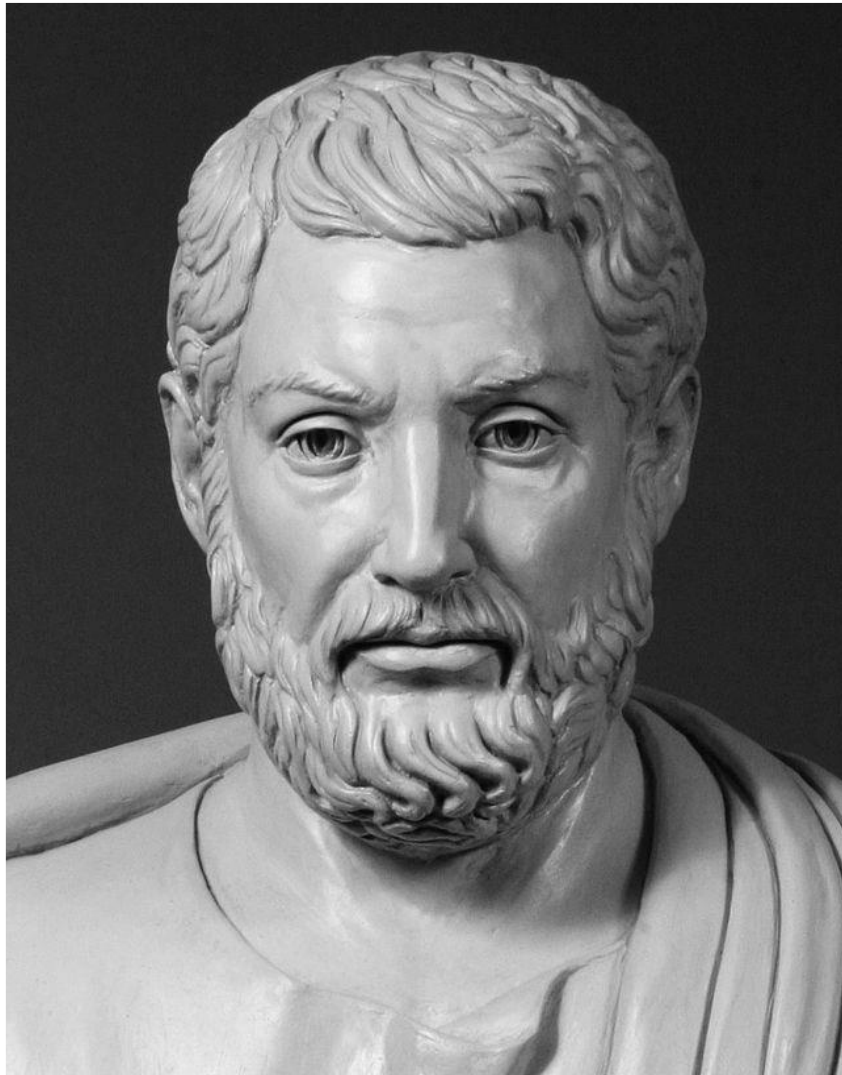


# Background



*In the 6th century BCE, Athens was the site of ongoing fighting between the rich Athenians, who controlled the government, and poor Athenians, who were farmers and merchants. In 508 BCE, a wealthy Athenian named Cleisthenes rose to power in the city-state. The following year, he introduced a system known as democracy.*

*Bust of Cleisthenes  
created in 2002-2004 by  
Anna Christoforidis*

Definition of  
Democracy. A  
*democracy is a  
form of  
government where  
political power  
comes from  
citizens.*

# democracy



*demokratia*

*demo:*

the people

*kratia:*

power or rule

*The word comes from the  
Greek demokratia. Demo  
means “the people,” and  
kratia means “power” or  
“rule.” Athenian democracy  
was a direct democracy.  
This means that citizens  
were allowed to vote  
directly on laws and  
government actions. This is  
different from a  
representative democracy,  
in which citizens elect  
officials to vote on laws.*

---

**rule by the people**

# Athenian Democracy

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## The ***Ekklesia*** (Assembly)

*The Ekklesia was Athens's main governing body and made the most important decisions, including voting on laws, deciding whether to go to war, and determining foreign policy. Any Athenian citizen could attend and vote in the Ekklesia, which met 40 times per year. Decisions required a simple majority to pass.*

## The ***Boule*** (Council of 500)

*The Boule was a council made up of 500 men (50 from each of the 10 Athenian tribes). These men were chosen by lottery and served one- year terms. The Boule made decisions about day-to-day government and decided what issues should go in front of the Ekklesia.*

## The ***Dikasteria*** (The Courts)

*The Dikasteria, or court, was made up of 500 men over 30 years old, who were chosen by lottery. They decided legal cases by majority rule. There were no official police or lawyers. Athenian citizens served in these roles instead.*

**Read through the  
documents and answer the  
guiding questions and stop  
when you come to the place  
with the title Structured  
Academic Controversy**

# DOCUMENT A

## Document A: Pericles (Modified)

*The following excerpt is from a speech known as “The Funeral Oration,” delivered by the Athenian general and politician Pericles in 431 BCE. Pericles was widely seen as the leader of Athens. He gave this speech during a funeral for Athenian soldiers that died in the first year of the brutal Peloponnesian War against Sparta, Athens’s chief rival. The Athenian historian Thucydides included the speech in his book the History of the Peloponnesian War. Historians are not sure when Thucydides wrote down the speech or how close his version was to the original.*

---

Our constitution favors the many instead of the few. This is why it is called a democracy. If we look to the laws, they give equal justice to all. Advancement in public life falls to one’s reputation for good work. **Social class** is not allowed to interfere with someone’s **merit**, and poverty does not block the way. If a man is able to serve the state, he is not stopped by the **obscurity** of his condition.

The freedom which we enjoy in our government extends also to our ordinary life. There, far from being jealous of each other, we do not feel called upon to be angry with our neighbor for doing what he likes. But all this ease in our private lives does not make us lawless as citizens. Fear is our chief protection against this, teaching us to obey the **magistrates** and the laws.

**Source:** *Thucydides (c. 460-395 BCE), “Pericles’s Funeral Oration,” in The History of the Peloponnesian War.*

### Vocabulary

social class: someone’s position in society

merit: talent, skills, or qualifications

obscurity: unknown or unimportant

magistrates: government officials



# DOCUMENT B

## Document B: The Athenian Constitution (Modified)

*The following excerpt comes from "The Athenian Constitution," written by the Greek philosopher Aristotle between 330 and 322 BCE. Aristotle was the leading Greek philosopher of the time, and is credited with writing accounts of the constitutions of 170 different Greek states.*

---

At the time that we are speaking, the people have secured their control of the state and established the constitution which exists at the present day. The democracy has made itself master of everything and administers everything by its votes in the Assembly and by the law-courts.

The present state of the constitution is as follows. The **franchise** is open to all men who are of citizen birth by both parents. They are enrolled as citizens at the age of eighteen. On the occasion of their enrollment, the current citizens give their votes first on whether the new candidates appear to be of the age set by the law. If the candidates are not of the right age, they are dismissed back into the ranks of the boys. Secondly, the current citizens give their votes on whether the candidate is **free born**, and has two citizen parents as the laws require. If they decide that he is not a free man, he can appeal to the law-courts. If the court decides that he has no right to be enrolled as a citizen, he is sold by Athens as a slave. If he wins his case, he has the right to be enrolled as a citizen without further question.

All the **magistrates** that are responsible for the ordinary routine of administration are elected by **lot** in the Assembly. However, the Military Treasurer, the Commissioners of the Festival Fund, and the Superintendent of the Water Supply are elected by vote. All military officers are also elected by vote.

**Source:** Aristotle, "The Athenian Constitution," 330-322 BCE.

### Vocabulary

franchise: right to vote and participate in government

free born: not born to a parent who is a slave

magistrates: government officials

lot: random lottery

# DOCUMENT C

## Document C: The Athenian Population

*The data below comes from the book Wealthy Hellas, written by Professor Josiah Ober in 2010. Ober is a professor of Classical Civilization and Political Science at Stanford University.*

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<i>Population Group</i>	<i>Total Number of people</i>	<i>Percentage of the population</i>	<i>Ability to vote</i>
<b>Citizen men</b>	29,900	12%	Yes
<b>Citizen women</b>	29,900	12%	No
<b>Children of citizens</b>	74,750	31%	No
<b>Metics</b>	25,775	11%	No
<b>Slaves</b>	80,000	34%	No
<u>Total Population:</u> <b>240,235</b>		<u>Percentage of Total Population Able to Vote:</u>	<b>12%</b>

**\*Metics** were foreigners or Greeks from other city-states that settled in Athens, normally for purposes of trade. They became a key part of the city-state's economy, industry, and education system.

**Source:** Josiah Ober, *The Rise and Fall of Classical Greece*, 2016.

# DOCUMENT D

## Document D: Professor Hansen

*Mogens Herman Hansen was a professor of philology and classics at the University of Copenhagen before retiring in 2010. He is considered a leading expert in the world on the subject of Athenian democracy. The following is an excerpt from an article he wrote in 1989.*

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The objections regularly raised against Athenian democracy are twofold: first, democracy is the rule of the whole of the people, excluding minors and maniacs only. **Demokratia** was rule by male citizens only, excluding women, free foreigners (metics) and slaves. Thus, by our standards it was **oligarchy**, not democracy. Second, rule was exercised directly by the people, whereas democracy today means government by representatives of the people. Popular assemblies belong to the past, and direct democracy has been made impossible by the size of modern nations. Athenian *demokratia* is criticized for being both more democratic and less democratic than democracy. It is more democratic by being government by the people instead of government by those elected by the people. It is less democratic by narrowing down the concept of *demos* to mean the adult male citizens in assembly.

**Source:** *Mogens Herman Hansen, "Was Athens a Democracy?", 1989.*

### Vocabulary

demokratia: the Greek word for democracy

oligarchy: a form of government in which a small group of people have power and control



# DOCUMENT E

## Document E: Professor Camp

*Professor John Camp directs excavations of the Athenian Agora, which was a gathering place in ancient Athens. He is also a professor of Classics at Randolph-Macon College. This is an excerpt from an opinion article he wrote in the New York Times in 2003.*

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Once a year the Athenians would meet and vote on a simple question: Is anyone . . . becoming a threat to the democracy? If a simple majority voted yes, then they dispersed and reassembled two months later. They brought with them their ostrakon (a fragment of pottery), on which they had scratched the name of the person they thought represented a threat. The man with the most votes lost. He was exiled for 10 years, and this was thought to calm any anti-democratic leanings he might have.

In other words, the Athenians not only voted people into office, but they had a regular procedure for voting one person per year out of office. It was an option which could be exercised but did not have to be. The exile did not involve **confiscation** or any other **punitive** measures; it was designed only to remove an individual from the political arena. . . .

The Athenians were better than we are at enforcing accountability in their public officials. . . . Almost every prominent statesman of Athens in the early 5th century BC took one of these 10-year vacations, courtesy of the Athenian people. . . .

There may be pitfalls. . . . One batch of 190 ostraca found in Athens, all with the name of Themistocles . . . turned out to be all written by only 13 individuals. . . . The other danger is that if a leading statesman is powerful enough and has the votes, ostracism is a great way to eliminate a weaker but annoying rival. . . .

In 417 BC, when the outcome was uncertain, the two top dogs . . . ganged up on Hyperbolos, a **hapless** number three. This was such an obvious misuse of the system that the Athenians never used it again.

**Source:** John Camp, "Ostracized in Athens: Ancient Greeks Knew How to Dump Bad Pols." The New York Times, July 24, 2003.

### Vocabulary

confiscation: taking property with authority

punitive: disciplinary

hapless: unlucky

# Structured Academic Controversy (SAC)

Divide into groups of four and then divide each group of four into Team A and Team B. Pass out the Guiding Questions,

Teams, use the Graphic Organizer to collect data for their side.

Team A argues ancient Athens *was* truly democratic,

Team B argues ancient Athens *was not* truly democratic

Team A presents to Team B, and Team B repeats arguments back to Team A, until Team A is satisfied.

Team B presents to Team A, and Team A repeats arguments back to Team B, until Team B is satisfied.

Teams try to reach consensus.

# Team A

As a group you are going to look back over all the documents and find the 4 MOST convincing pieces of evidence that Athens was truly democratic.

List those reasons on your paper,

# Team B

As a group you are going to look back over all the documents and find the 4 MOST convincing pieces of evidence that Athens was NOT truly democratic.

List those reasons on your paper,

Once YOU have shared all  
your opinions you will each  
Chose for yourself whether  
YOU think Athens was truly  
democratic or not. YOU will  
write your own short essay  
using evidence from your  
sources to support your  
opinion on the last page.



**The majority of your paper  
will be graded on your  
thesis statement and first  
paragraph, be sure that you  
follow the instructions  
provided in the following  
slide.**

## How to write your paragraph

### Thesis statement-

I believe that \_\_\_\_\_ because of the evidence found in documents \_\_, \_\_, and\_\_.

### Source 1-

In document \_ says " \_\_\_\_\_ " this supports my opinion that \_\_\_\_\_ (support thesis) Because \_\_\_\_\_.

### Source 2-

In document \_ says " \_\_\_\_\_ " this supports my opinion that \_\_\_\_\_ (support thesis) Because \_\_\_\_\_.

### Counter Argument

Someone might disagree with me because in document \_ it says " \_\_\_\_\_ " this goes against my opinion. In response to their claims I would say \_\_\_\_\_.

### Conclusion

Summarize your evidence, and tie it back into your THESIS, and finish strong.