

CHAPTER 12 | LESSON 2 Peloponnesian War

Primary Source**Pericles' Funeral Oration**

At the end of the first year of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians held an elaborate funeral for all those killed in the war. The funeral oration over these dead was delivered by the brilliant politician and general, Pericles. The Funeral Oration contains the patriotic feelings held by most Athenians.

For in the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her. No enemy who comes against her is indignant [angry] at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him. And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and succeeding ages; we shall not need the praises of Homer or of any other *panegyrist*¹ whose poetry may please for the moment, although his representation of the facts will not bear the light of day. For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valor, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity [hatred]. Such is the city for whose sake these men only fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and everyone of us who survive should gladly toil on her behalf.

excerpt from "Pericles' Funeral Oration"
from Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, trans.
Benjamin Jowett

*panegyrist*¹ a person who gives a tribute at a funeral

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTIONS

1. Why does Pericles think that a defeated enemy will not feel bad about being beaten by the Athenians?

2. What reasons does Pericles give to support his claim that Athens will be "the wonder of this and succeeding ages."

3. **Detecting Historical Points of View** In which line does Pericles say that Athens is even better than people say it is?

4. **Comparing and Contrasting** Is this oration like one a U.S. president might give today in wartime? Why/why not?

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Reteaching Activity**Reading Comprehension**

Choose the word that most accurately completes each sentence below. Write that word in the blank provided. Note: Some words may be used more than once.

Pericles
naval empire
Athens
truce

food supply
sea power
Sparta

plague
Peloponnesian War
King Philip of Macedon

1. The Greek city-state of _____ had a democratic form of government.
2. The Greek city-state whose culture glorified military ideals was _____.
3. Under the leadership of _____, Athens grew from a city-state to a _____.
4. The violent conflict between Athens and Sparta became known as the _____.
5. Part of Sparta's war strategy was to cut off the _____ for Athens by destroying crops.
6. Athens' war strategy relied on _____.
7. An outbreak of _____ killed as many as one-third of the Athenian people and army, as well as Pericles.
8. An agreement to stop fighting is called a _____.
9. _____ surrendered to _____ in 404 B.C.
10. One consequence of the war between Athens and Sparta was that _____ viewed the weakened Greek city-states as easy to attack in his plan to develop an empire.