**SBAC Argumentative Writing**

***Overview***

The purpose of this interdisciplinary writing test is to determine how well you can write to persuade others to think as you do about an issue. In this test, you will read source materials about an important issue, take a position on the issue and write a first draft of an argumentative essay. You must support your position with information from ***each***of the source materials.

**Steps to Follow**

1. **Understand the Question**
2. **Read the source materials.**

Before taking a position on the issue, it is important that you read all of the source materials related to Athens and Sparta. As you read the source materials, you may underline information, highlight, or write notes on the article’s themselves.

1. **Organize: Prepare to write your letter.**

You have been given two organizers which you may find useful as you consider the various arguments for or against a specific place. You may use the organizer that best suits your position. **You are not required to complete these pages, and they will not be scored.**

1. **Write! - Your letter should be typed.**

Your letter should be typed in Times New Roman, size 12 font. It should be no more than three pages long.

**5. Edit and Revise**

**Your Score:**

Your score will be based on the following criteria:

1. **Position** ─ Did you take a clear position on the issue?

2. **Comprehensiveness** ─ Did you use information from *each* of the three sources that are provided?

3. **Support** ─ Did you support your position with accurate and relevant information from the source materials?

4.  **Organization** ─ Did you organize your ideas in a logical and effective manner so that your audience will understand and follow your thinking?

5. **Clarity and Fluency** ─ Did you express your ideas clearly and fluently using your own words

*Argumentative Writing Task: Which city-state, Athens or Sparta, would be the superior polis to live in and why?*

The classical Greek world was one in which independent city-states vied for power, wealth, and fame. These city-states, while connected by a common language and religion, were fiercely independent. The two leading city-states, Athens and Sparta, could not have been more different in their beliefs and lifestyles. Scholars and historians have long debated which city-state would have been better to live in. You will read five articles about Ancient Athens and Sparta and you will have to decide which city-state you would prefer to live in. To effectively argue your position you must use *each* of the sources provided. This is an argumentative essay and you should take a clear position that is supported by relevant facts and details. You should use quotes from the source material to support your argument. The following scenario will assist you in providing the angle by which you are to write your essay.

**Scenario: You are the grandchild of the famous Greek historian Herodotus. Herodotus has given you the task of contributing to his next great work entitled “History of the Ancient World”. You have been asked to write about the two most famous ancient Greek city states, Athens and Sparta. The year is 430 BCE.**

**In order to get an understanding of life in Athens and Sparta, you have traveled to Greece to live amongst the people. The people you meet and the stories you are told show the important influence these two city states have had in your lifetime. You have come to believe that one day this time period will be called a “Golden Age of Classical Greece”. After spending time in both settings, you must write a letter to Herodotus explaining which of these two city states would have been the superior polis to live in and why. Herodotus is very old, so make sure you support your position well so that he will take your account of life in these two places seriously.**

**Part One: The Sources**

You will now examine several sources. You can re-examine any of the sources as often as you would like. After looking at the sources, use the rest of the time in PART ONE to answer the questions about them. Your answers will help you think about the information you have read and analyzed, which should help you write your argumentative essay. Feel free to highlight the sources or take any notes down that you want.

**Source ONE: Sparta vs. Athens Chart**

**Author: \_\_Bree Sposato\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Source: Athens v. Sparta: A Debate for the Ages**

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Athens | Sparta |
| Population | In Athens there were approximately 140,000 people, 40,000 men were citizens, and 40,000 were slaves.  By 432 BC Athens & it’s colony of Attica had become the most populous city-state in Greece. Around 50,000 aliens (non-Athenians) lived here. | In Sparta there were approximately 8,000 Spartiates (adult male citizens) ruled over a population of 100,000 enslaved and semi-enslaved people. |
| Social Structure | Social Structure of Athens: **Freemen** were all male citizens: divided into numerous classes: at the top were aristocrats who had large estates and made up the cavalry or captained triremes; middle ranks were small famers; lowest class was the thetes (urban craftsmen and trireme rowers). Metrics – those who came from outside the city; they were not allowed to own land, but they could run industries and businesses. Slaves were the lowest class but less harshly treated than in most other Greek cities. Slaves had no rights, and an owner could kill a slave. Slaves varied in status: some were given important roles in Athens, like policemen. Women were rarely seen outside the home and had no rights in the Athenian democracy. | Social structure of Sparta: Sparta had three class –  1. Spartiates = military professionals who lived mostly in barracks and whose land was farmed by serfs; they served in the army and could vote.  2. Perioeci = ‘neighbor/ outsiders’ who were freemen and included artisans, craftsmen, merchants; they could not vote or serve in the army; foreigner could be in this class.  3. Helots = serfs descended from those people who had resisted subjugation by Sparta and who were constantly rebelling. They were treated like slaves and gave ½ of their produce to the spartiate citizens who owned land.  Women had few rights, but were more independent in Sparta than elsewhere in Greece |
| Allies | Delian League = Athens was clearly the most powerful, they taxed and protected other city-states | Peloponnesian League = Sparta was clearly the most powerful state in this Alliance |
| Military | Strong Navy | Strong Army with the best and most feared fighters on land |
| Life style and values | Democratic values for citizens. They believed in participation in government as a civic responsibility. Athenians believed in their cultural superiority and in their role in an empire and benefited from trade. (Quote from Pericles’ Funeral Oration discussing these sources)  “Further, we provide many ways to refresh the mind from the burdens of business. We hold contests and offer sacrifices all the year round. The magnitude of our city draws the produce of the world into our harbor, so that to the Athenian the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his own.” | Spartan culture focused on Militaristic values. Children of citizens were raised to be ‘Spartan’ and taught to make do with almost nothing (supply wise). Spartiate citizens were not permitted to own gold or silver or luxuries. Spartan children were taught to respect their elders, women and warriors. [the strict separation of classes and militaristic system was put in place by Lycurgus in the 7th century BC]  Spartan mothers would say to their sons, “Ether come back with your shield or on it’ (meaning return victorious or die fighting) |
| Education | Boys: boys were tutored to prepare them to take part in the culture and politics of the city. They were expected to become well-rounded individuals. Education and literacy were very important. Schools taught reading, writing and mathematics, music, poetry, sport and gymnastics. Based upon birth and the wealth of their parents, the length of education was from the age of 5 to 14, for the wealthier 5-18 and sometimes into a student’s mid-twenties in an academy where they would study philosophy, ethics and rhetoric (the skill of persuasive public speaking). Finally, the citizen boys entered a military training camp for two years, until the age of twenty. Foreign metrics and slaves were not expected to attain anything but a basic education in Greece, but were not excluded from it either.  Girls: girls received little formal education (except perhaps in the aristocrats’ homes through tutors), The education of a girl involved spinning, weaving, and other domestic arts. | Boys: Boys were taken from parents at age seven and trained in the art of warfare. They were only given a cloak- no shoes or other clothes, and not enough food to survive – so they had to steal (this was done to teach the boys survival skills). At age 20 they were placed into higher ranks of the military. To age 30 they were dedicated to the state; then they would marry but still lived in barracks with other soldiers. They were educated in choral dance, reading and writing, but athletics and military training were emphasized.  Girls: Girls were educated at age 7 in reading and writing, gymnastics, athletics and survival skills. Could participate in sports, treated more as equals. |
| Role of Women | Athenian women and girls were kept at home with no participation in sports or politics. Wives considered property of their husbands. They were responsible for spinning, weaving and other domestic arts. Some women held high posts in the ritual events and religious life of Athens (where the goddess Athena was the patron) | Girls were educated in reading and writing and could participate in sports, they were treated more as equals to men. The goal was to produce women who would produce strong healthy babies. At age 18 she would be assigned a husband and return home. Citizen women were free to move around and enjoyed a great deal of freedom. Domestic arts (weaving, spinning) were usually left to the other classes. Spartan women could own and control their own property. In times of war the wife was expected to oversee her husband’s property and to guard it against invaders until her husband returned. |

Questions:

What population dominated the social class structure of Athens?

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What was the role of women in Athenian society? Spartan society?

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What did Spartan society value?

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**Source Two: Athenian Government**

**Author: \_\_\_Christina Kline\_\_\_\_ Source: \_\_Athens: The Rise of Golden Age\_\_\_\_\_**

Between 800 and 700 BC Athens grew quickly. As the city grew, merchants, soldiers and free peasants wanted more power to govern. Tyrants, or ruler who gain power by force in the ancient Greek meaning of the word, sometimes own the support of these groups by promising reforms or changes to the governmental and social structure. After one such man tried to gain power, the Athenians appointed a man named Draco to establish new laws. However, Draco’s laws were unpopular and considered harsh, Death was the penalty for most crimes, even minor ones.

When civil war threatened to break out, Solon, a wise leader, was given authority to revise the laws. He tried to balance the power between rich and poor, outlawed making people slaves to repay debts, and freed people already enslaved for debts. He also gave citizenship to some foreigners to attract tradespeople. Solon’s reforms helped to stabilize the government of Athens and make it fairer, but wealthy landowners continued to hold the most power.

Later reformers, including the tyrant Cleisthenes, gave greater power to ordinary citizens. Cleisthenes created a council of 500 chosen citizens who proposed laws to the assembly. Under Cleisthenes, the assembly became a real lawmaking body or legislature. This legislature was made up of free male citizens who were given the final authority to pass laws after free and open debate. This system created the foundations for Athenian democracy, or government by the people.

In Athens, although many people took part in government, many others, such as slaves and women, could not. Only free adult men were considered citizens in Athens. Athens had developed a limited democracy. There was no other place in the ancient world where so many people were involved in the political life of their state. However, many Athenian people were not given the right to govern themselves. They were left out of the democratic process and had few rights.

Questions:

How did the evolution of government in Athens promote the rights and responsibilities of Athenian citizenship?

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**Source Three: Sparta: A Society of Soldiers**

**Author: \_\_\_Katherine Hobson\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Source: Spartan Warlords\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Located in southern Greece, the city-state of Sparta was probably founded in about 1000 BC by the Dorian people. In the 700s BC Sparta became wealthy and powerful by attacking and defeating its neighbors. Eventually, there were more conquered people in Sparta than there were Spartans. In order to control the conquered population, the Spartans created a way of life based on military ideas that was not shared by other Greek people. The Spartans sacrificed individual freedoms, family life, the arts, and most luxuries for the common interests and security of their city-state. Even today, a Spartan life means ‘one with few luxuries.’

By the 600s BC Sparta was governed by two military leaders called kings and a 28 member council of elders, or men over 60 years of age. The council chose the issues to be presented to the assembly, or lawmaking group. The assembly voted on the issues. All free male Spartans over the age of 30 belonged to the assembly, which elected five ephors, or overseers. The Spartan kings were bound to consider the advice of the ephors. Also, the ephors were responsible for the education of Spartan youth and supervision of the kings. The conquered people of Sparta had no role in the Spartan government. They were helots, or slaved of the state. Helots farmed the land, which was equally divided among all male citizens, worked as household servants, and sometimes assisted soldiers in war. Their labor enabled Spartan men to devote themselves to military training and warfare. The entire Spartan society was organized for producing soldiers and keeping them in shape.

Questions:

Why did the Spartans need to maintain a state of military readiness?

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Who was responsible for the education of Spartan youth?

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**Source Four: The Glory that was Greece**

**Author: Robert A. Guisepi Source: \_\_City-State Comparison\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

From the vigorous iron-hearted warriors of this city-state has come the adjective Spartan. Sparta prided itself not on art, learning, or splendid buildings, but on its valiant men who "served their city in the place of walls of bricks." Athens, with its beautiful temples and statues, its poetry and philosophy, dominated the intellectual life of the world. In the end, however, Sparta wrested temporary political supremacy from its cultured opponent.

The Spartan government was founded on the principle that the life of every individual, from the moment of birth, belonged absolutely to the state. The elders of the city-state inspected the newborn infants and ordered the weak and unhealthy ones to be carried to a nearby chasm and left to die. By this practice Sparta hoped to ensure that only those who were physically fit would survive.

The children who were allowed to live were brought up under a severe discipline. At the age of 7, boys were removed from their parents' control and organized into small bands. The strongest and most courageous youths were made captains. The boys slept in dormitories on hard beds of rushes. They ate black broth and other coarse food. They wore the simplest and scantiest clothing. Unlike the boys of Athens, they spent little time learning music and literature. Instead they were drilled each day in gymnastics and military exercises. They were taught that retreat or surrender in battle was disgraceful. They learned to endure pain and hardship without complaint and to obey orders absolutely and without question. War songs were their only music, and their literary education was slight. No luxury was allowed, even in the use of words. They spoke shortly and to the point--in the manner that has come to be called laconic.

Questions:

How did the education of Spartan boys differ from their Athenian counter parts?

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What was the legacy of the Spartans?

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**Source Five: The Legacy of Athens**

**Author: \_\_\_Eric Ogden\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Source: \_\_\_Athenian Influence\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Driven by curiosity and a belief in reason, Athenian thinkers, artists, and writer explored the nature of the universe and the place of people in it. To later admirers, Athenian achievements in the arts represented the height of human development in the Western world. They looked back with deep respect on what one poet called ‘the glory that was Greece.” Some Athenian challenged the belief that events were caused by the whims of gods. Instead they used observations and reason to find causes for events. The Greeks called these individuals philosophers, meaning ‘lovers of wisdom.’

Athenian artists and architects reflected a concern with balance, order, and beauty. Athenian architects sought to convey a sense of perfect balance to reflect the harmony and order of the universe. The most famous example of Greek architecture is the Parthenon, a temple dedicated to the goddess Athena. The basic plan of the Parthenon is a simple rectangle, with tall columns supporting a gently sloping roof. The delicate curves and placement of the columns add dignity and grace. Athenian architecture has been widely admired for centuries. Today, many public buildings throughout the world have incorporated Greek architectural elements, such as columns, in their designs.

In literature the Athenians developed their own style. To later Europeans, Greek styles were a model of perfection. They admired what they called the ‘classical style,’ referring to the elegant and balanced forms of traditional Greek works of art. Perhaps the most important Athenian contribution to literature was in the field of drama. The first plays evolved out of religious festivals, and were often based on popular myths and legends. The greatest Athenian playwrights were Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. All three wrote tragedies, plays that told stories of human suffering that usually ended in disaster. The purpose of tragedy, the Athenian felt, was to stir up and relieve the emotions of pity and fear.

Questions:

What was the cultural impact of Athenian art and literature?

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