

Core Knowledge

## YEAR 3: ANCIENT GREECE (five lessons): Lesson 5. Marathon and Thermopylae

UK

TAGS: [Athens](#) [Sparta](#) [Persia](#) [Hoplite](#) [Marathon](#) [Thermopylae](#) [Pheidippides](#)



General information	
<i>Title of the work</i>	YEAR 3: ANCIENT GREECE (five lessons): Lesson 5. Marathon and Thermopylae
<i>Country of publication</i>	UK
<i>Publisher</i>	Core Knowledge UK
<i>Original language</i>	English
<i>Target and Age Group</i>	Primary school (7-8 year olds), year 3 in the UK education system, part of the national curriculum for history.
<i>Link (to resource)</i>	The link is to the whole ancient Greece Module, 5 lesson plans. <a href="http://coreknowledge.org.uk/resources">coreknowledge.org.uk/resources</a> Accessed September 30, 2020.
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### Core Knowledge

#### Core Knowledge UK

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<https://www.coreknowledge.org/about-us/>

Accessed September 30, 2020.

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## Additional information

Contents & Purpose	After learning about the Persian wars, this lesson focuses on two battles, one representing Athenian might and one Spartan heroism. The battles refer to the Persian invasion of 490 and 480 B.C.E. the students are asked to fill in a news article about Marathon and Thermopylae. They can write also a poem if they wish.
Further comments	<p>Marathon and Thermopylae were probably chosen due to their more familiarity than other battles from ancient Greece. It gives the teachers the opportunity to explain the meaning of the Marathon race. Thermopylae might be known from the movie 300 (2006) at least to some students, although they are much younger than the intended audience of the film, hence it is not referred to in the lesson, but other videos from the History channel and the BBC's Horrible Histories are referred to.</p> <p>These two battles however, showed a very different ethics and attitude towards life and death. The Spartans preferred death over retreat, the Athenians had no choice but to fight (and the Spartans did not come to their aid at first, a fact which is not mentioned in the lesson).</p> <p>Writing a newspaper article forces the students to focus on the main details and concise the significant elements of each battle, while still making the article comprehensible to a larger audience. Hence they must learn the battles well in order to write a good article.</p>