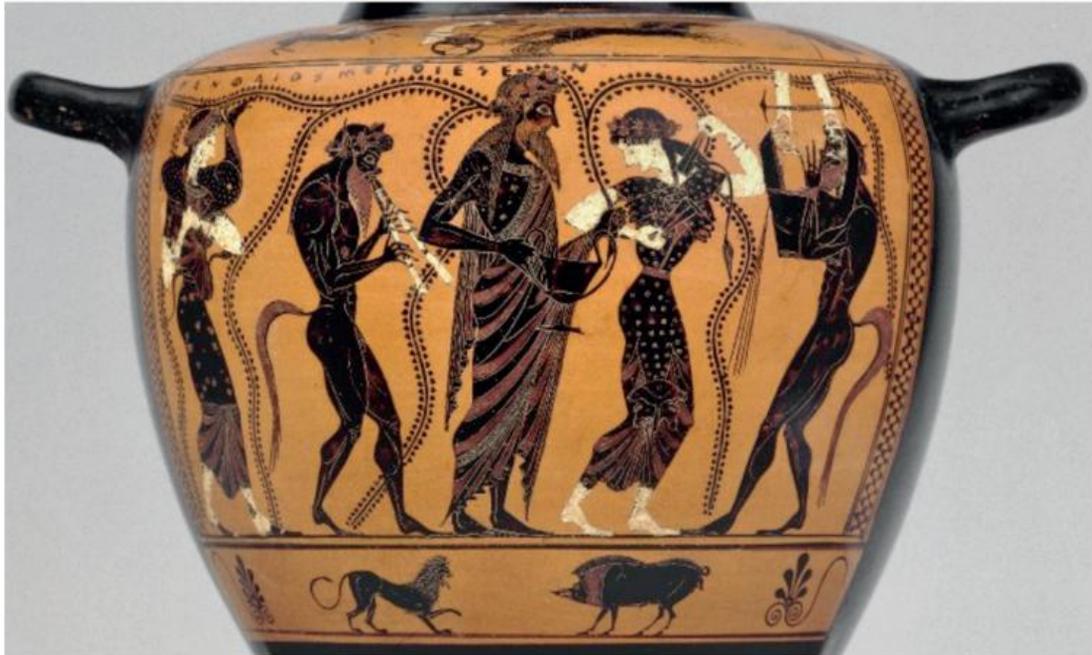
10 What item was given as a gift to the goddess worshipped during the Panathenaia?

----- (1)





Source A: A Greek amphora showing the god Dionysus



Study Source A:

1 (a) State **two** reasons why the figure in the centre of **Source A** has been identified as Dionysus.

- .....  
.....
- .....  
.....

(2)

(b) What might have **Source A** contained which was connected to Dionysus?

.....

(1)

2 What was the name of the festival held in Athens that worshipped Dionysus?

.....

(1)

**3 (a)** State **two** events that took place during this festival.

■ .....  
.....

■ .....  
.....

**(2)**

**(b)** Why were these events suitable for the worship of Dionysus?

.....  
.....

**(1)**





**Source H: An ancient writer called Plutarch describes a Roman festival.**

At this time of the noble youths and of the magistrates run up and down through the city naked, for sport and laughter striking those they meet with shaggy thongs. And many women of rank also purposely get in their way, and like children at school present their hands to be struck.

**Study Source H**

**14 (a)** What is the name of the festival described in **Source H**? **(1)**

.....

**(b)** In what month did this festival take place? **(1)**

.....

**(c)** Why did women 'purposely' [line 3] get in the way of the young men for this festival and 'present their hands to be struck' [line 3]? **(1)**

.....

.....

**15** Describe one other event that took place during this festival, other than that described in **Source H**. **(1)**

.....





**Source G: A Roman poet describes a popular festival in Rome**

At this time of the year, when the knights and senators show off their party clothes and even the emperor wears a freedman's cap and the slave is not afraid to look straight at the public official and shake the dice box, accept the gift you have received, whether from a poor or rich man. Let everyone give his guest an appropriate gift.

**Study Source G**

**11** What Roman festival is being described in **Source G**? **(1)**

.....

**12 (a)** At what point in the year did this festival take place? **(1)**

.....

**(b)** State **one** reason why this time of year was appropriate for this festival? **(1)**

.....

.....

**13 (a)** State **two** other events that took place during this festival that are **not** mentioned in **Source G**? **(2)**

- .....
- .....

**(b)** Why did this festival appeal to slaves? **(1)**

.....

.....

Source C: A scene from an Athenian festival in honour of Dionysus



Study Source C:

6 (a) What is the name of the theatrical festival celebrated in Athens in honour of Dionysus?

----- (1)

(b) Why do you think the **first** day of this festival would have been impressive to watch?

Make **three** points.

- -----  
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- -----  
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- -----  
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(3)

**7 (a)** State **two** ways in which the sanctuary of Dionysus was similar to other Greek sacrifices.

■

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■

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**(2)**

**7 (b)** Choose **one** of these ways. Why was it an important feature in a sanctuary?

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## Additional Notes Section

A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing notes.

