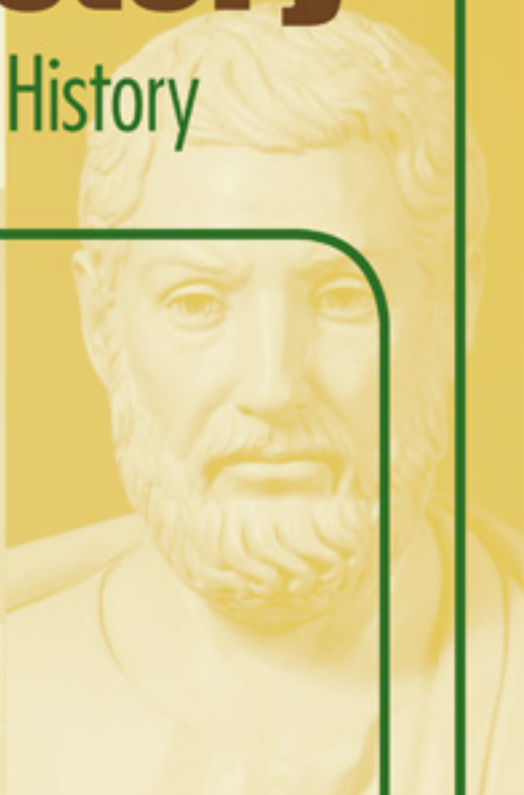


# Ancient History

Decision Making in World History



Kevin O'Reilly



**SOCIAL STUDIES  
SCHOOL SERVICE**

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**SOCIAL STUDIES SCHOOL SERVICE**  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA





**SOCIAL STUDIES SCHOOL SERVICE**

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# PREFACE:

## HINDSIGHT VS. FORESIGHT

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When we study history, it is all too easy to sit in judgment of those who came before us. We read it after the fact; we see it in hindsight. Given the benefit of such 20/20 hindsight, some historical figures seem to have been very misguided or downright silly in their decisions. Why couldn't they anticipate the consequences of their choices? How could they have been so shortsighted? Sports enthusiasts call this sort of analysis "Monday morning quarterbacking." However, it's not so easy to laugh at the follies of past decision makers if we are confronted with decisions in history before we learn the actual results. In such a situation, we find ourselves making some of the same mistakes that historical figures made, and we sometimes commit new errors they did not make. This method of studying history, which we might call "foresight history," is far more challenging—and engaging—than the traditional retrospective method to which we are inured.

In short, when we learn history by hindsight we risk becoming more arrogant and complacent. If, on the other hand, we learn history by *foresight*, by casting ourselves in the role of those historical figures and making decisions as they did—without knowing the outcome—we can learn humility and gain a great deal of empathy for historical decision makers. Students in my classes are constantly exclaiming, "This is hard!" as opposed to, "This is boring!"

Foresight history also helps students improve key skills they will use again and again as citizens. Schools of law, medicine, business, and nursing, along with the military and other social institutions, use case-study methods that require students to make decisions on a particular case and then analyze their thinking. If each of these varied disciplines values decision making so much, shouldn't we be training all our future citizens how to make good decisions?

History provides many benefits for those who study it. Historical knowledge is liberating all by itself, letting us draw back the veil of ignorance and see the present from a perspective enlightened by the past. The more knowledge of history we possess, the better we understand our societies and ourselves. Study and evaluation of primary sources, discussions of motives, debates about significance, analysis of causes and effects, and many other strategies are vital to history courses. The lessons here on decision making support and enhance these other methods of studying history, rather than replacing them with a more "practical" type of history.





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# INTRODUCTION

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## THE *DECISION MAKING IN WORLD HISTORY* SERIES

The lessons in *Decision Making in World History* are meant to be used independently within a standard World History course in middle school, high school, or college. The lessons have four main goals:

1. **Make History More Interesting.** Simply giving students the problems, having them make decisions, and then telling them what the people involved actually did will keep student interest high. It's exciting to make decisions before you know what the historical figures actually did. It's dynamic learning and it's open-ended. Students enjoy comparing their decisions to those of their classmates and to the decisions actually made by the historical figures. Even if you decide to use the lessons without giving instruction on how to perform the skills involved in decision making, students will still enjoy learning history this way. This increased interest should also lead to increased reading comprehension. After all, when students read their texts, they will actively search for what actually happened in order to compare it with what they chose.
2. **Improve Decision Making through Experience.** The primary way people learn to make better decisions is through the process of making decisions, both good and bad. Students therefore become more sophisticated decision makers with every choice they make. By giving students many chances to make decisions, we are giving them the chance to learn from mistakes and surprises, and as a result we can speed up the process of making them savvy decision makers. For example, students who decide to have a foreign government overthrown and then see many negative consequences of their decision will think twice before trying that again and will be skeptical of such a plan if proposed in the present day. Experience itself becomes the teacher.
3. **More Complex Ethical Thinking.** Ethical questions will arise regularly, and by discussing their positions students will develop more complex moral arguments and understandings. Note, however, that these lessons are not aimed primarily at ethical reasoning. To focus primarily on ethical reasoning, consult *Reasoning with Democratic Values* by Alan Lockwood and David Harris (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1985).
4. **Improve the Use of Decision-Making Skills and Reflection on Those Skills.** While experience is an important element in helping students improve their decision-making skills, they will develop those skills even more quickly if they learn specific subskills, which can then become guidelines for thinking through decision-making problems. The instruction is based on the skills of the **P-A-G-E** model, which is outlined later in this introduction. One of the teaching strategies (in the section "Reflecting on Decision Making") emphasizes journal writing, whereby students reflect on the problems they encounter, including how they could improve their own decision making. If you can get

students to reflect on how to improve on decisions they've just made, they will learn to be more reflective in general. Ideally, we want to train our future citizens to approach decision making by asking insightful questions, carefully probing for underlying problems, seeing a problem from a variety of perspectives, setting clear and realistic goals, and imagining consequences.

## HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Before you take a closer look at the lesson components, it is important to emphasize the following tips. It is best to use these lessons:

1. **Before students read about or study the topics.** If students read about the topics before they do the problems in each lesson, they may know which options worked well or poorly. That will spoil the whole decision-making experience!
2. **Individually.** These are stand-alone lessons. They are meant to be plugged into your world history curriculum wherever you see fit. They are not intended as part of a sequence.
3. **Flexibly.** You can use each lesson to provide either a quick introduction to a historical topic or a lengthier in-depth study of the topic.
4. **To teach skills as well as history content.** These lessons focus on real historical problems and often are accompanied by discussion of historical context; they provide both challenges to students' decision-making skills and the historical backdrop that will allow them to exercise those skills.

## LESSON COMPONENTS

There are seven lessons in this volume on decision making in ancient times, one on very early societies (Mesopotamia, nomads, and Egypt), two on Greece, two focused on Rome, one on Ptolemaic Egypt, and one on Han China. As in the other volumes in this series, no effort is made to cover all the major topics in this time period. Rather, lessons were chosen around interesting decision-making problems. Each lesson includes the following components:

1. **Introduction.** The first section of each lesson includes an overview of the topic, defines content vocabulary, and identifies the decision-making skills emphasized in the lesson.
2. **Lesson plan.** The main part of each lesson offers suggestions for how to use the handouts, how to focus on decision-making skills, how to connect the decision problem to the larger historical context, how to use video and other supplementary resources, and how to troubleshoot problems should any arise.
3. **Teacher notes.** This section includes notes for expanding discussion, along with information about outcomes (versions for students are also provided—see item 6 below), references to historians, interpretations of the topic, and decision-making analysis.

4. **Sources.** This section lists the publications and other sources of information used in the lesson.
5. **Problem(s).** Each lesson includes reproducible handouts, including a vocabulary list of relevant terms and concepts, for students to use in analyzing the problem(s).
6. **Historical outcome of the problem.** In this section, students can read about what people in history actually did to solve the problem(s), along with the consequences of their decisions.
7. **Primary sources and visuals:** These resources are integrated into several of the lessons.

Each individual decision-making challenge is referred to as a *problem*. Some lessons have one problem to challenge students, while others contain two or more problems. The basic format of each lesson is problem, decision, outcome, discussion. Each lesson is accompanied by handouts that can be used in part or whole to advance the lesson.

While decision making is the focus of the books, historical content is also very important. These lessons emphasize real problems that convey powerful lessons about world history—issues concerning taxation, regulation of business or behavior, social welfare, war, and so forth. In addition, the problems are not all approached from the perspective of political leaders; many problems ask students to take the perspective of ordinary people. Including problems from the perspective of ordinary people prepares students for their roles as citizens in a democracy and encourages empathy for unfamiliar groups.

Most of the problems are brief—some as short as one paragraph. They could be used as class warm-ups that last no more than ten minutes. Even the short problems, however, can be quite complex and can draw forth some sophisticated analyses. You are the best judge of how much analysis and discussion each problem requires depending on the needs of your students.

On the other hand, some problems are obviously more complicated. These problems deal with critical turning points in history. For these problems, students will almost certainly need more background information before making decisions, and analysis of these problems could take several class periods. These more involved problems could form the basis for an entire unit of study. The first lesson in this book, for example, could open the way to examining an essential question about ancient societies: What made some societies “civilized,” and what were the advantages and disadvantages of societies moving toward civilization?

## WHAT IS DECISION MAKING? *(Student Handout 1)*

Because making decisions is the focus of the lessons, it is important to look at what happens in the process of decision making. Decision making involves making a choice when there is no clear right answer. Students can derive important lessons about decision making from encountering “messy” problems. Student Handout 1, “Guide to Thoughtful Decision Making,” introduces students to a methodology for decision making.



## ■ Decision Making as Experience

The most powerful teacher of good decision making is experience. People learn to make good decisions by making decisions. Bad decisions are more instructive, perhaps, in making us more skeptical decision makers. The teaching profession illustrates the negative reinforcement aspect of decision making.

Teachers who place students into groups without giving specific directions quickly learn not to do that again. Lessons that don't work well are dropped or modified the next time around. Good teaching is basically good decision making, and good decision making is shaped rapidly by previous decisions.

Ordinary people, including students, have a tendency simply to assume their decisions will result in positive outcomes, rather than calculating the probabilities of certain outcomes. Decision-making experts, on the other hand, have a much more realistic view of probabilities. Experience teaches us to be more realistic about outcomes. Simply encountering the problems and outcomes in this book, therefore, can help students improve their decision-making skills in general.

## ■ Targeting Decision-Making Skills

These lessons go beyond decision-making problems and their outcomes. They also provide a decision-making model and strategies for teaching the skills involved in decision making. Students learn a simple model, called **P-A-G-E**, which provides basic guidelines for making decisions. This model gives support and guidance for student decisions, allows for communication built around specific skills and a common vocabulary, and provides specific criteria for teachers to evaluate student progress on those skills.

You are crucial in this process; your role is to guide students as they encounter the decision-making problems, in what Reuven Feuerstein (1980) refers to as “mediated learning.” Your guidance and questions can help students make sense of what they are thinking when they make decisions about historical situations. The problems and lessons allow you to combine experience and instruction in the form of mediated learning (coaching).

## ■ Repetition in Order to Master Skills

These lessons are based on the hypothesis that several repetitions of decision-making problems and outcomes help improve decision-making skills. That is, a person who has tried fifty problems will most likely have improved his or her decision-making skills more than a person who has tried only ten problems, simply because he or she has had more experiences making decisions. While you may not use all of the lessons in this book, it is a good idea to use them regularly (once or twice per week, perhaps) as warm-ups to start classes or units. The time spent on the problems will enhance students' experiences in problem solving and decision making.

Having experience with a large number of problems also provides students with more historical analogies on which they can draw. It is striking how often decision makers base their thinking on

an analogy (usually a recent one) in looking for ideas to help decide a problem. Having a broader range of analogies allows students to be more skeptical of any analogy suggested, because students are more likely to think of different analogies from the ones offered.

Though many experiences with decision making will help, it is essential that you coach students and offer them time to reflect on their thinking during decision-making problems. According to a number of writers, metacognition (thinking about our own thinking) is vital to improving thinking skills, so it is important that you allow “postmortem” time after each experience for students to reflect on their thinking, either verbally or in writing. These “premortem” strategies are included in several lessons. You may find it useful to take more time with some of the problems (1–3 class periods), giving students time for more in-depth analysis of their thinking and the historical topics involved; perhaps two or three lessons could be used for in-depth analysis per semester.

## ■ Individual Choice versus Historical Context

Research indicates that students generally view the role of individual choices as critical to historical events (for example, viewing Rosa Parks as an important catalyst for the civil rights movement), while professional historians stress underlying forces as more important (for example, African Americans fighting in World War II, the Cold War, etc., as important causes of the civil rights movement). Researchers argue that historical actors are constrained by historical context—much more than students probably think.

By focusing on decisions by individuals and by groups, these lessons may seem to perpetuate the overemphasis on the individual vs. historical forces. However, the lessons help students see more historical context, not less. To make good decisions, students need to learn a great deal of historical context. All of the lessons require students to ask questions about context. Each lesson includes a short outcome and a question about why students think that option was tried. Each problem also asks students to think about the historical forces that made it difficult for the individual to make a good decision. In addition, many problems include multiple points of view, which enrich student understanding of context. Finally, students discuss the ways in which the actual decision made historically was similar to or different from the decision they made; this emphasizes the role of context in shaping individual choices.

## **P-A-G-E** (*Student Handouts 2 and 3*)

Good decision making involves a number of subskills, but many of the subskills of decision making are difficult for students to master. To assist students in developing subskills, we have given many lessons a multiple-choice format. For example, to improve the “asking for more information” skill, some lessons include a list of questions from which students can select. To improve “identifying underlying problems,” some lessons list possible underlying problems. To improve “considering other points of view,” some lessons include handouts that put students in different roles (for

example, looking at property issues from the point of view of small farmers but from that of the landowners as well).

The more students can use the subskills, the more complex their thinking will be when they make decisions. A simple acronym—**P-A-G-E**—will help students recall the subskills involved in decision making. Research indicates that expert decision makers don't follow step-by-step models, so this acronym is intended to help students recollect the subskills but does not provide an actual formula for making decisions. Decision-making problems are too complex and varied for step-by-step formulas. For instance, in one problem, students need to focus on envisioning unintended consequences, while in another, historical context is more important.

Student Handouts 1 through 4 in this introduction will help you give students practice using **P-A-G-E**. Student Handout 1 offers a brief introduction to decision making. Handout 2 offers an explanation of the acronym as well as a short framework for the process of **P-A-G-E**. Handout 3 takes it all a step forward by giving students fuller explanations and examples of the uses of each part of the process. Handout 4 facilitates learning from experience by providing students with a log for tracking their decisions.

## ■ The Problem

The first section of **P-A-G-E** focuses on analyzing the problem, explaining what some experts call “framing.” Framing seems to have a variety of meanings for different people. The handout emphasizes finding the underlying problem in an attempt to keep things simple for students. It also asks, “What’s really going on here?” to help students uncover underlying problems.

According to Gary Klein (1998), experts (people with a great deal of experience in a particular field, such as nursing, firefighting, or chess) “recognize” particular problems as being of one type or another. Once they make this recognition (i.e., once they frame the problem or represent it a particular way), experts can make very quick and successful decisions—that’s why they’re experts! Experts make these recognitions based on the large numbers of analogies they possess in their area of expertise. Thus, the section of the handout that discusses framing is related to the section on analogies. Experiments with expert chess players have shown that recognition is extremely important. When pieces were placed on a board in completely random fashion, experts were not better at remembering the placement than nonexperts. But when the pieces were arranged as they would be in a game, experts could remember the placements with a single glance and project several possible moves.

Was it a big factor? Political scientist James Voss (1998) believes that the way people perceive problems in foreign policy acts as a key variable in the decisions they make. He writes that problem representation (which is similar to framing) constrains what we do thereafter. For example, if we see a problem as a case of terrorist aggression, we will make different choices from these we will make if we see the problem as a typical boundary dispute between neighboring countries. Questions included with some problems help students become more attuned to problem representation. Handout 5's section on assumptions is greatly simplified compared to the literature on assumptions, which delineates several different types of assumptions (presuppositions, working assumptions, etc.). The primary method this book uses to teach students to recognize their own assumptions is to ask them to identify which of a specific menu of assumptions they have made. When they see a list of possible assumptions, they can better recognize which ones they've made. This strategy seems more effective than having students read a lengthy explanation on types of assumptions.

## ■ Ask for Information

Asking questions is crucial in good decision making. The more people know about background and context, the better they will understand the real problem. Students will often think about a problem in terms of a personal analogy; for example, "I don't like it when people criticize me, so it's wrong for a country to make a harsh speech against another country." Student Handout 1 emphasizes asking questions about analogies (that is, how the historical case differs from a more familiar decision-making problem), but you should encourage students to think of historical analogies in the first place. Ask students where they get their ideas about what is really going on in a problem, probing for personal or historical analogies.

## ■ Goals

This section of the handout includes setting clear, realistic goals and generating numerous options for accomplishing those goals. Questions about ethics have also been included in this section, because ethics is related to setting goals.

## ■ Effects

The section on effects/consequences addresses both long-term unintended consequences and short-term possibilities of what could go wrong. Klein (1998) argues that the ability to run mental simulations—that is, to imagine what could go wrong and to imagine positive and negative consequences—is a vital skill in decision making. Every decision-making problem in this series emphasizes unintended consequences and things that could go wrong.

## EVALUATION TIPS FOR STUDENT HANDOUT 5 (Pages 24–25)

Here are some possible answers to consider in grading student responses to the decision on attacking Syracuse. They are only possible answers. Students will think of many other legitimate answers. Students need only get five criteria, and they only need to suggest ideas for each criterion. So, for example, you may give full credit to students who suggest any possible underlying problem, or ask any reasonable question.

### ■ Recognize the Underlying Problem

1. The military strengths of Athens and Sparta are mismatched. Athens dominates the seas, and Sparta dominates the fighting on land.
2. Both Athens and Sparta depend on food from outside their own areas.
3. Both sides are focused on winning the war rather than finding a compromise agreement to settle the issues that caused the war.

### ■ See the Problem from Other Points of View

1. How will the Spartans see the attack?

*Many Spartans will think the attack is good for Sparta, since it diverts Athenian resources away from fighting Sparta.*

2. How Athenian soldiers and sailors see the attack?

*Morale may go up, since someone has suggested a solution to the deadlock between the two sides. Having a clear, forward-going strategy will help many soldiers see that there is a possible end to the conflict in sight.*

3. How will other city-states see the attack?

*Allies of Athens may be bolstered by this bold strategy, but it has to be a successful attack. Other city-states (non-allies) may see the attack on Syracuse as a threat to them as well. In that case, Athens may be adding to its list of enemies.*

4. How does the Athenian public see the crisis?

*A majority of Athenians favor the attack, but if it doesn't go well, the new strategy will lose support.*

### ■ Assumptions/Emotions

1. Am I being prideful (hubris), assuming we can defeat the Syracusans easily?
2. Am I assuming that the war cannot be won by focusing all Athenian resources on the battlefields between Athens and Sparta?
3. Am I assuming that there are no options left other than this attack on Syracuse?

## ■ Ask about Context

1. Can the army and navy easily be supplied with food and weapons so far away?

*Yes.*

2. Does the army have siege weapons to capture the walled city of Syracuse?

*No.*

3. Do we have a backup plan in case things go wrong with the attack?

*Basically no. We would send more soldiers and ships.*

4. How are the Spartans likely to respond to this attack?

*They are likely to send in some soldiers and generals to strengthen the Syracusan forces enough to prolong the fighting there as much as possible. Their goal won't be to win but rather to tie up Athenian forces in a distant place.*

## ■ Ask about Sources

1. Do we have experts on Syracuse who can help plot Athenian strategy?

*Yes. We have people in our military who have in-depth knowledge of Syracuse.*

2. How reliable is Alcibiades?

*He has wide mood swings. Sometimes he is very positive about a strategy or situation and at other times he is despondent. He can sometimes be brilliant, other times foolish. It isn't clear if he is a reliable source of information about the battlefields in the area of Syracuse. He may have a reason to lie in order to bring honor to himself and his family.*

3. How reliable is Nicias?

*It isn't clear if he is a reliable source of information about the battlefields in the area of Syracuse. His motives are unclear: He changed his position from opposing the expedition to supporting it with even more soldiers and ships than the other supporters proposed. By supporting a bigger attack, Nicias was probably hoping that the people would vote it down. It would be too expensive to mount such an effort.*

## ■ Ask about Analogies

1. Athens' expedition to Egypt during the Persian Wars ended in disaster for Athens. (There are many similarities between the two cases in this analogy. Both involved sending an expedition to a faraway place to cut off supplies to the enemy during a war. There are some differences between the ethnic makeup of Egypt and the ethnic makeup of Syracuse and Sicily; however, these differences aren't significant to the success of the expeditions.)



## ■ What Are My Goals, and Are They Realistic?

1. Students should consider whether they are trying to win the war militarily or influence negotiations in light of the battles.
2. Is it realistic to use the attack to win the war? It seems reasonable to many people, but in response the Spartans might send some of their own soldiers and ships, leading to another stalemate. Spartan military support of Syracuse could lead to a negotiated settlement, but it is just as likely that there would be an escalation of the fighting at Syracuse, with neither side able to gain the advantage.

## ■ Generate Alternative Options

1. Negotiate. This would have avoided the disaster that happened to Athens at Syracuse.
2. Concentrate all Athenian forces on Sparta, not Sparta's distant ally at Syracuse.
3. Force a naval battle that the Athenians will presumably win. That could change the dynamics of the war.

## ■ Play Out the Options

1. Invasion: Athens' invading force may get trapped so far away from home.
2. Invasion: The Spartans may send reinforcements to tip the balance in their favor in the area around Syracuse.
3. Invasion: If the attack on Syracuse drags out for years, the Athenian public may decide it is sick of this expedition to an area so far away from the main battlefields.
4. No invasion: Without a bold new plan, the war may keep dragging on in a deadlock.

## ■ Anticipate Consequences/Effects (Long-Term)

1. If the attack fails, it could lead to the defeat of Athens in the whole war.
2. A defeat in the attack may lead to other city-states deserting the Athenian alliance.

## ■ Evaluating Students

There are numerous ways to evaluate student progress in both content and decision-making skills. A few examples are listed here:

- Quiz students on the vocabulary included in the relevant lesson(s).
- Have students keep a decision-making log, as outlined in Student Handout 4 in this introduction. The log requires students to reflect on their thinking. It's a good idea to copy the handout on colored paper. Then you can tell students after analyzing the outcome of a problem to turn to (for example) their green decision-making log and fill it in.

- Have students keep a journal in which they comment on several aspects of decision problems:
  - The decision actually made in history
  - What the actual decision makers did well or poorly
  - The historical constraints on the decision makers
  - What the outcome of the decision shows about that time period
  - The decision made by the student and what he/she did well or poorly
  - The “lessons” of this decision-making problem
- Have students write a “history” of a historical event after the class has participated in a decision-making problem on that event and discussed the outcome. Require students to include at least two elements of **P-A-G-E** in their historical analysis.
- As a test question, have students make a decision about one of the problems you don’t use in class. Give them the problem and instruct them to make a decision and explain their thinking according to **P-A-G-E**. You have criteria in the suggested answers for grading their work.
- Have students evaluate their thinking using Student Handout 5: Evaluating Decision Making.



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# GUIDE TO THOUGHTFUL DECISION MAKING

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## WELCOME TO “FORESIGHT” HISTORY!

The problems in the *Decision Making in World History* series will challenge you to make choices about events in world history before you know what actually happened during those events. This is learning history in a foresighted way—first you decide, then you find out what really happened—rather than a hindsight way, where you just find out what happened. You will get at least two benefits from this method of learning history: First, you will improve your decision-making skills. Someday, when you avoid buying a “lemon” of a used car that would have wasted thousands of dollars in repairs, you can thank your history teacher for helping you build your decision-making skills. Second, it’s fun to learn history as though it’s a cliff-hanger mystery, where you’re eager to find out if your decision worked or ended in disaster. But don’t forget to concentrate on the actual historical decision that was made and how it turned out. You can learn a lot about your own decision making through these problems, but you’re in class mainly to learn history and to understand what really happened, not what could have happened.

## WHAT IS DECISION MAKING?

You’ve learned about problem solving in other courses such as math and science, and you’ve encountered problem solving when you’ve tried to build something or fix something. Decision making resembles problem solving in some ways (for example, it involves defining a problem and thinking of alternatives), but it’s different from problem solving in that there is no one right answer. The lessons in this book involve “messy” problems; even long after the event, people often disagree about what the best decision was or should have been.

## DECISION MAKING AS EXPERIENCE

Experience teaches you how to make good decisions. Every decision that you make, whether good or bad, better equips you to make good decisions in the future—if you pay attention to how your decision brought about positive or negative consequences. For example, you would probably feel safer being treated by a doctor with a lot of experience than by a brand-new doctor. The historical problems your teacher gives you will provide you with experience in making decisions in general and will help you become a better decision maker in your role as a citizen. You won’t just learn about history; you will experience it. After some of these lessons, you will feel that you made good decisions; for others, you may feel that you’ve made errors in judgment. As you go along, try to reflect on your experiences as well as on your thinking about decision making.

## THE P-A-G-E GUIDE TO DECISION MAKING

While experience is the most important way to learn to make better decisions, it's also helpful to learn some basic decision-making skills so that you know what areas to target in order to improve your overall decision making. Handout 2 contains an acronym, **P-A-G-E**, that provides you with guidelines for making better decisions. These aren't rules you have to follow; they are just meant as tips to help you improve your thinking about decision making.

Handout 3 explains and gives examples for each part of the **P-A-G-E** guide to decision making. Keep it in your notebook for reference as you make decisions about situations in world history. Not every **P-A-G-E** guideline will apply to each decision-making problem you encounter. You (with the assistance of your teacher) will have to determine which guidelines work best with which problems.

# P-A-G-E ANALYSIS FOR DECISION MAKING

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## DECISION-MAKING ANALYSIS

### ■ P = PROBLEM

- Identify any **underlying problem**: What's really going on here?
- Consider **other points of view**: How do others see this situation?
- What are my **assumptions? emotions?**

### ■ A = ASK FOR INFORMATION (ABOUT)

- **Historical context**: What is the history and context of this issue?
- **Reliability of sources**: Does my information come from experts on this topic? Do the sources have a reason to lie? Is the information supported by evidence?
- **Historical analogies**: What has been done in the past about situations like this? In what ways do these other situations differ from this situation?

### ■ G = GOALS

- What are my main **goals**? Are they **realistic**?
- What are my **options** to achieve my goals? Are they **ethical**?

### ■ E = EFFECTS

- **Predict unintended consequences**. What are some long-term effects?
- **Play out the options**. What could go wrong?

# P-A-G-E EXPLANATIONS AND EXAMPLES

## PROBLEM

### ■ Underlying Problem

Sometimes, a decision-making situation will seem very difficult until you recognize that an underlying problem exists. For example, suppose two people come in for marriage counseling because they have been arguing about money. The counselor is going to look for an underlying problem (such as unfulfilled needs) that might have led to overspending. A student doing poorly in school might turn things around by discovering she needs glasses—the underlying problem. Please remember that you should **not** just repeat or rephrase the problem. Instead, you need to look for what's behind it, for what's causing it. Underlying problems are **not** openly given as part of the decision-making situation—you have to figure them out on your own.

Another way to think of this skill is “the ability to see what is really going on.” Some people call this “framing” the problem: in other words, by putting a “frame” around the heart of the problem and excluding unimportant parts, you discover what's really important. You need to call on your own personal experiences to see what's really going on. In history, this is done through analogies. You need to say, “The problem we are facing now is like a problem people faced before [this is an analogy], so I'd better do *this*.” The way you see (or frame, or represent) a problem influences the decision you eventually make.

#### Example:

*Bob's grades have been much lower for the last three months in history class. He says he's bored in class, and he'll improve his grades when he really needs to.*

**List at least two possible underlying problems for Bob's lower grades. What's really going on?**

### ■ Other Points of View

There is always more than one person involved in decisions in history. We need to consider all points of view as we make decisions about history, just as we need to consider other points of view in our own lives today.

#### Example:

*My brother Mark is angry at me for borrowing his car three times. But he's wrong to be angry. I needed to get to work each time I borrowed the car.*

**Rewrite this problem from Mark's point of view.**



## ■ What Are My Assumptions? Emotions?

Sometimes after we make a decision, we realize that we had made an assumption that we didn't even know we were making until it was too late. Emotions, especially frustration and anger, can sometimes lead us to make irrational choices. Emotions are part of being human, so they represent a legitimate part of the decision-making process. We do, however, need to be aware of our emotions during the decision-making process. People frequently become frustrated and say, "I've had enough of this situation. Let's just do *something*." But they often come to regret the rushed choices they made under such circumstances. They would have benefited from saying to themselves, "Okay. I'm getting frustrated, but I still need to take the time necessary to make a good decision."

Studies have shown that when people feel pessimistic or when they're in a bad mood, they exaggerate the possible negative consequences of decisions; similarly, when they feel optimistic or are in a good mood, they overestimate positive consequences. Emotions and gut feelings are unavoidable and natural, but thinking through the situation is crucial to making good decisions. We wouldn't want the president to decide about nuclear missiles in Cuba based solely on a gut feeling—we'd want him to gather information, consider several options, predict the possible consequences for millions of people, and move toward a decision calmly. As decision makers, we need to account for the role of emotion and gut feelings in our decisions and be aware of them as we choose.

### Example for assumptions:

*Player to teammate: "We'll have no trouble beating Central. After all, Central lost to Suburban, and we beat Suburban the first game of the year."*

### What is this player assuming?

### Example for emotions:

*Suppose you have two children and are trying to decide whether to buy life insurance. An insurance ad shows a boy who can't go to college because his father died and had no life insurance.*

### To what emotion does the ad appeal?

## ASK

### ■ Ask about Historical Context (History of the Issue; Context in the World)

Asking questions about both the historical background and the present context of a problem is essential for getting the information necessary to make a good decision. If you don't know the background, you will have difficulty deciding on the best solution. Every problem has a backstory,



and we need to find out what that story is. The key is to ask questions that will help you obtain the necessary information.

**Example:**

*You are seventeen years old, and you have been thinking about buying a car. You work part-time after school, about ten hours per week. Your parents have told you that you'll have to pay for the car yourself. You go to a used car dealership and the salesman shows you a used car that costs \$2,000.*

**What questions should you ask before you buy it?**

## ■ Ask about Reliability of Sources

Information is crucial to making good decisions, but we need know the sources of our information and consider the reliability of those sources. Basing a decision on bad information from questionable sources is a recipe for disaster. You can evaluate sources by asking if the person giving the information has a reason to lie, if the person is a primary source, if other sources support this information, if the person is an expert on the topic, what the person's bias is on the topic, or if the person has been reliable in the past. You should always be probing for disagreements among sources. Be wary if there don't appear to be any disagreements. It might mean your advisers are engaging in "groupthink," a situation in which they all get pulled to the same option without thoroughly thinking through other options or considering what could go wrong. Always try to find someone who disagrees with a proposed option. If you can't find one, ask tough questions yourself.

**Example:**

*The car salesman says this used car is in perfect condition.*

**How reliable is the salesman? What reasons might you have to distrust him?**

## ■ Ask about Historical Analogies

It's natural to compare the problems we encounter to other, similar situations that have occurred in the past. In fact, one reason we study history in the first place is to build a deeper understanding of our world today through learning about historical events/analogies. You should try to think of analogies to the problems you encounter. As mentioned above, you derive your understanding of what is important in a problem (framing) from analogies. (Example: "This problem is like Hannibal's situation during the Second Punic War.") The more you draw on your knowledge of history, the more likely you are to understand a decision-making problem fully.

However, analogies are tricky because important differences often exist between the problems we encounter now and the historical cases we use to guide our decisions. We should always evaluate analogies by asking, "How do the two cases differ? In what ways are they similar? Are they similar

enough to justify the conclusion?” We should also consider whether other, more appropriate analogies exist that could provide us with better guidance.

**Example:**

*Suppose you drove in a race at a parking lot near a mall a month ago. You raced your five-year-old Toyota Corolla, and your time was 36.8 seconds. Margaret told you that she drove in a race last Sunday and her time was 28.2 seconds. She says this proves she is a better race driver than you are.*

**What are two questions you could ask to determine whether Margaret is really a better driver?**

## GOALS

### ■ What Are My Main Goals? Are They Realistic?

We can't make good decisions if we are unclear about our goals. Once we establish goals, we can more easily set priorities and use them as a basis for choosing between options.

However, establishing goals isn't enough. The goals we set need to be realistic. Some decisions in history have been catastrophic because the decision makers didn't notice that they had unrealistic goals. It didn't matter how carefully they exercised their other decision-making skills—because their goals were unrealistic, they would never achieve them.

**Example:**

*You're out of school and need a job, because you live on your own and have expenses (rent, car payments, food, heat, insurance, etc.). You've got two offers. The first one is close to where you live and pays a lot more money, but it's doing work you wouldn't like. The second job is farther away and pays less money (although enough to cover your expenses), but it's doing something that you really like. What do you do?*

**After you decide, list your goals and ask how realistic they are.**

### ■ Generate Options to Help Achieve My Goals. Are They Ethical?

After you've made a decision, you don't want to be stuck thinking, “Oh, I wish I'd thought of that option before I decided.” At the same time, though, you don't want to become paralyzed trying to think of every possible option, no matter how remote. However, important decisions should spur us to take the time to consider a number of options.

**Example:**

*You are twenty-five years old and single, work full-time ten miles from where you live, and drive your compact car to work. In recent months, gas prices have risen to very high levels. Your main goal at this point is to save money.*

**What options do you have for coping with these price increases?**

## EFFECTS

### ■ Predict Unintended Consequences

Most of the time, predicting unintended consequences will be more important than any other thinking you do about a problem. For some problems, it may be enough just to see the situation from other points of view or to ask questions about background or context. However, considering consequences will do more to help you avoid that awful feeling you get when you've made a bad decision.

**Example:**

*You are thirty-five years old and have a son and a daughter, ages five and two. The company you work for is asking you to move to a different state. You can refuse and take a pay cut but keep your job.*

**If you make the move, what unintended consequences might you and your family experience in ten years? Guess at what the effects of the move might be.**

### ■ Play Out the Option. What Could Go Wrong?

Here, you need to think about short-term effects as opposed to long-term unintended consequences. For example, say you're playing the role of president and decide to try to get a law passed to help solve a problem. You have to take into account the fact that Congress has the constitutional power to pass laws, and thus to get your law enacted you need to convince Congress to approve it. By noticing that the approval of Congress is vital to the success or failure of your decision, you've identified something that could go wrong and need to plan accordingly (overcoming opposition by talking to individual members of Congress, thinking of another option as backup, etc.).

**Example:**

*Suppose you are thirty years old and working at a job you like. You get an offer to work at a job for higher pay that is farther away from where you live now.*

**If you take the job, what might happen? List two or more things that could go wrong.**

# DECISION-MAKING LOG

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■ What I Learned about the P-A-G-E Topic

■ Actual Decision

■ My Decision

■ Why Different from/Similar to This Topic? (2 Examples)

# EVALUATING DECISION MAKING

The year is 415 BCE and you are a leader in Athens. Sparta and its allies have been fighting a war against Athens and its allies for sixteen years, and neither side has been able to achieve dominance in the war. At this point, some people in Athens are proposing a bold new strategy. They argue that Athens should attack the city of Syracuse in Sicily. It isn't close to the battlefields between Athens and Sparta, but Syracuse is important to Sparta. Supplies from Syracuse and the area around it are crucial to Sparta's ability to fight the war against Athens. According to the people in favor of this strategy, cutting off supplies from Syracuse would bring Sparta close to defeat. Moreover, if the Athenians capture Syracuse, they will be positioned to take all of Sicily as well as other land in the area. A popular leader, Alcibiades, has spoken in favor of sending a small fleet and army to attack Syracuse, while another leader, Nicias, at first argued against attacking Syracuse but has now switched and is arguing for sending a large fleet and army. Most Athenians favor the attack.

Some Athenians argue that the expedition to Syracuse is a bad idea. They believe that all resources should be used to fight Sparta directly or at least to defend Athens against Spartan attacks. Why send any part of the navy or army to an area so far away? The military should be used to defeat Sparta directly.

What will you do?

- A. Attack Syracuse with a large navy and army.
- B. Attack Syracuse with a small navy and army.
- C. Not attack Syracuse.

Decide what your policy will be on the proposal to attack Syracuse, using at least five of the criteria from **P-A-G-E** (Handout 2). Do not use the main four letters of **P-A-G-E**; rather use the ten criteria under the main letters. For example, you wouldn't be using "Problem," but one of the three criteria under "Problem," such as "What are my assumptions?" Give your reasoning for each criterion as a separate paragraph.

After you have written your analysis according to five or more criteria, then write your overall decision about the attack on Syracuse and explain why you made the decision you did.

- **P:**

- **A:**

- **G:**

- **E:**

Your decision:



# LESSON 1: WHERE WOULD YOU SETTLE IN ANCIENT TIMES?

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## Teacher's Guide

### INTRODUCTION

#### ■ Overview

This lesson deals with the rise of civilizations by giving students the opportunity to choose one of three societies in which to live: a nomadic clan, a society of city-states, and a nation. The lesson emphasizes the advantages and disadvantages of each type of society and asks students to reflect on the positive and negative elements of advancing civilization.

#### ■ Vocabulary

- Irrigation system—man-made channels to supply water to crops
- Nation—a large area of land controlled by its own government
- Granaries—buildings that store grain
- Scribes—writers
- Luxury items—expensive but unnecessary items
- Nomads—a group of people who have no permanent home and migrate according to the seasons
- Clan—a group of interrelated families
- City-state—a city that is also an independent state

#### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Consider other points of view
- Recognize assumptions
- Ask questions about context
- Generate ethical options



## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON *(two or three 50-minute classes)*

This lesson could serve as the organizing device for a whole unit. The social, political, and economic analysis of these ancient societies could take longer than two or three class periods.

There are two sets of handouts for this lesson. Handout 1 is labeled “Short” and is targeted for middle school students, while Handout 2 is labeled “Complex” and is geared for high school students. The handouts are labeled “Short” and “Complex” rather than “Middle School” and “High School” in order to give teachers more flexibility in using the handouts without stigma (using the short handout with high school students, for example). Handouts 1 and 2 cover the same topics, so all students are exposed to the same content and skills. Compared to Handout 2, Handout 1 is shorter, is less intricate, and contains more cues to aid with reading comprehension. The teacher can choose the handout that fits the students better or tailor learning by giving Handout 1 to students who struggle with reading comprehension and Handout 2 to more advanced students.

### ■ Procedure

Tell the class that in this lesson they will be analyzing three ancient societies by deciding on a society in which to live. As the name of this problem implies, people didn’t often get the chance to choose their society. In this lesson, students are given a choice so that they can examine the positive and negative elements of each society.

Distribute Handout 1 or 2 and have students decide individually which society they will inhabit. Some students may struggle with trying to recall the large number of elements described for each society. Use the columnar chart in Handout 3 to help students compare these many elements. Remind students that they must include reasons for their choice of societies. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to refer to that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making criteria before deciding.

After students have finished choosing and writing their rationales, have them pair up to discuss their decisions. Circulate through the room to answer questions and clear up misunderstandings. Several questions are suggested below in the “Decision-Making Analysis” section. Ideally students will think of questions like these on their own. If they do not think of questions, you can prompt students to go back and discuss possible questions. Bring the class together, conduct a preliminary vote on each proposal, and discuss reasons for and against each proposal. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. Then have the class revote. Distribute Handout 4 for outcomes and analyses of each type of society and have students answer these questions:

1. What outcomes surprised them?
2. What did they learn about decision making from this problem?
3. What were the most important elements in ancient societies in general?

*Option for Primary Source:* After students have read Handout 1 or Handout 2 and made a tentative (but not final) decision about where to settle, have them read Handout 5 on Hammurabi's Code and answer the questions for analysis.

### Possible Answers

1. Does the Code of Hammurabi bring justice? Is it a fair set of laws in terms of rich versus poor and men versus women, for example?

*Some students may argue that the laws seem to punish both rich and poor and provide rights for both men and women. Others may feel the laws favor men over women.*

2. How are these laws similar to and different from laws today?

*The punishments are much more severe in this code than they are today. Note that the sayings "an eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth" apply to this code.*

3. What does the code show about the king (Hammurabi)?

*He thinks he's pretty great as kings go and is not shy about trying to influence people to see him as such.*

4. How reliable is the Code of Hammurabi as a source? Ask students if reading the code changed their decision about where to settle. Would they be more inclined to live in a city-state that had these laws?

*It is a primary source and there is no reason to question its reliability. This is the law, plain and simple.*

As a follow-up, you could use the lesson to explore the concept of civilization. Egypt (Society A) and Mesopotamia (Society C) are called civilizations by anthropologists and historians, while nomadic clans (Society B) are not. You could have students read definitions of civilization from their textbook and other sources and then discuss as a class what should be included in the concept of civilization.

### ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did in decision making on this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these choices about which society to live in? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the "Decision-Making Analysis" section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

### ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students what the characteristics of the ancient societies in this lesson teach us about characteristics of our own society today. For example, what do the societies have to teach us about how to respond to technological change or about what countries today should do to improve trade?

## ■ Troubleshooting

There are many social, political, and economic concepts involved in this lesson. That's an advantage, since students can learn a great deal about these concepts in analyzing societies, including their own today. On the downside, some students may find it difficult to understand the concepts or specialized vocabulary. Teachers could pass out the vocabulary list in advance and have students highlight and look up terms they don't know. Also, as described above in the lesson plan, the teacher could use the chart in Handout 3 to help students compare these many elements. Remind students that they must include reasons for their choice of societies.

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON *(30 minutes)*

Distribute Handout 1 for homework and have students make their decision. In class ask for a show of hands for each of the societies. Have students pair up and discuss their choices. Bring the class back together and discuss arguments for and against each society. Have students revote. If the vote changed, determine why people changed their decision. Distribute Handout 4 with the outcomes, and have students write their reactions to Handout 4 for homework.

## TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handout 4.)

The information on clans is not specific to any historic society, but it is somewhat representative of nomadic groups in general. However, some of the information is based on nomadic groups from the Zagros Mountains, northeast of the Tigris River, to the plains of Iran. According to Charles Redman (1978), at the time of the rise of civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt, there were still seminomadic and nomadic groups in this area. Nevertheless, the lesson makes no claim that the three societies in Handout 1 were contemporaneous. Rather, the lesson is designed to recognize differences among small clans, city-states, and nation-states in general, not at any particular moment in history.

Kamyar Abdi (2003) outlines four types of pastoralism, including nomadic pastoralism as depicted in Society B. Not only were there pastoral nomadic clans, as described in Handout 1, but the number of these clans increased around the time of the development of civilizations. Anatoly Khazanov (2009) argues that some forms of nomadic pastoralism involved trading with agricultural societies to get grain and objects such as pottery. While desert nomads had camels and other pack animals for transportation, at least some nomads in the Zagros Mountains did not use pack animals. Therefore, the description of Society B does not include pack animals.

According to Nagle (2002), many seminomadic pastoralist groups lived close to, and interacted with, city-states in trade, while others were more remote. The clan group chosen for Handout 1 is farther away and more isolated from the cities, in order to make the differences between the societies more obvious.

Information about tents, food, and social life was taken partly from evidence of ancient Hebrews (see Benner in sources). Some aspects of Hebrew nomadic life differed from those of other nomadic peoples, especially monotheism. This lesson could be a springboard for a discussion of the unique characteristics of the Hebrews as a culture making a transition from nomadic life to farming and statehood.

Scheidel (2007) argues that the rate of a society's innovation correlates positively with the size of its population, so there would have been more innovations in cities. He also argues that increased wealth led to increased value of time, which led to increased cost of children (time for children results in time being taken away from activities that were of higher economic value), leading to lower fertility rates. Life expectancy in cities was 22–25 years. Death rates exceeded birth rates in cities, so populations were sustained by immigration rather than by natural growth.

Jared Diamond (1997) argues that technology increased much faster when societies changed from nomadic to sedentary. Increased trade also accelerated innovations as knowledge diffused through trade. He further argues that the populations of nomads in ancient times were probably decreasing, as mothers spaced out births more and as the nomadic life made it difficult for babies, toddlers, and the elderly to survive. In terms of decision making, Diamond shows that small seminomadic groups made decisions by consensus, not by order of a leader.

Bruce Trigger (2003) refers to Egypt as a territorial state. Barry Kemp (2006) argues that Egypt has the characteristics of a nation, so I chose to refer to Egypt in the student handouts as a nation. Kemp also points out that the pyramids and other buildings and temples did employ people, both for construction and for maintenance, and provided rations for them. Economists tend to point out the unproductive use of resources in these public works.

Steven Pinker (2011) argues that nomadic clans experienced a higher level of violence than did populations settled in city-states or nations. While Pinker does not include groups from the Zagros Mountains in his study, his argument about violence among nomads in general is important for students to understand. Constant raids were deadlier for ordinary people than were intermittent wars. Furthermore, nation-states were far safer than city-states, which fought each other on a regular basis.

As a result of higher rates of disease outweighing lower rates of violence and generally better nutrition, the life expectancy of people in ancient cities was probably lower than it was in nomadic groups overall. However, there is no general agreement on this point, so this was not covered in the lesson.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

### P = Problem

Identify any underlying problem(s).

**Consider other points of view.**

**What are my assumptions? emotions?**

### A = Ask for information (about)

***Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)***

Reliability of sources

Historical analogies

### G = Goals

What are my main goals? Are they realistic?

**Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

Predict unintended consequences.

Play out the options. What could go wrong?

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Consider other points of view:** Choosing a society to live in should involve seeing the various societies from other points of view. For example, men should consider the degree to which men and women are treated as equals, even though it doesn't affect them directly.
- **Consider assumptions:** Students should stop and reflect on their assumptions as they analyze the three societies. For example, students who love camping might assume that it would be fun to live in a tent all year. It might be, but they should realize that they are assuming it would be fun without really knowing the truth. Students may assume that kings are bad, without thinking about that assumption. Are kings ever good for society?
- **Ask questions about context:** Asking good questions can help students make a better choice between societies. Here are some possible questions:

### **Society A—Egypt**

1. Did Egyptians go out and conquer other peoples?

*Yes. —mostly peoples living in the south.*

2. Did these building projects help the economy to grow?

*Roads and granaries did help the economy, but buildings and statues didn't, according to most economists, since they didn't provide a good or service for the economy and took a large amount of resources out of the economy.*

3. Could a woman be the monarch (queen)?

*Yes. One of the leaders was a woman/queen.*

### **Society B—Clan**

1. What were the effects on the clan of moving around?

*It was hard on the very young and very old, some of whom died from exposure. It was also hard for others in the clan, but those who survived become tougher people.*

2. Were the campsites very clean?

*Not compared to today, but they were clean compared to cities.*

3. Were there doctors?

*Yes, there were doctors who relied on natural remedies, such as herbs, and on supernatural remedies, such as communicating with gods to heal the sick.*

### **Society C—Mesopotamia**

1. Why did the cities fight so much?

*They fought over dominance in the area. Sometimes one city-state achieved dominance and set up a national government, but it didn't generally last very long.*

2. What did they do for entertainment?

*They concentrated on sports, especially wrestling.*

- **Generate ethical goals:** Students do not have to make ethical goals the controlling element in their goals for societies, but they should think about living in a society that does what is right rather than what will help the people of the city at the expense of those outside that society. They should consider the morality of wealth. Do they want to live in a society with extremes in rich and poor, in which many people don't work, employing others to do the work for them? Students should also consider the ethics of large government. Can a government get so large that there are restrictions on freedom and widespread corruption among officials?



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# LESSON 1: WHERE WOULD YOU SETTLE IN ANCIENT TIMES?

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## VOCABULARY

- Irrigation system—man-made channels to supply water to crops
- Nation—a large area of land controlled by its own government
- Granaries—buildings that store grain
- Scribes—writers
- Luxury items—expensive but unnecessary items
- Nomads—a group of people who have no permanent home and migrate according to the seasons
- Clan—a group of interrelated families
- City-state—a city that is also an independent state

# WHERE WOULD YOU SETTLE IN ANCIENT TIMES?

(Short)

Although some people moved away from their homeland in ancient times, most stayed in the area where they grew up. However, in this lesson, you get to choose one of the following societies, or groups of people, in which to live. Try to avoid jumping to conclusions about where to live. For example, it wouldn't be wise to say, "Oh cool, this group has bows and arrows. I want to live there and conquer the world!" Rather, you should think about other characteristics of the societies, as well, such as, "Oh no, they have no food!" Also, think about questions you might want to ask about each situation. People who ask good questions often make better decisions. Read the descriptions and decide on which is the best group for you.

## ■ Society A

1. This society is located on a great river that makes it easy to farm. It floods about the same amount each year, so not much irrigation is needed. The river is also easy to sail.
2. This is a unified nation with a king, a strong army, and easily defended borders.
3. The government takes a portion of people's crops as taxes and makes people work part of the year building temples, statues, walls, and granaries. In return, the government provides food for many people. The granaries are used to store the grain collected as taxes. People are also hired by the government to do artwork.
4. Writers (called scribes) work for the government. They keep records of crops, shipments, and trades. Learning how to write is prized in this society, so many children from rich families go to school to learn writing and other subjects. New ideas from other people through trading and immigration have led to numerous inventions, such as the plow and the water clock.
5. These people are more powerful militarily than other groups in the area because they have metal weapons and armor.
6. The king and national government have absolute power over society—there are no checks on the king's rule. People see the power of the national government in the large buildings and statues, and they believe the king is related to the main god.
7. There are strict laws and strong police to control crime, but the law favors rich people over poor people. Unfortunately, there is corruption in the government.

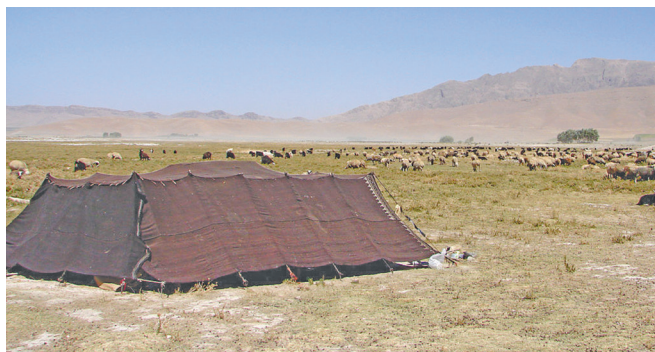


A modern photograph of the river that runs through this society.

8. There are many private businesses, and their contracts are protected by law. People with new ideas or inventions are allowed to make money from them.
9. People have many different types of jobs, so they trade with each other and with people outside their country. The government controls the outside trade.
10. Cities are crowded, leading to the periodic spread of diseases. Most houses are small, but rich people have larger houses with luxurious furniture to show off their wealth.
11. Rich women have access to doctors and wear fine clothes, makeup, and jewelry to show off wealth.
12. Women are expected to obey their husbands and fathers, but they also have rights to property and can testify in court. Boys generally marry between ages fifteen and seventeen and girls between twelve and fourteen. While marriages are arranged by families, boys and girls often get a say and can base their choices on romantic love.

## ■ Society B

1. This is a small group of about fifty people who live in tents and move around a great deal each year, following the rainfall, gathering plant food, and hunting animals.
2. The people are all related. Families decide important issues about marriage and food. People think about the good of the group over their own needs. Leaders of the group are chosen for their ability to hunt and because people trust them. Disputes are settled by the older members of the group. Respect for older people is an important value in this society. There are no judges, kings, or government officials. The people do not pay taxes.
3. Since the group moves so much, people own few possessions. Everything has to be carried on people's backs, so it would be foolish to own many items. Sharing food and objects, rather than owning things, is important. There are no rich or poor people. Everyone is equal economically. There are no slaves.
4. Conversation is a major social activity in the group. Men talk, especially at meal time, about recent events and the needs of the clan. Women talk together as they prepare food, repair tents, and make clothing. Education consists of older people telling stories to children about the history of the clan and about proper living.
5. There is some trade with farmers, but the group mainly makes what it needs. All the members of the group know all the skills needed for survival, such as how to hunt, which kinds of berries to gather, how to put up and take down a tent, and so forth. Women contribute equally with men in getting things done.



A photograph of a modern nomadic tent.

6. Sometimes there is little food. At those times, people know that they have to live on less food until more abundant food becomes available.
7. Religion is very personal in this society. People in the clan pray to their deceased ancestors to help them, especially for plentiful food from the land.
8. Clan members know how to fight, using stone weapons. They regularly raid other groups to steal food or animals. Generally, a few people are killed in these raids. Unfortunately, the clan is also regularly raided. Raids are a constant part of clan life.

## ■ Society C

1. These people live along two rivers that bring water and soil for crops. The flooding is unpredictable and dangerous, sometimes wiping out cities and other times absent, which leads to drought and famine. The people work together to build very extensive irrigation ditches to make the most out of their water supply. There are very few trees, so the soil does not hold moisture.



One of the rivers.

2. This society consists of separate city-states, each with its own army, rather than a national army. Each city has a king, who serves the god for that city. There is no overall king for the whole area. The cities fight with each other on a regular basis. It is dangerous outside the city walls.
3. Taxes are low, paid through food or through labor on large public buildings, statues, and artwork. There is some bribery of government officials. The priests at religious temples help the poor, sick, and injured in their cities.
4. People who commit crimes are pursued by the police and punished by harsh laws in courts. However, the law favors rich people over poor people.
5. Obedience to the king, fathers, and older people in general is a major value in this society. Women's roles are limited. People value competitiveness and the achievements that come from it. They enjoy participating in and watching sports contests for entertainment.
6. People have many different types of jobs, so they trade with each other and those outside their cities in distant lands. Outside trade is done by merchants, not governments, so it is open and not held back by government rules.



7. Cities are crowded, leading to the periodic spread of disease. Most houses are small, but rich people have larger houses with luxurious furniture to show off their wealth.
8. Rich women wear fine clothes, makeup, and jewelry to show off wealth, and only the rich go to school and have access to doctors. Many rich people don't need to work because the poor people pay rent and work for them.
9. These people developed writing. The children of wealthy families go to school to learn writing, mathematics, medicine, or law. As a result of new kinds of thinking, these people have invented devices such as the wheel. The stronger of these city-states are more powerful militarily than other groups outside the region because they have metal weapons and armor.
10. There are many gods for each city in this society. People make sacrifices to the gods and pray to them hoping that the gods will intervene to prevent tragedies such as floods or droughts. Each person can have his or her own god, which makes some praying very personal.



A chariot from this society showing the use of wheels.

## Decision

In which society would you choose to live? Give two reasons for your choice:

Society (A, B, or C):

Reason 1:

Reason 2:

# WHERE WOULD YOU SETTLE IN ANCIENT TIMES?

(Complex)

Although some people moved away from their homeland in ancient times, most stayed in the area where they grew up. However, in this lesson, you are going to choose one of the following societies, or groups of people, in which to live. Assume you are an ordinary person, not a rich person and not a leader. Try to avoid jumping to conclusions about where to live. For example, it wouldn't be wise to say, "Oh cool, this group has bows and arrows. I want to live there and conquer the world!" Rather, you should think about other characteristics of the society as well, such as, "Oh no, they have no food!" Also, think about questions you might want to ask about each society. People who ask good questions often make better decisions. Read the descriptions, ask follow-up questions, and then decide which group would be best for you.

## ■ Society A

These people live along a river that runs through a desert. The river floods during the summer every year, just at the right time for planting crops for winter harvest. The river brings not only water but also rich soil, good for growing crops by the river and in the delta area which is hundreds of miles wide where the river meets the sea.



The river that runs through this society.

As a result, these people generally eat well. There are sometimes excessive floods or not enough flooding, but generally the river floods about the same amount every year. There is some irrigation to conserve water, but overall irrigation is not needed in most places because the river is so predictable. The river flows in one direction, and the prevailing winds generally blow in the other direction. Boats can float downstream with the current, but the wind helps boats sail upstream as well. This favorable transportation also makes it easier to send messages within the nation.

The people in this society have a king, so they feel like a nation, with a common identity. They speak a common language, use the same writing system, have a common religion, and celebrate at the same festivals. Family ties are important, but people are also loyal to the nation. They have a strong army with metal weapons, while many of the groups outside this society have inferior stone weapons. Geography also helps with defense. The nation is surrounded by desert, keeping it isolated from other groups. Only two small areas need to be defended to keep out invaders. There are many cities in this nation, most with walls around them for defense. Each city is different, with its own leaders (rich people) and laws. However, the people in each city also obey the king and feel loyalty to the nation in times of crisis.



These people use writing: The marks on this jewelry include the name of a person.

These people allow immigration and are open to immigrants becoming part of the nation. There is a very extensive public works program. That is, many thousands of these people, along with slaves (many of whom are prisoners of war), work part of the year or year-round, to construct large buildings, monuments to the king and gods, and religious temples. People are also hired by the government to do artwork for the king or other important officials. More people work for the government than for any other group. The people pay low taxes (lower than in Society C) to the king through crops and labor. The king, in turn, gives food to those who are working on public buildings. There are public granaries in every city, mainly to store grain collected as taxes but also to feed people if there is drought or excessive flooding. One granary is so big that it holds enough wheat (for bread) to feed 3,400 families for an entire year. The government also employs scribes (writers) who keep a record of crops, shipments, and trades. Since scribes get larger amounts of food, people who learn how to write will have more secure, higher-paying jobs. Learning how to write is valued in this society, so many rich children go to school to learn writing; however, most children are not rich and are not educated.

There are many government officials, and this society values character traits that support being a good official: calmness, humility, honesty, efficiency, and politeness. While there is some bribery (and other types of corruption), society condemns it, emphasizing honesty more than power.

The king and the government are firmly in control. Decisions for the whole nation are made by the king and his advisers—there are no checks on the king's power. Local decision makers, such as



mayors, have to check their decisions with regional or national officials. Large buildings, statues, and monuments inscribed with writings make the government look powerful. The people view the king as a member of the main god's family. The king and priests offer sacrifices to the most important gods (there are thousands of gods) to get them to protect society. An inscription on one monument says that the king is "one who takes thought for dependents [ordinary people] and stands by mercy." While people make sacrifices to their individual gods, they also believe that only the king and top priests can sacrifice and influence the most important gods. The people revere the king as a god and are grateful to the government for providing food and employment. Both warriors and civilians are patriotic and are willing to sacrifice their lives to fight for their nation.

There have been rebellions, but they are rare. People who commit crimes are pursued by the police and punished harshly by the law. People feel there is law and order in this society. However, the law favors rich people over poorer people. For example, punishments are less severe for rich people, and they are more likely to be found not guilty if they are accused of a crime. While the government employs most of the inhabitants, there are many private businesses, and their contracts are protected by law. People with new ideas or inventions are allowed to make money from them.

The main job for most people in this country is farming, but there are many other jobs (some in addition to farming). Men in cities have a variety of jobs as scribes, woodworkers, potters, bakers, soldiers, sailors, metalworkers, and artists. Women make cloth and perform religious work, such as being priestesses. People trade for those items they don't make themselves. Each city has a marketplace where goods are traded by barter (goods traded for other goods), but traders also use credit in their exchanges and they calculate the value of goods in terms of a common exchange item, such as silver. The government controls trade with groups outside the nation.

The streets in most cities are narrow and houses are close together. Sanitation is a challenge and clean water generally has to be carried by people from the river. People are concentrated so closely in cities that diseases, such as measles and smallpox, are more likely to break out than in rural areas. On the other hand, some cities are laid out on a planned grid, with wider, straight streets, reducing overcrowding. Most houses are small with a courtyard in the middle. Many houses have two floors, and the houses of rich people are larger. People decorate their houses with furniture and other possessions, the rich people showing off their wealth with luxury items.

The rich also dress in fine clothing, and rich women wear makeup and jewelry. Rich people use their control of land and other wealth to make money through rents and loans; they often do not work themselves. In addition, they have access to doctors, whereas the common people do not. People marry within their own class. Rich and privileged people marry other rich people. The social position and opportunities are determined more by birth than by achievements. For example, only the sons of rich people go to school to learn to write to become scribes. At school, boys learn to write by copying texts, some of which are about how people should be good and honest. They also learn mathematics, law, and medicine. Writing, learning, and getting new ideas from foreigners (through trade or immigration) has led to inventions such as the plow and the water clock.



Feasts and celebrations are major forms of entertainment. People love to get together to eat, dance and enjoy music. The feasts are extravagant, with a wide variety of meats, vegetables, fruits, breads, cakes, and drinks. In addition, many people like board games, such as a game similar to checkers. Many people like to participate in and watch sports contests.

Women and children are expected to obey their husbands and fathers. In return, they benefit from an orderly society, are relatively safe from crime and have their material needs met. The words *father*, *king*, and *god* are closely associated, so even the language reflects that women are secondary to men in many ways. Obedience to the king, to fathers, and to older people in general is an important value in this society. However, women do have rights. Women can own property, engage in business, and be witnesses in court cases. In fact, about one-third of all property in this society is owned by women. They can divorce their husbands, sign their own marriage licenses, and make their own wills. Boys generally marry between ages fifteen and seventeen and girls between twelve and fourteen. While marriages are usually arranged by families, boys and girls often get a say in who their spouses will be and base their choices on romantic love.

## ■ Society B

This is a small group of about fifty people who move around a great deal each year, following the rainfall to places of vegetation. The leader of the clan, usually one of the oldest men, decides when and where to move, two to five times per year, depending on location and other factors. Everyone knows everyone else because everyone is related—it's a giant extended family. The people live in tents. These are large tents made of animal hairs and propped up by poles. Inside space is divided by a curtain (male and female sides), and there is a rug on the ground. Tents provide shade from the sun in summer, warmth in cold weather (they are black so they absorb sunlight), and shelter from the rain (fibers in the cloth expand when wet, forming a waterproof seal).



A modern nomadic tent.

The people gather food and hunt animals – especially goats and gazelles – in the hills and mountains. Some of the places where they live have abundant wheat or other grains growing. The group moves to these places during harvest times to gather in the grains. The grains are ground into flour and made into bread. Fruit is also available for picking in some places. The people dry the fruits so they can be preserved for later. In addition to hunting for animals, these people have

their own herds of sheep and goats. From these they get milk and cheese. Occasionally, one of the animals is slaughtered for meat, when there is a celebration or when wild game is not available.

Extended family is the key unit of this group. Families make collective decisions about who will marry whom and about how to feed themselves. People think about the good of the group, not about their own needs. Leaders of the group are chosen for their ability to hunt and because people trust them. Disputes are settled by the older members of the group. Respect for older people is an important value in this society. There are no judges, kings, or government officials. The people do not pay taxes.

Since the group moves so much, people own few possessions, and they share what they have with whoever needs it. Everything has to be carried on people's backs, so it would be foolish to own many items. People have tents, poles for the tents, a few cooking supplies, tools for harvesting grain, and a few weapons. Owning a larger herd of animals is a sign of wealth, but otherwise owning things isn't really prized in this clan. Generosity is valued and respect is given to those who are generous. The best hunter is prized for sharing the catch with the whole group and is more likely to be a leader in the group. Since there isn't private property, and there is so little to accumulate except for herds, there are no rich or poor people. Everyone is equal economically. There are no slaves.

Generosity is especially valued when strangers enter the camp. Although strangers are not made part of the clan (since they are not related and since clans have to avoid getting too big in order to feed themselves), they are given food, shelter, and protection during their stay.

Conversation is a major social activity in the group. Since hunting and gathering food isn't as time-consuming as farming is, these people have more time to talk and relax. Men talk, especially at meal time, about recent events and the needs of the clan. Women talk together as they prepare food, repair tents, and make clothing. Older people tell stories to children about the history of the clan and about proper living.

There is some trade with farming villages when the group is close to the towns in early summer and in the fall. While almost everything needed is caught or made within the group, it helps the group to trade for farm crops and craft products such as pottery for carrying food. All the members of the group, men and women, know all the skills needed for survival, such as how to hunt, which kinds of berries to gather and how to put up and take down a tent. Women contribute equally with men in getting things done. For example, women hunt for birds and other small animals.

Sometimes there is little food. At those times, people know that they have to live on less food until more abundant food sources become available. People in the clan pray to their deceased ancestors to help them, especially that the land will provide plentiful food. Religion is very personal in this society. During day-to-day activities, people think about whether they are pleasing their ancestors.

While clan members do not receive the military training that soldiers in nations or city-states receive, they know how to fight, using stone weapons. Despite generosity to guests, these people



regularly raid other groups to steal food or animals. Generally, a few people are killed in these raids. Unfortunately, the clan is also regularly raided. Raids are a constant part of clan life.

## ■ Society C

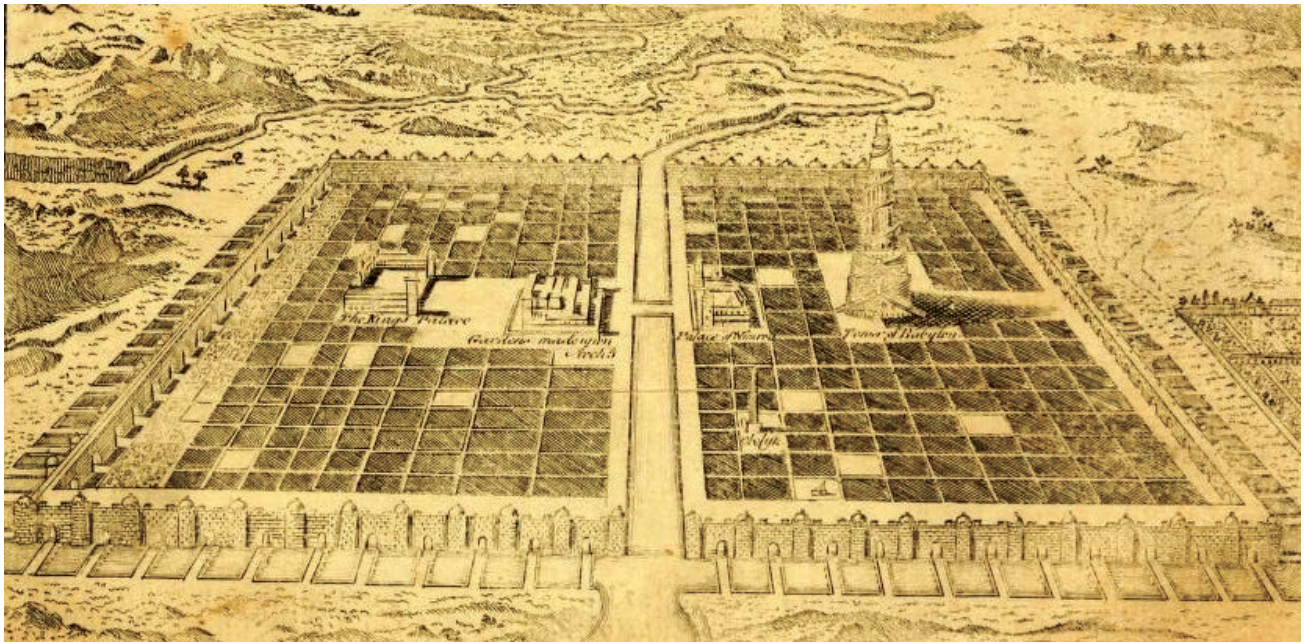
These people live along two rivers that run through a desert. The rivers flood every year, bringing the water and rich soil needed to grow food crops—especially in the delta area where the rivers meet the sea. The flooding, however, is unpredictable in terms of when it occurs and in terms of the intensity of the flooding. Most often the rivers flood at the wrong time of year. Sometimes the floods wipe out whole villages and cities. At other times the river doesn't flood enough, leading to poor crop yields and famines. The people work together to build extensive irrigation ditches to route the water toward crops during the dry season. After the flooding, there is a lot of mud for several months. Then the ground hardens until it gets like stone. There are very few trees, so the soil does not hold moisture well.



One of the rivers.

This society has many cities, and each city rules itself. There is no king or overall ruler for the whole area. This society is really a group of separate city-states rather than a nation. The people speak a common language, use a common writing system, and trade with each other, so they feel some unity. Essentially, however, each city has its own walls and army and defends itself. The king of each city serves the god for that city. Both warriors and civilians are patriotic and are willing to sacrifice themselves in fighting for their city. People's main loyalty is to their city.





An artist's idea of one of the cities.

The cities fight with each other on a regular basis. There are few natural barriers (such as mountains or ravines) in this area, so attacks by outside groups are also frequent. Taxes are low (received in the form of food or work) and are paid to the city for defense, public buildings, monuments to the gods, religious temples, public granaries, and irrigation ditches. People are also hired by the city governments to do artwork. There is some bribery of government officials, but not as much as in Society A. The granaries are used to collect taxes and to help people by providing food when there is famine. Religious temples own a significant amount of land. The temples use some of the wealth they have to help the poor, sick, and injured in their cities.

People who commit crimes are pursued by the police and punished by the law in courts. However, the law favors rich people over poor people. The laws are made by rich people, punishments are less severe for rich people, and rich people are more likely to be found not guilty. At one point, a leader took over many of the city-states and issued a set of laws that would apply equally to everyone. The laws set down in writing what punishment would be given for misdeeds or accidents. The leader also increased the amount of public works, which had been very small up to that point, in an effort to increase employment. Now, however, the centralized government has declined and the city-states are more independent again.

While most people in this area spend the majority of their time farming, the men in cities have a variety of nonfarming jobs (some in addition to farming); they work as scribes, woodworkers, potters, bakers, soldiers, sailors, metalworkers, and artists. Women make cloth and perform religious work, including being priestesses. Women can own property, engage in business, and be witnesses in court cases. Men are the heads of the families, so they are considered to be in charge. Obedience to the city king and to fathers and older people in general is a major value in this society. Women's roles are more restrictive than in Society A. Marriages are arranged by families, but

family ties are less important than in Society B. The position of people in society is determined by a combination of their birth, especially the wealth and power of their parents, and their achievements. People value competitiveness and the achievements that come from it. For example, they enjoy participating in and watching sports contests for entertainment.

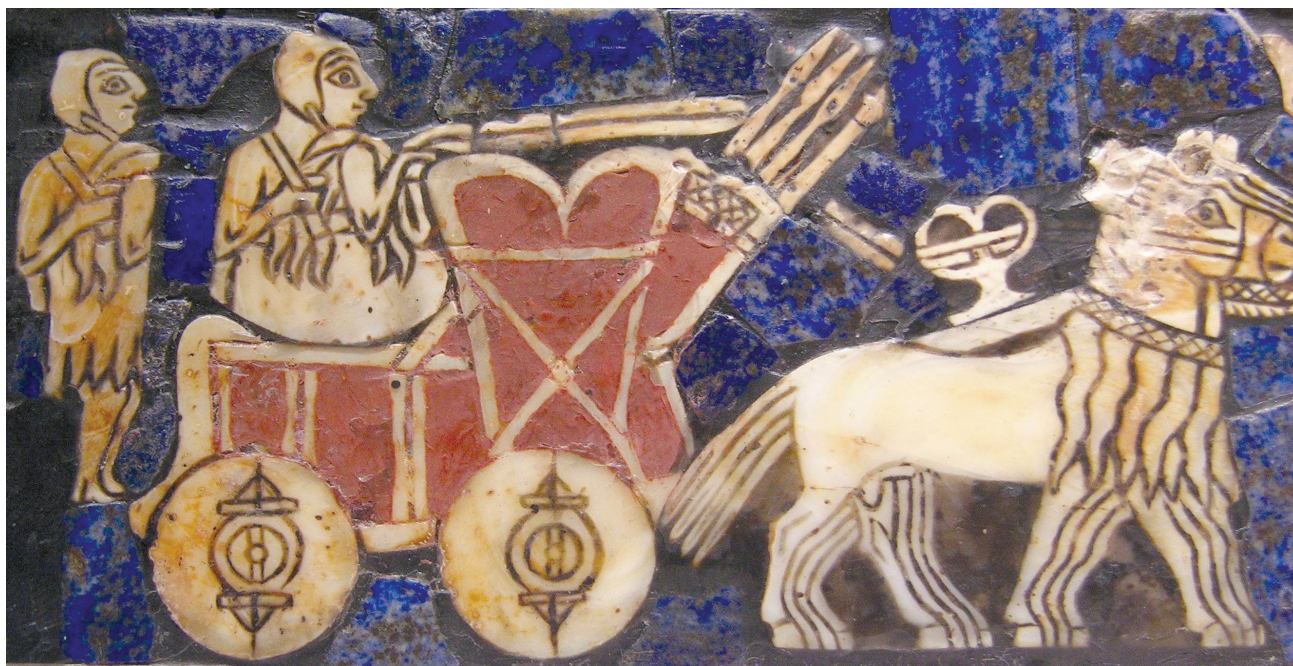
The metalworkers make bronze swords and armor, giving these cities a military advantage over non-city groups in the area. This advantage reduces attacks by other people, including clans, but also allows these cities to take wood, metal, and other materials from those outside groups. The people trade with each other for those items they don't make themselves. Trade is protected by the government. For example, if someone doesn't keep his end of a deal, the people he cheated can sue him in court. Much of the trade is by private traders from city to city along the rivers. The traders avoid government officials, since the frequent wars fought between cities would disrupt their trade if governments were involved. The frequent conflicts make it dangerous to travel outside the cities and send messages, but traders still venture out. Trade is brisk. A fair amount of trade also comes across the desert or from people coming over the nearby mountains. Each city has a marketplace where goods are traded. In addition, traders from these cities travel great distances by land and by ship to trade with other groups. The traders have trading posts set up in foreign lands, and they often trade using credit rather than always trading by barter (exchanging goods for other goods). They calculate values of goods in terms of a common exchange item, such as silver.

There are some very rich people in this society, while the rest (perhaps 90 percent) are commoners. These commoners are divided into several groups: independent farmers, craftspeople, or traders; dependent people who work for the rich people or are tenants of landowners (often in debt to the landowners); and a small number of slaves. With the rents of tenants flowing in, along with the work of dependent people, many rich people don't need to work.

Most houses are small, with a courtyard in the middle. Many have two floors, and the houses of rich people are larger. People decorate their houses with furniture and other possessions, the rich showing off their wealth with luxury items. The rich also dress in fine clothing, and rich women wear makeup and jewelry. The houses are close together on crowded streets, so people are always meeting and interacting. There are many immigrants who come to this area. Some cities welcome them to become part of their city-state, while others keep them separated. In the cities, people are so close together that disease spreads quickly—and because getting clean drinking water and disposing of human waste are problems in the cities, the outbreak of disease is not infrequent.

There are schools where children of the wealthier people in the cities learn to write by making lists, of plants, animals, minerals, and other cities, for example. Some students also solve mathematics problems and study medicine and law. In addition, schools have libraries that hold government records and literary works, such as poems. As a result of new kinds of thinking these people have invented new technologies such as the wheel and the sail.





A chariot from this society showing the use of wheels.

There are many (perhaps four thousand) gods in this society. People make sacrifices to the gods and pray to them hoping that the gods will intervene to prevent tragedies such as floods and droughts. Each person can have his or her own god, which makes some praying very personal. There are also gods for each city. The temples represent the power of the gods to protect the cities as well as the importance of the city leaders in keeping the gods happy.

## Decision

In which society would you choose to live? Give two reasons for your choice:

Society (A, B, or C):

Reason 1:

Reason 2:

# CHART FOR THREE SOCIETIES

## Problem 1

| SOCIETY A                           | SOCIETY B  | SOCIETY C                                  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Easy farming                     | 1. Gathering food and hunting                            | 1. Difficult farming (floods and droughts) |
| 2. All-powerful king                | 2. Leader chosen for ability                             | 2. City kings                              |
| 3. Houses and monuments to king     | 3. Tents, not houses                                     | 3. Houses and monuments to kings           |
| 4. Low taxes (lower than C)         | 4. No taxes  | 4. Low taxes (higher than A)               |
| 5. Granaries (abundant food)        | 5. Food is scarce or unpredictable; sometimes starvation | 5. Granaries (abundant food)               |
| 6. Many government records          | 6. Family is central                                     | 6. Invented writing                        |
| 7. Many inventions                  | 7. No inventions   | 7. Many inventions                         |
| 8. Strong army; metal weapons       | 8. Constant fighting; poor weapons                       | 8. Armies fight regularly                  |
| 9. Strict laws that favor the rich  | 9. Disputes settled by elders                            | 9. Strict laws that favor the rich         |
| 10. Corruption in government        | 10. No corruption  | 10. Corruption in government               |
| 11. People specialize and trade     | 11. No specialized jobs or trade                         | 11. People specialize and trade            |
| 12. Crowded cities; disease         | 12. Not crowded; few diseases                            | 12. Crowded cities; disease                |
| 13. Rich show off wealth            | 13. Few possessions; no rich people                      | 13. Rich show off wealth                   |
| 14. Women have some rights          | 14. Women relatively equal to men                        | 14. Women have few rights                  |
| 15. Excellent, cheap transportation | 15. Difficult transportation                             | 15. Poor transportation                    |
| 16. Value doing a good job          | 16. Value talking together                               | 16. Value competition and achievement      |
| 17. Religion: many gods             | 17. Religion: pray to ancestors                          | 17. Religion: many gods                    |
| 18. Wealthiest society              | 18. Not wealthy at all                                   | 18. Some wealth, but less than A           |

# OUTCOMES: THREE SOCIETIES

Choosing a society depends on your values—there is no right or wrong choice. Different people will have their own reasons for choosing one of the societies. This discussion of outcomes focuses on the advantages and disadvantages of each society.

Society A is Egypt, Society B is a nomadic clan, and Society C is Mesopotamia. Egypt and Mesopotamia are referred to as early civilizations, part of the development of people toward modern society. Nomadic clans are not considered civilizations in terms of advancement toward modern society. However, as you can see in the description of Society B, there were definite advantages to living in a nomadic clan. Here is an analysis of each group:

## ■ Society A: Egypt

### Disadvantages

Egypt was very tied to the rule of one person. Many of Egypt's pharaohs were good leaders, but when they got a bad leader, such as Akhenaton, the whole country suffered through corruption and chaos. There was no check on the pharaoh's power, for good or ill. The extensive government led to corruption, such as bribery and fraud, as well as too much control of the economy of Egypt. The Egyptian government provided for the needs of most people, but it also controlled or influenced much of what people did.

Public works in Egypt helped make the country look powerful, but they hurt the economy. The many pyramids in Egypt wasted human labor and resources on projects that did not help the economy to grow, since the pyramids did not result in a good or a system that people could continue to use and profit from. It did provide jobs for many thousands of people during the years of construction, but economists think the jobs would have been more productive if the labor had been devoted to activities or projects with the long-term benefits for the people.



Egyptian pyramids.

There was also greater inequality in Egypt than in Mesopotamia. The amount of luxury that the pharaohs and other rich people in Egypt enjoyed at the expense of the rest of society was much higher than it was in the Mesopotamian cities.



## Advantages

However, Egypt had many advantages. This society had all the benefits enjoyed by Mesopotamian cities and more: increased food production, specialization, economic growth, writing, better weapons, and new inventions. Since Egyptians were the most open of the three societies to immigrants, they had even more ideas, leading to more improvements and growth. Egypt was also relatively isolated from outside attack, making it a safe place to live. Egyptians had easy transportation and communication along the Nile River, resulting in a more unified nation. The Nile River was much more predictable and less destructive than the Mesopotamian rivers (the Tigris and Euphrates), which made farming better and life safer.



The Nile River and Delta.

Although women were worse off than they were in nomadic clans, they had more rights in Egypt than in Mesopotamia. All Egyptians took pride in being a powerful nation and had a sense of national identity that was lacking in nomadic groups and city-states.

## ■ Society B: Nomadic Clan

### Disadvantages

This group didn't have writing, education, or specialization in terms of jobs, and they had little trade. As a result, this group didn't have many new ideas, inventions, or opportunities to increase their wealth. Without writing or education, people did not develop many new ideas; when they did have new ideas, they couldn't easily spread without writing. With little trade, they got few ideas from outside communities. Without specialization the economy stayed at about the same size, because people who don't specialize don't increase the amount they produce. The lack of economic growth kept a limit on population growth. As other societies increased in population and invented new weapons, this group would have been more vulnerable to attack.

People in nomadic clans were more likely to be short of food on a regular basis, so nomads would be more likely to suffer from hunger than people in city-states or nations. Walking miles every day would also have been difficult for young children, the elderly, and the sick. In addition, people in nomadic clans were probably subject to higher rates of violence because of constant raids. City-states and nations started larger wars, but the reduction in raids probably decreased the violence rate overall compared to nomadic groups.

### Advantages

On the other hand, there were many advantages to nomadic life. People were equal in terms of wealth and political power. Women in particular were more equal to men in nomadic groups than

they were in city-states or nations. The lack of formal government and taxes allowed for more freedom for each person and reduced the risk of corruption.

Diseases were rare in nomadic groups compared to the densely packed population in cities, and there was less emotional stress. Although work was hard, the overall pace of life was slower and more relaxed than in cities. The emphasis on sharing also made clans more humane than the more competitive city-states and nations. People enjoyed the closeness of a storytelling culture as well as a community primarily based on families.

## ■ Society C: Mesopotamia

### Disadvantages

People in these cities were more secure from frequent raids than nomadic groups, but there were larger conflicts and wars all too often. The concentration of people so close together led to diseases, which killed many people. The problem of dense population was also seen in waste disposal and difficulties getting clean drinking water. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, which gave life to the cities, could also bring floods or, with too little water, famine. The life expectancy in cities was probably lower than in nomadic groups, possibly around twenty-five years old.

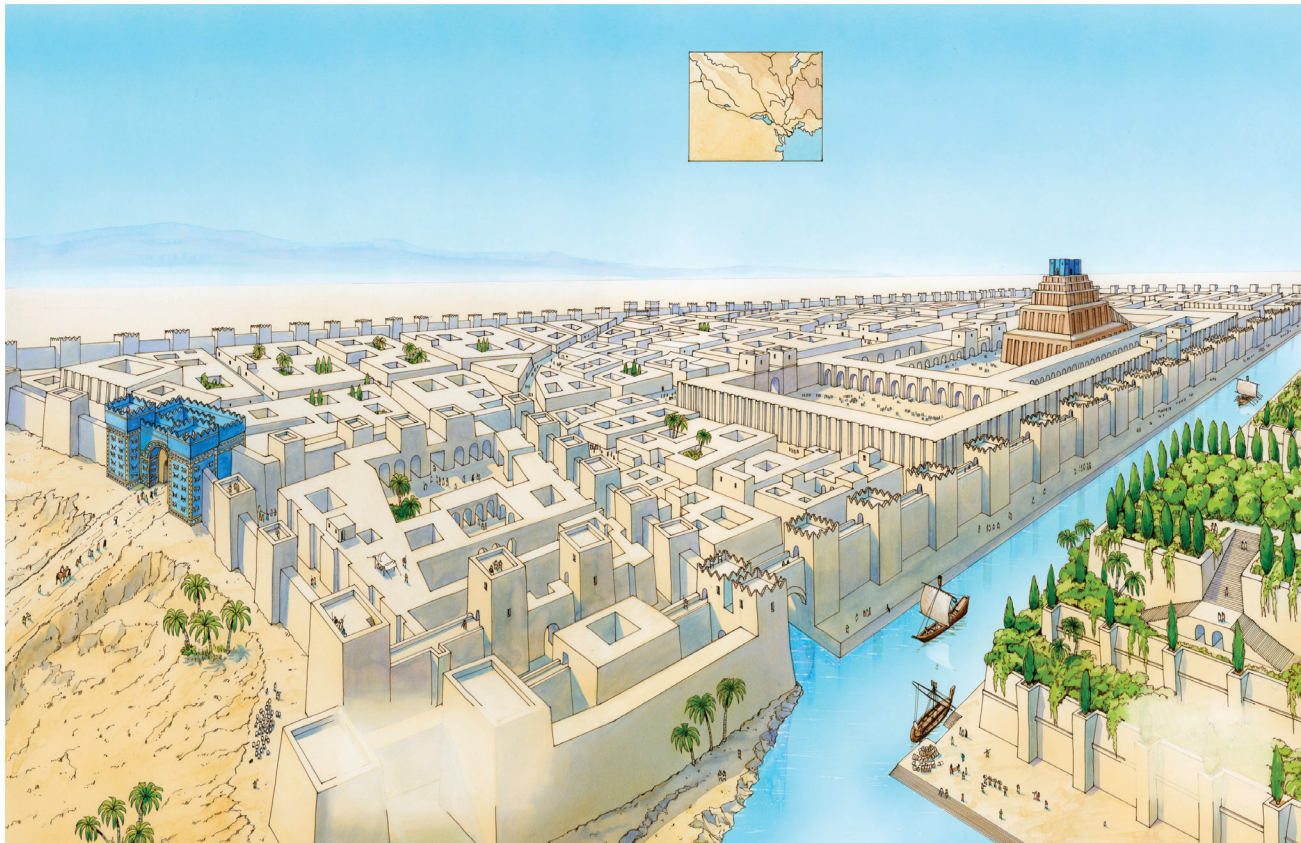


The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

People in general were more unequal in Mesopotamia than in nomadic clans, with the rich having many possessions and poor people having very little. Formal governments led to taxes, corruption, and restrictions on people. In terms of equal rights, women were much worse off in Mesopotamian cities than they were in nomadic clans, and they were somewhat worse off than in Egypt.

### Advantages

Because farms produced extra food, some people in Mesopotamia could spend part or all of their time doing other things, such as designing and constructing public buildings. When people specialized, they produced more, since they would learn specific skills for a particular task and become more proficient at that task with experience. They could also focus on ways to produce goods more quickly, sometimes inventing new tools. When people traded they also benefited, since more goods would be made available. People in city-states therefore had more wealth than did people in nomadic groups. In addition, the wider variety of jobs in cities made them more interesting places for most people to live.



An illustration of the Mesopotamian city of Babylon.

Since people had time for activities other than securing food, city-states were more likely to have people who thought about mathematics and science, and more people were inventing new tools and new ways to make goods. Science and technology advanced greatly when city-states formed. For example, the wheel was developed in Mesopotamia. The Mesopotamians also invented a writing system, which enriched life with written stories and poems and helped people think in new ways and spread new ideas.

Since city-states were more inventive, they had better weapons than did clans. For example, soldiers from city-states had metal swords, which are far deadlier than stone weapons used by clans, and they had armor to defend themselves. With a larger population, the Mesopotamian city-states pushed aside smaller groups and took resources from them.



# THE CODE OF HAMMURABI

Hammurabi's Code was a set of laws written by a king of a city-state. The code consisted of 282 laws along with an introduction and a concluding paragraph. A few of the laws are given below. The numbers above the laws are the actual numbers in the code. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

## Introduction

Before this portrait let every man who has a legal dispute come forward, read this text, and heed its precious words. The stone tablet will enlighten him in his trouble, and thus may he find justice and breathe easier in his heart, speaking these words: "Hammurabi is a king who cares for his people like a loving father."

**1**

If a man bring an accusation against a man, and charge him with a capital crime [a crime for which the punishment could be death], but cannot prove it, he, the accuser, shall be put to death.

**48**

If a man owe a debt and [a flood] inundate his field and carry away the produce, or, through lack of water, grain have not grown in the field, in that year he shall not make any return of grain to the creditor, he shall alter his contract-tablet and he shall not pay the interest for that entire year.

**53**

If a man neglect to strengthen his dike and do not strengthen it, and a break be made in his dike and the water carry away the farm-land, the man in whose dike the break has been made shall restore the grain which he has damaged.

**148**

If a man take a wife and she become afflicted with disease, and if he set his face to take another, he may. His wife, who is afflicted with disease, he shall not put away. She shall remain in the house which he has built and he shall maintain her as long as she lives.

**149**

If that woman does not elect to remain in her husband's house, he shall make good to her the dowry which she brought from her father's house and she may go.

**195**

If a son strike his father, they shall cut off his fingers.

**196**

If a man destroy the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye.

**200**

If a man knock out a tooth of a man of his own rank, they shall knock out his tooth.

**218**

If a physician operate on a man for a severe wound with a bronze lancet [surgical knife] and cause the man's death; or open an abscess (in the eye) of a man with a bronze lancet and destroy the man's eye, they shall cut off his fingers.

**229**

If a builder build a house for a man and do not make its construction firm, and the house which he has built collapse and cause the death of the owner of the house, that builder shall be put to death.

I, Hammurabi, who was a perfect king to the downtrodden people entrusted to me by the god Enlil. . . . I shield them [the cities and people] in my peace and protect them in my wisdom. That the strong might not oppress the weak, that the widow and orphan might receive their due, . . . have I inscribed my precious words on a memorial stone and erected my statue as King of Justice.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Does the Code of Hammurabi bring justice? Is it a fair set of laws in terms of rich versus poor and men versus women, for example?
2. How are these laws similar to and different from laws today?
3. What does the code show about the king (Hammurabi)?
4. How reliable is the Code of Hammurabi as a source?

# LESSON 2:

## REFORMS IN SPARTA AND ATHENS

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### Teacher's Guide

## INTRODUCTION

### ■ Overview

The two most famous Greek city-states were Sparta and Athens. Since these two cities developed in very different ways, they provide models for different types of political, economic, and social systems. In this lesson, students get the opportunity to make decisions at crucial points in the histories of both cities that influenced the development of each system.

### ■ Vocabulary

- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
- Helot—a captive owned by the Spartan government, like a slave
- Patriotism—love of country or city-state
- Barrack—a building for housing soldiers
- Spartan—simple and plain (from the word for a citizen of Sparta)
- Slave—a person who is owned by or forced to work free of charge for someone else
- Jury—people who decide guilt or innocence in a legal case
- Democracy—rule by the citizens
- Metics—foreign residents
- Tyranny—a form of government in which absolute power is vested in a single ruler

### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context
- Generate ethical options
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON (50 minutes)

### ■ Procedure

Unlike the other lessons in this volume, this lesson consists entirely of handouts targeted to middle school students. There are no complex versions of the handouts. Therefore, there is only one lesson plan.

Ask students what they have heard about the ancient Greek cities of Sparta and Athens. Why do they think we hear more about Sparta and Athens than about other Greek cities? Tell them that in this lesson they are going to make some decisions at crucial points in the history of Sparta and Athens. They won't know what actually happened until *after* they make the decisions themselves. Making the decisions will help them understand why these cities developed the way they did. In the process, they will have the opportunity to analyze the similarities and differences between the cities.

Distribute Handout 1 and have students read the three introductory paragraphs. Ask students what the problem is for Sparta. Why do they need to make some changes? Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? Now have students read the various options. Remind students that they are deciding "yes" or "no" for each proposal and giving a reason for each decision. Have students individually decide what they will do. If you use the **P-A-G-E** Sheet for making decisions, remind students to look at that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before deciding. Have students pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the eight options. Have students make arguments for and against each of the options. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. After the discussion of arguments, have them revote. You might want to have students look once again at the **P-A-G-E** sheet as they make their arguments.

When all the options have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes. Students are to read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet.

Use the same procedure for Handout 3, on Athens. Have a student explain the perspective of the poor, the rich landowners, the merchants, and the foreign residents. After the choices, votes, arguments, and revotes on the 10 options, distribute Handout 4 and follow the same procedure as for Handout 2.

*Option for Primary Source:* After students finished reading Handout 3, but before they make their final decision, have them read the primary source by Solon in Handout 5 and answer the questions. Since this document is poetry, you might want to go over some of the vocabulary with students before having them answer the questions.

## Possible Answers

1. According to the author Solon, what were the problems that he corrected?

*Some Athenians were being sold into slavery because of debts they couldn't pay. Some were slaves in Athens and some were sold overseas, where they lost their connection to Athens.*

2. What did Solon do to correct the problems?

*He ended slavery and brought slaves home to Athens from overseas.*

3. How reliable is Solon as a source?

*He is a primary source, since he is talking about a reform he himself initiated. He has a reason to lie to defend his actions. Based on his comments about granting justice to the lowborn and the noble, it seems he was criticized for favoring one group over the other. There is no corroborating evidence to support his arguments about being fair, but there is evidence that he abolished slavery for nonpayment of debts.*

## ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did on decision making on this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these decisions on Sparta and Athens? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

Ask students whether the decisions made by the Spartans in Handout 2 were more the result of historical forces or the result of decisions made by individual leaders. Those arguing for the role of individual leaders would point out how unique these decisions were. No other city under threat resorted to such strict community control or focus on military necessity. Those supporting historical forces would argue that the helots' threat to Sparta was unique and that those historical forces shaped the Spartan response.

## ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students to compare the Spartan response to the helot security threat with the United States' response to the September 11, 2001, terrorists attacks. In what ways were they similar or different, and why?

## ■ Troubleshooting

The problem of debt for farmers in Handout 3 could be difficult for some students to understand. This provides an opportunity to teach students the fixed costs that farmers face in owning land (the mortgage amount or rent is the same every year), while the money made from the sale of crops



varies from year to year. When the money from sales drops, farmers cannot pay their debts. In this case, they were sold into slavery to pay off the debt.

## **LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON** *(20 minutes)*

Choose only one of the cities to explore. Distribute Handout 1 and have students decide which reforms they will support and have them vote. Discuss for five minutes and have them revote. Distribute Handout 2 and for homework have them comment on the outcomes. Alternatively, use the same procedure with Handouts 3 and 4.

## **TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION**

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 2 and 4.)

There is some disagreement about whether the Solon's reforms were a result of class conflict between aristocrats and peasants. There is very little evidence on the motives for reform. The one clear source is Solon himself. He says in his poems that the rich needed to be stopped from taking advantage of the poor farmers. This statement could be a cover for another motive—conflict between aristocratic families. Nevertheless, the evidence from Solon, along with similar aristocrat/peasant conflicts in other ancient societies, made the class-based analysis seem reasonable. Most historians assume that this conflict is the motive.

Solon divided citizens into four groups, based on landownership and production. The bottom group of non-landowners could participate in the Assembly but could not hold office. The law gave incentive to merchants—who had some wealth—to buy land, because they couldn't hold office without it. While the reform seemed to continue aristocratic control, it was based on wealth, not privilege. These considerations have been simplified to a restriction on aristocrats (rich landowners) and a gain in power for the poor.

Historians note that the situation of the helots was more like that of the European serfs, since both groups were tied to the land, than it was to slaves in other Greek cities.

The tidy differences between Sparta and Athens are exaggerated, according to some historians, as there were many exceptions to the basic frameworks in the two cities.

The Spartans forbade people from using coins that were used in other Greek cities in order to discourage trade. Instead, Spartans had to use large iron bars that were difficult to carry and use.

The simple Spartan lifestyle was probably exaggerated. That view of Sparta was promoted by the Spartans themselves in order to intimidate other cities. In reality, like people everywhere, there were some Spartans who enjoyed luxurious food, clothing, and housing.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

### P = Problem

**Identify any underlying problem(s).**

**Consider other points of view.**

What are my assumptions? emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

**Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**

Reliability of sources

Historical analogies

### G = Goals

What are my main goals? Are they realistic?

**Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

***Predict unintended consequences.***

***Play out the options. What could go wrong?***

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Consider other points of view:** The lesson for Athens is set up to encourage students to look at the problem from several points of view: poor farmers, landowners, merchants and foreign residents. As students consider the various proposals to help poor farmers, for example, they are reminded in the problem description to consider other points of view, since landowners are included in the description. In the problem on Sparta, students should think about each option from the point of view of the helots and the people in other city-states.
- **Ask questions about context:** Here are some possible questions:

### **Sparta**

1. How soon are the rebels likely to take over Sparta?

*It will be a few years, most likely. So, there would be time for Option 5.*

2. Have other countries stopped trade? If so, how did it affect those cities?

*The cities that stop trade do worse economically than those that continue to trade.*

## Athens

1. Have other cities canceled debts, and if so, how did it turn out?

*The ancient Israelites canceled debts, which did not have negative economic effects.*

2. What has happened to societies that make it easy for foreigners to become citizens, compared to those societies that do not make it easy?

*The societies that make it easy for foreigners to become citizens do better than societies that do not because foreigners-turned-citizens feel more loyalty than foreigners excluded from citizenship. They contribute more to society and are less inclined to rebel.*

- **Generate ethical goals:** In Handout 1, the effects of military discipline for the whole society should be considered in terms of ethics. Is it right to take boys and men away from their families for most of their lives? One ethical test is whether people would independently choose this military lifestyle. If they would not choose it, is it fair to force people to live this way? Is it ethical to kill members of a political group who haven't committed a crime?
- **Predict unintended consequences:** Some unintended consequences are covered in Handouts 2 and 4. One unintended consequence for Sparta was the negative economic impact from the lack of trade. An unintended consequence for Athens was the negative effect of not granting citizenship to metics.
- **Play out options:** In Handout 2, students should anticipate that landowners and people who lent money would be very angry that they were not going to be paid for the loans they made to poor farmers (Option A). These lenders would work to persuade government officials not to support the proposal to cancel debts.

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# LESSON 2:

## REFORMS IN SPARTA AND ATHENS

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### VOCABULARY

- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
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# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR SPARTA

## Reform Proposals—Sparta



You are a leader in Sparta in 669 BCE. You just suffered a defeat in a war against Argos, another Greek city. However, your biggest problem is a revolt by the Messenians against Sparta. The situation is truly desperate. The Messenians greatly outnumber the Spartans, by as much as ten to one, and they are threatening to taking over the city and the whole area.

## ■ Sparta's Messenian Colony

The background to the situation is important. A few years ago, Sparta took over Messenia and forced the people there to give one-half of their harvest of crops to Sparta. It made some Spartans rich, but it is extremely difficult to control all these people. Messenia is a long distance away from Sparta and it is on the other side of a mountain range. The Messenians were waiting for the right moment to revolt, when Sparta was especially weak. This moment arrived when Argos defeated Sparta. There has to be a change, or Sparta will be taken over and cease to exist.

## ■ Decision

Here are some suggestions for action to be taken. Which ones will you choose? You can choose as many as you would like. Just be careful that you don't pick options that contradict each other.

- A. Make an economic deal with the Messenians. Tell them that they don't have to pay half their harvest. They don't have to pay anything. They keep their land and keep the money they make from selling their crops.
- B. Make a political deal with the Messenians. Tell them that they can be citizens of Sparta on an equal footing with the other Spartans. They will help to govern the city.
- C. Make an alliance with another city to help defeat the Messenians. Tell the leaders of the other city that they can have half the Messenians' land in exchange for helping defeat the Messenians.
- D. Tell the Spartans that they have to give up their individual goals and unite as one people to defeat the Messenians. Obedience and duty to the government are the only way to defeat the revolt.
- E. Tell the Spartans that they will get the land of the Messenians to control as individuals if Sparta defeats the Messenians. Spartans will own the land, but the Messenians will work the land. Without having to work the land, Spartans will have time to devote to becoming great warriors.

- F. Tell the Spartans that they must focus on improving their military skills. Boys and men must live simply, in barracks (simple military buildings) with other soldiers, training in the use of weapons and working as a group. Trade undermines the equality of warriors because it enriches some people more than others. There should be very little trade with outside cities. Poetry, singing, plays, and literature are also unimportant. All that counts is loyalty to Sparta and preparation for fighting. Sparta must be known as a fierce warrior state.
- G. Declare a state of war against the Messenians, which will allow individual Spartans to kill them at any time without being arrested for murder. (War allows people to kill enemy soldiers without being arrested for murder.) Messenians will be outsiders, with few rights.
- H. Have the women serve the good of Sparta by producing more men to fight and by running the farms and businesses while men prepare for warfare.

# OUTCOMES OF SPARTAN REFORMS

The Spartans decided against compromising with the Messenians by offering concessions, as suggested in Options A and B. Any compromise, such as letting them keep land or granting citizenship, might have been taken as a sign of weakness by the Messenians. Granting the Messenians citizenship would have been a big problem, as Messenians would have outnumbered Spartans and taken control of the government. The Spartans also rejected making an alliance with another city at that time (Option C), since that would mean giving up some of their independence. Later, after the immediate revolt was crushed, the Spartans did make alliances in which the other cities would help Sparta in case of revolt.

Instead of compromise, the Spartans chose oppression of the Messenians and radical internal changes in their society, focusing on increasing their military strength. The Spartans made all the changes outlined in Options D–H. The Spartans recognized that the underlying problem was that the Messenians were too numerous to be controlled without drastic measures being taken.

Messenians were labeled as “helots” or captives with few rights (Option G). They could be killed without legal consequences for the killer—a form of state terrorism. The strongest helots or those helots with leadership potential were regularly killed. In fact, a part of training for Spartan men was giving them a dagger and having them live off the land. While they were trying to survive, they were to kill helots. The Roman historian Plutarch wrote hundreds of years later about Spartan training: “The magistrates from time to time sent out into the country at large the most discreet of the young warriors, equipped only with daggers and such supplies as were necessary. In the daytime, they scattered into obscure and out-of-the-way places, where they hid themselves and lay quiet; but in the night, they came down into the highways and killed every Helot whom they caught.”

The Spartans were right to be fearful of the Messenians, as the land system was so blatantly unfair. In this system, the Messenians (helots) worked the land, but the Spartans owned the land and made all the money (Option E). Naturally, the helots would rise in revolt against such a system whenever they had the chance. The helots were from the same group of Greeks as the Spartans (the Dorians). They were always thinking of how they could regain their freedom as Greeks. Spartans always had to be prepared to fight.

This preparation for war or rebellion demonstrated intense patriotism to Sparta (Option D). Spartans gave up their personal goals for the good of their city to a much greater extent than citizens of any other city-state in Greece and almost any other society in history.

This training for war began for boys in childhood. They lived in barracks (Option F) and trained with other boys and older men, who were their mentors. Spartans emphasized loyalty to their military group over loyalty to their families. For example, meals were eaten at the barracks rather than at home. Men served in the military from age 7 to age 60, so almost all of their lives were



devoted to the military. Since men were away from home so much, women had a very important role to play in keeping farms and businesses going (Option G). Women in Sparta were freer than women in other Greek cities, since men were not around as much as they were in other cities. Of course, there were also disadvantages for women. Mothers would basically never live or eat with their sons after age seven.

The Spartans created a unique society, a result primarily of a fear of revolt. Compared to other societies, the Spartans lived strict and serious lives. Spartans did not emphasize the arts except when the poems, songs, plays, or visual arts were related to patriotism or religion (Option F). Their simple lifestyle—without much artwork, fashionable clothes, or ornate furniture—is where we get the term “Spartan.” Today that term connotes simple housing, plain clothing or strict diet.

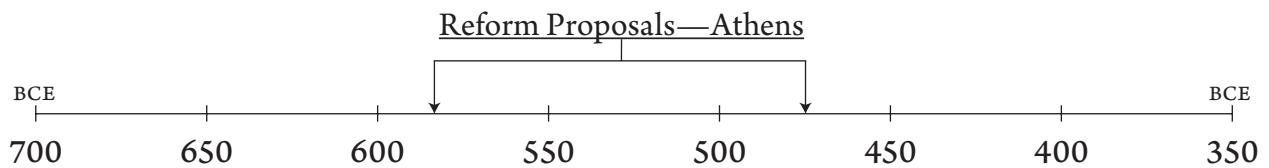
The emphasis on patriotism and the military worked for Sparta. For hundreds of years, other cities feared going to war with Sparta. Although helots were constantly trying to rebel, the Spartans kept them from revolting successfully.

On the other hand, the emphasis on military preparedness also undermined Spartan society. Without much trade (Option F), Sparta was doomed in the long run. There would be less economic growth. Other cities advanced as they gained products and ideas from trading with each other, but Sparta fell behind. Equally bad, weakening the family structure hurt the social cohesion that families provide. With weaker families, there would also be fewer babies. Sparta’s population would not grow as fast as the populations of other cities. Eventually, Sparta’s population was so small that the city ceased to exist.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Summarize in your own words the ways in which the Spartans changed their society.
2. How well did these decisions work out for the Spartans? Which worked out well and which did not?
3. You also made decisions. How well did your decisions work out?
4. What would you change to improve your decision-making skills? For example, if you didn’t think about goals in making these decisions, you might want to explain how you would have used that skill.

# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR ATHENS



You are a male citizen in Athens in the fifth century BCE. This problem concerns only males, since women had few rights and were excluded from politics. The groups below (poor farmers, large landowners, merchants, and foreign residents) are limited to men.

Many people in Athens are unhappy with the political and economic situation in the city. Poor farmers are sold into slavery for not being able to pay their debts. Rich landowners don't like all the changes in society. Merchants and poor people don't like being excluded from having a say in government. Foreign residents of Athens want to be allowed to become citizens. Read the concerns of each group and the proposals for dealing with those concerns. Which of them will you support?

## ■ Poor Farmer Concerns

Small farmers are in debt and losing their farms to rich landowners. When the small farmers can't pay their rent, the rich landowners sell them into slavery and rent the land to someone else. It is difficult to farm on the rocky soil in the area around Athens, even in good weather. When the weather is bad, farmers can't make enough money to pay their debts. As a result, they are sold into slavery. Poor farmers argue that rich people have bought up all the land, so farmers have no choice but to rent. It is not the fault of the poor farmers when they can't pay their rent. Their plight is due to bad weather or low prices. They should not be sold into slavery. Poor farmers want more say in establishing the rules for landownership. They want to become citizens and become eligible for election to the Assembly, which votes on proposed laws.

## ■ Large Landowner Concerns

Rich landowners argue that poor farmers agreed to pay the rent, so when they can't pay, the landowners deserve to get their money back by selling the farmers as slaves. The rental contracts clearly say that the renters can be sold as slaves if they don't pay. Remember that landowners lose money when renters don't pay their rent. Rich landowners don't think there should be so many changes in society and government. They argue that the best families have run the government for hundreds of years without major problems. Now, with merchants making more and more money from trade, they want to change the government so they can take power. Even the poor want to run the government. Imagine the chaos that would result if poor people—the mob—were running the government!

## ■ Merchant Concerns

Merchants feel that they are contributing to economic growth in Athens by bringing wealth to the city through trade. But the rich landowners, who are from the privileged families, control the government. Merchants want power in government equal to their power in the economy.

## ■ Foreign Resident Concerns

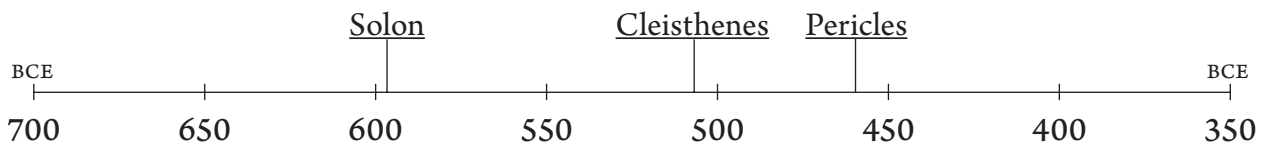
Foreign residents want to become citizens so they can vote and hold office in the government. They also claim that they bring wealth to Athens, and therefore deserve citizenship so they can have a say in how the government is run.

## ■ Decision: Proposed Reforms to Meet Various Groups' Concerns

Which reforms, if any, will you support? You can support as many of these proposed reforms as you would like.

- A. Cancel any debts that farmers owe up to this point. This will clear the debts and give poor farmers a new chance to make a living. All new debts will have to be paid, but the old debts are canceled.
- B. Outlaw selling people into slavery for not paying debts.
- C. Take some land away from large landowners and give it in small farms to poor farmers for free. When the poor farmers become landowners they will have a real stake in Athenian society.
- D. Allow the poor the right to appeal rulings about debts and land to the Assembly.
- E. Allow the poor to be part of the Assembly that votes on proposed laws. The Assembly would have some influence over government, but the kings and Council (made up of rich people) would have more power. The poor wouldn't be able to hold office in the government, just vote in the Assembly.
- F. Allow any man, including a poor man, to hold office in the government.
- G. Allow all male citizens to choose a Council and participate in the Assembly. The Assembly would be the highest authority and, along with the Council, would control the government.
- H. Allow male foreign residents to become citizens, granting them the right to vote and hold office in government. They could become residents only after living in Athens for two years and committing no crimes.
- I. Have a strong leader take over the government and make reforms that would appeal to poor people and merchants.
- J. Pay for people to serve on juries. That way, poor people would be able to serve in this important part of government.

# OUTCOMES OF ATHENIAN REFORMS

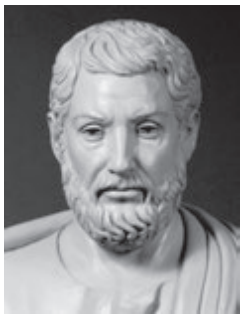


Athens went through a series of reforms that, according to many historians, led to the rise of democracy (rule by the people) in the city. Solon was the first to make reforms, around 594 BCE.

He chose to cancel debts (Option A) for poor farmers, outlaw selling people into slavery for not paying debts (Option B), and allow appeals in cases about debts (Option D). He did not take land away from rich people to give small farms to the poor (Option C), but the other reforms improved the situation for poor farmers significantly. He also allowed the poor to vote in the Assembly (Option E), a big step toward democracy, although the poor still could not hold government office (Option F).



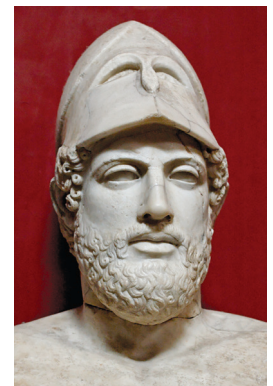
Solon.



Cleisthenes.

Cleisthenes, in 508 BCE, was the next reformer. He reorganized the whole government around the Council and Assembly (Option G), which took the power to control government away from the rich landowners and increased the power of ordinary people in government. This new government was organized around villages in the Athenian countryside. These villages were called *demes*, from which we get the word *democracy*. Each deme, which selected people for the Council, was a home to mixture of rich and poor, so there was less chance of the rich dominating the government.

Pericles followed up with new reforms around 462 BCE, in which he allowed any citizen (including poor people) to hold office (Option F), and to serve on juries (Option J). One thing that Pericles did not allow was Athenian citizenship for foreign residents, called metics (Option H). Most historians see this as a big mistake that weakened Athens in the long run. If foreign residents, of which there were thousands in Athens, had felt included as citizens they probably would have provided strength and support for Athens in wars that were soon to come. It is clear that one of the great strengths of Athens was its attraction to foreign people, who brought new ideas and wealth to the city. Pericles missed an opportunity to increase that Athenian advantage.



Pericles.

Note that by these democratic reforms, Athens chose a different political path from the one taken by Greek cities that were ruled by monarchy or tyranny. Under tyranny, a strong leader would take over the government and make changes that would appeal to the mass of poor people (Option I). Sometimes Athens itself fell into tyranny, when a single leader, often to help the common people, took control of the government.

Athenian democracy was not perfect. Women, slaves, and foreigners were excluded. In fact, the situation of women grew worse after men got more power in the government. With more men discussing politics in public, women were increasingly limited to private conversations inside their homes. Nevertheless, the Athenian reforms proved to be a great experiment in democratic government—one to which today's political philosophers and thinkers often turn for inspiration.



# POEM BY SOLON

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In this excerpt, Solon talks about some of his reforms as explained in Handout 4.

I restored to Athens, their god-built home,  
many who were sold abroad, sometimes  
by crooked judgments, or voluntarily fled  
a crushing burden of debt and wandered  
so far they lost their Athenian accents.  
Others I freed from the shame of slavery  
in the heart of Athens, where once they trembled  
at a master's whim. And though I gained  
my ends by force, I melded Power  
with Justice and did what I promised to do.  
The laws I wrote were the same for lowborn  
and noble; both were straightened by Justice.

Source: David Mulroy, trans., *Early Greek Lyric Poetry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 66–67.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to the author, Solon, what were the problems that he corrected?
2. What did Solon do to correct the problems?
3. How reliable is Solon as a source?



# LESSON 3:

## THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR

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### Teacher's Guide

## INTRODUCTION

### ■ Overview

The Peloponnesian War brought tragedy and destruction to the Greek world, particularly to Athens and Sparta. As the war dragged on, with its unending violence against soldiers and civilians, people's civilized habits and beliefs were undermined. The war and the causes of the war have been studied by historians for millennia. In this lesson, students have the opportunity to make decisions in regard to the causes of this momentous war, and as a consequence they may gain insight into the causes of war in general.

### ■ Vocabulary

- City-state—a city that is also an independent state
- Athens—a Greek city-state that headed an alliance of several city-states and had a powerful navy
- Sparta—a Greek city-state that led an alliance of many other city-states and had a powerful army
- Alliance—an agreement between countries or city-states to support each other militarily
- Isthmus—a narrow strip of land connecting two larger areas of land
- Thirty Years' Peace Treaty—a treaty between Athens and Sparta to settle disputes by arbitration and other peaceful methods
- Archidamus—king of Sparta, who argued against rushing into war against Athens
- Pericles—leader of Athens, who argued against agreeing to Spartan demands
- Arbitration—a process of resolving a dispute, in which the opposing parties submit their arguments to an arbitrator (like a judge) and agree to accept the arbitrator's ruling
- Peloponnesian War—the war of Sparta and its allies against Athens and its allies

## ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Identify assumptions or emotions
- Ask questions about the reliability of sources
- Establish realistic goals
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON *(two class periods)*

There are two sets of handouts for this lesson. Handouts 1–4 are labeled “Short” and are targeted primarily at middle school students, while Handouts 5–8 are labeled “Complex” and are geared for high school students. The handouts are labeled “Short” and “Complex” rather than “Middle School” and “High School” in order to give teachers more flexibility in using them without stigma (allowing the use of the short handouts with high school students, for example). The handouts in each set cover the same topics: Handouts 1 and 5 target Athenian decisions near the beginning of the crisis (Handout 1 has only one decision, while Handout 5 contains three decisions), Handouts 2 and 6 focus on the Spartan decision to declare war, Handouts 3 and 7 cover the last-ditch negotiations after war was declared but before the fighting started, and Handouts 4 and 8 describe the outcomes. The “short” handouts are shorter, are less complex, and contain more cues to aid reading comprehension. The suggestions in the sections “Reflecting on Decision Making,” “Putting Decisions into Historical Context,” “Connecting to Today,” and “Troubleshooting” are for both middle school and high school students.

### ■ Short Problems *(Handouts 1–4)*

Tell students that in this lesson, they are going to make some important decisions in a crisis situation between Athens and Sparta. First they will look at the situation from the point of view of the Athenians, then from the point of view of the Spartans, and finally from the Athenians viewpoint again. They won’t know what actually happened until *after* they make the decisions themselves.

Before they can make these decisions, students may need to review some material on Athens and Sparta, but background material isn’t crucial to making the decisions in this lesson. If you have already taught students about the governments of Athens and Sparta, activate their prior knowledge by asking how the government worked. If not, this is the ideal time to teach about Athenian democracy and Spartan oligarchy.

Distribute Handout 1 and have students read the context and arguments. If necessary, review BCE dating, the Athenian government, and the location of Athens and Megara on Map A. Ask a student to summarize the context and arguments for and against punishing Megara. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? What is the Thirty Years' Peace? What is the difference between Option A and Option B? What are the arguments for and against punishing Megara? Are there any other questions? Have students individually decide what they will do. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to refer to that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before deciding.

Now have students pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students take an initial vote on each of the three options. Next, ask students to argue for and against the options and then have them revote. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. You might want to have students look once again at the **P-A-G-E** sheet as they make their arguments. In the course of discussion, students may suggest a fourth option. That's great! It means that students are not being limited by the options presented. The best solution in difficult decision situations is often one that is not among the original options. Just add the fourth option and have students vote on all four options.

Handout 2 switches students to the Spartan point of view. Again, have students read the handout and ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation and the choices. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? What is the decision that Sparta has to make? What did the representatives from Corinth argue? Which techniques did they use to get Sparta to declare war? What did the Athenians argue? What did Archidamus argue? What did Sthenelaidas argue? Could any of these people be lying or exaggerating? Why would they lie or exaggerate? As you did with Handout 1, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for or against each option (incorporating any new options), and then revote in light of the discussion.

Handout 3 switches back to the Athenian point of view. At this point, Sparta has declared war but has sent representatives to negotiate a settlement before the fighting begins. After students have read the handout, ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation and the choices. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? What are the Spartans asking Athens to do? What did Pericles argue? Who is he? Again, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for or against each option, and then revote in light of the discussion.

When all three problems have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 4 with the outcomes. Instruct students to read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. Have students pair up and discuss their answers, and then discuss the answers as a class.



## Possible Answers

1. Which side, Athens or Sparta, was more to blame for the war?

*Students are likely to disagree on which side was more to blame.*

2. Was the war the result mainly of a decision made in 433–432 (Handouts 1 or 2 or 3), or was the war due more to underlying historical forces?

*Those arguing for the short-term decisions in 433–432 might argue that in each of these situations, the Athenians or Spartans could have made decisions that would have prevented war at that point. Those arguing for underlying historical forces might point out that even if the short-term decisions had been better, the underlying tension between the two city-states and their alliances would have led to war eventually. That is, the underlying power relationship was the main cause of the war. The historian Thucydides famously stated that the Spartans chose war not because of the arguments made at the meeting discussed in Handout 2 but “because they were afraid that the Athenians would become too powerful, seeing that the greater part of Greece was already in their hands” (Thucydides, 1.88).*

3. What is one thing you learned about decision making from this problem on the causes of the Peloponnesian War?

*Students will have various answers. Some parts of decision making that students might mention are: think about unintended consequences, think about emotions and assumptions (in this case, about pride and assuming the Spartan side would win easily), and see a problem from other points of view.*

## ■ Complex Problems (Handouts 5–8)

Distribute Handout 5 and instruct students to read it and decide what choices they will make for the three problems. (Alternatively, you could have students read, discuss, and vote on each decision one at a time.) Have them pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the three problems. Ask students to make arguments for and against the various options for each problem and then have them revote.

Handout 6 switches students to the Spartan point of view. Again, have students read the handout and ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation and the choices. In similar fashion to the strategy for Handout 5, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for or against each option, and then revote in light of the discussion.

Handout 7 switches back to the Athenian point of view. At this point, Sparta has declared war but has sent representatives to negotiate a settlement before the fighting begins. After students have read the handout, ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation and the choices. Again, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss

their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for or against each option, and then revote in light of the discussion.

When all three problems have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 8 with the (complex) outcomes, and have students read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. Suggested answers are outlined in the paragraph above for Handout 4.

*Option for Primary Source:* When students are preparing to make a decision about whether Sparta should declare war (Handout 2 or Handout 6) tell them to read the primary source by King Archidamus in Handout 9 and answer the questions.

### Possible Answers

1. What is King Archidamus warning his fellow Spartans will happen if Sparta goes to war with Athens?

*He is warning that it will not be easy to defeat the Athenians. They will be able to supply their cities because of their great navy and treasury. Sparta will have to build a navy in order to defeat Athens.*

2. What does King Archidamus say are three strengths of Athens compared to Sparta?

*Strengths: navy, money, many allies.*

3. Does King Archidamus say this will be a short war or a long war?

*Long war.*

4. How reliable is King Archidamus as a source?

*He was a participant, so he is a primary source. However, the speech was reported by Thucydides, who admits that many of the speeches in his history were composed by him from comments other people reported about the speeches. So this speech is likely to have been made up by Thucydides, which means it isn't primary. Archidamus had a reason to lie or at least exaggerate in order to avoid a painful war. It is a public speech, geared to sway his fellow Spartans, so he is even more likely to exaggerate.*

### ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did on decision making on this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these decisions about the crisis between Athens and Sparta? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the Decision Making-Analysis section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

The question of whether the war resulted more from individual decisions or more from historical forces is addressed in the short lesson plan as a suggested answer for Handout 4, question 2. It is a very important question, as Thucydides famously claimed that historical forces (the fear of Athenian power) had caused the war. This focus on broader historical forces is one reason that Thucydides has been regarded by many as an important person in the writing of history.

## ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students if there are conflicts between countries today that leaders face where the circumstances or decisions of the Athenians and Spartans could help provide more thoughtful choices? Students may disagree. Some may argue that the situations in ancient Greece are too different from modern history to provide any lessons for more recent conflict situations. Others may see enduring elements in foreign policy decision making, such as pride (hubris), the role of perceptions, or the consideration of unintended consequences.

## ■ Troubleshooting

The number of events, especially in the complex problem, could become confusing to some students. The time lines at the top of each handout can help students keep the various conflict situations straight.

Students may forget that the arguments made for and against actions are not necessarily true. They are arguments made by particular people to persuade others to take certain actions. Remind students that these statements may contain distortions and exaggerations designed to advance the speaker's own agenda.

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON *(40 minutes)*

Choose the short problem (Handouts 1–4), but skip Handout 3. Distribute Handouts 1 and 2 for homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for Handout 1 for five minutes. Then have them discuss their choices to Handout 2 for five minutes. Bring the class together, have them vote on the various options, and have students offer arguments for and against proposals for five minutes. Have students re-vote and distribute Handout 4 with the outcomes. For homework, students are to write what they learned about history and about their own decision-making strategies from these outcomes.

## TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 4 and 8.)

While most historians refer to the Peloponnesian War in the singular, some argue that there were two wars—the one referred to in Handout 5 (from 460 to 446 BCE) and the one that is the

subject of this lesson, from (431 to 404 BCE). Since most historians reference this latter war as the Peloponnesian War, and since it is simpler for students to understand just one war, there is only one war in this lesson.

Thucydides was a historian who lived at the time of the wars and witnessed some parts of the war from both sides. There are very few other contemporary or primary sources on the war. Therefore, despite some weaknesses in Thucydides' analysis of the war, scholars rely on his history, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, for much of the information about the causes of the war and events during the war itself. On the other hand, Thucydides based some of the writings quoted in the handouts on other sources rather than transcriptions of actual speeches. Students should be conscious that they are not reading actual quotations of eyewitnesses.

There is debate among historians about the causes of the war. Some stress specific incidents, such as the Corcyrian conflict, the Potidaean revolt, and the Megarian Decree. A second group emphasizes the underlying cause as the Spartan fear of Athenian power. A third group emphasizes Sparta's desire for dominance rather than its fear of Athens; this group holds that Sparta was waiting for a moment of Athenian weakness to start a war, and that weakness presented itself in 432 BCE.

In *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War*, historian G. E. M. De Sante Croix (1972) analyzes the causes of the war in great detail. Some of his arguments are incorporated into the lesson, but his arguments are so consistently favorable to the Athenian side that many of his conclusions are not part of the lesson. For example, the author argues that the dispute between Corcyra and Athens on the one hand and Corinth on the other was almost completely Corinth's fault, while Athenian actions were defensive and completely reasonable. Some parts of his book are more of a defense of Athens than a historical analysis. It's an ironic twist, since in the introduction to the book the author condemns other historians for a lack of objectivity on the causes of the war. For a critique of the book, see R. F. Tannenbaum (1975).

Historians disagree on the motives of each city in various actions. For example, Donald Kagan (2003) argues that the Spartans were really searching for a peaceful solution when they sent delegates to Athens to negotiate after the vote for war. He further says that the demand for Athens to drop the Megarian Decree was reasonable. Historian Nigel Bagnall (2004), on the other hand, dismisses Spartan diplomacy as inept, saying, "[I]t is difficult to see what Sparta was hoping to achieve." Historian J. E. Lendon (2010) emphasizes the desire by the Spartans to get Athens to agree to at least some of their demands in order to show Sparta's dominance over Athens.

Religion is not mentioned in the handouts as part of the thinking of the Greeks in these conflict situations. However, teachers could emphasize the role of religion in their debriefing of the lesson. How does religion affect how people make decisions in foreign affairs?

Helots are described as slaves rather than serfs to avoid complicated explanations of the differences between slaves and serfs.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

### P = Problem

**Identify any underlying problem(s).**

**Consider other points of view.**

***What are my assumptions? emotions?***

### A = Ask for information (about)

***Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)***

Reliability of sources

**Historical analogies**

### G = Goals

**What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**

**Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

**Predict unintended consequences.**

**Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Identify any underlying problem(s):** Thucydides states in his history of the Peloponnesian War that Athenian imperialism and Spartan fear of the rising power of Athens were the key underlying problems and causes of the war. Some modern historians posit different underlying problems (such as Spartan desire for hegemony over Athens and Greece). Students need to consider possible underlying problems.
- **Consider other points of view:** Since the lesson moves from the point of view of Athens to Sparta's and back to Athens', there is a natural emphasis on point of view. Considering other points of view can be further encouraged by stopping students after they have made a preliminary vote on any decision and telling them to think about that problem/decision (such as whether to punish Megara) from the point of view of the other city.
- **Identify assumptions/emotions:** The Spartans were confident, perhaps too confident, that they could defeat Athens in a short war. This overconfidence was referred to by the ancient Greeks as *hubris*, or pride. Athenians, Spartans, Corinthians, and Greeks from many other cities were acting with great emotion during these crises (undoubtedly much more emotion than students will feel in making decisions in class). Some of the decisions described in the handouts on outcomes are difficult to understand unless students recognize the role



of emotion. For example, people in these cities were easily offended by the actions of other cities. Revenge was another important emotion. In the fight between Corcyra and Corinth before the Peloponnesian War started, the Corcyrians slaughtered the Corinthians they had captured. When the Corinthians won a later battle, they in turn slaughtered the Corcyrian wounded and prisoners.

- **Ask questions about the reliability of sources:** All the people who spoke to the Athenians (Handouts 1, 3, 5, and 7) and to the Spartans (Handouts 2 and 6) had a reason to lie to get Athens and Sparta to take a particular action. Students should ask about the reliability of these sources.
- **Establish goals that are realistic:** Pericles' strategy for the Athenians looks unrealistic. It seems very unlikely that the Athenian public would continue to support a strategy of staying on the defensive for a period of years until the Spartans give up the war. As crops and farms were destroyed and people remained imprisoned inside Athens, they would likely revolt against this strategy. It is amazing that Athenians did not revolt against the strategy for so many years, a testimony to the leadership of Pericles.
- **Predict unintended consequences:** As described in Handouts 4 and 8 (outcomes), the war was not unintended, but the length of the war and the changes resulting from the war were unintended. Did students try to predict the consequences of the war?
- **Play out options:** As students make various decisions, they should play out what will happen next and what could go wrong. For example, if Athens attacks Megara, what might happen if Spartan forces show up? What happens if Athenian soldiers can't capture the city of Megara quickly and there is a siege lasting years? What if Spartan forces attack Athenian siege forces from the rear?

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# LESSON 3: QUARRELS BETWEEN ATHENS AND SPARTA

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## VOCABULARY

- City-state—a city that is also an independent state
- Athens—a Greek city-state that headed an alliance of several city-states and had a powerful navy
- Sparta—a Greek city-state that led an alliance of many other city-states and had a powerful army
- Alliance—an agreement between countries or city-states to support each other militarily
- Isthmus—a narrow strip of land connecting two larger areas of land
- Thirty Years' Peace Treaty—a treaty between Athens and Sparta to settle disputes by arbitration and other peaceful methods
- Archidamus—king of Sparta, who argued against rushing into war against Athens
- Pericles—leader of Athens, who argued against agreeing to Spartan demands
- Arbitration—a process of resolving a dispute, in which the opposing parties submit their arguments to an arbitrator (like a judge) and agree to accept the arbitrator's ruling
- Peloponnesian War—the war of Sparta and its allies against Athens and its allies

# ATHENS IN 433 BCE

(Short)



The year is 433 BCE and as a citizen of Athens, you must decide if Athens will punish the city of Megara for taking sides earlier this year against Athens (and Corcyra) in a battle against the city of Corinth. (See #5 below.) Here is information about the context of the situation:



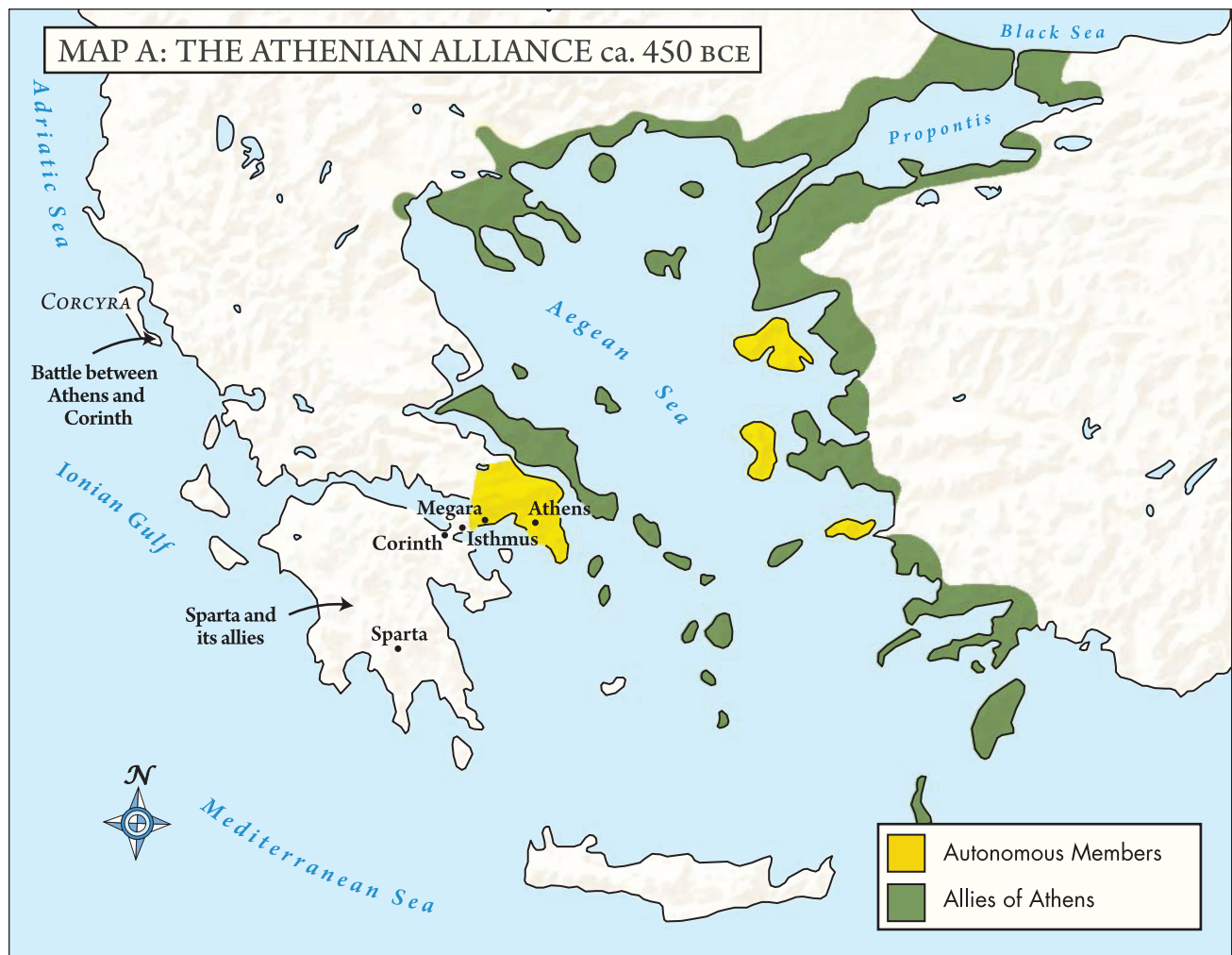
Illustration of the Acropolis in Athens.

1. Athens leads an alliance of several Greek city-states, and Sparta leads an alliance of many other city-states.
2. Athens and its allies have fought wars against Sparta and its allies in the past.
3. Athens imports most of its food by sea and is the strongest naval power. Sparta has the best land army.
4. Athens and Sparta have a peace treaty (called the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty) that is supposed to last for thirty years. It was signed thirteen years ago, and although there have been some issues between the two city-states, there hasn't been a war for those thirteen years.
5. Earlier this year, Athens decided to support the neutral city of Corcyra in a fight against the city of Corinth (see Map A). The city of Megara sided with Corinth in the fight.

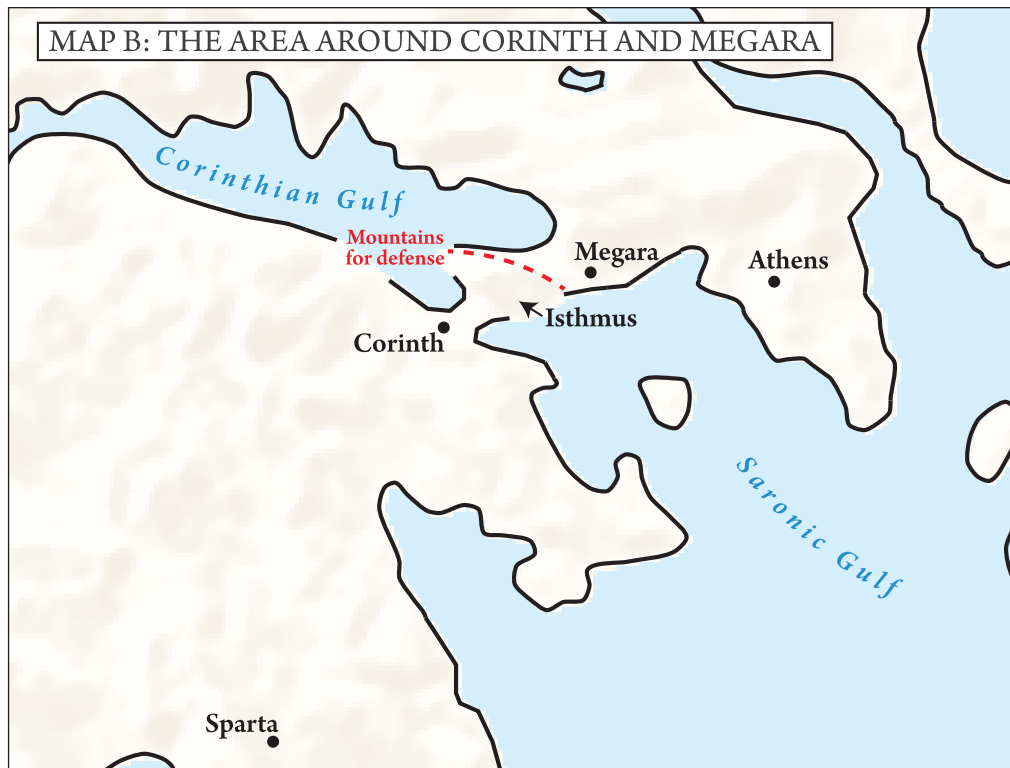
6. Corinth and Megara are not in either the Athenian or the Spartan alliance system, but Corinth has been friendlier to Sparta than to Athens, and Megara has had strong ties to Sparta in the past.

### Arguments in Favor of Punishing Megara

1. Megara sent ships and soldiers to fight on the side of Corinth against Athens. If Megara is not punished for helping Corinth, then other cities, perhaps even some within the Athenian alliance, might also choose to side with Corinth or drop out of the alliance. Athens needs to be seen as strong to keep the alliance together.
2. Megara is located in a very important spot (see Map B). If Athens controls the area around Megara, which is on a narrow isthmus between Sparta and Athens, Sparta and the other cities allied with Sparta will be unable to attack Athens. Keeping Megara will keep Athens safe.







## ■ Arguments against Punishing Megara

1. Megara didn't send very many ships or men to fight against Athens. The ships and men didn't make much difference in the battle, since Athens and its ally won the battle.
2. Punishing Megara will lead to both Megara and Corinth complaining to Sparta, which might lead to a major war between the Athenian alliance and the Spartan alliance.

## ■ Decision

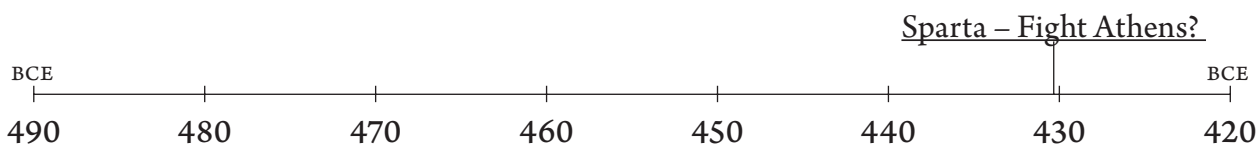
What will you do?

- A. Punish Megara by staging a military attack against the city. That will almost surely bring war, because it violates the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty (which says that neutral cities cannot be attacked). On the other hand, conquering the city will bring a strategic advantage in any future war by blocking the isthmus.
- B. Punish Megara by forbidding Megarians from trading with any city in the Athenian alliance. This option is less drastic than attacking Megara (Option A) and it doesn't violate the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty (which says nothing about trade or economics). It might push Megara into joining the Athenian alliance.
- C. Don't punish Megara.



# SPARTA IN 432 BCE

(Short)



The year is 432 BCE and you are a citizen of Sparta. The assembly of Sparta and its allies are gathered to hear arguments for and against fighting a war against Athens and its allies.

## ■ Corinthian Arguments: Pro-War

1. The Spartans haven't taken a stand against the Athenians for decades. As a result, Athens is getting stronger all the time, while Sparta is falling behind. "They [Athenians] are revolutionary and quick to formulate plans and put them into action, while you preserve what you have, invent nothing new, and when you do act do not even complete what is necessary" (Thucydides, 1.70).
2. The Athenians broke the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty. First, they supported a neutral state—Corcyra—in order to hurt the Spartan alliance and Corinth (see Map A). Second, they deliberately hurt the neutral city-state of Megara by preventing Megarians from trading with any of the cities in the Athenian alliance. Since the Athenians chose to break the peace treaty, they have chosen war. Sparta must vote for war to uphold the treaty.
3. It looks like Athens is trying to force Megara to join its alliance in order to prevent a Spartan land attack. Athens is preparing for war.
4. If Sparta doesn't support Corinth in its struggle against Athens, Corinth may be forced to drop out of the Spartan alliance.

## ■ Athenian Arguments: Anti-War

1. All actions by Athens have been justified within the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty and have been taken through fear, honor, and a reasonable self-interest. The Thirty Years' Peace Treaty does not prevent defensive alliances with neutral cities such as Corcyra or economic embargoes, such as preventing people from the city-state of Megara from trading with Athens or its allies. Athenian actions were not intended to cause a war or to humiliate any city.
2. All the grievances can be settled peacefully. There is no reason to fight. Just stick to the terms of the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty, and all can be settled.

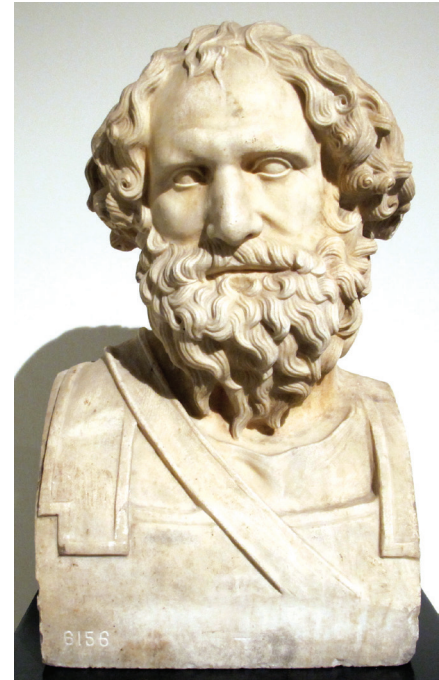
3. If Sparta does declare war, the mighty Athenian empire, with its dominant navy, will attack the Peloponnesian coasts. Athens “shall try to take vengeance on those who have started the war when you have led the way” (Thucydides, 1.78.5).

The representatives of the two sides (Corinthians and Athenians) leave the assembly and the Spartans and their allies argue on their own about declaring war.

### ■ Spartan Arguments

One of the two Spartan kings, Archidamus, argues that the Athenians are much stronger than any enemy Sparta has faced before. The Athenians have a walled city (which the Spartans cannot defeat), a strong economy, and a powerful navy. It will be a long war. He fears that “we shall pass this war onto our children” (Thucydides, 1.81.6).

A powerful Spartan leader, Sthenelaidas, argues for war. He says, “They [Athenians] praise themselves highly, but they don’t deny that they are doing wrong to our allies, and to the Peloponnesus. . . . Others may have much money, ships, and horses, but we have good allies whom we must not betray to the Athenians. . . . Do not allow the Athenians to grow stronger and do not betray your allies, but let us, with the help of the gods, march out against those who are doing wrong” (Thucydides, 1.86).



Archidamus.

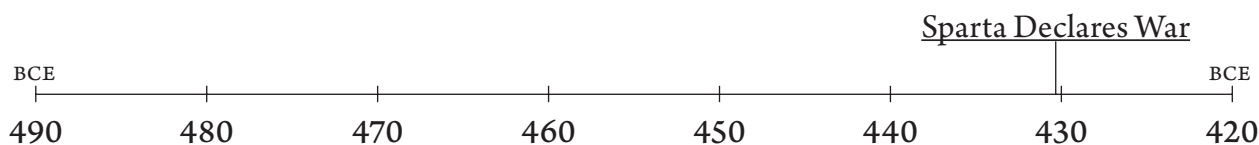
### ■ Decision

What will you do?

- A. Declare war on Athens and its allies.
- B. Declare war on Athens, but delay fighting to allow time for more negotiations. The declaration of war may persuade Athens to negotiate.
- C. Don’t declare war on Athens. Keep negotiating to bring about a peaceful settlement.

# SPARTA DECLARES WAR

(Short)



The year is 432 BCE and you are a citizen of Athens. Earlier this year, Sparta and its allies declared war on Athens and its allies. Now Sparta has sent negotiators to Athens to settle the disputes between the two alliances and avoid war. The Spartans have one main demand: for Athens to remove the trade embargo on Megara. “They proclaimed . . . that there would be no war if the Athenians withdrew the Megarian Decree” (Thucydides, 1.139.1). The Megarian Decree prevents people from Megara from trading in Athens or at any ports in the Athenian alliance.

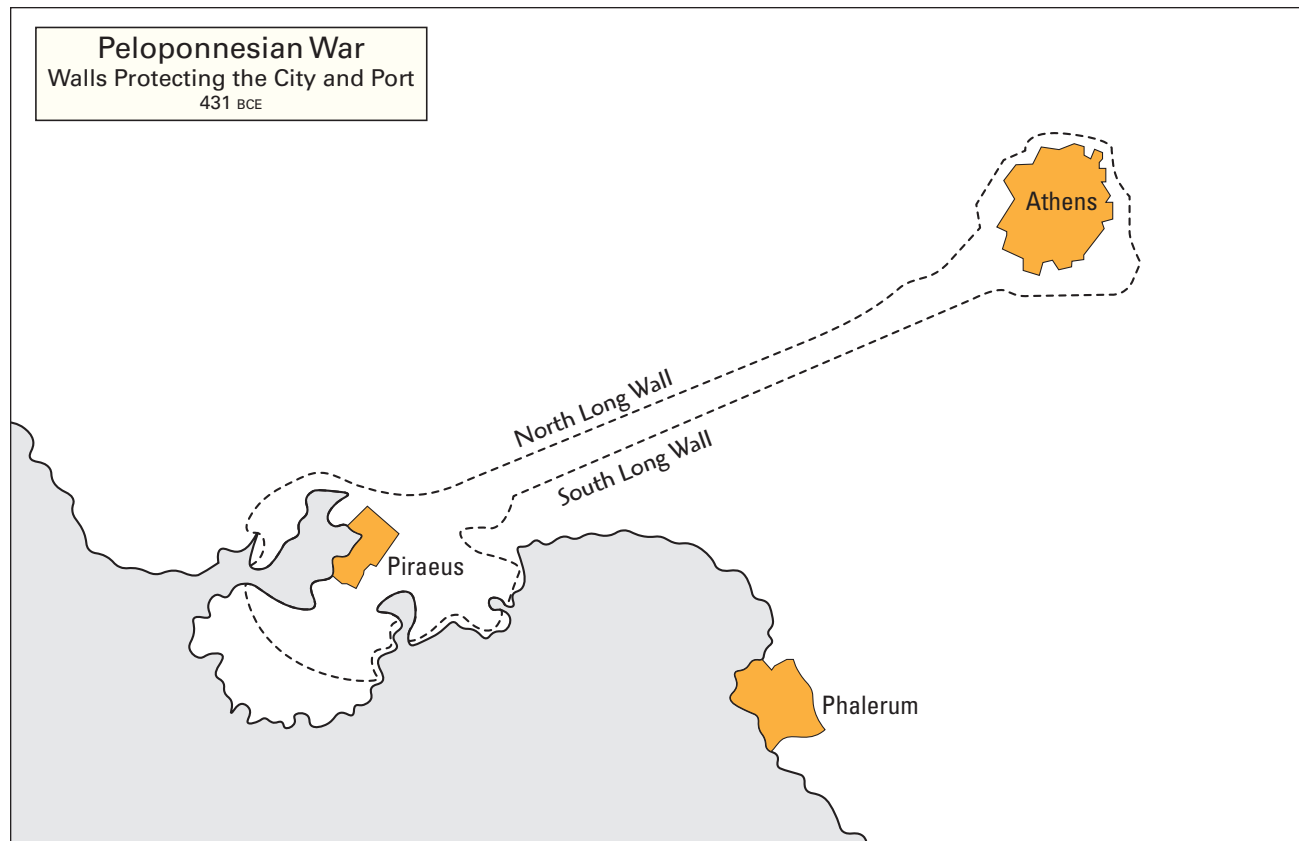


Pericles

## ■ Pericles Calls for Arbitration

Pericles, the well-respected leader of Athens, opposes giving in to the demands of the Spartans. He argues that disputes should be settled by arbitration, according to the Thirty Years’ Peace Treaty. In arbitration, both sides are treated as equals. Each side presents its arguments, and the arbitrator (who is like a judge) makes a decision based on fairness. If, on the other hand, Athenians just give in to Spartan demands, then Athens will look weaker than Sparta. Accepting Spartan demands, even just the one demand to remove the trade embargo, would be a great humiliation. Athens will look weak to the rest of the Greek cities. The perception of weakness could lead to revolts by cities in the Athenian alliance—a problem Athens has already faced.

Pericles says not to fear a war. Athens can win a long war with a defensive strategy. The Spartan armies and their allies will march into the area around Athens, taking crops and damaging farms, but they won’t be able to capture Athens, with its high walls. Because Athens has naval dominance, food will continually be brought by ship to Athens’ port. The people will have food. In the meantime, the powerful Athenian fleet will attack various coastal cities in the Spartan alliance. Gradually, over the course of several years, the Spartans and their allies will grow tired of the war and negotiate an end to it.



## Decision

How will you vote on the Spartan demand that Athens withdraw the Megarian Decree that prevents people of Megara from trading with Athens or its allies?

- A. Listen to Pericles and reject the demand. Respond to the Spartans that the dispute must be settled by arbitration, as outlined in the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty.
- B. Accept the demand by Sparta. Withdraw the Megarian Decree in order to settle the dispute without war.



# OUTCOMES OF QUARRELS BETWEEN ATHENS AND SPARTA

(Short)

These decisions by Athens and Sparta in 433 and 432 BCE led to the Peloponnesian War, one of the longest wars in ancient history. Tens of thousands of people died. Both Athens and Sparta were crippled by the war. It was the beginning of the end for Athens and Sparta. Had they known the outcomes of the war, both sides would likely have tried much harder to avoid it.



Greek soldiers (hoplites) fighting.

In Handout 1, Athenians decided to punish the city of Megara by preventing trade (Option B) rather than invading the city. The Megarian Decree stated that people from Megara couldn't trade with Athens or its allies. Athenians wanted to send a message to other Greek cities not to take sides against Athens.

When Sparta called a meeting of the cities in her alliance, Corinth argued for war against Athens. The Corinthians were angry about Athenian actions in joining Corcyra and punishing Megara. Athens argued unsuccessfully for a peaceful settlement. The Spartans and their allies declared war (Handout 2, Option B), confident of a quick victory with their superior land armies.

In the time before the actual fighting started, Sparta sent officials to try to negotiate a peaceful settlement. The one issue that they insisted on was that Athens stop the trade embargo (cutting off trade) against Megara. The Athenians, led by Pericles, refused that demand (Handout 3, Option A), arguing that they wouldn't agree to any demand under threat. Pericles argued that it would be humiliating for Athens to agree to any demands by Sparta. If the Athenians couldn't negotiate as equals through arbitration, they would not negotiate at all. And so, the war began.

The war lasted, with some periods of peace, from 431 to 404, a total of twenty-seven years. Given that each side was strong where the other was weak, a long war was predictable. Nonetheless the two great city-states and their allies went to war, bringing catastrophe to both sides.

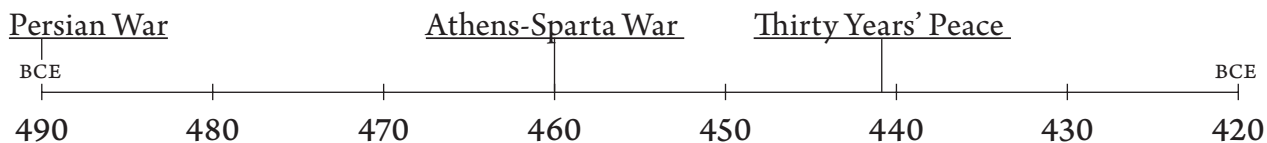
## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Which side, Athens or Sparta, was more to blame for the war?
2. Was the war the result mainly of a decision made in 433–432 BCE (Handouts 1, 2, or 3), or was the war due more to underlying historical forces?
3. What is one thing you learned about decision making from this problem on the causes of the Peloponnesian War?



# ATHENS IN 433 BCE

(Complex)

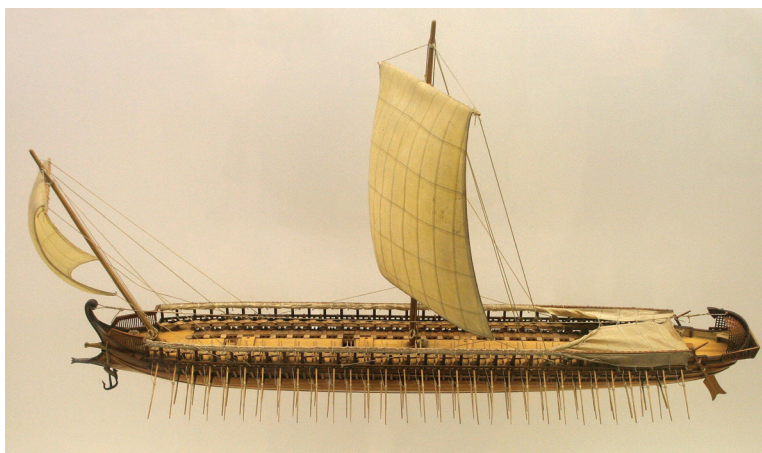


## Background Information

The year is 433 BCE and as a citizen of Athens, you have several decisions to make. In 433 BCE, there is great suspicion between Sparta and Athens, the leaders of the two great Greek alliances (see Map C).



Background information helps us understand some reasons for the suspicion. In the Persian Wars from 490 to 479, Sparta and Athens cooperated in leading the Greek city-states to defeat the Persians. When the Greek city-states emerged victorious against the Persians in 479, Athens continued its alliance, called the Delian League, which was based mostly on naval power, and Sparta continued the Peloponnesian Alliance, which was based mostly on land armies (see Map C).

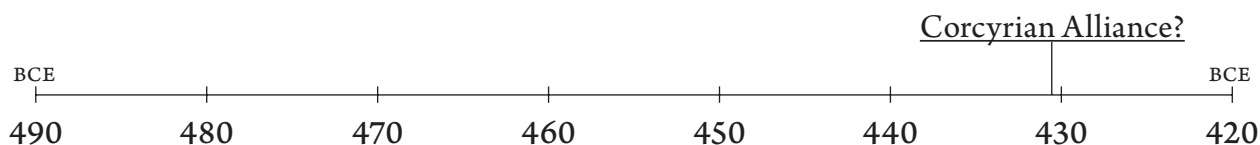


A Greek warship called a trireme.

In 465, Athens sent soldiers to help Sparta put down a revolt, but Spartan leaders refused the help and sent them back to Athens. This refusal was a great insult to Athens. The Delian League and Peloponnesian Alliance fought a war from 460 to 446. There was no clear winner in this war. In the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty that ended the war, both sides held onto their alliances. Note that Corcyra and Corinth are not in either alliance. The land around Athens is poor for farming, so Athens has to import most of its food by sea. Inside Sparta there are many more Greek slaves, called helots, than there are Spartans. The Spartans are constantly worried about a revolt by the helots.

There are two groups within Athens in terms of their attitudes toward Sparta. The hawks want to fight Sparta and end the constant problems with that city. The doves want to compromise and settle disputes peacefully.

### ■ Topic A: Corcyrian Alliance



The year is 433 BCE and you are a member of the Athenian assembly. The city of Corcyra is asking Athens to make an alliance with them against the city of Corinth (see Map C).

#### Corcyra Arguments: Pro-Alliance

1. Corinth is deliberately pushing for war. When Epidamnus (see Map C), a small city under the rule of Corcyra, revolted, the Corinthians marched soldiers to that city to help the revolt. Corcyra defeated Corinth in a naval battle and forced the revolting city to surrender. Now Corinth is preparing for another attack.

2. Corcyra made several attempts to settle the conflict, but Corinth rejected every proposal for a peaceful solution, even against the advice of her own allies.
3. Making an alliance with a neutral city (Corcyra is neutral, not in either alliance system) is allowed under the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty, so this alliance is legal.
4. A war between the Athenian Alliance (called the Delian League) and the Spartan Peloponnesian Alliance seems inevitable. According to the Corcyrians, "the Spartans are eager for war out of fear of you, and the Corinthians have great influence with them and are your enemies" (Thucydides). The Corcyrian navy is second in size only to the fleet of Athens. If Corinth—which has the third largest navy—defeats Corcyra and gets what is left of its fleet, Athens would be threatened by an enemy with a strong navy. If, on the other hand, Athens makes an alliance with Corcyra, the combined fleets of both cities will be by far the largest navy.

### **Corinthian Arguments: Anti-Alliance**

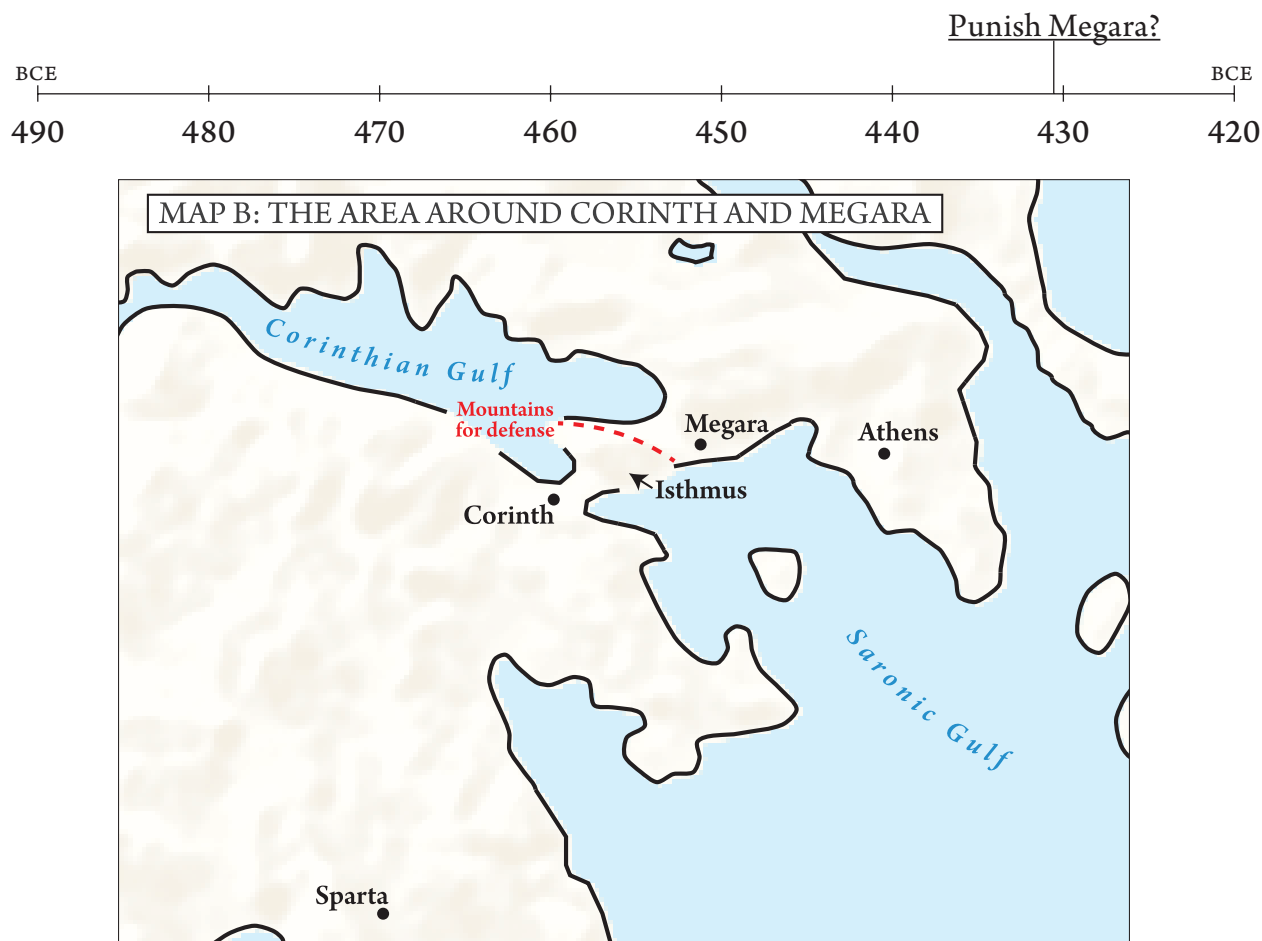
1. An alliance with Corcyra would not be legal under the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty. "Although it says in the treaty that any of the unenrolled (neutral) cities may join whatever side it likes, the clause is not meant for those who join one side [Corcyra] with the intention of injuring the other [Corinth, since Corinth is in conflict with Corcyra]" (Thucydides).
2. A war between the Athenian Alliance and the Spartan Alliance is not inevitable. Therefore, an alliance between Athens and Corcyra is not necessary.
3. On the other hand, making an alliance with Corcyra will likely cause a war. The Spartans will fear the growing power of Athens and call for its allies to declare war. Corinth will be the enemy of Athens. Leaders of Corinth have stated, "If you join with them, it will be necessary for us to include you in our revenge against them."

### **Decision**

Given this background and the arguments made by representatives of Corcyra for allying with them and the arguments by the Corinthians for not allying with Corcyra, what will you do?

- A. Ally with Corcyra. It is the right thing to do and we don't want to risk losing the Corcyrian navy to the Spartans.
- B. Don't ally with Corcyra. An alliance risks starting a war with Sparta and the Peloponnesian Alliance.

## ■ Topic B: Punish Megara?



The year is still 433 BCE. Athens chose in the first problem to make a defensive alliance with Corcyra, which led to a naval battle in which the Corinthian fleet withdrew. Corcyra is safe for the time being, but Corinth is outraged that Athens supported Corcyra. At the same time, some people in Athens are angry that the city of Megara sent ships and men to support Corinth (see Map C). If there is no punishment of Megara for helping Corinth, then other cities within the Athenian Alliance may also side with Corinth. These Athenians want to punish Megara. Moreover, Megara is in a strategic spot (see Map B). If Athens controls the area around it, Sparta and the other cities allied with Sparta will be blocked from attacking Athens. People favoring a peaceful solution argue that punishing Megara will lead both Megara and Corinth to complain to Sparta, which might lead to war.

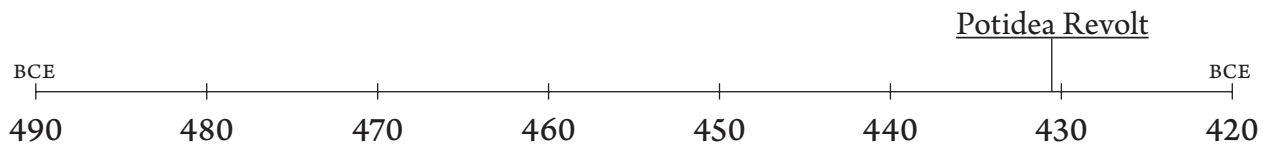
### Decision

What will you do?

- A. Punish Megara by staging a military attack against the city. That will almost surely bring war, because it violates the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty. On the other hand, conquering the city will bring a strategic advantage in the war.

- B. Punish Megara by forbidding Megarians from trading with any city in the Athenian Alliance (the Delian League). This option is less drastic than attacking Megara (Option A) and it doesn't violate the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty (which says nothing about trade or economics).
- C. Don't punish Megara.

### ■ Topic C: Potidea Revolt



The year is still 433 BCE. Since Athens has come into conflict with Corinth and Megara this year, Athenians have begun to prepare for a possible war with Sparta and the Peloponnesian Alliance. One complication is the city of Potidea (see Map C), which is in the Delian League but is also a colony of Corinth. In fact, Corinth sends officials to Potidea every year. Corinth has every reason to incite rebellion in Potidea to cause problems for Athens, and its influence with the Potideans suggests it might succeed. If the city revolts successfully against Athens, other cities in that area may also leave the Delian League, just at the point when Athens may need as many allies as possible to fight against Sparta and its allies.

### Decision

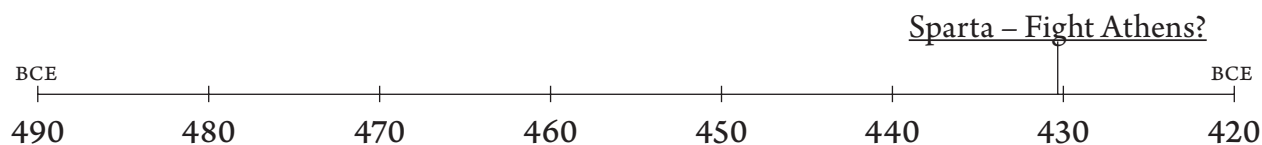
What will you do about Potidea? You can choose as many actions as you would like.

- A. Send an Athenian naval and land force to guard the city.
- B. Demand that the city take down its wall.
- C. Demand that the city expel the Corinthian officials.
- D. Demand that the city send some hostages to Athens.
- E. Attack the city and destroy it.
- F. Do nothing.



# SPARTA IN 432 BCE

(Complex)



The year is 432 BCE and you are a member of the Assembly in Sparta. There are two groups within Sparta in terms of their attitudes toward Athens. The hawks want to fight Athens and end the constant problems with that city. The doves want to compromise and settle disputes peacefully. At this point, the Spartans have called the city-states of the Peloponnesian Alliance to the Spartan Assembly to state their arguments in favor of or opposed to fighting a war against Athens and its allies. The Corinthians have spoken in favor of fighting Athens with these arguments:

## ■ Corinthian Arguments: Pro-War

1. Up to this point, the Spartan reluctance to fight against Athens has been disastrous. Athens is dynamic, getting stronger all the time, while Sparta is stagnant. "They [Athenians] are revolutionary and quick to formulate plans and put them into action, while you [Sparta] preserve what you have, invent nothing new, and when you do act do not even complete what is necessary" (Thucydides, 1.70).
2. The Athenians broke the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty in three ways. First, they supported a neutral state – Corcyra – in order to hurt the Peloponnesian Alliance and Corinth (see Map C). Second, they deliberately hurt the neutral city-state of Megara by preventing Megarians from trading with the Athenian-led Delian League (see Map C). Third, the Athenians made unreasonable demands on the Corinthian colony of Potidea (see Map C). Since the Athenians chose to break the peace treaty, they have chosen war. Sparta must vote for war to honor the treaty.
3. Remember that Megara was the key cause of the previous war between Athens and Sparta. As long as Athens held Megara, Athens was safe from attack by land (see Map B). When Megara switched to Sparta's side, Athenians negotiated for peace because they knew they were going to lose the war. It looks like Athens is trying to force Megara to join the Delian League, again to prevent a Spartan land attack. Athens is preparing for war.
4. If Sparta doesn't support Corinth in its struggle against Athens, Corinth may be forced to leave the alliance.

## ■ Athenian Arguments: Anti-War

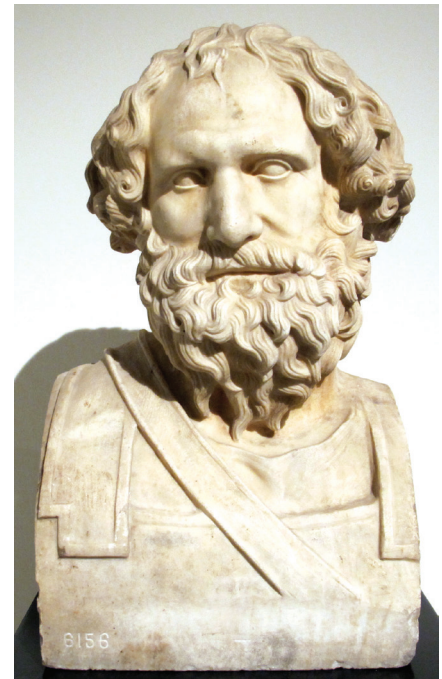
1. All actions by Athens have been justified within the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty and have been taken through fear, honor, and a reasonable self-interest. They have not been taken to cause a war or to humiliate any city.
2. All the grievances can be settled peacefully. There is no reason to fight. Just stick to the terms of the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty and all can be settled.
3. If Sparta does declare war, the mighty Athenian empire, with its dominant navy, will attack the Peloponnesian coasts. Athens "shall try to take vengeance on those who have started the war when you [Sparta] have led the way" (Thucydides, 1.78.5).

The representatives of the two sides (Corinthians and Athenians) left the assembly and the Spartans and the other members of the Peloponnesian Alliance discussed a possible declaration of war among themselves.

## ■ Spartan Arguments

One of the Spartan kings, Archidamus, argues against war. He says that the Athenians are much stronger than any enemy Sparta has faced before. The Athenians have a walled city (which the Spartans cannot defeat), a strong economy, and a powerful navy. It will be a long war. He fears that "we shall pass this war onto our children" (Thucydides, 1.81.6).

A powerful Spartan leader, Sthenelaidas, argues for war. He says, "They [Athenians] praise themselves highly, but they don't deny that they are doing wrong to our allies, and to the Peloponnesus. . . . Others may have much money, ships, and horses, but we have good allies whom we must not betray to the Athenians. . . . Do not allow the Athenians to grow stronger and do not betray your allies, but let us, with the help of the gods, march out against those who are doing wrong" (Thucydides, 1.86).



Archidamus.

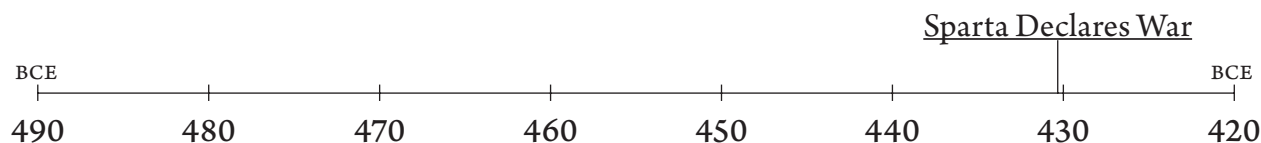
## ■ Decision

What will you do?

- A. Declare war on Athens (and the Delian League).
- B. Declare war on Athens, but delay fighting to allow time for negotiations. The declaration of war may persuade Athens to negotiate.
- C. Don't declare war on Athens. Keep negotiating to bring about a peaceful settlement.

# SPARTA DECLARES WAR

(Complex)



The year is 432 BCE and you are a citizen of Athens. Earlier this year, Sparta and its allies declared war on Athens and its allies but there has been no fighting so far. At this point, Sparta has sent negotiators to settle the disputes between the two alliances and avoid fighting the war. The Spartans made various demands, but now they have settled on one demand. “They proclaimed publicly and in the clearest language that there would be no war if the Athenians withdrew the Megarian Decree” (Thucydides, 1.139.1). The Megarian Decree prevents people from Megara from trading in Athens or at any ports in the Delian League.



Pericles

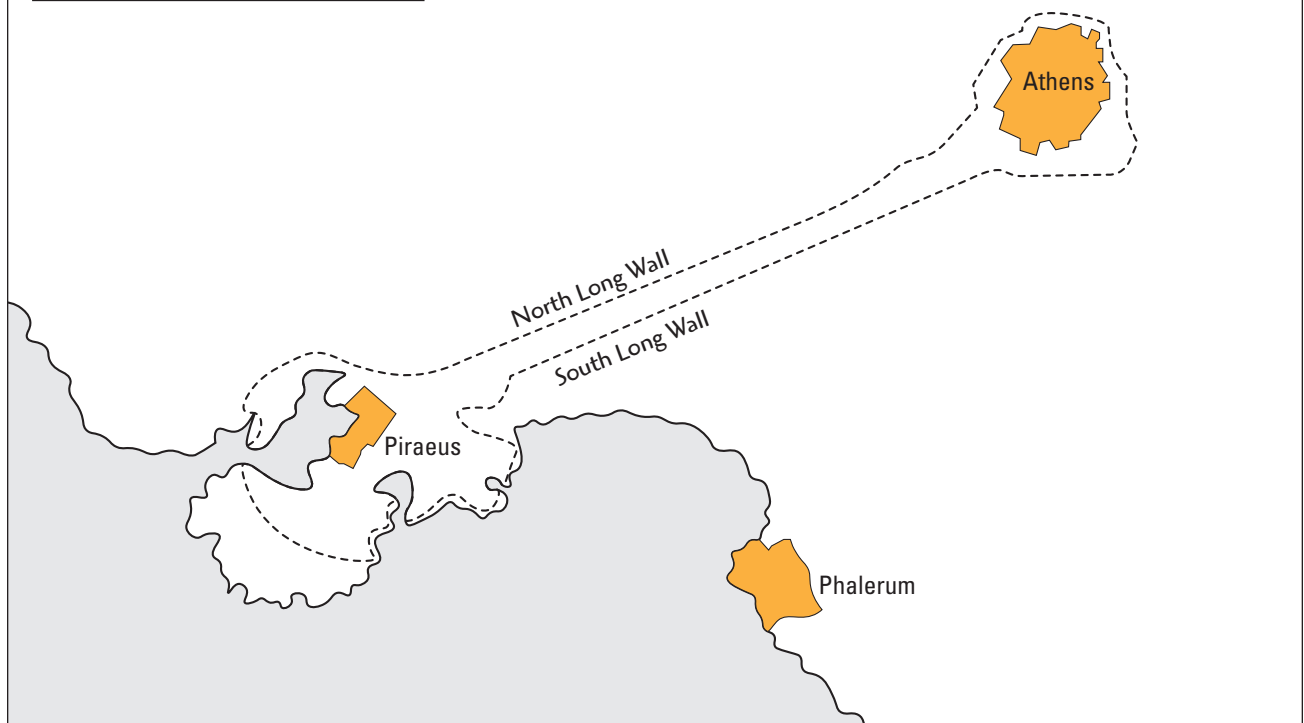
## ■ Pericles Calls for Arbitration

Pericles, the well-respected leader of Athens, opposes giving in to the demands of the Spartans. He argues that disputes are to be settled by arbitration, according to the Thirty Year’s Peace Treaty. In arbitration both sides are treated as equals. Each side presents its arguments and the arbitrator makes a decision based on fairness. If, on the other hand, Athenians just give in to Spartan demands, then Athens will look weaker than Sparta. That would bring Athens great humiliation. It would look weak to the rest of the Greek cities. The perception of weakness could lead to revolts by cities in the Athenian Alliance.

Pericles says not to fear a war. Athens can win a long war with a defensive strategy. The Spartan armies and their allies will march into the area around Athens, taking crops and damaging farms, but they won’t be able to capture Athens, with its high walls.

Because Athens has naval dominance, food will continually be brought by ship to Athens’ port. The people will have food. In the meantime, the powerful Athenian fleet will attack various coastal cities in the Spartan alliance. Gradually, over several years’ time, the Spartans and their allies will grow tired of the war and negotiate an end to it.

**Peloponnesian War**  
Walls Protecting the City and Port  
431 BCE



## Decision

How will you vote on the Spartan demand that Athens withdraw the Megarian Decree that prevents people of Megara from trading with Athens and its allies?

- A. Listen to Pericles and reject the demand. Respond to the Spartans that the dispute must be settled by arbitration, as outlined in the Thirty Years' Peace Treaty.
- B. Accept the demand by Sparta. Withdraw the Megarian Decree in order to settle the dispute without war.



# OUTCOMES OF QUARRELS BETWEEN ATHENS AND SPARTA

(Complex)

These decisions by Athens and Sparta in 433 and 432 led to the Peloponnesian War, one of the longest wars in ancient history. Tens of thousands of people died. Both Athens and Sparta were crippled by the war. It was the beginning of the end for Athens and Sparta. Knowing the outcomes of the war, both sides would likely have tried much harder to avoid it.



Greek soldiers (hoplites) fighting.

In the first problem in Handout 5, Athens decided to help Corcyra (Option A), but only in a defensive alliance. The Athenians feared that if they didn't ally with Corcyra and that city lost to Corinth, what was left of the large Corcyrian navy would come under the control of Corinth or one of the cities of the Peloponnesian Alliance, posing a serious threat to Athenian naval dominance. The alliance with Corcyra naturally made the Corinthians angry.



In the same year, Athens imposed an economic embargo on the city of Megara (Handout 5, Problem 2, Option B) for helping Corinth against Athens and Corcyra. The Megarian Decree stated that people from Megara couldn't trade with Athens or its allies. Athenians wanted to send a message to other Greek cities not to take sides against Athens. Then, Athens sent a military force to the city of Potidea and made demands on the leaders there (Handout 5, Problem 3, Options A–D).

When Sparta called a meeting of the cities in its alliance, Corinth argued for war against Athens. The Corinthians were angry about Athenian actions in joining Corcyra, punishing Megara, and making demands on Potidea, a Corinthian colony. Athens argued unsuccessfully for a peaceful settlement. The Spartans and their allies declared war (Handout 6, Option B), confident of a quick victory with their superior land armies.

However, Sparta waited about a year before starting the actual fighting. In that time, Sparta sent officials to try to negotiate a peaceful settlement. The one issue that they insisted on was that Athens stop the trade embargo against Megara (the Megarian Decree). The Athenians, led by Pericles, refused that demand (Handout 7, Option A), arguing they wouldn't agree to any demand under threat. Pericles argued, "They [Spartans] want to resolve their complaints by war instead of discussion, and now they are here, no longer requesting but already demanding. . . . Only a flat and clear refusal of these demands will make it plain to them that they must treat you [Athenians] as equals" (Thucydides, 1.140.2, 5). The Athenians argued that the right way to settle disputes was through arbitration under the Thirty Years' Treaty. Athens was to be treated as an equal in negotiations, or there would be no negotiations.

The war lasted, with some periods of peace, for many years, from 431 to 404, a total of twenty-seven years. Given that each side was strong where the other was weak, a long war was predictable. Nonetheless, the two great cities and their allies went to war, bringing sorrow to both sides.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Which side, Athens or Sparta, was more to blame for the war?
2. Was the war the result mainly of a decision made in 433–432 (Handouts 1, 2, or 3), or was war inevitable before these decisions were made?
3. What is one thing you learned about decision making from this problem on the causes of the Peloponnesian War?

# ARCHIDAMUS'S SPEECH

Speech by Archidamus, the king of Sparta, to the Spartans about whether to declare war on Athens, 432 BCE:

I have not lived so long, [Spartans], without having had the experience of many wars, and I see those among you of the same age as myself, who will not fall into the common misfortune of longing for war from inexperience or from a belief in its advantage and its safety. This, the war on which you are now debating, would be one of the greatest magnitude, on a sober consideration of the matter. In a struggle with Peloponnesians and neighbors our strength is of the same character, and it is possible to move swiftly on the different points. But a struggle with a people who live in a distant land, who have also an extraordinary familiarity with the sea, and who are in the highest state of preparation in every other department; with wealth private and public, with ships, and horses, and heavy infantry, and a population such as no one other Hellenic place can equal, and lastly a number of tributary allies—what can justify us in rashly beginning such a struggle? Wherein is our trust that we should rush on it unprepared? Is it in our ships? There we are inferior; while if we are to practice and become a match for them, time must intervene. Is it in our money? There we have a far greater deficiency. We neither have it in our treasury, nor are we ready to contribute it from our private funds. Confidence might possibly be felt in our superiority in heavy infantry and population, which will enable us to invade and devastate their lands. But the Athenians have plenty of other land in their empire, and can import what they want by sea. Again, if we are to attempt an insurrection of their allies, these will have to be supported with a fleet, most of them being islanders. What then is to be our war? For unless we can either beat them at sea, or deprive them of the revenues which feed their navy, we shall meet with little but disaster. Meanwhile our honor will be pledged to keeping on, particularly if it be the opinion that we began the quarrel. For let us never be elated by the fatal hope of the war being quickly ended by the devastation of their lands. I fear rather that we may leave it as a legacy to our children; so improbable is it that the Athenian spirit will be the slave of their land, or Athenian experience be cowed by war.

Source: Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (1910; Project Gutenberg, 2009), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7142/7142-h/7142-h.htm>.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. What is King Archidamus warning his fellow Spartans will happen if Sparta goes to war with Athens?
2. What does King Archidamus say are three strengths of Athens compared to Sparta?
3. Does King Archidamus say this will be a short war or a long war?
4. How reliable is King Archidamus as a source?

# LESSON 4: THE PUNIC WARS

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## Teacher's Guide

### INTRODUCTION

#### ■ Overview

The Punic Wars were among the longest, the deadliest, and the most important wars in ancient history. If Carthage had won the war, the entire history of Western civilization would have been radically different. In this lesson, students get an opportunity to decide from the Roman perspective whether or not to take action against Carthage (leading to the First Punic War), what strategies to use in the Second Punic War, and whether to attack Carthage once again in the Third Punic War.

#### ■ Vocabulary

- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
- Carthage—a powerful trading city in Africa
- Senate—the group of political leaders in Rome who passed laws and collected taxes
- Republic—the Roman government in which supreme power was held by the elected representatives of the people
- Legion—a unit of about six thousand men in the Roman army
- Punic Wars—wars fought between Rome and Carthage (a city originally settled by Phoenicians, also known as Punics)
- Empire—a group of countries or territories ruled over by a single government
- Hannibal—the great military leader of Carthaginian armies in the Punic Wars
- Battle of Cannae—the worst military defeat in Roman history, achieved by Hannibal
- Cato—a Roman senator who argued for defeating Carthage completely

#### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Identify assumptions
- Ask questions about context

- Establish realistic goals
- Generate ethical options
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON *(two 50-minute classes)*

### ■ Procedure

There are two sets of handouts for the first problem in this lesson. Handouts 1 and 2 are targeted for middle school students, while Handouts 3 and 4 are geared for high school or more advanced students. The handouts are labeled “Short” and “Complex” rather than “Middle School” and “High School” in order to give teachers more flexibility in using the handouts without stigma (allowing the use of short handouts with high school students, for example). The short handouts are shorter, are less complex, and contain more cues to aid reading comprehension. The lesson plan *for the first problem only* is divided into a middle school version and a high school version. The lesson plan for the rest of the lesson is the same for all students, as the problems are shorter and simpler. The suggestions in the sections “Reflecting on Decision Making,” “Putting Decisions into Historical Context,” “Connecting to Today,” and “Troubleshooting” are also for both middle school and high school students.

### ■ Problem (Short)—Should Rome Risk War with Carthage? *(Handouts 1–2)*

Tell students that in this lesson, they are going to make some important decisions as citizens in the Roman Republic in regard to a conflict with the city of Carthage. They won’t know what actually happened until *after* they make the decisions themselves. Before they can make these decisions, however students may need to review some material from Roman history. Review with students the historical context in 264 BCE. In many ways, powerful cities were like today’s countries: Strong cities fought wars and expanded, while smaller cities joined with larger, powerful cities for protection. The two most powerful cities in the Mediterranean region at the time were Rome and Carthage. In 264 BCE, their territories were touching for the first time. If you have taught about the Roman Republics, activate this prior knowledge by asking how the government worked. If not, this is the ideal time to teach about the Republic, especially the role of the Senate and the Assembly of the people in making decisions.

Distribute Handout 1 and have students read the introductory paragraph. If necessary, review BCE dating and the Roman city-state and allies from Map A. Have students read the problem and the arguments for and against taking action against Carthage. Is there any vocabulary that students don’t understand? Are there any other questions? Have students individually decide what they will do. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, encourage students to look at that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before individually deciding. Now have students

pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote for or against taking action against Carthage. Have students make arguments for their choice and then have them re-vote. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. You might want to have students look once again at the **P-A-G-E** sheet as they make their arguments.

When both problems have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes. Tell students to read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to look at that sheet before answering question 3.

### ■ **Problem (Complex)—Should Rome Risk War with Carthage?** (*Handouts 3–5*)

Distribute Handout 3 and have students read it and decide if they will make the alliance with the Mamertines. Have them pair up and discuss their actions. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on whether they will make the alliance. Have students make arguments for and against the alliance and then have them re-vote. After the second vote, distribute Handout 4 and for homework have students write what they learned from these outcomes.

*Option for Questions:* To focus on the skill of asking questions, write the questions from Handout 5 on the board and have students vote for any two questions they deem most important. Read the suggested answers to the top two vote getters. Tell students to discuss their choice again in light of the information gained from the questions. Then have students vote once again on whether they will make the alliance. At the end of the lesson, you could focus on the skill of posing good questions by asking students which question turned out to be most helpful in making a good decision. After the exercise, copies of the questions and answers on Handout 5 can be distributed to students in writing.

*Option for Premortem:* To help students think through their decision, ask them to consider that it is years later and their choice (alliance or no alliance) in Handout 1 or 3 ended up being a disaster. They are to go back to discussion in pairs and determine what the disaster was, what went wrong, and how likely the problems are to have occurred. Should they change their decision in light of their analysis?

### ■ **Problem—What Is the Best Strategy against Hannibal?** (*Handouts 6–7*)

Repeat the same process for Handout 6 on the Second Punic War. Again, focus on asking questions and considering negative consequences of choices. Students discuss in pairs, ask questions, vote, make arguments, and then re-vote. The questions may be a little different, as this problem is about military strategy against Hannibal in the Second Punic war. After the second vote, distribute the outcomes from Handout 7 and have students reflect on what they learned about decision making and about the Second Punic War for homework.



## ■ Problem—Should Rome Defeat Carthage Completely? (Handouts 8–9)

The focus for Handout 8 is on the Third Punic War. Here the students must decide whether to follow the advice of Cato and destroy Carthage once and for all. Follow the same process: Students discuss in pairs, ask questions, vote, make arguments, and then re-vote. After the second vote, distribute the outcomes from Handout 9 and have students reflect on what they learned about decision making and about the Second Punic War for homework.

*Option for Primary Source:* After students have made and discussed their decision for the Third Punic War, have them read the primary source (Polybius) in Handout 10 and answer the questions.

### Possible Answers

1. Do you agree with Polybius that Scipio is acting like a great man?

*A person who thinks about the long-term fate of his society is a thoughtful person. Some students may consider this thoughtfulness a trait of a great man.*

2. Why did Scipio order Carthage to be burned to the ground?

*Based on the problem in Handout 6, the whole idea of the war from the Roman side was to end the conflict with Carthage for good by destroying the city. Scipio could claim to be following orders. On the other hand, he would probably have had some discretion for how severe to be with the city.*

3. How reliable is Polybius as a source?

*Polybius is a primary source, as an eyewitness to the burning who has heard Scipio's words directly. However, as a Roman historian, he might have a reason to lie to make the Romans seem sensitive and not overly cruel. (It is also possible that Roman historians might want their leaders to look strong and cruel in order to keep Rome feared.) Here he gives a perspective that is sympathetic with the perpetrator of a great, violent order, rather than with the victims of that order. We can well imagine that a Carthaginian historian would set the scene within the burning city, recording the words of Carthaginians who were losing their homes and being sold into slavery, if not killed.*

You can finish the lesson with a discussion of what students think were the primary underlying causes of the wars and the most important effects of the wars.

## ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did on decision making for this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in deciding the fate of Carthage? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

Ask students whether the decision to make an alliance with the Mamertines (Handout 1) was more a result of historical forces or of decisions made by individual leaders. (Some will argue that the Senate's choice to let the people decide was the key to the outbreak of war. People chose alliance; it wasn't historical forces. Rome had been able to compromise with Greece and other states in the eastern Mediterranean, so peace was possible with Carthage in the western Mediterranean. Those arguing for historical forces can point to the clash of two very different cultures. When the territory between the two powers was gobbled up—when their territories met—then the differences between their cultures made war likely.)

## ■ Connecting to Today

Can students think of countries today that have had repeated conflicts? Would it be a good idea for one of the sides to go all-out to defeat the other side once and for all, as Rome did to Carthage? What would be lost and/or gained in that choice?

## ■ Troubleshooting

Students could easily be confused about the background information, especially the high number of cities involved. You might want to point out the various cities on Map A, so students can see which cities were involved in which way. Keep referring back to the map as decisions are considered.

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON *(20 minutes)*

Choose only one of the problems. For example, if you choose the first problem on the causes of the First Punic War, just use Handouts 1 and 2. The students could decide about taking action against Carthage (Handout 1) for homework. Have them pair up and discuss their choice for five minutes. Students vote, the class makes arguments for and against the alliance, and the class re-votes. Distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes. For homework, students are to write what they learned about history and about their own decision-making strategies from these outcomes.

## TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 2, 4, 7, and 9.)

Messana is the name of the city referred to in the lesson, though it is also called Messina.

Historian H. H. Scullard (1980) argues that war between Rome and Carthage was all but inevitable. He says, “Different in race, culture and religion, with divergent moral and material interests, they [Rome and Carthage] would gravitate towards conflict [when] the minor states between them had been eliminated or assimilated. . . . [I]n the west rivalry would lead to war: compromise was difficult, if not impossible” (p. 166). In a different interpretation of the Punic Wars, historian Nigel Bagnall (1990) argues the opposite—that war was illogical, chosen despite evidence that the two great powers could coexist and prosper.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

### P = Problem

**Identify any underlying problem(s).**

**Consider other points of view.**

***What are my assumptions? emotions?***

### A = Ask for information (about)

***Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)***

Reliability of sources

Historical analogies

### G = Goals

**What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**

**Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

**Predict unintended consequences.**

**Play out the options. What could go wrong?**

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Identify any underlying problem(s):** Students should consider the underlying problem of the expanding power of Rome and Carthage. Once territory between the two expanding powers was gone, the likelihood of major conflict increased. Behind all the specific decisions was this underlying power relationship. Students should consider it in making their specific decisions.
- **Consider other points of view:** Students should consider the point of view of the Carthaginians. While sending a small force to Messana was an action to expand power, it was most likely done to counter the power of Syracuse, not to threaten Rome.
- **Identify assumptions:** The Romans figured that if there was a fight, they would easily beat the Carthaginian forces, since Romans were better trained, and the Roman people were (in their minds) morally superior to Carthaginians. This assumption of superiority, referred to as *hubris* by the Greeks, was one cause of this long, drawn-out war.
- **Ask questions about context:** See Handout 5 for possible questions and answers. As mentioned in the lesson plan, at the end of the lesson you could focus on the skill of doing good investigation by asking students which question turned out to be most helpful in making a good decision.

- **Establish realistic goals:** As described in Handout 2, the Romans didn't have clear goals, which led to poor overall strategy in the war. Did students discuss goals before making their decision for Handout 1?
- **Generate ethical options:** Some Romans argued that it was immoral to side with the Mamertines, since they had slaughtered all the men in Messana and enslaved the women and children. Did students consider this moral question?
- **Predict unintended consequences:** The long-term effects of the three Punic Wars were very important. Rome lost more than five hundred thousand men in the wars alone, not to mention the economic and psychological effects that come with such enormous losses. Wives and children of killed soldiers faced a loss of income even as they were saddened by the loss of their loved ones. In addition, there was a much larger number of wounded soldiers and sailors. Physically these wounded men required medical care, while emotionally these traumatized individuals put even more stress on their families. The war wasted resources that could have been used to promote economic growth. On the positive side, the war brought tremendous wealth to Rome and made it the dominant power in the known world. Rome became a naval power, which helped it control the empire around the Mediterranean Sea. Unfortunately, the wealth also led to great inequality within Roman society, as some people piled up fortunes from increased trade and speculation. In addition, Rome needed a larger and more permanent army to protect such an extensive empire. The larger army, in turn, contributed to the demise of the Republic, as military leaders had more power to influence and eventually control the government.
- **Play out options:** Playing out a war with Carthage could have helped Roman leaders see that they were going to need a navy in order to win. The expense of building all those ships would have raised the issue of financing the war. Questions about recruiting enough soldiers and sailors should also have been discussed.

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# LESSON 4: THE PUNIC WARS

## VOCABULARY

- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
- Carthage—a powerful trading city in Africa
- Senate—the group of political leaders in Rome who passed laws and collected taxes
- Republic—the Roman government in which supreme power was held by the elected representatives of the people
- Legion—a unit of about six thousand men in the Roman army
- Punic Wars—wars fought between Rome and Carthage (a city originally settled by Phoenicians, also known as Punics)
- Empire—a group of countries or territories ruled over by a single government
- Hannibal—the great military leader of Carthaginian armies in the Punic Wars
- Battle of Cannae—the worst military defeat in Roman history achieved by Hannibal
- Cato—a Roman senator who argued for defeating Carthage completely

# SHOULD ROME RISK WAR WITH CARTHAGE?

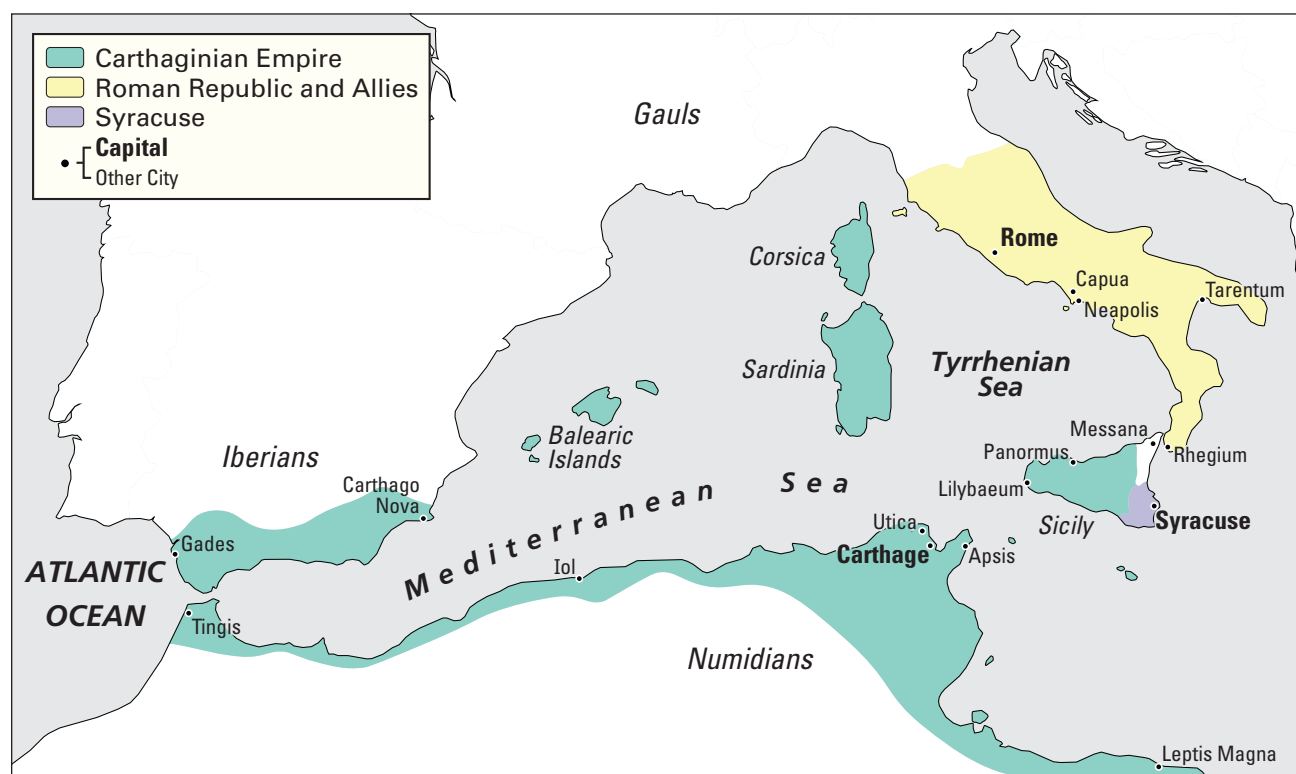
(Short)

## Risk War with Carthage?



The year is 264 BCE and you, as a Roman citizen, have a decision to make. The leaders of the city of Messana (or Messina) in Sicily (see Map A) have asked Rome to help them against Carthage, a powerful African city. Messana is not part of Roman territory, but it is in an important location, right on the edge of Roman territory. It is also not part of Carthaginian territory—it doesn't like being dominated by Carthage. Rome's government divides power among three groups: consuls, the Senate, and the people. The Senate is split over whether to agree to help Messana, so the decision is left to the people. Keep in mind that sending soldiers to help Messana will likely lead to war with Carthage (as there are already soldiers from Carthage in Messana), and Rome would be taking over the city. Rome and Carthage are by far the strongest powers in the Mediterranean world, so a battle over Messana would be a fight to become the most powerful empire. Some Romans favor taking action against Carthage and some oppose it.

Map A:



## ■ Pro-War Arguments

1. Messina is at the strategic spot on the strait between Italy and Sicily. If Carthage controls Messina, it could stop Roman trading ships from going through the strait. Impeding Roman ships would decrease Roman trade and make it more difficult for Roman cities on the western side of Italy to contact cities on the eastern side of Italy.
2. Even if Carthaginians allow Roman ships through the strait, they will control trade in Sicily to their advantage. The trade restrictions won't hurt Rome directly, because Rome doesn't have much interest in trade. Restrictions on trade will, however, hurt the trading cities in southern Italy, which are allied to Rome.
3. Romans should be confident that they will win if there is a war. Rome is stronger than Carthage because of the strict discipline and high moral values of the Roman people. Carthaginians are more business-minded than loyal to their city. They are unprepared to fight trained Roman legions. The soldiers in their army aren't even from Carthage. Rather, they are hired by Carthage from Spain and other parts of the Mediterranean and Africa to fight for Carthage. Only the generals are actually from Carthage. The war should therefore be short.
4. A successful war against Carthage will allow Rome to expand into Sicily. The Roman Republic has gained control of all of Italy, so the next logical step is to expand into Sicily. A war will also bring new territory to Rome, increasing its military power, and it will bring wealth to Rome as well, in the form of goods taken from conquered areas.

## ■ Anti-War Arguments

1. Carthage and Rome are better off leaving each other alone than fighting. Carthage is a great trading city, which makes money for itself and for Rome. Rome controls the eastern Mediterranean while Carthage controls the western Mediterranean. The two great cities have made treaties, left each other alone, and prospered. Why spoil everyone's economic gain by fighting a war?
2. Carthage has a very strong navy, and Rome has no navy. It will be very difficult to defeat an enemy that is strong where Rome is weak. For example, any coastal city that Rome surrounds can be resupplied by Carthage from the inland side, so Rome won't be able to starve out those cities.
3. Rome should concentrate on expanding northward, into Gaul. There is more wealth to be gained by taking territory in Gaul. Expanding south into Sicily would take resources away from this more important northern expansion.

4. The risk of war should not be taken lightly. People die needlessly, and wealth is wasted in fighting. Resources are destroyed that could be devoted to increasing the wealth of the Roman Republic through increasing food production or building roads and bridges, for example.

## ■ Decision

These are some of the arguments for and against taking action against Carthage. Now it is time to decide. Will you take action against Carthage?

- A. Yes. Take action against Carthage.
- B. No. Don't take action against Carthage.

# OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

(Short)

Roman leaders decided to take action against Carthage and support the city of Messana (Option A). Rome sent soldiers to Messana, which led to war with Carthage, called the Punic War. ("Punic" comes from the Phoenicians, which is the group that originally settled Carthage.) Roman leaders did not, apparently, think through their decision. They did not seem to consider that it would be a long war. In fact the war lasted from 264 BCE to 241 BCE, a total of twenty-four years!

At first the Romans had a number of military successes with their army. They realized they had to build a navy, which they did. Since they had little experience in sailing, they decided to fight naval battles like land battles. They lowered a huge plank from the Roman ship onto the enemy's ship, and then their soldiers would rush over the plank to fight a "land battle." They won several naval battles this way. Then they lost whole fleets to storms and Carthaginian naval attacks (by ramming, arrows, and boarding). Historians estimate that Rome lost hundreds of ships and nearly one hundred thousand men at sea. The momentum of the war swung back and forth. Both sides made major blunders and then tried to compensate by buying new fleets and raising new armies. Eventually, the Romans captured two Carthaginian strongholds in Sicily. Carthage was forced to leave Sicily and pay a large amount of money to Rome. The Romans won the war.

The war cost Romans a tremendous amount of money and the loss of more than a hundred thousand of her young men. Many families faced the tragedy, psychologically and economically, of losing a man in the family. These were young men, fathers, husbands, and brothers that entire families relied upon for protection and livelihood. Thousands of Roman families went into poverty. Meanwhile, other Romans piled up fortunes from increased trade and speculation. The gap between rich and poor Romans became much greater.

According to historians, there were many reasons that Rome entered the Punic War. Among the reasons Rome chose war were a fear of Carthage, greed in hoping to get wealth and power from Sicily, an inability to look at the risk that the war might be a long fight, and, perhaps most importantly, her pride. Romans assumed they were stronger than Carthaginians and would win a war quickly. Did you also make that assumption?

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

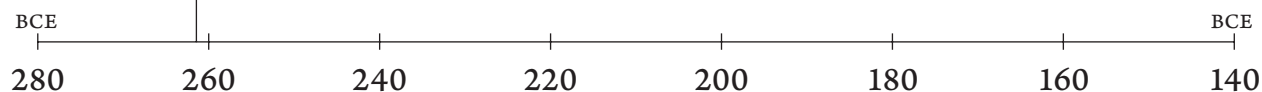
1. Based on Handout 2, why did Romans decide to take action against Carthage in 264 BCE? What was the main reason?
2. How well did this decision work out for the Romans?
3. What would you change about the way you make decisions to improve? For example, if you didn't think about the problem from other people's point of view, you might want to develop that skill.



# SHOULD ROME RISK WAR WITH CARTHAGE?

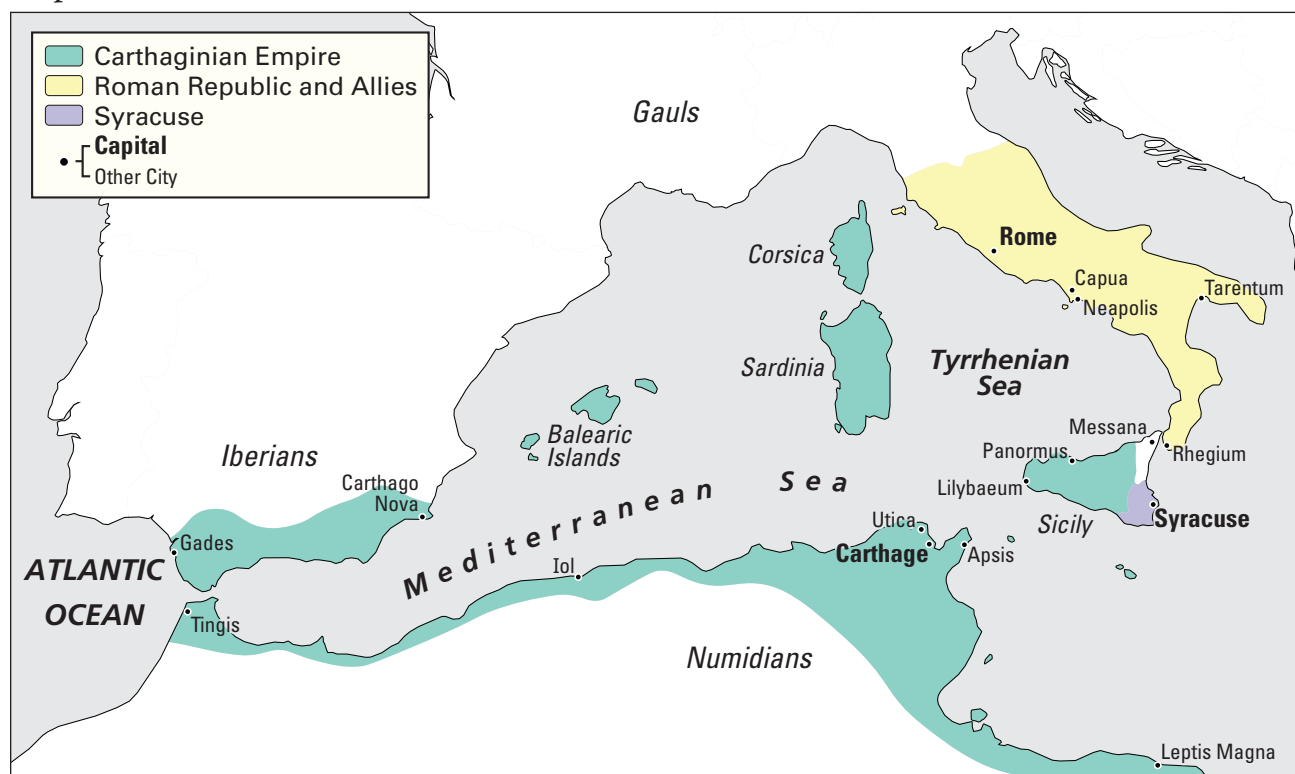
(Complex)

## Risk War with Carthage?



The year is 264 BCE and as a Roman citizen you have a decision to make. Some leaders of the Mamertines, an Italian group in control of the city of Messana (or Messina) in Sicily (see Map A), have asked Rome for an alliance against their enemies from another Sicilian city, Syracuse.

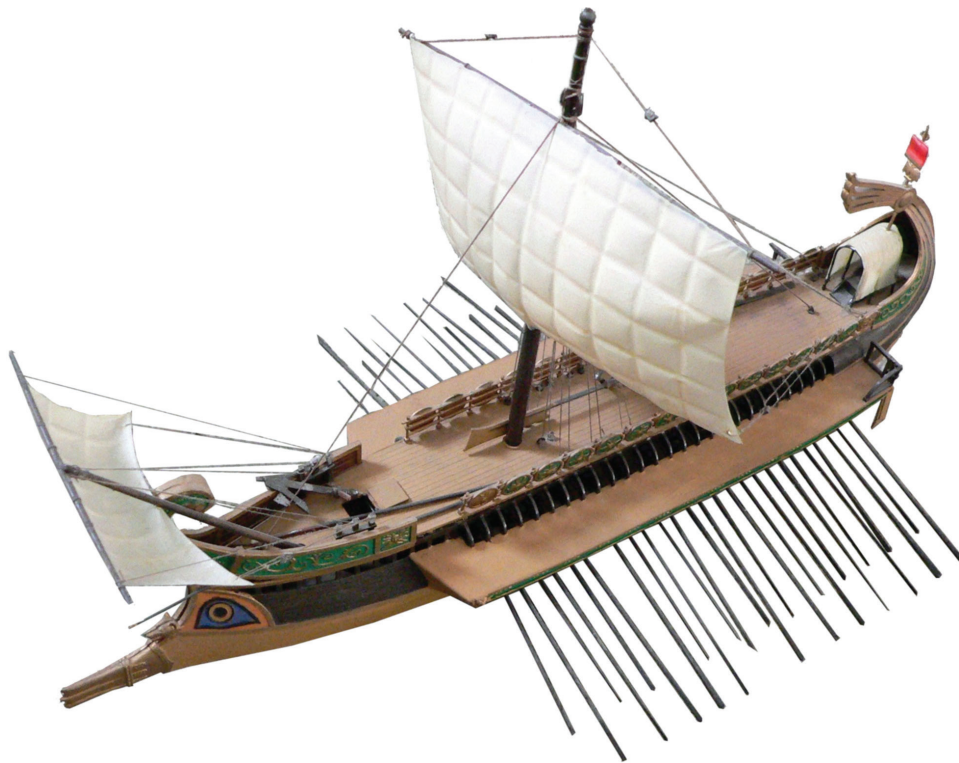
Map A:



The situation is very complicated. Fifteen years ago the Mamertines took over Messana, killed all the men in the city, put the women and children into slavery, and attacked other towns in the area. Syracuse was allied with some of the towns being attacked, so the king of Syracuse decided to fight the Mamertines. Facing a strong enemy, the Mamertines turned to the powerful African city of Carthage for help. Carthage quickly sent soldiers. Instead of simply defending the Mamertines, the Carthaginians took over Messana. Now, some of the Mamertine leaders, who had disagreed with asking Carthage for help, have asked Rome for an alliance to counteract Carthaginian control.

Most Mamertines see control by Carthage as just as bad as the threat of control by Syracuse. Besides, in the view of many Mamertines, Carthage is an unreliable ally, being mostly interested in trade and not in honoring political treaties. As the situation changes, Carthage is likely to abandon the alliance, leaving Messana open to attack by Syracuse. Many Mamertines think Rome will be a much better ally, because Rome gives allies a great deal of independence, and, like the Mamertines, Romans are Italians.

Rome's government divides power among three groups: consuls, the Senate, and the people. The Senate is split over whether to agree to the alliance with the Mamertines, so the decision is left to the people. Keep in mind that making an alliance with the Mamertines will likely lead to war with Carthage as there are already soldiers from Carthage in Messana, and Rome will be taking over the city.



A Roman trireme.

Those who argue for the alliance see Carthage as a threat. They believe the Carthaginians may take control of all of Sicily unless Rome takes action against them. Carthage already controls the western part of the island and will likely defeat Syracuse. Moreover, Messana is at the strategic spot on the strait between Italy and Sicily. If Carthage controls Messana, it could stop Roman trading ships from going through the strait. That would decrease Roman trade and make it more difficult for Roman cities on the western side of Italy to contact cities on the eastern side of Italy.

Even if Carthaginians allow Roman ships through the strait, Carthage will control trade in Sicily to its own advantage. The trade restrictions won't hurt Rome directly, since it doesn't have much interest in trade. However, restrictions will hurt the trading cities in southern Italy, which are allied with Rome.

According to supporters of the alliance, Rome is stronger than Carthage because of the strict discipline and high moral values of the Roman people. Carthaginians are more business-minded than loyal to their city. They are not prepared to fight against trained Roman legions. The soldiers in their army aren't even from Carthage; they are hired by Carthage from Spain and other parts of the Mediterranean and Africa. Only the generals are actually from Carthage. Carthage has a very strong fleet but a very weak army. Therefore, these supporters of the alliance argue, the war should be short.

Some Roman senators feel that making an alliance with the Mamertines provides Rome with an opportunity to expand into Sicily. The Roman Republic has secured control of all of Italy, so the next logical step is to expand into Sicily. A successful war would also bring new territories to Rome, increasing its military power, and conquered lands will supply Rome with a new stream of captured goods.

Others oppose making the alliance with the Mamertines and getting into a war. They argue that Carthage and Rome are better off leaving each other alone than fighting. The fact that Carthage is a trading hub creates wealth for Rome, not just for Carthage. Rome controls the eastern Mediterranean, while Carthage controls the western Mediterranean. The two great cities have made treaties, left each other alone, and prospered. Why spoil all this economic gain by fighting a war? Other senators feel that Rome should concentrate on expanding northward, into Gaul, where there is more wealth to be gained, especially metals. Expanding south into Sicily would take resources away from this more important northern expansion.

Moreover, the Mamertines are not the kind of allies that Rome should want. They slaughtered all the men in Messana and enslaved the women and children. The Mamertines are more like pirates than a legitimate government.

Opponents of the alliance argue that the risk of war should not be taken lightly. People die needlessly, and wealth is wasted in fighting. Resources are destroyed that could be devoted to increasing the wealth of the Roman Republic through increasing food production or building roads and bridges, for example. Peace, not war, is what brings lasting prosperity.

## ■ Decision

These are some of the arguments for and against making the alliance. Now it is time to decide. Will you make an alliance with the Mamertines, thereby risking a war with Carthage?

- A. Yes. Make the alliance and risk war.
- B. No. Don't make the alliance and avoid war.

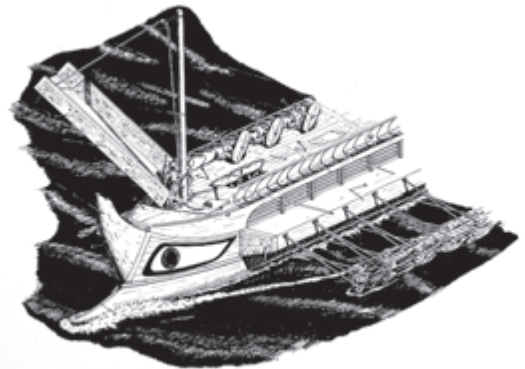
# OUTCOMES OF THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

(Complex)

Roman leaders decided to make the alliance with the Mamertines and send soldiers to Messina (Option A), which led to a war with Carthage called the Punic War (Punic comes from the Phoenicians, which is the group that settled Carthage). Roman leaders apparently did not think through their decision. Here are some points they missed (did you think of these?):

1. They didn't establish a clear goal for the war, so they didn't focus their resources on accomplishing that goal. As a result, during the war the Romans made attacks that didn't actually help them, as when they attacked Corsica.
2. They didn't think about the fact that Carthage had a strong navy, while Rome had no significant navy. Eventually, the Romans realized they had to build a navy and defeat the Carthaginian navy in order to defeat Carthage—a huge unforeseen cost.
3. While the Romans had a dominant army, they didn't think about the general effects of Carthage having a dominant navy. This mismatch of military power would lead to a stalemate in which neither side could easily defeat the other. It would be a very long war.

In fact, the war lasted from 264 BCE to 241 BCE, a total of twenty-four years! At first the Romans had a number of military successes with their army. Then they realized they had to build a navy, which they did. Since they had little experience in sailing, they decided to fight naval battles as though they were land battles. They lowered a huge plank from the Roman ship onto the enemy's ship, and then their soldiers would rush over the plank to fight a "land battle." They won several naval battles this way. Then they lost whole



A Roman boarding plank in action.

fleets to storms and Carthaginian naval attacks (by ramming, arrows and boarding). Historians estimate that Rome lost hundreds of ships and nearly one hundred thousand men at sea. The momentum of the war swung back and forth. Both sides made major blunders, and then tried to compensate by buying new fleets and raising new armies. Near the end of the war, with the outcome still very much in doubt, the Roman Senate had to decide between negotiating a settlement and making another attempt to capture two Carthaginian strongholds by building yet another fleet with money Rome didn't have. The Senate decided to build the new fleet by borrowing the money from the wealthy senators themselves. The new fleet successfully helped capture the strongholds. Carthage was forced to leave Sicily and pay a large amount of money to Rome. The Romans won the war.

The war cost Romans a tremendous amount of money and the loss of more than one hundred thousand of Rome's young men. Many families faced the tragedy, psychologically and economically, of losing a man in the family. These were young men, fathers, husbands, and brothers that entire families relied upon for protection and livelihood. Thousands of Roman families fell into poverty. Meanwhile, other Romans piled up fortunes from increased trade and speculation. The gap between rich and poor Romans became much greater.

According to historians, there were many reasons Rome entered this first Punic War. Among the reasons Rome chose war were a fear of Carthage, greed in hoping to get wealth and power from Sicily, an inability to look at the risk that the war might be a long fight, and, perhaps most importantly, pride. Romans assumed they were stronger than Carthaginians and would win a war quickly. Did you also make that assumption?



A Roman legionnaire.



# CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

(Complex)

1. Why did Carthage send soldiers to Messina? What are the motives behind this action?

*Carthage sent a small force of infantry to Messina, but no warships. According to some of your advisers, leaving out the navy indicates that Carthage isn't interested in using Messina as a strategic naval base to control the strait or threaten Rome. The most likely explanation for their sending troops is that the Carthaginians wanted to warn Syracuse to give up her attacks. It worked, as Syracuse hasn't attacked since the Carthaginians arrived. It's possible that at some later point the Carthaginians will use Messina as a base to support an attack on Syracuse, thus gaining control of all of Sicily. Other advisers point out that the Carthaginians did send a small fleet to an island north of Messina, so they may be looking for strategic control of the straits between Sicily and Italy.*

2. What is the relevant history of the struggles in Sicily? What do we know about Carthage, Syracuse, and other cities on the island?

*Carthage and Syracuse have fought repeatedly over control of Sicily for many years. In recent years, Carthage has expanded and controls more than half the island. However, Syracuse is a strong opponent to Carthage. It has a strong economy and a strong military.*

3. Has Carthage been trustworthy in the past? Has it stuck with its agreements?

*Carthage and Rome have made three treaties in the past century, and Carthage has stuck to them all. At one point when Romans were attacking a city in southern Italy, a Carthaginian fleet showed up. It is possible that the fleet was looking to occupy the city, thinking that Rome had given up on its attack. Occupying a city in Italy would have been a violation of one of the treaties. However, the fleet sailed away, so there was no violation.*

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Carthaginian military compared to Rome? Can Rome defeat Carthage?

*Carthage has the strongest navy in the Mediterranean, comprising hundreds of warships and trading vessels. After all, Carthage is a trading empire, so it depends on ships. Meanwhile the Carthaginian army is weak. Roman legions are well trained and have greater discipline than the Carthaginians. As mentioned in Handout 1, the Carthaginian army is made up of mercenaries, men from other cities hired to fight for Carthage.*

*Therefore, Rome has the advantage to defeat Carthage on land. However, since Sicily is an island, Rome will have to build a navy and defeat a great naval power. Rome's disadvantage isn't just that it lacks ships. Carthaginian sailors have experience, while Rome has very few sailors. Roman sailors will have to be trained to make up for their lack of experience. It will be a challenge.*

5. How strong is Carthage politically and economically?

*Carthage has a strong, solid government, based on an assembly that hears arguments and makes decisions. It has been a stable government for many years. The Carthaginian economy is even stronger, based on extensive trade and excellent finances. Even if Carthage is defeated in battle, it has the political stability and economic resources to keep fighting and paying money to raise new armies and fleets.*

6. What are Roman political strengths and weaknesses?

*Rome's government is stable and solid. While there are criticisms of the government, citizens show great loyalty to Rome and are willing to make significant sacrifices to support the government and city. Since Rome is a republic, with divided powers meant to represent various groups in Roman society, the people feel they have a voice in the decisions Rome makes. In that sense, a decision by the government to fight Carthage is a decision by the people for war. If Rome decides to fight, the population will generally commit to winning the war with grim determination.*

*In addition, Rome has fairly loyal allies who will supply soldiers for the Roman legions and material supplies. It is possible that some of the allied cities will desert Rome, but Rome has been lenient with allied cities: They have independent decision making except in issues of foreign policy, they do not have to pay high taxes to Rome (but they do have to supply troops), and people in some of these allied cities can become Roman citizens. Cities allied with Rome are treated more like partners in Roman prosperity than as conquered territories.*

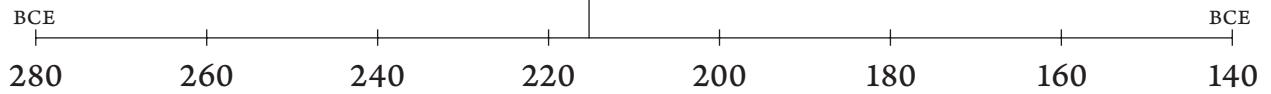
7. Is Rome able to finance a short war? a long war? Will a war bankrupt Rome?

*Rome has been fighting wars on a regular basis for many years. The city has solid finances so it can fund a short war. But this war is different. It will not be fought on the boot of Italy. It will be fought on an island against an opponent with a powerful navy. It will probably be impossible to defeat Carthage without a navy, so Rome will have to build a navy from scratch. Navies are extremely expensive, so that could cause financial problems. Rome will have to borrow money, increase taxes, or both.*

*In addition, it is likely that this will be a long war. The two sides have mismatched strengths. Since each side can't be easily challenged in its strong area (Rome on land, Carthage at sea), the war could easily become a stalemate. As the war drags out, the financial burden will increase.*

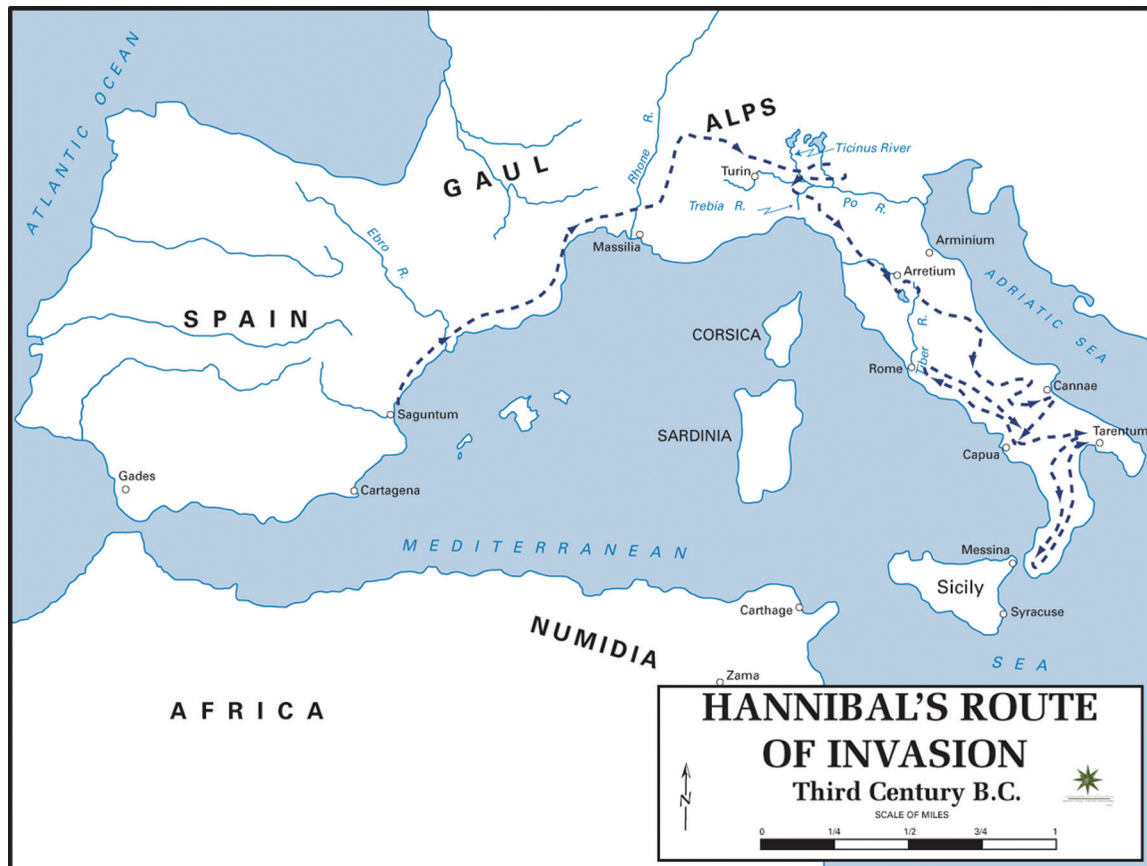
# WHAT IS THE BEST STRATEGY AGAINST HANNIBAL?

## Strategy against Hannibal?



The year is 216 BCE and you, as a Roman senator, have to decide what Rome's military strategy should be in fighting against Carthage's military leader, Hannibal. This is the Second Punic War between Rome and Carthage. The first war lasted twenty-four years, and this one has lasted more than a decade. In this war, Hannibal has led his troops over the Alps and into Italy (see Map B). He lost almost all of his elephants in the long march, but he has an excellent cavalry and a large army. He can't really attack Rome, since its defenses are too strong. Rather, he has been hoping to move around the other parts of Italy and persuade Rome's allies to switch sides and join with Carthage in its war against Rome. Without allies, Rome would definitely lose the war and its leading position in the Mediterranean region.

Map B:





Carthaginian cavalryman.

Fortunately for Rome, none of the major cities has defected to the Carthaginians. Hannibal lacks siege equipment necessary to capture fortified cities, so he can't force them into surrender. Instead, he has been marching around the countryside, destroying crops and buildings and taking food and equipment for his army.

The Roman general in charge, named Maximus, employs a strategy of not fighting Hannibal's forces in open battle, because Rome's armies were destroyed in two previous major battles. It is just too risky to fight an open battle with Hannibal. It is better, Maximus argues, to keep the Roman army near Hannibal and wear his army down by waiting. The Carthaginian army has been unsuccessful in getting Italian cities to defect to Carthage's side. It is far from home and cut off from supplies and reinforcements. Eventually, Hannibal will give up and go back to Carthage.

Critics of Maximus argue that "eventually" could be a very long time. They call the Roman general Maximus the Delayer. Meanwhile, Hannibal is destroying the countryside. Why does Rome even have an army if the Roman general doesn't use it to fight and defeat the enemy? Why is Maximus letting the enemy march around Italy and destroy the countryside? These critics want a more energetic strategy. The best defense is a good offense, they argue. They want to concentrate Roman forces into a large army and defeat Hannibal in a major battle. Then the war will be over, and the Roman people will be able to get back to their normal lives.

Yet another group of critics propose sending a Roman army to attack Carthage itself. Rome is now in complete control of the sea, so it could transport an army to Africa to attack Carthage by land. If Rome captures Carthage, the war will be over. Even if the Roman army doesn't capture Carthage, there is another possible favorable outcome: The Carthaginians may decide to bring Hannibal back to Africa to defend his home city. That would end the fighting in Italy.

## ■ Decision

What will you decide as the war strategy in the Second Punic War? You can choose more than one option, but make sure they don't conflict.

- A. Continue with Maximus's strategy of avoiding open battle with Hannibal, waiting for Hannibal's army to give up.
- B. Send an army to attack Carthage, either to win the war or at least to force Hannibal to return to Africa to defend the city.
- C. Concentrate Roman forces to defeat Hannibal in open battle in Italy and thereby end the war.



# OUTCOMES OF THE SECOND PUNIC WAR

The Roman Senate decided in 216 BCE to remove Maximus from command and replace him with two generals who would fight Hannibal directly (Option C). It was a disastrous decision, leading to the worst military defeat in all of Roman history, the Battle of Cannae. As Maximus had argued, Hannibal was too good a military leader against whom to risk open battle. He surrounded the Roman legions, and, since the Roman soldiers were pushed closer together, they could not move to fight as unified groups. The entire Roman army was killed or captured, with few losses to the Carthaginians.



The Romans are slaughtered at Cannae.

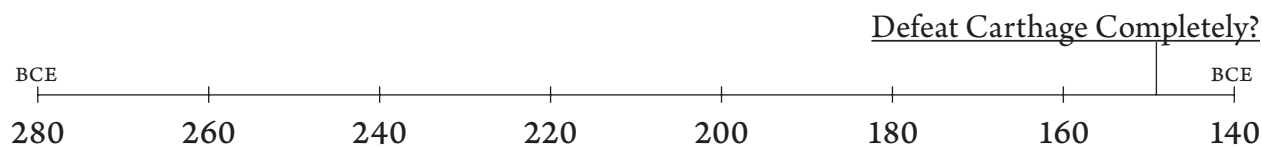
With such a one-sided loss, there was an increased chance of Roman allies switching to the Carthaginian side in the war. Fortunately for Rome, out of loyalty, most allies did not switch sides. The Roman Senate raised a new army but adopted Maximus's strategy of not fighting Hannibal directly. Later, the Romans also sent an army to capture Carthage (Option B). Hannibal was indeed recalled to Africa to help defend the city, where he was defeated by the Roman army. The war ended with a negotiated treaty in which, among other terms, Carthage:

1. Gave up almost its entire navy
2. Paid a huge indemnity (money) to Rome every year for fifty years
3. Was prevented from making war outside Africa and could fight in Africa only with permission from Rome.

In short, Carthage became a dependent territory of Rome.



# SHOULD ROME DEFEAT CARTHAGE COMPLETELY?



The year is 149 BCE, and as a Roman senator you have a decision to make about Carthage. The Romans have fought two wars against Carthage, but Carthage is causing trouble again. After the last war, which ended fifty-three years ago, Carthage had to give up almost her entire navy and pay large amounts of money to Rome for fifty years. Carthage has paid off its debts, and there has been peace since the war ended. The long period of peace brought prosperity—maybe too much prosperity in the opinion of many Roman leaders—to the Carthaginians. They have become powerful again, making weapons for a large army, which they recently used to attack their neighbors in Africa. This battle, which the Carthaginians lost, violated the peace treaty at the end of the last war, which stated that the Carthaginians couldn't attack any group without Roman permission.

A senator named Cato has been arguing for years that Rome should declare war on and completely defeat Carthage so it never causes trouble again. Cato argues that after Rome defeats Carthage on the battlefield, there should be no negotiated settlement. The city should be burned to the ground, and all its people should be sold as slaves. Cato ends every one of his speeches in the Senate with the words, "And I think Carthage should be destroyed."

Other senators argue that war is unnecessary. Rome is better off prospering from trade with Carthage rather than destroying the city. The best thing to do in response to Carthage's military strength and its violation of the treaty with Rome is simply to watch the city closely, not to wipe it out entirely.

## ■ Decision

What will you do about Carthage?

- A. Attack the city and destroy it. No compromise settlement.
- B. Don't attack. Enforce the treaty more strictly and watch the city more closely.

# OUTCOMES OF THE THIRD PUNIC WAR

The Roman Senate decided to fight once again against Carthage (Option A). Roman legions defeated the Carthaginian army, burned the city to the ground, and spread salt on the land so no city could be rebuilt. Carthage was removed from the world, and Rome was the only major power left in the known world. Rome was solely in charge of its empire. The effects of wiping out Carthage are very important. There was no Carthage in the Mediterranean after 146 BCE to increase trade and challenge the Romans, even though Carthage had been one of the most important cities in ancient history. It is left to our imaginations to wonder how history would have been different had Carthage continued as an important trading and cultural center after 146 BCE.

With all these new lands under Roman control, the war also pushed Rome more toward an empire, away from its republican government.

The long-term effects of the three Punic Wars were very important. Rome lost more than five hundred thousand men in the wars and suffered all the economic and psychological effects that such enormous losses had on families and society. Wives and children of killed soldiers faced a loss of income even as they were saddened by the loss of their loved ones. In addition, there was a much larger number of wounded soldiers and sailors. Physically, wounded men required medical care, while emotionally, traumatized men put even more stress on families. The war wasted resources that could have been used to promote economic growth.



The remains of Carthage's destruction.

On the positive side, the war brought tremendous wealth to Rome and made it the dominant power in the known world. Rome became a naval power, which helped it control the empire around the Mediterranean Sea. Unfortunately, the wealth also led to great inequality within Roman society, as some people piled up fortunes from increased trade and speculation. In addition, Rome needed a larger and more permanent army to protect such an extensive empire. The larger army in turn contributed to the demise of the Republic, as military leaders had more power to influence and eventually control the government.

# POLYBIUS'S HISTORY OF THE PUNIC WARS

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This source is from the Roman historian Polybius. This excerpt, from his history of the Punic Wars, is about the burning of Carthage at the end of the wars. Scipio is the Roman commander who ordered the city to be burned.

When he [Scipio] had given the order for firing [burning all of] the town [Carthage] he immediately turned round and grasped me by the hand and said: "O Polybius, it is a grand thing, but, I know not how, I feel a terror and dread, lest someone should one day give the same order about my own native city [Rome]." . . . Any observation more practical or sensible it is not easy to make. For in the midst of supreme success for one's self and of disaster for the enemy, to take thought of one's own position and of the possible reverse which may come, and in a word to keep well in mind in the midst of prosperity the mutability [changeability] of Fortune, is the characteristic of a great man, a man free from weaknesses and worthy to be remembered.

Source: Polybius, *The Histories*, Book 39, ed. Friedrich Hultsch and trans. Evelyn Shuckburgh (1889; The Perseus Catalog), [www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0234](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0234).

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Do you agree with Polybius that Scipio is acting like a great man? Explain.
2. Why did Scipio order Carthage to be burned to the ground?
3. How reliable is Polybius as a source?

# LESSON 5:

## REFORMS IN THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

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### Teacher's Guide

## INTRODUCTION

### ■ Overview

One of the turning points in Roman history was the land reform proposal by Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus. The proposal and reaction may have been the beginning of the end for the Roman Republic. This lesson expands upon the Gracchus land reform proposal and analyzes three related reforms. It gives students the opportunity to reflect on the reforms proposed and the changes that doomed the Republic.

### ■ Vocabulary

- Republic—the Roman government in which power was held by the elected representatives of the people
- Punic Wars—wars that Rome fought with the Carthaginian, who were originally Phoenicians (or Punics)
- Slave—a person who was owned by or forced to work for someone else
- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
- Citizen—a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country
- Draft—a system for recruiting members of the military or other government service by requiring every male citizen to serve
- Dictator—a leader with absolute power
- Julius Caesar—Roman general who became the dictator of Rome
- Corruption—dishonest actions by people in government and other social institutions

### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Ask questions about context

- Generate ethical options
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON (40-50 minutes)

### ■ Procedure

There are two sets of handouts for this lesson. Handouts 1 and 2 are targeted at middle school students, while Handouts 3 and 4 are geared for high school or college students. The middle school handouts are shorter, are less complex, and contain more cues to aid reading comprehension. The suggestions in the sections “Reflecting on Decision Making,” “Putting Decisions into Historical Context,” “Connecting to Today,” and “Troubleshooting” are for both middle school and high school students.

### ■ Problem (Short)—Proposed Reforms for the Roman Republic (Handouts 1–2)

Tell students that in this lesson, they are going to make some important decisions in Roman history. They won’t know what actually happened until *after* they make the decisions themselves. Before they can make these decisions, students need to review some Roman history. Review with students the events of the Punic Wars, especially Hannibal’s armies ravaging the Italian countryside. If you have already taught students about the Roman government, activate their prior knowledge by asking how the government worked. If not, this is the ideal time to teach about the Roman Republic, especially the role of the Senate in making decisions.-

Distribute Handout 1 and have students read the introductory paragraph. If necessary, review BCE dating, the Roman Empire from Map A, and the Punic Wars. Have students read Topic A and the three proposals. Ask a student to summarize what the problem is. Is there any vocabulary that students don’t understand? Ask what the difference is between Option A and Option B. Are there any other questions? Have students individually decide what they will do. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to look at that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before deciding. Now have students pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the three options. Have students make arguments for and against the options, and then have them re-vote. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. You might want to have students look once again at the **P-A-G-E** sheet as they make their arguments. In the course of discussion, students may suggest a fourth option. That’s great! It means that students are not being limited by the options presented. The best solution in difficult decision situations is often one that is not among the original options. Just add the fourth option and have students vote on all four options.

Use the same procedure for Topic B on Handout 1.



When both problems have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 2 and have students read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to look at that sheet before answering question 4. Have students pair up and discuss their answer; then discuss the answers as a class.

## ■ Problem (Complex)—Proposed Reforms for the Roman Republic

(Handouts 3–4)

Distribute Handout 3 and instruct students to read it and decide what choices they will make for the four problems. Have them pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the four problems. Have students make arguments for and against the various options for each problem and then have them re-vote. After the second vote, distribute Handout 4 and have students write what they learned about history and about their own decision making from these outcomes for homework.

*Option for Premortem:* To help students think through their decision, ask them to imagine that it is years later and their choice for solving the problem of poverty (Topic C) in Handout 3 ended up being a disaster. They are to go back to their pairs and discuss what the disaster was, what went wrong, and how likely the problems are. Should they change their decision in light of their analysis about a possible disaster?

*Option for Primary Source:* Have students read the primary source (Plutarch) in Handout 5 and answer the questions.

### Possible Answers

1. According to the author (Plutarch), what caused the problem with poor farmers that led to the suggested reform by Tiberius Gracchus?

*He says the problem was due to the avarice of the rich people.*

2. What motives did Tiberius Gracchus have for proposing the land reform, according to Plutarch?

*He was hoping to gain more fame and influence than his friend; he was genuinely interested in helping people after seeing them in a rural area; and he was responding to petitions by poor people.*

3. What does Plutarch think of the land reform proposal by Tiberius Gracchus?

*He thinks it is excellent: "Never did any law appear more moderate and gentle. . . ."*

4. How reliable is Plutarch as a source?

*He is a historian, but he wrote two hundred years after the event. Based on the language he uses, he is unusually biased in favor of the reform, so he is not very reliable.*

## ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did on decision making on this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these decisions about reforms in Rome? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** applied especially to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

Ask students whether the decision made in Topic A (in which public land that exceeded 300 acres was confiscated by the government and distributed as small farms to landless people) was the result more of historical forces or the result of decisions made by individual leaders.

### Possible Answer

*Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus came up with the reforms. Without them the reforms wouldn't have been moved forward. Therefore, individuals were the key to this decision. On the other hand, the situation after the Punic Wars was so difficult that changes, such as land reform, had to be made. If the Gracchus brothers hadn't suggested reforms, others would have. The reforms would have been different, but there would have been reforms due to historical circumstances.*

## ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students if there are phenomena today similar to the bread and circuses of Roman times. (There are food stamps and soup kitchens, but these are different from giving bread away to everyone. There are video games, television programs, and movies for entertainment. Do these forms of entertainment keep people passive when they should be questioning government actions?)

## ■ Troubleshooting

In the first topic on Handout 3, “Small Farmers Are Getting Hurt,” make sure students see the difference between Option A (all land over 300 acres) and Option B (land over 300 acres that had been given by the government).

This lesson also presents an opportunity to teach students, or reinforce with them, the concepts of supply, demand, and price. If the government gives away grain, what happens to the price of grain in general? With more food coming into Rome from new territories, what happens to the overall supply of food and therefore to the price of food?

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON (20 minutes)

Chose the middle school handouts (Handouts 1 and 2). Distribute Handout 1 for homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for Topic A for five minutes. Then have them discuss their choices to Topic B for five minutes. Bring the class together, have them vote on the

various options, and have students offer arguments for and against proposals for five minutes. Have students re-vote and distribute Handout 2. For homework, students are to write what they learned about history and about their own decision making from these outcomes.

## **TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION**

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 2 and 4.)

The land reforms suggested in Topic C were made by the Gracchus brothers, both of whom were killed, as mentioned in Handouts 2 and 4. Tiberius Gracchus made a number of decisions, such as removing a leader who opposed the proposal, in trying to get his proposal passed into law. These decisions definitely relate to the decision-making skill of playing out the options, but the details are very complicated, so they weren't included. M. M. Henderson (1968) blames the Senate's reaction for the problems with the land law, which is explained in Handout 2. Andrew Swidzinski (2007 & 2008) reviews the historiography on Tiberius Gracchus and concludes that his motives were a combination of idealistic reform and political ambition.

The amount of land that people were allowed to keep before confiscation included additions for giving land to heirs. The figure of 300 acres is given in the lesson for simplicity.

Historian L. de Ligt (2004) argues that the overall Roman population was actually increasing in the countryside in 133 BCE, so the threat that the army would run short of men was not that great. He does think that Tiberius Gracchus was correct that the number of people in poverty was increasing.

Historian J. S. Richardson (1980) argues that the Gracchus land reforms were meant to include Italians in general, not just Romans. He suggests that this reform is probably related to the reform to keep allies loyal to Rome (Topic B).

According to Peter Temin (2013), the Romans had economic growth because of their stable government (with some exceptions for the civil wars), education, and a strong banking system. The government building program may have hurt economic growth somewhat, but government, education, and banking were more important to overall economic growth.

The ages at which Roman men had a duty to serve in the military were from seventeen to forty-six, but in times of emergency the call-ups extended to age sixty.

David Stockton (1979) argues that the Gracchus reforms were a watershed event in Roman history. As other historians have argued, he says that most poor farmers hurt by the flood of crops and slaves stayed in the countryside rather than move to the cities.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

### P = Problem

**Identify any underlying problem(s).**

**Consider other points of view.**

What are my assumptions? emotions?

### A = Ask for information (about)

**Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**

Reliability of sources

Historical analogies

### G = Goals

What are my main goals? Are they realistic?

**Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?**

### E = Effects

***Predict unintended consequences.***

***Play out the options. What could go wrong?***

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Identify underlying problems:** Beneath both topics in Handout 1 and all four topics in Handout 3 is the underlying problem that Rome is becoming an imperial power. It has taken over an empire, and that empire is causing changes inside Rome.
- **Consider other points of view:** In the first topic about redistributing land, students should consider the point of view of the rich people who own the land now. How will they react to having to give up land they may have worked hard on and thought they owned? In Topic B how will Roman citizens feel about new people being allowed to become Roman citizens?
- **Ask questions about context:** Possible questions for Handout 3 are:

### **Topic A**

Why has someone proposed this land reform?

*The evidence points to several reasons. First, Tiberius Gracchus was genuinely interested in helping former landowners get some land. Second, he was ambitious and wanted to gain a positive reputation through his reforms. Third, the reform would gain the support of poor people for Gracchus, so he would build a base of support to gain political power. The three-person commission for deciding cases for confiscating and distributing land to poor people was to be*

*the two Gracchus brothers and another relative. The makeup of this commission suggest the power motive.*

How long ago was the land given by the government?

*Several generations in some cases.*

How much land is included in public land that exceeds 300 acres per farm?

*It's enough land to help out thousands of landless people.*

Is it clear which land is public?

*No. The records are not good enough to make it clear which land is public.*

### **Topic B**

How much do we rely on allies now?

*About half of our armies are allied soldiers.*

### **Topic C**

Are there people in danger of starvation?

*No. There are people who sometimes struggle to buy food, but they do get it.*

### **Topic D**

Is the army really that short on soldiers?

*This is in dispute. Some leaders say Rome is running short, while others argue that overall, the armies are as big as Rome needs.*

- **Generate ethical goals:** In Handout 3, Topic B: It may be effective to make an example out of a city by destroying it (although it might *not* be effective, as pointed out in Handout 4). However, students should consider if it is moral to do that.
- **Predict unintended consequences:** One long-term consequence of land reform in Topic A (Handouts 1 and 3) was the use of violence in the killing of the Gracchus brothers, which set the precedent for the use of violence to solve political disputes. Moreover, the Roman public split between rich and poor on the issue of land reform. Poor people felt the Senate was controlled by rich people who were not interested in the plight of the poor. Eventually, the social class divisions and the use of violence in politics contributed to the decline of the Republic and the replacement of the republican government by emperors. Likewise, the giving of land (Topic D, Handout 3) to poor soldiers by their generals eventually led to the generals taking power in Rome. In Handout 1, Topic B, and Handout 3, Topic C, giving out bread and providing entertainment (bread and circuses) led to a great portion of the Roman population becoming more dependent on and less critical of the government.



- **Play out options:** In Handout 3, Topic A, students should anticipate that there will be difficulty in trying to establish which land should be confiscated. Which is public and which is part of farms of more than 300 acres? The Romans set up a commission to hear people's appeals and, predictably, it was swamped with very complicated cases.

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# LESSON 5:

## REFORMS IN THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

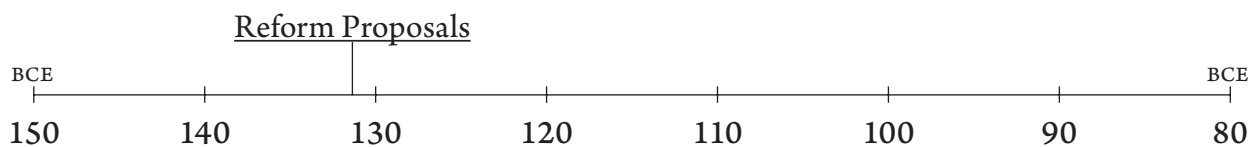
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### VOCABULARY

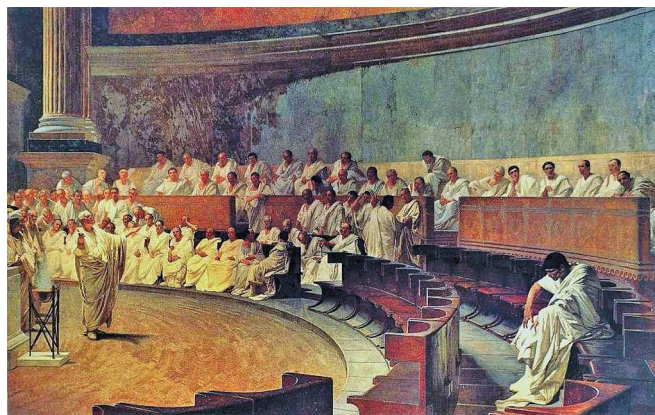
- Republic—the Roman government in which power was held by the elected representatives of the people
- Punic Wars—wars that Rome fought with the Carthaginians, who were originally Phoenicians (or Punics)
- Slave—a person who was owned by or forced to work for someone else
- Alliance—a formal agreement between nations to cooperate militarily
- Citizen—a person who is a legal resident of a country and enjoys the rights and protections of that country
- Draft—a system for recruiting members of the military or other government service by requiring every male citizen to serve
- Dictator—a leader with absolute power
- Julius Caesar—Roman general who became the dictator of Rome
- Corruption—dishonest actions by people in government and other social institutions

# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

(Short)



It is 133 BCE. You are a senator in the Roman Republic after the end of the Punic Wars with Carthage. As you can see on Map A, Rome is located in central Italy. Much of the rest of Italy is allied with Rome. In addition, Rome has conquered the area around the Mediterranean Sea. The new territories conquered during the Punic Wars have brought wealth to Rome, but also problems. Roman leaders have proposed a number of reforms in order to deal with problems in the Republic. Each topic below explains a situation and the proposed reforms to deal with it. Decide which reforms, if any, you would support.



A painting of the Roman Senate.





## ■ Topic A: Small Farmers Are Getting Hurt

During the war with Carthage a lot of farms in Italy were damaged. Now with the war ended, trade is no longer blocked by the warring navies. Farmers from Egypt and other areas are shipping their crops to sell in Italy. The large amount of food is leading to lower prices, which makes it hard for small farmers to make a profit. For example, take a farmer with costs of \$100 (in today's dollar value) and \$120 from sales of crops. That's a profit of \$20. When prices for crops drop, however, the money from sales might drop to \$80. Instead of gaining a profit, the farmer is losing \$20.

To compound the problem, slaves—many of whom were captured during the war—are also flowing into Italy. Rich Romans, including many senators, are buying up huge farms and using slaves to work on the farms. Small farmers can't compete with slave labor. Thousands no longer own their land. Most do seasonal work in the countryside, while others have moved to Rome and other cities. They are underemployed or unemployed. The rich are getting richer, and the poor farmers are getting poorer. Many rich people are interested mainly in extravagant living, with beautiful homes, furniture, artwork, and clothes. They are not as interested in public service to the Republic (such as serving in the military or serving in local government) as Romans used to be.

Some of the land that rich people own is public land (land given away by the government). A law was passed decades ago that stated that no one could get more than 500 acres of government land. Rich people got around the law through tricks, such as putting part of the land in the name of a relative. The law was not enforced.



Roman farmers harvesting crops (an architectural detail on a building in France).

### Decision: Proposed Reforms to Help Small Farmers

Which reform, if any, will you support?

- A. Any family that owns a very large farm of public land would *have* to give some of the land back to the government and would not be paid for it. The government would then give the land in small farms to people who don't have land.



- B. Any family that owns a very large farm of public land would be *asked* to give some of the land back to the government and would not be paid for it. The government would then give the land in small farms to people who don't have land. This would be a *voluntary* program. No one would *have* to give up land.
- C. Do nothing.

## ■ Topic B: Poverty in Rome

There are many poor and unemployed people in Rome who sometimes can't afford to buy bread. When there is bad weather, such as a drought or flood, the amount of grain for bread is lower. Since sellers of grain don't have as much to sell or as much grain being sold by other people, they can charge higher prices. Higher grain prices mean higher bread prices, and the poorest people can't pay these higher prices.

### Decision: Proposed Reforms to Help the Poor

Which of these reforms, if any, will you support? You can choose more than one proposal.

- A. Have the Roman government store grain (for bread) and give it away free to all Romans.
- B. Have the Roman government buy and store grain in warehouses. Then the government will sell the grain to any Roman citizen each month at low prices.
- C. Provide entertainment for the poor. Build large stadiums so many people can see competitions and races for free.
- D. Increase government programs to build things like roads and large government buildings. The government will then hire unemployed people and reduce poverty by paying them for their work.
- E. Do nothing.

# OUTCOMES OF ROMAN REFORMS

(Short)

Here is what the government chose to do for each of the problems described in Handout 1:

## ■ Topic A: Small Farmers Are Getting Hurt

After great debate, the government decided on Option A, taking some land from large farms and giving it to poor people in farms of 30 acres each. The people who owned the large farms were very angry to have to give up some of their land. Although many of the farms were bought by rich people recently, other owners had worked the land for decades, so they felt the government had no right to take some of the land away from them. Rich people in the Senate even killed the two people who proposed the reforms.

Poor people were very happy to get land. Most of the people had been farmers in the past, so they were able use the land to make a living. Overall, as a result of this reform, poverty was reduced, and income levels of Roman citizens became more equal.

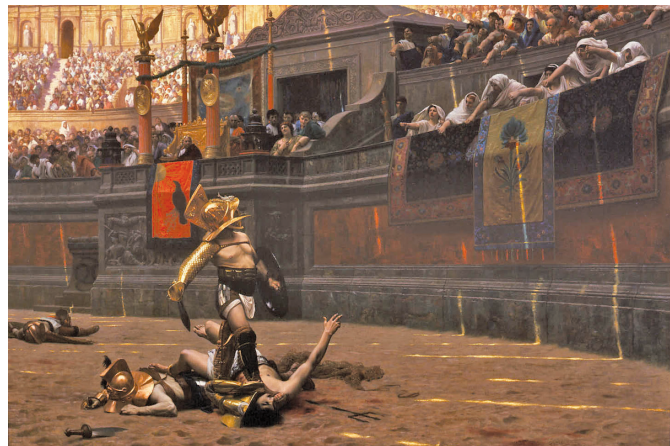
The violent reaction by some senators to this law caused division within Roman society. Many poor people felt the Senate represented rich people, not all of Roman society. The violence by senators made many Romans lose respect for the Senate. With less respect for representative government, people were more likely to support non-democratic leaders, such as emperors. Unfortunately, these divisions contributed to the decline of the Roman Republic.

Option B (asking people to give up some land voluntarily) probably wouldn't have worked, because very few people would have chosen to give some of their land to other people.

Doing nothing (Option C) would have allowed the existing situation to continue. The rich farmers would have dominated farming, and there would still have been many poor people. It's difficult to tell if doing nothing would have been better or worse for the survival of the Roman Republic and for Roman society in general.

## ■ Topic B: Poverty in Rome

The government of Rome tried all four of these proposals at different times. In terms of food, it started with Option B, to store and sell grain (for bread) at low prices. The lower prices helped some people to afford bread. Later, the government decided to give grain away (Option A) and increase entertainment (Option C). The free grain was available to any citizen at first, but it was eventually



Gladiator combat (by Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1872).

targeted at helping poor people. In the famous saying about Rome, the government provided ordinary people “bread and circuses”; people were kept loyal to the government because they received free food and entertainment. They became more dependent on the government, so they were less critical of the government. The entertainment included gladiators fighting to the death and chariot races in coliseums and racetracks around the empire.



The Appian Way, a famous Roman road that has lasted more than two thousand years.

The government had an ongoing program of building (Option D), which kept thousands of people employed. The amount of building was especially great under Julius Caesar. The Roman government could do so much building because there was a great deal of wealth flowing into Rome from the other parts of the empire around the Mediterranean Sea. Even with all that wealth, many economists believe Rome would have been better off letting private companies and individuals use the wealth, rather than taxing people and having the government use it to build structures and employ people.

These economists argue that more people would have been employed through the free market (in which private companies compete to sell products). Government contracts led to corruption and mismanagement of some of the money. Critics argue that corruption and mismanagement were greater than they would have been by private businesses. On the other hand, the building of roads by the government was a definite plus for Rome. It increased trade, which boosted the economy, and it allowed Roman armies to travel quickly when they were needed. Likewise, building aqueducts for clean water and sewers for disposing waste improved sanitation, thus increasing the health of the Roman people. Even the drain on government funds as a result of the construction of large buildings didn't seem to have a great negative effect, since there was economic growth, and Romans in general were more prosperous than any other people in the ancient world.





A Roman aqueduct, used for transporting clean water.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Summarize in your own words what the Romans decided for Topics A and B.

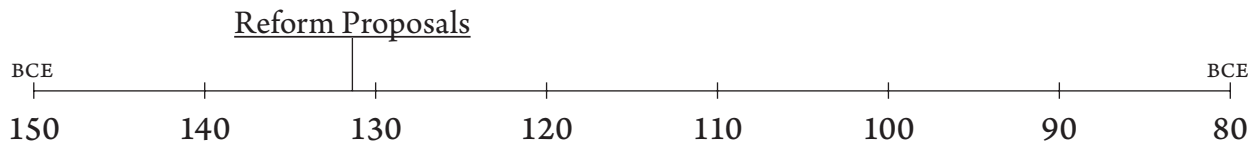
| Topic | Summary | How did the decision work? |
|-------|---------|----------------------------|
| A     |         |                            |
| B     |         |                            |

2. How well did your decisions work?
3. What would you change about the way you make decisions to improve? For example, if you didn't think about the problem from another person's point of view, you might want to mention that you should think of that skill.

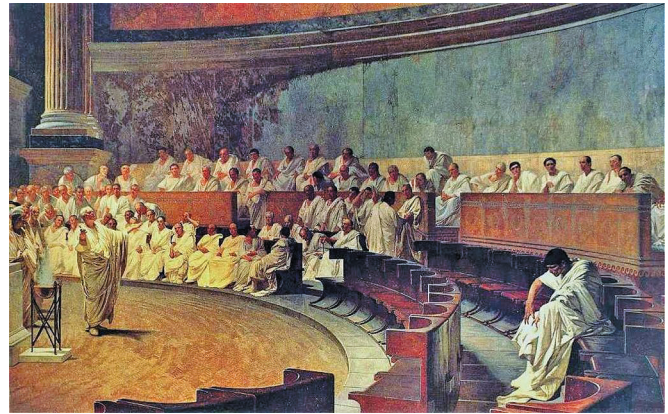


# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

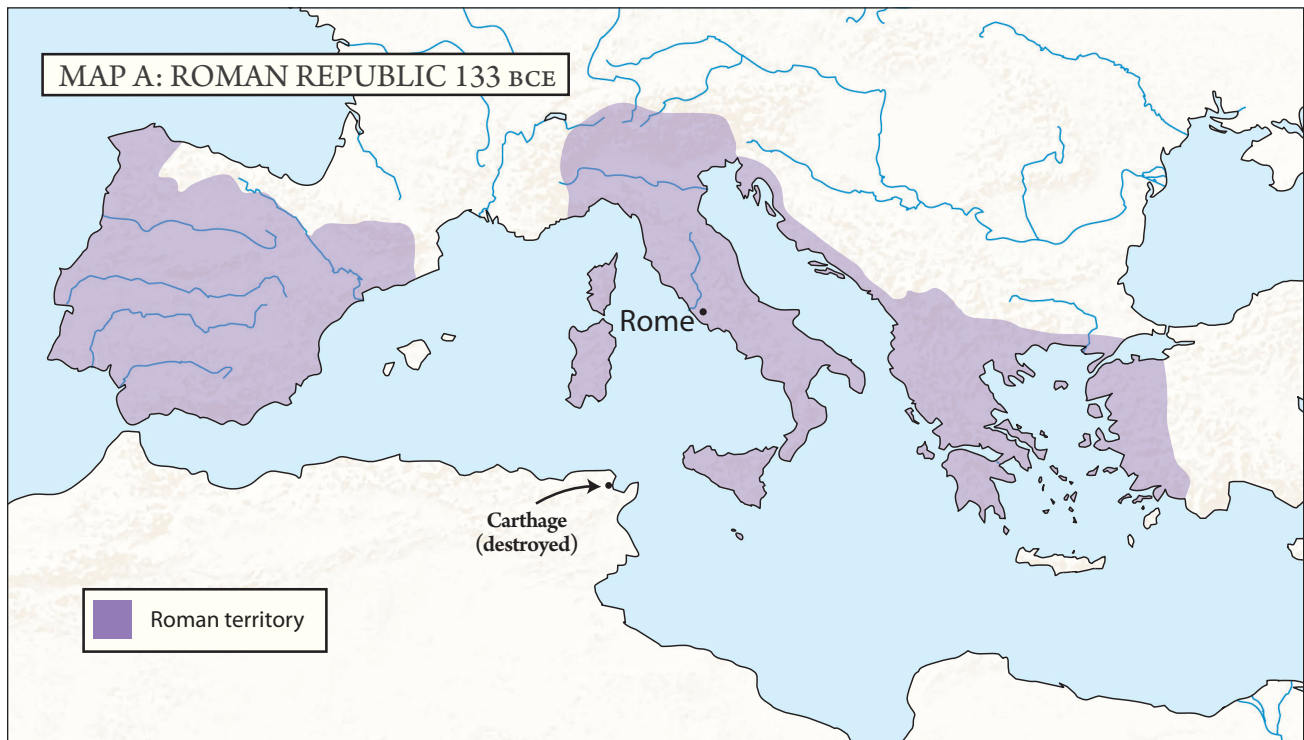
(Complex)



It is 133 BCE. You are a senator in the Roman Republic after the end of the Punic Wars with Carthage. As you can see on Map A, Rome is located in what is today central Italy. Much of the rest of the Italian peninsula is allied with Rome. In addition, Rome has conquered the area shown around the Mediterranean Sea. The Punic Wars and the new conquered territories have brought wealth to Rome, but also problems. Roman leaders have proposed a number of reforms in order to deal with problems in the Republic. Each topic below explains one problem and the proposed reforms to deal with it. Decide which reforms, if any, you would support.



A painting of the Roman Senate.





## ■ Topic A: Small Farmers Are Getting Hurt

Small farmers have been getting wiped out since the war with Carthage. Hannibal's Carthaginian army damaged a lot of farms in Italy, and many small farmers didn't have the money to repair them. Rich people bought the farms. Now with the war ended, trade is no longer blocked by the warring navies. Farmers from Egypt and other areas are shipping their crops to sell in Italy. During the wars, food was used to feed the Roman armies, but now it is being sold on the Roman markets. The large amount of food is leading to lower prices, which makes it hard for small farmers to make a profit.

To compound the problem, slaves are also flowing into Italy. Rich Romans, including many senators, are buying huge farms and using slaves to work on the farms. Small farmers can't compete with slave labor. Thousands no longer own their land. Most do seasonal work in the countryside, while others have moved to Rome and other cities. In both places, they are underemployed or unemployed. The problem is that the rich are getting richer and the poor farmers are getting poorer.

Some of the land that rich people have is public land (land given away by the government). A law was passed decades ago that stated that no one could get more than 300 acres of government land. Rich people got around the law through tricks, such as putting part of the land in the name of a relative. The law was not enforced.

Many rich people are interested mainly in extravagant living, with beautiful homes, furniture, artwork, and clothes. They are not as interested in public service to the Republic (such as serving in the military or serving in local government) as Romans used to be. Meanwhile, the Roman army depends on small farmers to become soldiers when needed, because only men who have full citizenship and own land can serve in the military (see Topic D below for an explanation).

### **Decision: Proposed Reforms to Help Small Farmers**

Which reform, if any, will you support?

- A. Any family that owns a farm of more than 300 acres would give the land in excess of 300 acres to the government. The government would then give the land in small farms of 30 acres to people who don't have land. The taking of land in excess of 300 acres would apply to all large farms.
- B. Any family that owns a farm of more than 300 acres *that was given to it by the government* would give the excess land back to the government. Essentially, this proposal would enforce the law described above. The government would then give the land in small farms of 30 acres to people who don't have land. The taking of land in excess of 300 acres would apply only to land given to people by the government.
- C. Do nothing.

## ■ Topic B: Keeping Allies in Time of War

Rome's allies in Italy have usually been loyal during war, which was especially true in the Punic Wars. Without loyal allies, Rome would not have won the war against Carthage. However, some allies in southern Italy did switch to the enemy side. It's important that Rome have dependable allies. At present, some people in allied regions and cities can become full Roman citizens, while others can become partial Roman citizens. They can serve in the military, but they can't vote and generally aren't given public land that has been taken in war.

### Decision: Proposed Reforms to Keep Allies in Time of War

Which reform, if any, will you support? You can choose more than one proposal.

- A. Allow all people of allied countries in Italy to become full citizens of Rome, including the right to vote and to get public land. Supporters argue that allowing people in various countries to become citizens will make the allied countries much more loyal to Rome and will give Rome the power to raise larger armies, drawing citizen-soldiers from all these allied countries. Opponents argue that adding all these outside people as citizens will weaken the power of people who are already Roman citizens.
- B. Destroy an allied city that was disloyal to Rome in the Punic Wars, and enslave all the people from that city. This cruelty will send a message to other cities not to backstab Rome in times of war.
- C. Do nothing.

## ■ Topic C: Poverty in Rome

There are many poor and unemployed people in Rome who sometimes can't afford to buy bread. When there is bad weather, such as a drought or flood, less grain is available for bread. Since of grain sellers don't have as much to sell and the demand is high, they can charge higher prices. Higher grain prices mean higher bread prices, and the poorest people can't pay these higher prices.

### Decision: Proposed Reforms to Help the Poor

Which of these reforms, if any, will you support? You can choose more than one proposal.

- A. Have the Roman government store grain (for bread) and give it away for free to all Romans.
- B. Have the Roman government buy and store grain in warehouses. Then the government will sell the grain to any Roman citizen each month at prices below the market price. When there is a shortage of grain, the price won't rise as much because the government will be adding to the supply of grain to be sold.
- C. Provide entertainment for the poor. Build large stadiums so many people can see competitions and races.

- D. Increase government programs, to build projects such as roads and large government buildings. The government will then hire unemployed people and reduce poverty by paying them for their work.
- E. Do nothing.

### ■ Topic D: Shortage of Soldiers in the Army

At this point, men serve in the army as a duty to the Roman Republic. They bring their own equipment, clothing, and food to their legions. (Just recently, in the last year, the government has changed its policy and has begun to supply weapons, food, and clothing to soldiers.) When there is a military need, men are drafted or called to serve. They serve for a few months until the enemy is defeated. Then they go back to their farms for planting or harvesting. They can be called to serve repeatedly from ages seventeen to sixty. Therefore, a man can serve in the army as many as fifteen times in his lifetime. Only full citizens, those who own land, can serve in the army. Poor people aren't allowed the privilege of being soldiers. Romans prize military service—the highest honors and awards are in the military. Romans also feel that landowners have more of a stake in the well-being of the country, and landowners can afford the costs of serving better than landless poor people can.

Since there are fewer farmers these days, there are fewer men to serve in the army. Over time, the shortage of men may get worse, as there are more and more poor, landless people. The problem is compounded because armies are now being used to occupy some of the distant lands won by Rome in the Punic Wars. Soldiers don't return home for years, rather than for just a few months. Many men don't want to do that. Serving in these faraway places is very unpopular. There have been several riots against the draft recently.

#### **Decision: Proposed Reforms to Help the Army**

Which of these reforms, if any, will you support? You can choose more than one proposal.

- A. Draft everyone, rich or poor, into the army for a specific length of time—for example, two to ten years. The government will provide the equipment and pay. The army would become a career for some people.
- B. Allow poor, landless people in the army and have their generals give them land at the end of their time in the army. The promise of land will attract poor people to the army, which will relieve the shortage of soldiers.
- C. Do nothing.

# OUTCOMES OF ROMAN REFORMS

(Complex)

Here is what the government chose to do for each of the situations described in Handout 1:

## ■ Topic A: Small Farmers Are Getting Hurt

After great debate, the government decided on Option B, taking public land (land that had been given by the government) on large farms in excess of 300 acres and giving it to poor people in farms of 30 acres each. The people who owned the large farms, including many senators, were very angry about having to give up the land over 300 acres. Although many of the farms were bought by rich people recently, other owners had worked the land for decades, so they felt the government had no right to take some of the land away from them. Rich people in the Senate went so far as to kill the two people who had proposed the reforms.

Despite all the difficulties, the excess land was taken from large farms and given as small farms to many poor people. Some of these new landowners weren't successful and sold the land to other farmers, but most of those who received land had been farmers in the past, so they were able to make a living. Overall, as a result of this reform, poverty was reduced, and Citizens of the Roman Republic became more equal economically. Since there were more landowners, more men were available to serve in the army.

The violent reaction by some senators to this law caused division within Roman society. Many poor people felt the Senate represented rich people, not all of Roman society. The violence by senators made many Romans lose respect for the Senate. With less respect for representative government, people were more likely to support non-democratic leaders, such as emperors. Unfortunately, these divisions contributed to the decline of the Roman Republic.

Option A (the government's taking any land in excess of 300 acres) would have been much more radical and would not have worked. In Option B, the government had a justification for taking land, because the government had given the land to people. There was no such justification for Option A—it would have been taking land from rich people who had bought it and worked on it. The opposition of so many rich and powerful people to such a proposal, moreover, would have made this option extremely unlikely to pass the Senate.

Doing nothing (Option C) would have allowed the existing situation to continue. The rich farmers would have dominated farming and there would have been many poor people.

## ■ Topic B: Keeping Allies in Time of War

At first, the government decided against Option A (allowing the people from all Italian allies to become full Roman citizens), and the person who proposed it was assassinated. When the government decided not to grant them citizenship, the Italians revolted against Rome. After several

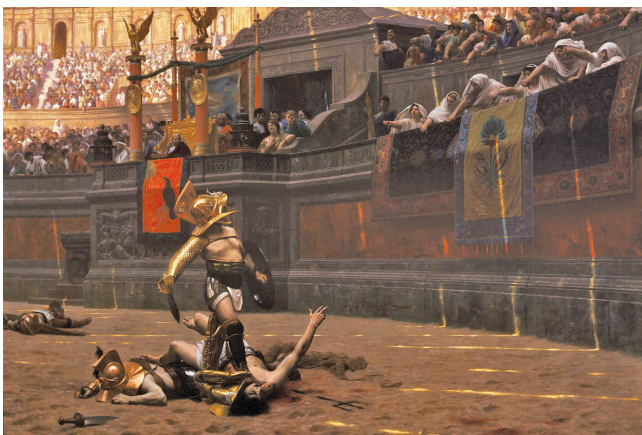


years of fighting, the Senate voted in favor of citizenship for all Italians who wished it. After this reform, allies had much more incentive to fight for Rome, as they were included in the government of Rome. Almost all of Italy became unified under Rome, and the army increased in size. This reform worked out well for Rome.

Option B (destroying a city to send a message) was done on a regular basis by other groups in ancient history, such as the Greeks and the Egyptians. When a power destroyed a city, it did send a message to other groups to be careful not to antagonize that power. Most historians feel that Rome's method here of making allies citizens (Option A) was more effective, however. Citizenship made allies truly feel loyal to Rome. They were willing to fight for a positive reason. The cruelty in Option B would have made people stay as allies out of fear. It could work, but allies would have been more likely to change sides when Rome was clearly losing a war. Alliances based on loyalty have proved to be more lasting than alliances based on fear.

### ■ Topic C: Poverty in Rome

The government of Rome tried all four of these proposals at different times. In terms of food, it started with Option B, to store and sell grain (for bread) to keep grain prices lower and more stable than they would have been otherwise. The government's buying the grain to store and sell interfered with the free market for grain, but overall this proposal worked to reduce shortages and prevent huge increases in prices. It did not, however, aim to help the poor in particular—most poor people still wouldn't have been able to afford grain, even at the lower prices.



Gladiator combat (by Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1872).

Later, the government decided to give grain away (Option A) and increase entertainment (Option C). The free grain was for any citizen, but it was eventually targeted at helping poor people. A famous saying about Rome claims that the government provided the ordinary people with “bread and circuses” (entertainment). The people were kept loyal to the government because they received free food and entertainment. They became more dependent on the government. The government could do, and did do, some

terrible things, but the people didn't rise up in revolt partly because they got bread and circuses from the government. The entertainment included combat between gladiators (to the death) and chariot races in coliseums and racetracks around the empire.

The government had an ongoing program of building (Option D), which kept thousands of people employed. The amount of building was especially great under Julius Caesar. The Roman government could do so much building because there was a great deal of wealth flowing into Rome from the other parts of the empire around the Mediterranean Sea. Even with all that wealth,



many economists believe Rome would have been better off letting private companies and individuals use the wealth, rather than taxing people and having the government use it to build structures and employ people. These economists argue that more people would have been employed through the free market. Government contracts led to corruption and mismanagement of some of the money. On the other hand, the building of roads by the government was a definite boon for Rome. It increased trade, which boosted the economy, and it allowed Roman armies to move more quickly to where they were needed. Likewise, building aqueducts for clean water and sewers for disposing of waste improved sanitation, thus increasing the health of the Roman people. Even the construction of large buildings didn't seem to have a great negative effect, since there was economic growth and Romans in general were more prosperous than any other people in the ancient world (or possibly any people in the world up to the eighteenth century).



The Appian Way, a famous Roman road that has lasted more than two thousand years.



A Roman aqueduct, used for transporting clean water.

## ■ Topic D: Shortage of Soldiers in the Army

The government chose Option B, eliminating the property requirement for serving in the army. Later, under pressure from soldiers, the Senate passed a law giving land to soldiers without property at the end of military campaigns. In the short run, the reform did solve the problem of recruiting men for the army. Poor people in large numbers signed up for the army with the hope of getting land. In the long run, however, the reform created a different problem. Soldiers' loyalty, which had been to serving the Republic of Rome, was now transferred to serving their own general, since the general approved the land transfer to them. This reform was one reason for the fall of the Republic. Several Roman generals used the loyalty of their own soldiers to overthrow the power of the Senate and set up dictatorships. There were other causes for the fall of the Republic, but this was an important cause.

Option A, setting up a fixed time period for soldiers, would have set up a professional standing army. With some people serving for years as a career, the army could count on professional soldiers. Although the Roman government didn't choose this option formally, the occupation of areas of the empire for long periods of time led to a professional standing army. As with Option B, Roman generals used a professional army to overthrow the Senate and take power themselves.

Doing nothing (Option C) may have done the least harms given how badly Options A and B turned out.



# TIBERIUS GRACCHUS

Excerpt from “Tiberius Gracchus,” by Plutarch (a Roman historian). Written about 75 CE, about two hundred years after Tiberius Gracchus lived.

Of the land which the Romans gained by conquest from their neighbors, part they sold publicly, and turned the remainder into common; this common land they assigned to such of the citizens as were poor and indigent, for which they were to pay only a small acknowledgment into the public treasury. But when the wealthy men began to offer larger rents, and drive the poorer people out, it was enacted by law that no person whatever should enjoy more than five hundred acres of ground. This act for some time checked the avarice of the richer, and was of great assistance to the poorer people, who retained under it their respective proportions of ground, as they had been formerly rented by them. Afterwards the rich men of the neighborhood contrived to get these lands again into their possession, under other people's names, and at last would not stick to claim most of them publicly in their own. The poor, who were thus deprived of their farms, were no longer either ready, as they had formerly been, to serve in war or careful in the education of their children; insomuch that in a short time there were comparatively few freemen remaining in all Italy, which swarmed with workhouses full of foreign-born slaves. These the rich men employed in cultivating their ground of which they dispossessed the citizens. Caius Laelius, the intimate friend of Scipio, undertook to reform this abuse; but meeting with opposition from men of authority, and fearing a disturbance, he soon desisted, and received the name of the Wise or the Prudent, both which meanings belong to the Latin word *Sapiens*.

But Tiberius [Gracchus], being elected tribune of the people, entered upon that design [for land reform] without delay. . . .

. . . Others again say that Spurius Postumius was the chief occasion [for land reform]. He was a man of the same age with Tiberius, and his rival for reputation as a public speaker; and when Tiberius, at his return from the campaign, found him to have got far beyond him in fame and influence, and to be much looked up to, he thought to outdo him, by attempting a popular enterprise of this difficulty and of such great consequence. But his brother Caius has left it us in writing, that when Tiberius went through Tuscany to Numantia, and found the country almost depopulated, there being hardly any free husbandmen or shepherds, but for the most part only barbarian, imported slaves, he then first conceived the course of policy which in the sequel proved so fatal to his family. Though it is also most certain that the people themselves chiefly excited his zeal and determination in the prosecution of it, by setting up writings upon the porches, walls, and monuments, calling upon him to reinstate the poor citizens in their former possessions.

... Never did any law appear more moderate and gentle, especially being enacted against such great oppression and avarice. For they who ought to have been severely punished for transgressing the former laws, and should at least have lost all their titles to such lands which they had unjustly usurped, were notwithstanding to receive a price for quitting their unlawful claims, and giving up their lands to those fit owners [small farmers who had lost their land] who stood in need of help. But though this reformation was managed with so much tenderness that, all the former transactions being passed over, the people were only thankful to prevent abuses of the like nature for the future, yet, on the other hand, the moneyed men, and those of great estates, were exasperated, through their covetous feelings against the law itself, and against the lawgiver, through anger and party-spirit. They therefore endeavored to seduce the people, declaring that Tiberius was designing a general redivision of lands, to overthrow the government, and cut all things into confusion.

Source: Plutarch, "Tiberius Gracchus," in *Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men*, vol. 3, trans. John Dryden (1887; Google Books), 111.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to the author (Plutarch), what caused the problem that led to the suggested reform by Tiberius Gracchus?
2. What motives did Tiberius Gracchus have for proposing the land reform, according to Plutarch?
3. What does Plutarch think of the land reform proposal by Tiberius Gracchus?
4. How reliable is Plutarch as a source?

# LESSON 6: CLEOPATRA IN EGYPT

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## Teacher's Guide

### INTRODUCTION

#### ■ Overview

The story of Antony and Cleopatra (as well as Julius Caesar and Cleopatra) is a tale that has been retold many times in plays and films. In this lesson, students have the opportunity to match wits with the fabled queen in three tricky situations. In the process, students learn about the workings of the Roman Empire and the limited choices open to weaker client states.

#### ■ Vocabulary

- Cleopatra—queen of Egypt
- Ptolemy—a family of Greeks who ruled Egypt for generations
- Julius Caesar—dictator of Rome, who was assassinated
- Octavian—first emperor of Rome, who came to be known as Augustus
- Marc Antony—co-leader of Rome who was defeated by Octavian in a civil war
- Battle of Actium—the final battle in the civil war, in which Octavian defeated Marc Antony

#### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Identify assumptions/emotions
- Ask questions about context
- Identify realistic goals
- Generate ethical options
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options



## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON (50 minutes)

### ■ Procedure

Distribute Handout 1 and instruct students to read it and decide what choices they will make for the three problems. Have them pair up and discuss their responses to the first point of conflict with Cleopatra's brother, Topic A. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, remind students to look at that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before deciding. Bring the class back together and have students vote on which option they would choose. Have students make arguments for and against the various options and then have them re-vote. Use the board to record student votes and arguments.

Repeat the same process for Topic B, regarding Cassius, and Topic C, on meeting Marc Antony at his headquarters.

After each topic has been voted on, discussed, and voted on a second time, distribute Handout 2 and have students reflect on what they learned from these outcomes for homework. What do they think of Cleopatra's decision making? How well did they do in making these decisions? What did they notice about Cleopatra's motives in decision making and how she went about accomplishing her goals? When they made their decisions, did students assume the same goals that the historical Cleopatra seems to have had?

*Option for Primary Source:* After students have made their decisions and discussed the outcomes, have them read the primary source (by Plutarch) in Handout 3 and answer the questions.

### Possible Answers

1. In what ways did Cleopatra win the admiration of Antony, according to Plutarch?

*Through careful preparation to show off Egypt's wealth and her beauty, by adapting to his type of conversation, and through her beautiful voice.*

2. What is your impression of Cleopatra from this reading?

*Cleopatra is very impressive: She is smart and talented, as shown by the many languages she speaks. She prepares everything carefully to create an atmosphere to win Antony's favor.*

3. How reliable is Plutarch as a source?

*He is a historian, but he wrote more than one hundred years after the event, and, based on his description, he is unusually biased against Marc Antony. He says that Antony was bewitched by Cleopatra's charms. This is the propaganda that Octavian used to prove that Antony was no longer loyal to Rome. While it is possible that Antony was totally taken in by Cleopatra, it is more likely that Plutarch was taken in by Octavian's propaganda. Without confirming evidence, his description of the power relationship between Antony and Cleopatra is not reliable. On the other*

*hand, Plutarch's admiration of Cleopatra's talents confirms that she was, indeed, a remarkable person and a strong leader.*

## ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students: “What did you learn about yourself in this process, and which **P-A-G-E** questions might you need to remember to ask next time?” Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these decisions as Cleopatra? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

Ask students whether the decisions made by Cleopatra were more the result of historical forces or decisions made by an individual leader.

### Possible Answer

*Cleopatra was clearly a strong personality who generated creative options for solving problems. On the other hand, those arguing that historical forces were more important would argue that the lack of military power of Egypt compared to Rome was the most important factor shaping Cleopatra's decisions. She may have been a unique person, but historical forces limited her choices.*

## ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students to think of modern leaders of countries with weak militaries. After a few names are generated, ask them how much freedom these leaders have to make decisions, both internally and in foreign policy. How much does their lack of power limit their choices?

## ■ Troubleshooting

It may be difficult for some students to keep track of the context of a given decision as the problems change. Use the maps to help students visualize the various situations. You could also have students summarize each of the problems and what the options are.

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON (20 minutes)

Chose only one or two of the topics. For example, if you choose Topic A on the conflict with Ptolemy XIII, give Handout 1 for homework but tell students that the class will only be discussing Topic A. In class ask for a show of hands for options A, B, C, and D. Discuss students' reasons for five minutes. Distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes, and have students write their reactions to the outcomes of Topic A for homework.

## TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handout 2.)

In regard to Cleopatra's decisions, it is difficult to separate the historical events from the mythology. I followed the interpretation by Goldsworthy (see sources) for this lesson more closely than the other sources. The biography of Cleopatra by Schiff (see sources) is beautifully written and entertaining to read. It is also carefully researched. However, the author engages in a bit more speculation (for example, describing meetings in great detail for which there is scant evidence) than does Goldsworthy. I therefore used less material from that source.

### ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

P = Problem

***Identify any underlying problem(s).***

**Consider other points of view.**

**What are my assumptions? emotions?**

A = Ask for information (about)

**Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)**

Reliability of sources

Historical analogies

G = Goals

**What are my main goals? Are they realistic?**

***Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?***

E = Effects

**Predict unintended consequences.**

***Play out the options. What could go wrong?***

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Identify underlying problems:** The underlying problem is a key to this decision-making situation. Egypt was militarily weak compared to Rome. That weakness meant that Cleopatra was very limited in her options. If Romans needed aid, then she had a chance to influence events, but she couldn't direct the flow of events. She made the best of her limited options for staying in power.
- **Consider other points of view:** Students should consider how their decisions as Cleopatra would look to the Roman public. It was easy for Octavian to argue that Cleopatra had

ensnared Marc Antony with her wily female charm. Octavian used this propaganda to convince Romans that Marc Antony was no longer loyal to Rome.

- **Identify assumptions or emotions:** Cleopatra assumed or at least hoped that her personal charm and beauty would influence events in her favor, and she was correct in each case. Note that emotions played a significant role in the decisions of Julius Caesar and Marc Antony. Students should be aware of their own assumptions and emotions.
- **Ask questions about context:**
  - How well guarded is Alexandria by Ptolemy XIII's forces? Is there a reasonable chance to get in to talk with Julius Caesar?  
*He has soldiers in the city, but it is impossible to guard the whole waterfront as well as land approaches to a large city. In addition, if you go in disguise, the guards may not notice. After all, no one would expect such a daring move.*
  - Can I trust my brother?  
*Are you kidding? No.*
  - Which side is stronger in the civil war between Octavian/Antony and Brutus/Cassius?  
*The army of Octavian/Antony is somewhat stronger, but the navy is weaker. Only Antony has real combat experience, so the Octavian/Antony side has an advantage of leadership. Antony's experience is limited, however, as he was always following orders from Julius Caesar—he's never led an army into battle on his own. The lack of leadership on both sides makes it very difficult to predict which side will win.*
- **Identify realistic goals:** According to many historians, Cleopatra identified her goal as staying in power. Since she accomplished her goal, staying in power for eighteen years, it seems it was a realistic goal. According to other historians, she also brought stability to Egypt in a turbulent time. If maintaining her country's stability was a goal, Cleopatra accomplished that as well.
- **Generate ethical options:** Cleopatra had one member of her family killed and probably other members killed as well. Students should consider the morality of these actions.
- **Predict unintended consequences:** While the underlying military weakness of Egypt meant that Cleopatra could not control the long-term outcomes of her decisions, she should have (and may have) considered the consequences of involvement in Rome's civil wars. Once Octavian got the upper hand in the civil war, Cleopatra was bound to go down with Marc Antony. In some sense, Cleopatra was caught in the inevitable trap of the Roman civil war.
- **Play out options:** Cleopatra was excellent at playing out the options. She looked at situations and sized up how she could get what she wanted and accomplish her goals. She arranged her meetings to secure the most positive effects for her side and herself personally, including preparing elaborate flower arrangements and theatrical displays. She was masterful at stage managing short-term events to influence outcomes.

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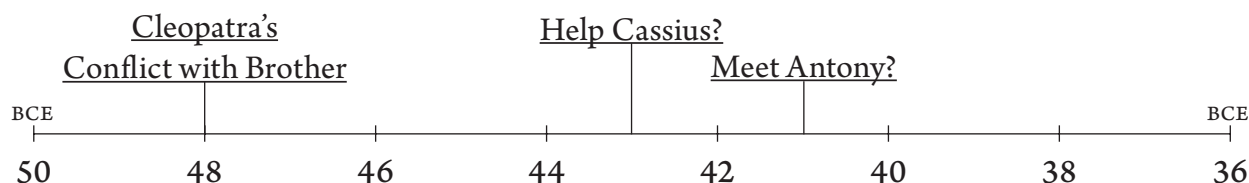
# LESSON 6: CLEOPATRA IN EGYPT

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## VOCABULARY

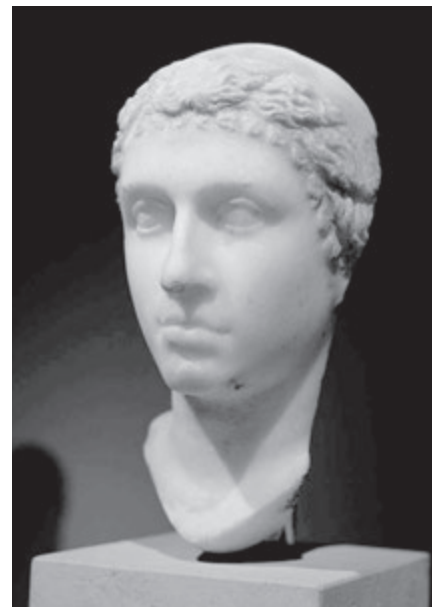
- Cleopatra—queen of Egypt
- Ptolemy—a family of Greeks who ruled Egypt for generations
- Julius Caesar—dictator of Rome, who was assassinated
- Octavian—first emperor of Rome, who came to be known as Augustus
- Marc Antony—co-leader of Rome, who was defeated by Octavian in a civil war
- Battle of Actium—the final battle in the civil war, in which Octavian defeated Marc Antony

# CIVIL WAR IN EGYPT AND ROME



## ■ Topic A: Conflict with Ptolemy XIII

You are Cleopatra, queen of Egypt in 48 BCE, but your hold on power in Egypt is in trouble. Three years ago, you and your brother, Ptolemy XIII, were both chosen in your father's will to rule Egypt. Your brother is younger than you—at the time of the will he was only eleven years old and you were eighteen. You asserted yourself and made decisions alone, not including your brother in them. However, when he got older, he and his followers fought back with the support of the army. He forced you out of Egypt. You went to Syria (see Map A), raised an army (by promising wealth if victorious), and marched back into Egypt. The problem is that your army is weaker than the army supporting your brother. To make matters worse, your brother's army is in an excellent defensive position on a mountain. Your army can't get around your brother's army, so you are stuck.



Cleopatra.

Some of your soldiers have given up and left for home. In short, your brother is on the throne in Egypt's capital city, and you are an outsider trying to get back in power.

Your relatives, the Ptolemy family, have ruled Egypt for nine generations, even though your ancestors are Greek, not Egyptian. Unfortunately, the members of your family do not get along very well. Family fights over who will rule Egypt have been frequent. There have been several civil wars caused by rifts between family members. Members of the Ptolemy family have had their brothers, sisters, children, and parents poisoned, stabbed, and strangled. You live in fear that you will be killed by your brother, younger sister, or youngest brother. In these family fights, one of the Ptolemies has often asked Rome for help against another Ptolemy, because Rome is much more powerful militarily than Egypt is. At the same time, Rome depends on Egypt for wheat, which means you have some bargaining power.

You have received news that Julius Caesar, the Roman dictator, has landed in the Egyptian capital city with a small force of soldiers. He has decided that the civil war between you and your brother should stop and that the two of you should again share the leadership of Egypt. He wants peace in Egypt so that the Roman Empire can prosper. Your brother opposes the decision by

Caesar. He doesn't see why he should share leadership with you when he already has control of Egypt by himself. He has ordered some of his army to fight Caesar's soldiers. Caesar's forces are outnumbered by your brother's forces, but more Roman soldiers might come to Egypt at any time. If they do, Caesar will take control of the situation in Egypt, forcing a settlement.



At this point, you have an important decision to make in the civil war with your brother over rule in Egypt. Which of these options will you choose?

- A. Give up the civil war and stay outside Egypt. Your side can't win against your brother's stronger army, and some of your soldiers are going home. Your army is melting away.
- B. Smuggle yourself into Egypt's capital city to talk with Caesar. It is a daring idea, but if you can avoid your brother's guards and talk with Caesar, you might be able to persuade him to support you in the civil war.
- C. Accept the proposal by Caesar to share power with your brother. Maybe your brother will agree if you agree to Caesar's proposal.
- D. Join your brother against Caesar. Use what is left of your army to support your brother in his fight against Caesar.

## ■ Topic B: Help Cassius?

The year is now 43 BCE. You survived the earlier conflict with your brother five years ago when Julius Caesar supported you against your brother. You became Caesar's girlfriend and had a son by him. Unfortunately for you, Julius Caesar was killed by some senators about a year ago. You returned to Egypt. Now a civil war has broken out in Rome between two of the men (Cassius and Brutus) who killed Julius Caesar and two men (Octavian and Marc Antony) who want to get revenge for his murder and reunite Rome.

Cassius is near Egypt (see Map B) and demands that you to send him money, wheat, and ships to help him and Brutus to fight against Octavian and Antony. He is located in the area where your younger sister is, so he may be thinking of replacing you as leader of Egypt with your sister. If you don't send the supplies, Cassius may take over Egypt, since Egypt doesn't have a strong army. He has attacked and taken over Rhodes when its leaders refused to provide him with supplies. On the other hand, it would be risky for Cassius to send an army to Egypt when he might be attacked by Octavian or Antony at any time. Moreover, if you take the side of Octavian and Antony, you'll be supporting the people who want to avenge the killers of your boyfriend.





**Decision**

What position will you take in this Roman Civil War?

- A. Support Cassius and Brutus. Their forces are closer to Egypt, so they are a direct threat to your rule of the country. You need to eliminate the direct threat first.
- B. Support Octavian and Antony to get revenge against those who killed your boyfriend.
- C. Stay out of it. If you choose a side that loses, you'll be killed or at least be taken out of power. That's no good.

### ■ Topic C: Meet Antony?

The year is 41 BCE. Last year, the forces of Antony and Octavian completely defeated the armies of Cassius and Brutus. Two years ago, you tried to stay out of the civil war between Cassius/Brutus and Antony/Octavian. Eventually, you decided that it was time to support Antony by sending ships to him. Unfortunately, one of your governors sent food to help Cassius, and your ships to help Antony got turned back and damaged in a storm. As far as Antony knows, you helped his enemy. He has called for you to come to his military headquarters in the city of Tarsus (see Map C), but you don't know what he wants. The purpose of the meeting may be to discuss your help for his enemy. It could be dangerous for you to go. If he had you killed, he could replace you with your sister as leader of Egypt. She is in the same area as the headquarters, so he may have talked with her. On the other hand, Antony very much needs wheat and other supplies for his army, and Egypt is the wealthiest economic area in the Mediterranean and most likely to supply the army. You, personally, are one of the richest people in the world, so Antony is especially interested in your views on helping him.

**Decision**

Will you travel to Antony's headquarters to talk with him?

- A. No. It is too dangerous.
- B. Yes. You will go to his headquarters and tell him that you want to stay out of Roman military and political affairs.
- C. Yes. You will go to his headquarters and use your charm to get him to support your quest for unthreatened power in Egypt in exchange for your supplies for his army.

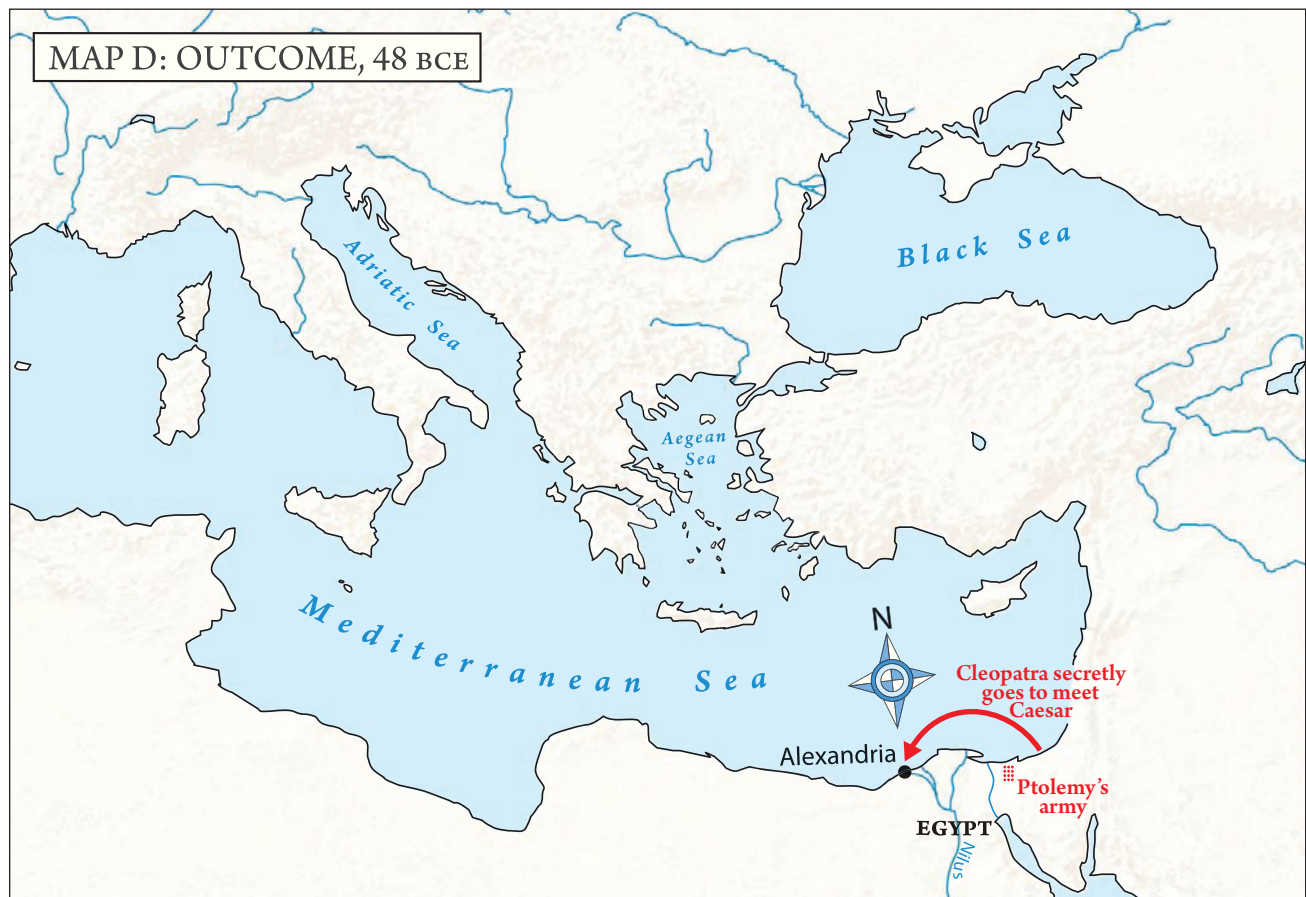




# OUTCOMES OF CLEOPATRA'S DECISIONS

## ■ Topic A: Conflict with Ptolemy XIII

Since her army was becoming so weak, Cleopatra chose to go to talk with Julius Caesar (Option B). She smuggled herself into the capital city of Alexandria, either with a hood over her head or in a laundry sack that a servant carried into Caesar's headquarters (see Map D). The servant opened the sack and Cleopatra came out. She was pretty and Caesar was attracted to her. He supported her in her conflict with her brother. When more Roman soldiers arrived in Alexandria, Caesar defeated the army of Cleopatra's brother. During the battle, Ptolemy XIII was probably killed. Caesar made Cleopatra and her youngest brother (Ptolemy XIV) the rulers of Egypt. Cleopatra saved her leadership position in Egypt through her daring, secret meeting with Julius Caesar. She became pregnant and had Julius Caesar's son as a result of this secret meeting. Ptolemy XIV was too young to cause trouble at that point, but he could become a threat to Cleopatra when he got older. Fortunately for Cleopatra, he died mysteriously that same year. Many historians believe she had him poisoned.





Caesar gives the Egyptian throne to Cleopatra.

understood that her brother, Ptolemy XIII, wouldn't agree to share power with her (Option C), as Caesar had ordered. Even if Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII agreed to share power, the civil war would restart as soon as Caesar left Egypt. Siding with Ptolemy XIII (Option D) against Caesar would have been a bad idea for the same reasons explained above about sharing power with Ptolemy XIII. Even if Cleopatra and Ptolemy XIII defeated Caesar, her brother would start fighting her again as soon as it was clear that Caesar had lost. Of course, defeating a Roman army would probably have led to Roman revenge against Egypt as well.

## ■ Topic B: Help Cassius?

As mentioned above, Cleopatra tried to stay out of the Roman civil war between Octavian/Antony and Cassius/Brutus (Option C). Cassius, who was leading an army that was close to Egypt, demanded aid from Egypt. Cleopatra told Cassius that Egypt was in the midst of a drought (which was true), so she couldn't send help until later (which was not true). She was stalling for time. It was a risky decision, since he could have invaded Egypt for not supplying aid. The stalling worked, since Cassius had to march his army away from Egypt to prepare to fight against Octavian/Antony. One of her governors gave supplies to Cassius, but this wasn't her decision. When Cassius was no longer threatening Egypt, Cleopatra switched to Option B. She may have felt that the forces of Octavian/Antony were stronger than those of Cassius/Brutus, or she may have been hoping to get revenge on the murderers of her boyfriend. She sent ships to help Antony, but the ships were turned back and damaged by a storm.

Once Cleopatra had control of Egypt, she stabilized the economy, which experienced greater economic growth. Egypt became more prosperous. Cleopatra also governed well. After 150 years of regular revolts in Egypt, there were no revolts under Cleopatra's reign. She enjoyed the support of her people. When there was a drought five years later, Cleopatra reduced taxes, opened the government granaries (storage buildings), and gave the wheat to people for free. She helped the country get through the hard times.

Cleopatra rejected the other options. She was very ambitious, so she never considered giving up and living outside Egypt (Option A). She also



## ■ Topic C: Meet Antony?

Even though Cleopatra chose to stay neutral in the Roman civil war and later help Antony, it may have appeared to Antony that Cleopatra had actually helped his enemy, Cassius. After all, the only evidence he had was of Egyptian aid to Cassius by one of Cleopatra's generals. Antony requested that Cleopatra meet him at his headquarters in Tarsus. Cleopatra decided to meet him, explain what had really happened, and win his support to protect her as the leader of Egypt. As it had been with Julius Caesar, she felt that she could charm Antony over to her side. Antony needed financial support for his army, so she showed off the wealth of Egypt by hosting a luxurious party for him. He also became her boyfriend, and, as she had by Julius Caesar, she became pregnant and eventually had twins by Antony. Historians believe Antony and Cleopatra were in love with each other—they didn't just make an alliance. Cleopatra had the governor who gave aid to Cassius killed. In exchange, Antony had Cleopatra's sister killed. With her brothers and sister all dead, Cleopatra was much more secure as leader of Egypt. Antony made her queen not of only Egypt but also of Cyprus and other areas, making the country much larger.



Cleopatra meets Marc Antony at Tarsus.



Statue of Octavian, eventually called Augustus.

Nevertheless, there was a fatal flaw in the alliance of Antony and Cleopatra. A few years after the alliance, a new Roman civil war broke out between Antony and Octavian. This time Cleopatra was clearly committed to one side (Antony) in the civil war. Octavian used Antony's commitment to Cleopatra as propaganda to show to the Roman people that Antony was more loyal to Egypt than to Rome. He said that Cleopatra was controlling Antony, who was spending a lot of time in Egypt under her spell. Octavian argued that Antony had given a great deal of Roman land to Egypt, wanted to move the Roman capital to Egypt, and wanted to be buried in Egypt. The propaganda about the evil influence of Cleopatra on Antony helped Octavian recruit a large army to fight Antony. Despite all the aid that Cleopatra gave to Antony's forces in the form of food and hundreds of ships, Octavian won the decisive Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. Antony and Cleopatra were doomed, and, as Roman forces closed in on them the next year, they committed suicide.



Battle of Actium.

Octavian took over Egypt and made it part of the Roman Empire. He used the wealth from Egypt to pay off his soldiers and to construct new buildings and monuments in Rome. With the victory of Octavian, now known as Augustus, the decades of civil war came to an end. Augustus ruled as emperor over the whole Roman world. He had control of the Roman government, thereby ending the Roman Republic. He also brought peace to the Roman world that would last for hundreds of years.

Cleopatra lost her life in the civil war, but she had held power in Egypt for eighteen years. According to some historians, her long reign helped provide stability and prosperity for Egypt. Other historians argue that her decisions were focused on keeping power for herself, not on the welfare of ordinary Egyptians. They point to her cruel murders of her siblings (brothers and sister) as evidence of her focus on power. The legend of the love affair between Antony and Cleopatra—rather than the cruelty and murders—lives on in movies and plays.

The story of Cleopatra teaches us about the limited options of weaker countries. Egypt did not have a strong army, and despite the Roman need for wealth from Egypt, Cleopatra's country was dependent on Rome. Caesar, Antony, Octavian, and other Romans made the most important decisions. Cleopatra was largely reacting to the choices of others. However, given her limited options, she made some clever decisions that helped her preserve her power for years.



# ANTONY

This is an excerpt from “Antony,” written by the Roman historian Plutarch in 75 CE—about one hundred years after the events described.

Such being his [Antony’s] temper, the last and crowning mischief that could befall him came in the love of Cleopatra, to awaken and kindle to fury passions that as yet lay still and dormant in his nature, and to stifle and finally corrupt any elements that yet made resistance in him of goodness and a sound judgment. He fell into the snare thus. When making preparation for the Parthian war, he sent to command her to make her personal appearance in Cilicia, to answer an accusation that she had given great assistance, in the late wars, to Cassius. . . . She had some faith in the words of Dellius, but more in her own attractions; which, having formerly recommended her to Caesar and the young Cnaeus Pompey, she did not doubt might prove yet more successful with Antony. Their acquaintance was with her when a girl, young and ignorant of the world, but she was to meet Antony in the time of life when women’s beauty is most splendid, and their intellects are in full maturity. She made great preparation for her journey, of money, gifts, and ornaments of value, such as so wealthy a kingdom might afford, but she brought with her her surest hopes in her own magic arts and charms.

She received several letters, both from Antony and from his friends, to summon her, but she took no account of these orders; and at last, as if in mockery of them, she came sailing up the river Cydnus, in a barge with gilded stern and outspread sails of purple, while oars of silver beat time to the music of flutes and fifes and harps. She herself lay all along under a canopy of cloth of gold, dressed as Venus in a picture, and beautiful young boys, like painted Cupids, stood on each side to fan her. Her maids were dressed like sea nymphs and graces, some steering at the rudder, some working at the ropes. The perfumes diffused themselves from the vessel to the shore. . . . On her arrival, Antony sent to invite her to supper. She thought it fitter he should come to her; so, willing to show his good-humor and courtesy, he complied, and went. He found the preparations to receive him magnificent beyond expression, but nothing so admirable as the great number of lights; for on a sudden there was let down altogether so great a number of branches with lights in them so ingeniously disposed, some in squares, and some in circles, that the whole thing was a spectacle that has seldom been equalled for beauty.

The next day, Antony invited her to supper, and was very desirous to outdo her as well in magnificence as contrivance; but he found he was altogether beaten in both, and was so well convinced of it that he was himself the first to jest and mock at his poverty of wit and his rustic awkwardness. She, perceiving that his raillery was broad and gross, and savored more of the soldier than the courtier, rejoined in the same taste, and fell into it at once, without any sort of reluctance or reserve. For her actual beauty, it is said, was not in itself

so remarkable that none could be compared with her, or that no one could see her without being struck by it, but the contact of her presence, if you lived with her, was irresistible; the attraction of her person, joining with the charm of her conversation, and the character that attended all she said or did, was something bewitching. It was a pleasure merely to hear the sound of her voice, with which, like an instrument of many strings, she could pass from one language to another; so that there were few of the barbarian nations that she answered by an interpreter; to most of them she spoke herself, as to the Ethiopians, Troglodytes, Hebrews, Arabians, Syrians, Medes, Parthians, and many others, whose language she had learnt; which was all the more surprising because most of the kings, her predecessors, scarcely gave themselves the trouble to acquire the Egyptian tongue, and several of them quite abandoned the Macedonian.

Antony was so captivated by her that, while Fulvia his wife maintained his quarrels in Rome against Caesar by actual force of arms, and the Parthian troops, commanded by Labienus (the king's generals having made him commander-in-chief), were assembled in Mesopotamia, and ready to enter Syria, he could yet suffer himself to be carried away by her to Alexandria, there to keep holiday, like a boy, in play and diversion, squandering and fooling away in enjoyments that most costly, as Antiphon says, of all valuables, time. . . .

Source: Plutarch. "Antony," in *Plutarch's Lives of Illustrious Men*, vol. 5, trans. John Dryden (1887; Google Books), 177-80.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. In what ways did Cleopatra win the admiration of Antony, according to Plutarch?
2. What is your impression of Cleopatra from this reading?
3. How reliable is Plutarch as a source?

# LESSON 7: THE HAN DYNASTY IN CHINA

## Teacher's Guide

### INTRODUCTION

#### ■ Overview

The Han Dynasty unified China under a government that commanded the loyalty of officials and citizens because of generally recognized standards of behavior, rather than simply because of harshness and punishment. The centralized government became respectable, despite many mistakes, and the system remained in place for more than 2000 years. So important was the Han Dynasty that even today the largest ethnic group in China is referred to as Han Chinese. In this lesson, students get an opportunity to match decisions with several Han leaders.

#### ■ Vocabulary

- Han Dynasty—the Chinese government from 202 BCE to 220 CE
- Dynasty—a line of hereditary rulers of a country
- Merchant—a person who buys and sells products
- Confucius—Chinese philosopher and teacher
- Interest—the money charged for a loan
- Caravan—a group of traders traveling together
- Amnesty—a pardon for people who have been convicted of a crime
- Merit—the worthiness of any individual (for a position or other advantage) based on qualifications or actions
- Civil service exam—a test taken to become a government official
- Silk Road—the name for the group of trade routes that linked China with Central Asia and Europe

#### ■ Decision-Making Skills Emphasized

- Identify underlying problems
- Consider other points of view
- Recognize assumptions
- Establish realistic goals
- Generate ethical options
- Predict unintended consequences
- Play out options

## LESSON PLAN A: IN-DEPTH LESSON (50 minutes)

There are two sets of handouts for this lesson. Handouts 1–2 are labeled “Short” and are targeted at middle school students, while Handouts 3–4 are labeled “Complex” and are geared for high school students. The handouts are labeled “Short” and “Complex” rather than “Middle School” and “High School” in order to give teachers more flexibility in using the handouts without stigma (allowing the use of the short handouts with high school students, for example). Handout 1 (Short) has five problems from Han China for students to address, while Handout 2 (Short) has the outcomes for those five problems. Handout 3 (Complex) has the same five problems, but they are longer and more involved, and Handout 4 (Complex) has the outcomes for the more complicated problems from Handout 3. Handout 5 is the primary source, which can be used for either middle school or high school students. The middle school handouts are shorter, are less complex, and contain more cues for aiding reading comprehension. The sections “Reflecting on Decision Making,” “Putting Decisions into Historical Context,” “Connecting to Today,” and “Troubleshooting” are for both middle school and high school.

### ■ Problem (Short)—Proposed Reforms for the Han Dynasty (*Handouts 1–2*)

Tell students that in this lesson, they are going to make some important decisions as leaders of the Han Dynasty in China, from 202 BCE to 220 CE. You might want to make sure everyone understands BCE versus CE. Ask them what *dynasty* means (a line of hereditary rulers of a country). Some students may have heard of a sports dynasty. It is the same idea: One group or team rules or dominates a country or sport over a long period of time. Tell students that they will not be making decisions for any one Han leader, because the decisions were made by several different leaders. The focus in the lesson is on the policy decisions, not on the names of the leaders or the dates of the decisions.

Before they can make these decisions, students may need to review information about China. If you have already taught students about the geography and previous history of ancient China, activate their prior knowledge by asking about those topics. If not, you might want to show a map of China and ask a few questions. There is no need for students to know the previous history of China, as the only important element is that the area had not been unified until recently.

Distribute Handout 1 and have students read Topic A and the options. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? Who is Confucius? What are the options for this problem? Are there any other questions? Have students individually decide what they will do. If you use the **P-A-G-E** sheet for making decisions, encourage students to look at that sheet to remind themselves of the decision-making skills before deciding. Now have students pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the four options. Next, ask students to make arguments for and against the options, and then have them re-vote. Use the board to record student votes and arguments. You might want to have students look once again at the **P-A-G-E** sheet as they make their arguments. In the course of discussion, students may suggest a fifth option. That's great! It

means that students are not being limited by the options presented. The best solution in difficult decision situations is often one that is not among the original options. Just add the fifth option and have students vote on all five options.

Topic B focuses on merchants in China. Again, have students read the handout and ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation and the choices. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? What is a *merchant*? In similar fashion to the strategy for Topic A, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for and against each option, and then re-vote in light of the discussion.

Topic C focuses on poor farmers compared to rich landowners. After students have read the handout, ask questions to make sure everyone comprehends the situation. Is there any vocabulary that students don't understand? What is *land reform*? What are the proposals on taxes? Again, ask students individually to decide what they will do, have them pair up to discuss their choices, bring the class together for a preliminary vote, call for arguments for or against each option, and then re-vote in light of the discussion.

Topics D and E follow the same format. Make sure students understand *foreign trade* and *amnesty*, among other vocabulary challenges. Students decide individually what they will do, pair up to discuss their choices, come together as a class for a preliminary vote, make arguments for and against each option, and then re-vote in light of the discussion. When all five topics have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes. Instruct students to read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. Have students pair up and discuss their answers. Then discuss the answers as a class.

### Possible Answers

1. Evaluate each of the five decisions made during the Han Dynasty. That is, make a judgment (good or bad) about the decisions made in each of the five problems.

*Students will have different evaluations for each problem.*

2. Evaluate any two of your decisions. Did you make a good decision or a bad decision?

*Answers will vary.*

3. What is one thing you learned about decision making from these problems?

*Answers will vary.*

4. Why is the Han Dynasty so important in Chinese history?

*It established a unified government based on respect, not just fear. It also expanded a bureaucratic government and an anti-merchant culture.*



## ■ Problem (Complex)—Proposed Reforms for the Han Dynasty (Handouts 3–4)

Distribute Handout 3 and instruct students to read it and decide what choices they will make for the five topics. (Alternatively, you could have students read, discuss, and vote on each decision one at a time.) Have them pair up and discuss their choices. Move around the room to answer possible questions or clear up misunderstandings. Bring the class back together and have students vote on each of the five topics. Ask students to make arguments for and against the various options for each topic, and then have them re-vote.

When all five topics have been discussed and voted on, distribute Handout 4 with the outcomes, and have students read the outcomes and answer the questions for analysis at the end of the sheet. Suggested answers are outlined above for Handout 2.

*Option for Primary Source:* When the class gets to the decision about whether the government should take action against merchants (Topic B in Handout 1 or Handout 3), tell students to read the primary source in Handout 5 and answer the questions.

### Possible Answers

1. According to the author, why is farming so difficult?

*The weather, endless work, guests, relatives, children, and taxes all take their toll.*

2. Why do farmers lose their land?

*From paying taxes and having to borrow money at high interest rates.*

3. Why is it easy for merchants to make money?

*They already have money that they can loan out at high interest rates; they hoard some products to force up the price; they take advantage of farmers' or laborers' hard work; and they sell to the government, sometimes at double the market price.*

4. How reliable is this report as a source?

*This is a contemporary source but not necessarily a primary source. We don't know if this author saw the hard life of farmers and the easy life of merchants, or if he heard these claims from other people. The author makes broad generalizations, unsupported by evidence, about hundreds of thousands of farmers and merchants. So these claims are clearly not true in many cases. Therefore, this author has a reason to lie or exaggerate. The report is an attempt to sway the government against merchants and toward farmers, so it is public in that sense. There is no other evidence to support these claims. Overall, this is a very weak source.*

## ■ Reflecting on Decision Making

Ask students how well they did on decision making on this problem. Which decision-making skills were especially important in making these decisions about the Han Dynasty? Which of the letters of **P-A-G-E** were especially applicable to this problem? (See the “Decision-Making Analysis” section below for ideas.) Ask students what they did well or poorly in terms of the **P-A-G-E** analysis of decision making. Discuss their answers.

## ■ Putting Decisions into Historical Context

Ask students whether the decisions in this lesson were more the result of individual choices or historical forces. Those supporting individual choices may argue that individual leaders pushed for these reforms. For example, individual leaders decided that candidates for office should answer questions, merchants should be restricted, rich landowners should pay more taxes, foreign trade should be expanded, and harsh laws should be softened. Those supporting historical forces as the key to these decisions may argue that the historical context in each case made it likely that these decisions would be made. Many Chinese people realized that corruption and incompetence were hurting the government. Many Chinese farmers had negative views of merchants and large landowners. Many yearned for foreign trade despite the costs, and many were tired of harsh laws.

## ■ Connecting to Today

Ask students which of these five topics are still issues in today's society. Students will disagree on which, if any, are still issues today. Some may argue that the differences between then and now are just too great to make the analogy. Others will see the same themes today, such as corruption or incompetence in government, the issue of inequality, the question about the extent of foreign trade, and the issue of punishment versus reform for criminals.

## ■ Troubleshooting

The concept of monopoly can be challenging for some students, which is why it was left out of the short handouts (Handouts 1 and 2). You might want to review with students that a monopoly occurs when one seller controls the price of a commodity for which there are no good substitutes. Understanding the concept may help students make a better decision about whether the Han Dynasty should impose a monopoly on iron and salt.

The question about the government moderating the price of grain can also be challenging, which is why it was also left out of the short handouts. The diagram may help students to grasp the dynamics of the intervention by government, but students need to understand the basics of supply and demand as well.

Students may forget that the arguments made for and against actions are not necessarily true. They are arguments made by particular people to convince others to take certain actions. Remind students that these statements may contain distortions and exaggerations.

## LESSON PLAN B: QUICK MOTIVATOR LESSON (20 minutes)

Choose the short set of handouts (Handouts 1 and 2), but concentrate on only two of the topics instead of all five. Distribute Handout 1 for homework. In class, have students pair up and discuss their choices for five minutes for the two topics you selected in Handout 1. Bring the class together, have them vote on the various options, and have students offer arguments for and against proposals for five minutes. Have students re-vote and distribute Handout 2 with the outcomes. For homework, students are to write what they learned about history and about their own decision-making strategies from the outcomes of the two topics discussed in class.

## TEACHER NOTES TO EXPAND DISCUSSION

(For outcomes for students, see Handouts 2 and 4.)

As mentioned in Handouts 1 and 3, the topics are not attributed to any particular leader because they were decisions faced by Han leaders at several points in time. Also, some emperors were figureheads, so other leaders were actually more important. The focus is on the public policy questions, not on the particular people involved in each situation.

The decisions of Wang Mang are included in this lesson, even though he was not in the Han Dynasty. (He tried to set up a new dynasty but was overthrown, and the Han Dynasty was placed back in power.) Hans Bielenstein (1986) argues that the policies of Wang Mang were very consistent with policies of the Western Han and the Eastern Han. It was simpler to include Wang Mang without comment about the dynastic interlude in order to keep student attention on the policy issues rather than diverting their attention to dynastic succession.

Historian Witold Rodzinski (1984) argues that the dominance of officials from large landowning families continued throughout Chinese history: “The overwhelming majority [of government officials] came from large landowner families; this feature was to remain practically constant throughout the entire imperial era. . . .”

Grant Hardy and Anne Kinney (2005) see the main legacy of the Han Dynasty as a unified government: “Perhaps the most important [legacy] of the Han was the ideal of a stable, enduring, politically unified China, with power concentrated in the center. . . . This [political unity] offers a striking contrast to Europe. . . .” A strong central government that ruled at least partly on the basis of moral principles, rather than solely on the basis of force, endowed a legacy of relative peace, stability, and the benefits of civilization, including art, literature, philosophy, and scholarship.

The writings attributed to Confucius, such as the *Analects*, were not all clearly written by him. There is some evidence of multiple authors, for example.

There are other issues, such as slavery, that were left out of this lesson in order to avoid making it even more complicated. Slavery and forced labor were definitely used in Han China, but slavery was much less significant than it was in Rome at the time. An interesting reform not included in the lesson was the proposal to abolish money, since reformers thought that money led to selfishness and away from ethical behavior.

## ■ Decision-Making Analysis\*

|   |
|---|
| <p><u>P = Problem</u></p> <p><b>Identify any underlying problem(s).</b></p> <p><b>Consider other points of view.</b></p> <p><i>What are my assumptions? emotions?</i></p>       |
| <p><u>A = Ask for information (about)</u></p> <p>Historical context (history of this issue; context in the world)</p> <p>Reliability of sources</p> <p>Historical analogies</p> |
| <p><u>G = Goals</u></p> <p><b>What are my main goals? Are they realistic?</b></p> <p><b>Generate options to help achieve these goals. Are they ethical?</b></p>                 |
| <p><u>E = Effects</u></p> <p><i>Predict unintended consequences.</i></p> <p><i>Play out the options. What could go wrong?</i></p>   |

\*Bold denotes topics addressed in this lesson. Italics denote topic(s) that are especially emphasized.

- **Identify any underlying problem(s):** Students should consider underlying causes for poverty among farmers. For example, if the main cause of poor farm incomes is poor farming techniques, then the best solution is changing the techniques, not giving land to landless farmers. If the main cause is that farms are too small for using the best farm equipment or techniques, then dividing large farms into smaller farms will actually make the problem worse, not better.
- **Consider other points of view:** Students should consider the attitude of large landowners to the land reform proposal. How will they like being forced to give away some of their land? How will they likely react?

- **Recognize assumptions:** There are many assumptions in these topics. Topic B, farmers are hardworking and merchants are lazy. In Topic D, the products coming into China through foreign trade will be cheap and will only help the rich merchants. In Topic E, harsh punishments deter crime, or less harsh laws decrease crime. All of these assumptions are questionable. Students should try to identify the assumptions they are making, and then test them to see if the assumptions are accurate.
- **Consider if goals are realistic:** Students should question whether land reform in Topic C is realistic (which it was not in this case) and whether trade routes in Topic D could be defended (which they could, well enough that the trade routes continued).
- **Generate ethical goals:** Is it ethical in Topic C to take private land from people without paying for it? Students may disagree on this question, but they should ask it.
- **Predict unintended consequences:** There are some very significant unintended consequences in these topics, as explained in Handouts 2 and 4. In Topic B, the anti-merchant laws led to an anti-merchant culture. In Topic B, the monopolies led to stunted economic growth. In Topic A, the civil service requirements led to a somewhat more widespread education, although education was still limited mostly to wealthy families.
- **Play out options:** There were many opportunities for playing out the options in these topics. In Topic A, students should consider how widespread education was (it was limited to rich people). In Topic A, students should consider that rich, well-educated people will recommend people they know, not necessarily the best-qualified people. In Topic B, students should consider the effects of taxes on the economy. In Topic C, students should consider that large landowners will try to get around paying taxes.



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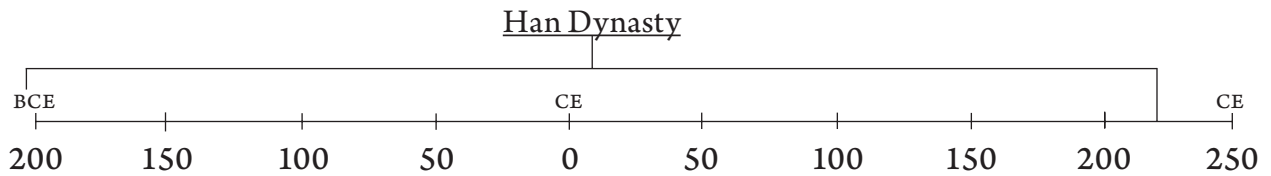
# LESSON 7: THE HAN DYNASTY IN CHINA

## VOCABULARY

- Han Dynasty—the Chinese government from 202 BCE to 220 CE
- Dynasty—a line of hereditary rulers of a country
- Merchant—a person who buys and sells products
- Confucius—Chinese philosopher and teacher
- Interest—the money charged for a loan
- Caravan—a group of traders traveling together
- Amnesty—a pardon for people who have been convicted of a crime
- Merit—the worthiness of an individual (for a position or other advantage) based on qualifications or actions
- Civil service exam—a test taken to become a government official
- Silk Road—the name for the group of trade routes that linked China with Central Asia and Europe

# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR THE HAN DYNASTY

(Short)



You are a leader in China during the Han Dynasty (202 BCE to 220 CE). For each topic below, decide what you think is best for the country and explain why you think that choice or those choices are best.

Map A:



The Han Dynasty.

## ■ Topic A: Incompetence, Laziness, and Corruption

The governments in China before the Han Dynasty had many officials who didn't know exactly what they were doing, were corrupt, or were lazy. As a result, the Chinese people and economy suffered. Since the Chinese government is centralized and large, it needs a large number of competent, honest officials to keep good records, to collect taxes honestly, and to perform other official duties.

## Decision

Which of the following should the Han Dynasty do to reduce incompetence, laziness, and corruption? You can choose as many as you would like.

- A. Increase punishments for corruption, laziness, and incompetence. That will discourage people from taking government positions for which they are not qualified and make them work harder and be more honest when they get government jobs.
- B. Ask people who are wealthy and educated to recommend qualified people for government positions.
- C. Make candidates for government positions answer questions about the classical writings in China, especially from Confucius. People who can answer these questions will be more educated, and therefore in general will be more competent and less inclined to be corrupt. Also, since the works of Confucius are about moral behavior, these candidates are more likely to behave morally.
- D. Do nothing. None of these options will be effective at decreasing incompetence, laziness, or corruption.



Confucius.

## ■ Topic B: Merchants vs. Farmers



Merchant houses showing their wealth.

Many people in China think merchants (people who buy and sell goods, such as silk or grain) are getting too rich. According to these people, farmers work very hard, but most are still very poor. Merchants, on the other hand, don't have to work hard (just buying and selling things other people make) but often are rich.

Once they build up a large amount of money, merchants

can make even more money by lending it out to poor people at very high rates of interest. A poor person borrowing \$100 might have to pay back \$150 by the end of the year, a 50 percent interest rate. It isn't fair.



**Decision**

What will you do about the unfairness of farmers being so poor and merchants getting rich? You can choose as many as you would like.

- A. Increase taxes on merchants and increase penalties for those who cheat on taxes.
- B. Decrease taxes on farmers.
- C. Pass laws to restrict merchants, so everyone knows they are not as worthy as the hard-working farmers. For example, you could have a law stating that merchants can't work for the government.
- D. Don't do anything. Supporters of Confucian values argue that government policies won't help.

**■ Topic C: Land Reform**

Rich landowners keep getting richer and gaining even more land and power, while poor farmers have little chance to improve their lives. Right now, most rich landowners are not paying taxes (either they are not required by law to pay taxes, or they cheat their way out of paying taxes), while the poor people are paying a high tax on their land (about 10 percent). Some poor farmers are forced to sell their land to pay taxes and other costs, and the rich landowners are buying up their farms, making the inequality even worse.

One proposal is for land reform. Portions of land (over a certain size of farm) would be taken from rich landowners and given to landless farmers so that every farmer would own some land.

**Arguments for Land Reform**

1. Give a helping hand to poor farmers. With all families having their own land, they will have a better chance to make money, which reduces poverty.
2. Make Chinese citizens more equal so that everyone has a more equal say.
3. Increase food production and economic growth in China.

**Arguments against Land Reform**

1. Land reform will not work because landowners will be outraged at the government interfering in private property that farmers worked hard to earn.
2. Land reform could lead to the government taking away other property rights or freedoms.
3. Land reform could decrease food production and economic growth in China because poor farmers are generally not as productive at growing food as rich landowners are. (Otherwise they would be rich.)



## Decision

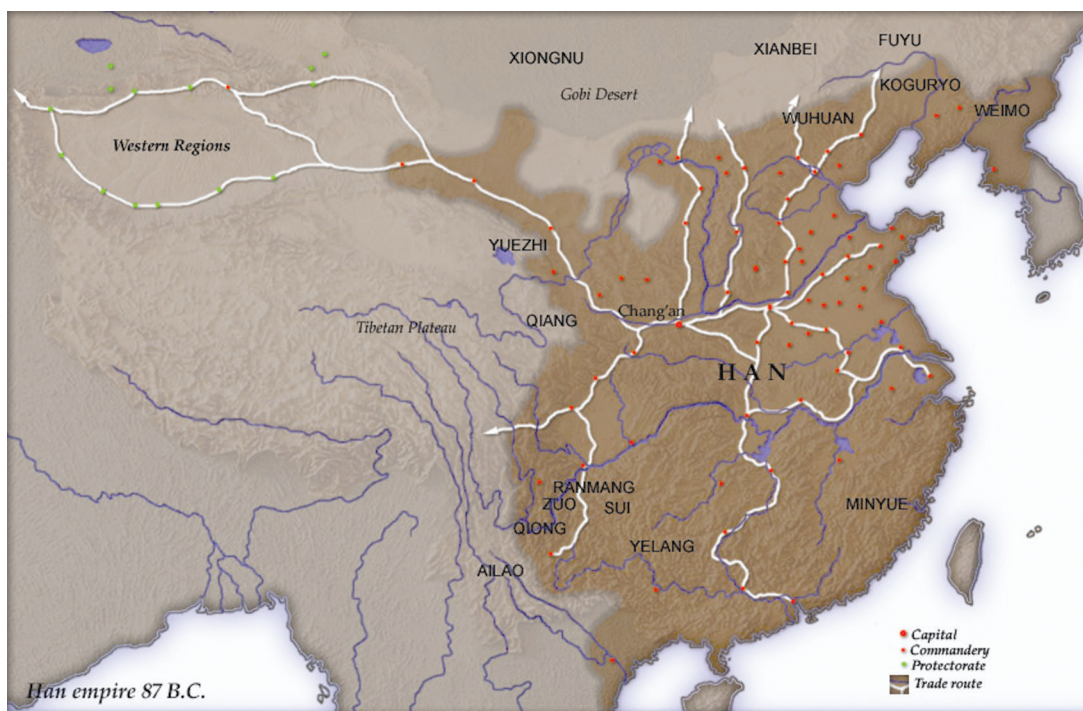
Which of the following actions would you take to correct the inequality between rich landowners and poor peasants? You can choose as many as you would like.

- A. Reform the tax system to make sure the rich landowners pay their fair share. Those who lie about how much land they own will have all their land taken away by the government and given to landless people.
- B. Decrease taxes on poor farmers.
- C. Start the land reform program described above, in which the government will take some land away from large farms and give it to people who don't have land.
- D. Do nothing. Supporters of Confucian values argue that government actions will probably make the problem worse. Let the farmers make their own decisions.

## ■ Topic D: Foreign Trade

Some people want to expand trade with groups of people outside of China (Map A), including sending out government caravans loaded with Chinese goods to encourage trade.

Map A:



The Han Dynasty.

**Arguments for More Foreign Trade**

1. Trade will bring wealth to China. The wealth added to China from foreign trade will be greater than any military cost to defend Chinese traders from thieves.
2. The trade will bring new ideas to China.
3. It will bring in products that Chinese people do not make.

**Arguments against More Foreign Trade**

1. Foreign trade will make merchants even richer than they are now. The merchants will get control of the trade and make all the money, while others will make very little.
2. Trade with foreigners will lead China into fights with other groups along the trade routes. Trade routes will have to be guarded, and when traders are robbed or attacked, thieves will have to be punished by the Chinese military. All Chinese people will have to pay more taxes to help the rich merchants.
3. The trade will bring cheaply made products into China that will be of little benefit to the Chinese people.

Will you support foreign trade?

- A. Yes. Make efforts to increase foreign trade, including government caravans to set up trade with other countries.
- B. Yes. Make efforts to increase foreign trade, but don't include government caravans. Leave it up to private traders.
- C. No. Foreign trade will not help China very much. It isn't worth the cost.

**■ Topic E: Punishments for Crime**

Punishments for crime in China have been harsh, including having to wear a heavy collar (for humiliation), forced labor in a work gang, beatings with bamboo poles, or exile out of the convict's home area. Now some people want to make punishments more reasonable and less cruel. Supporters of harsh punishments argue that strong penalties stop people from committing crimes; they keep crime low and Chinese people safe. Opponents of the harsh punishments say that they do not decrease crime. They argue that when the punishments were made harsher, the crime rates went up, not down.

**Decision**

Which of the following would you do? You can choose as many options as you would like.

- A. Allow people convicted of crimes to pay a fine to avoid the other punishments.
- B. Have a general amnesty to let people go free who were convicted of certain crimes.
- C. Make the punishments for crimes less severe.
- D. Don't change anything. Keep the harsh punishments.

# OUTCOMES OF HAN DYNASTY REFORMS

(Short)

## ■ Topic A: Incompetence, Laziness, and Corruption

In Topic A, the Han leaders, starting with Emperor Liu Bang, chose to have candidates for office answer questions (Option C) based on the classical writings, including those of Confucius. This choice significantly improved the quality of government officials, increasing people's respect for the government. It didn't solve the problem of rich people getting the great majority of government positions, since at the time only rich people could afford to get the education necessary to study the Chinese classics. To correct that problem, the government set up several schools to educate people, rich and poor alike, in China, a remarkable decision that was unique in the ancient world. The students in these schools were still almost all from rich families, but a few students were from poorer families. In addition, officials at least had to be educated in this new selection system, and they were more likely to be moral in their positions (showing that Option D was wrong).

Even though the system was imperfect—always dominated by rich people—the government put forth the *idea* that officials should be chosen based on merit (being worthy based on qualifications or actions), an idea that persisted in China for centuries. Moreover, since the Confucian writings focused on moral behavior, this new selection system promoted the idea that government officials should be moral and upright. This new emphasis undoubtedly improved the performance of government officials and decreased corruption. Honest government officials were among the most admired people in Chinese society.



Civil service exam rooms.

The system of making candidates answer questions later changed into the famous system of civil service exams, which lasted for more than two thousand years.

Only those who had an education (an expensive undertaking except for those few in government-funded schools) could expect to pass the exams, so more rich people got the positions. However, the way they got their positions was seen as fair, and occasionally a poor person would rise to the top of the government. On the other

hand, since the tests focused on traditional writings, the officials tended to be more traditional in their outlooks, hampering China from evolving in response to changes in the world.



Chinese leaders decided against increasing punishments (Option A). China already had extreme punishments, and they weren't working to stop corruption or incompetence. Some Chinese people wanted to decrease punishments. They felt that government should operate on the basis of moral principles, not punishment.

## ■ Topic B: Merchants vs. Farmers

In Topic B, leaders in the Han Dynasty took the first four options (Options A–D) for at least part of the time of the dynasty. Taxes on merchants were increased (Option A) by as much as twice the level applied to other people.

The government passed laws to restrict merchants' rights (Option C). Merchants were not allowed to serve in the government, wear silk clothing, or ride horses, for example.

They were also subject to being forced to serve in the military. In terms of status, merchants were often classified with criminals. Most merchants continued to prosper, but according to some historians, these negative policies and attitudes hurt merchants and the economy in general.

Cutting taxes on small farmers (Option B) helped many of them and their families avoid starvation or destitution and probably led to more food being produced, helping the economy in general.

## ■ Topic C: Land Reform

In Topic C, Han leaders chose the first three options at different times. Unfortunately for the government, the effort to get rich landowners to pay more taxes (Option A) wasn't very effective. The rich held a lot of power in the government so they were able to prevent most taxes from being enforced. Option B had a more positive outcome. Reduction of taxes on poor farmers was helpful to reduce poverty, as described in Topic B above.

The option to limit the maximum size of farms and make sure everyone had a minimum sized farm (Option C) was the most controversial. Large landowners helped organize opposition to the government. This opposition was so strong that the law was withdrawn within three years. A few years later, there was a rebellion and Emperor Wang Mang was killed. The rebellion was caused by other factors as well, especially by a flood of the Yellow River, but the land reform effort contributed to the problem.

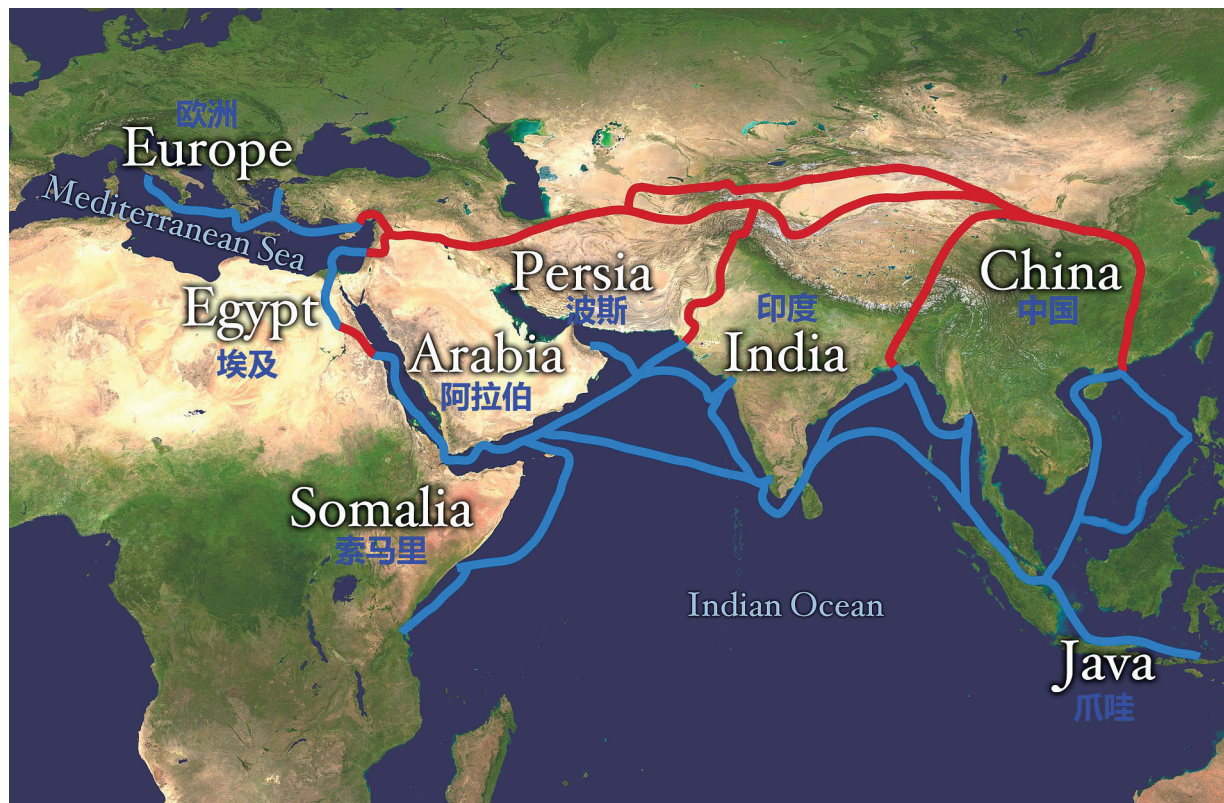


Chinese merchants.

## ■ Topic D: Foreign Trade

In Topic D, the leaders chose to push for trade, including sending government caravans to the west to open trade (Option A). These caravans often were carrying silk to trade with outside groups, from which the trade route gets its name, the Silk Road (Map B). The critics of trade were correct that it had to be defended. China fought numerous conflicts with marauding bands in Central Asia but never could prevent all the attacks.

Map B:



The Silk Road.

Nevertheless, the trade brought new products, new ideas, and economic growth to China. The benefit to the economy outweighed the military cost.

## ■ Topic E: Punishments for Crime

In Topic E, Chinese leaders chose to make the laws less harsh (Option C) and had several amnesties for people convicted of crime (Option B). The crime rate in the Han Dynasty was lower than it was under previous governments. This lower crime rate may have been due to a stronger government in China under the Han or due to more competent and moral officials in government. Chinese people may simply have had more respect for the government, so they were more willing to obey the laws. However, most historians think the less harsh laws and the amnesties helped reduce crime as well setting the government on a course of ruling through respect rather than fear.



Many Chinese people rejected the idea of allowing convicted people to pay a fine (Option A) rather than undergo harsh punishments. They argued that poor people wouldn't be able to pay the fines. With rich people able to buy their way out of the punishment, the poor would be the only people to be punished, exacerbating the inequality and unfairness of Chinese society.

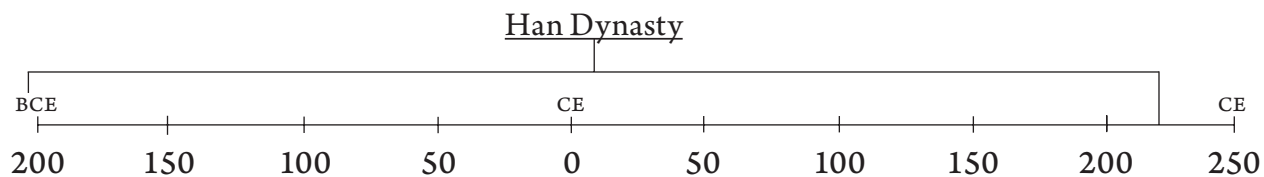
Overall, the Han Dynasty—despite some bad decisions shown in this lesson—established a government based on respect rather than just on fear. The centralized government with thousands of officials, including some selected based on merit, became the form of government that dominated China until the twentieth century. The Han Dynasty was so important that ethnic Chinese today are referred to as Han Chinese.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. Evaluate each of the five decisions made during the Han Dynasty. That is, make a judgment (good or bad) about the decisions made in each of the five problems. (You will have five answers for this question.)
2. Evaluate any two of your decisions. Did you make a good decision or a bad decision?
3. What is one thing you learned about decision making from these problems?
4. Why is the Han Dynasty so important in Chinese history?

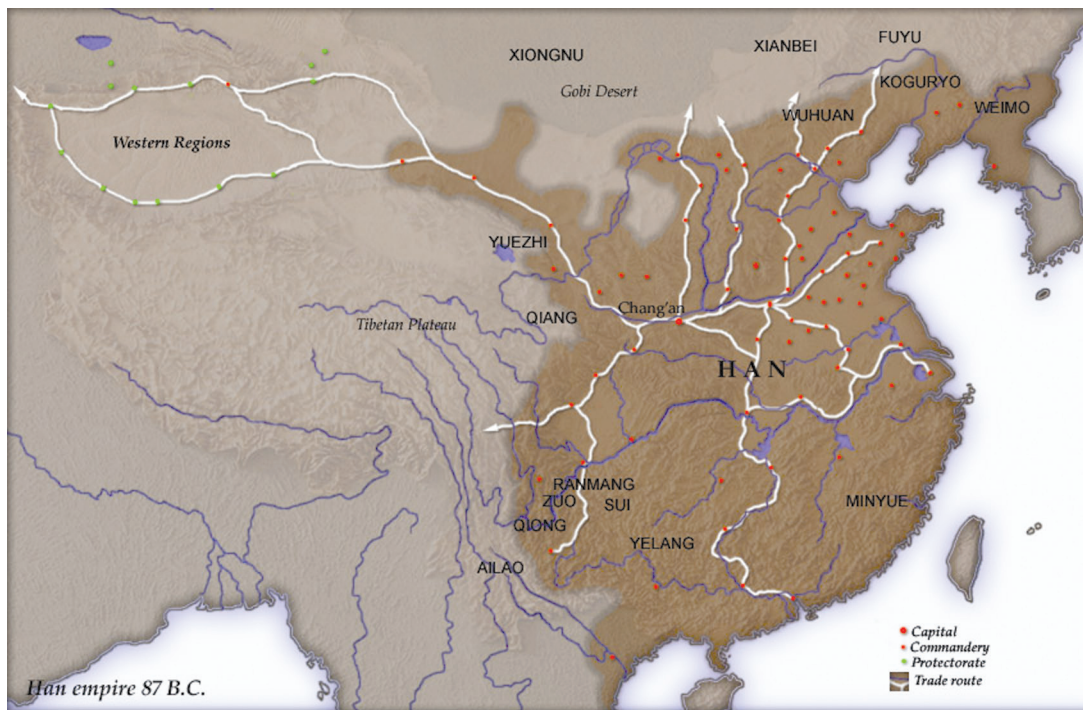
# PROPOSED REFORMS FOR THE HAN DYNASTY

(Complex)



You are a leader in China during the Han Dynasty (202 BCE to 220 CE) and you want to do what is best for China. Before this dynasty, the government operated by a system called legalism, with very harsh punishments. China became unified mainly through fear of punishment from the government.

Map A:



The Han Dynasty.

The problems aren't set up for any particular leaders because the issues involved occurred at different times in the Han Dynasty. For each problem below, decide what you think is best for the country and explain why you think that choice is best (or those choices are best).

## ■ Topic A: Incompetence, Laziness, and Corruption

The governments in China before the Han Dynasty had many officials who were incompetent, corrupt, or lazy. As a result, the Chinese people and economy suffered. Since the Chinese government is centralized and large, it needs a large number of competent, honest officials to keep good records, to collect taxes honestly, and to perform other official duties.

### Decision

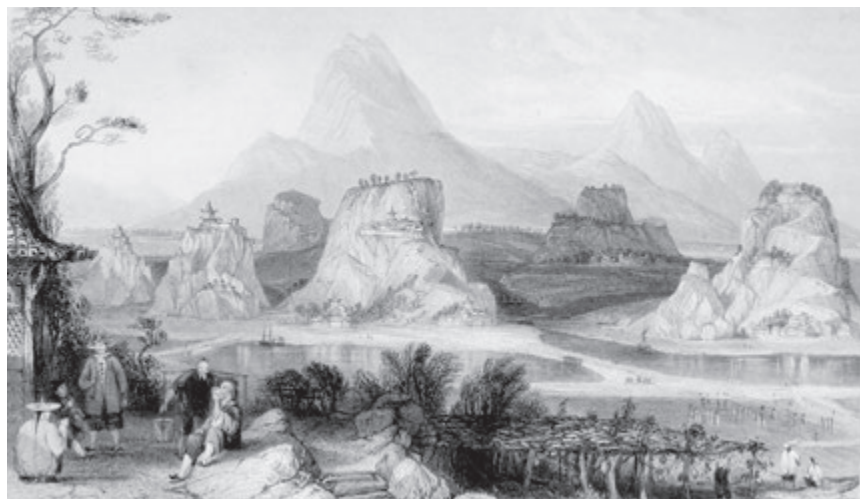
Which of the following should the Han Dynasty do to reduce incompetence, laziness, and corruption? You can choose as many options as you would like.

- A. Increase punishments for corruption, laziness, and incompetence. That will discourage people from taking positions for which they are not qualified and make them work harder and be more honest when they take government jobs.
- B. Ask people who are wealthy and educated to recommend qualified people for government positions.
- C. Make candidates for government positions answer questions about the classical writings in China, especially those of Confucius. People who can answer these questions will be more educated and therefore in general will be more competent and less inclined to be corrupt. Also, since the works of Confucius are about moral behavior, these candidates are more likely to behave morally.
- D. Do nothing. None of these options will be effective at decreasing incompetence, laziness, or corruption.



Confucius.

## ■ Topic B: Merchants vs. Farmers



Chinese merchants.

Many people in China think merchants (people who buy and sell goods, such as silk or grain) are getting too rich. According to these people, farmers work very hard but most are still very poor. By contrast, merchants don't have to work hard (just buying and selling things other people make) but often are rich.

Once they accumulate a large amount of money, they can make even more money by lending it out to poor people at very high rates of interest. A poor person borrowing \$100 might have to pay back \$150 by the end of the year, a 50 percent interest rate. It isn't fair. One government official reported:

*Farmers plough in spring, weed in summer, reap in autumn and store in winter; they cut undergrowth and wood for fuel and render labor services to the government. . . . Thus all year round they [farmers] cannot afford to take even a day's rest. . . . Sometimes taxes are collected quite unexpectedly; if the orders are issued in the morning they must be prepared to pay by the evening. . . . Eventually they have to sell fields and dwellings, or sometimes sell even children and grandchildren into slavery in order to pay back the loan. On the other hand great merchants get profits of two hundred percent by hoarding stocks of commodities while the lesser ones sit in rows in the market stalls to buy and sell. . . . Without experiencing the farmers' sufferings, they make vast gains. . . . They ride in well-built carriages and whip up fat horses, wear shoes of silk and trail white silk [garments]. It is no wonder that the merchants take over farmers and farmers become vagrants drifting from one place to another.*

One proposal to deal with the merchants is to set up government monopolies on certain goods, especially salt and iron, commodities that earn an excessive amount of money for merchants. The people making this proposal, called modernists, argue that the government needs the money in order to defend the western parts of China (Map A) against barbarians. Government monopolies would make a great deal of money for the government of China rather than for the already-rich merchants. Why should the merchants get all this money? Without new sources of money, the government will be weakened, unable to properly defend the country or carry out its other duties as well. On the other hand, with more money coming in from the monopolies, the government would be stronger to fight barbarians and to promote a unified country and strong economy.



A symbol of the Han Dynasty.

In terms of iron, if the government made iron farm tools, the prices would be reasonable and the quality would be the same for everyone, so everyone would be assured of getting a good quality product.

Opponents of the monopolies, called reformists, argue that the ideal government should minimize controls on the people, the level of taxes, and the number of government officials. Monopolies increase government control and restrict people. In addition, these monopolies would set up the government to be competing with its own citizens. If the people become selfish, some of them will leave farming—the most important job in any country—and become merchants.

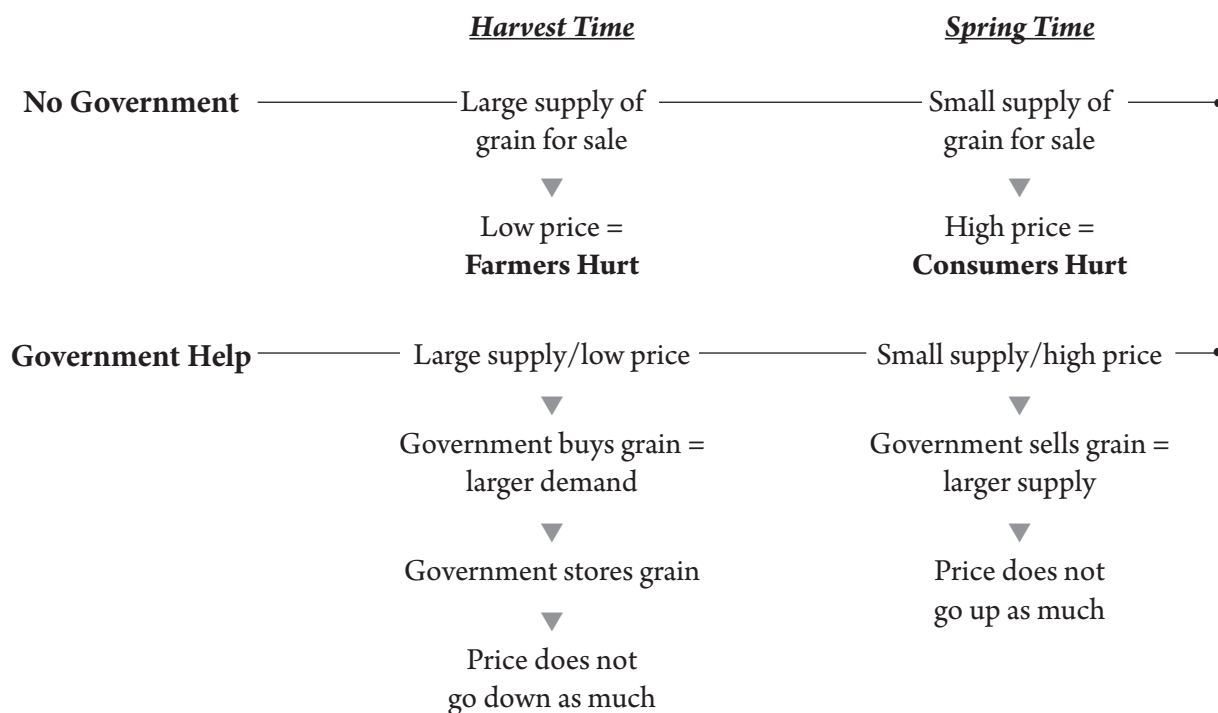
Monopolies hurt businesses and consumers as well. The best way to get the economy to grow is to allow people to run businesses and sell their products in the marketplace. Consumers get a better



product for a lower price from businesses competing with each other than they do when they are forced to buy only from the government.

A second proposal is to have the government get more involved to prevent prices from going too low or too high. The government would buy some important products, especially grain (wheat), when the price is low in order to help out farmers, storing these products in government storage buildings. Then, in other parts of the year, when the price gets too high, the government would sell the products bought earlier, which would keep prices from rising too much.

### Diagram A—Proposal for Government Helping Prices



### Decision

What will you do about the unfairness of farmers being so poor and merchants getting rich? You can choose as many options as you would like.

- Increase taxes on merchants and increase penalties for those who cheat on taxes.
- Decrease taxes on farmers.
- Pass laws to restrict merchants, so everyone knows they are not as worthy as hardworking farmers. For example, you could have a law stating that merchants can't work for the government.
- Set up government monopolies, especially on salt and iron. This way, the government can get the money it needs to keep China strong.



- E. Have the government buy, store, and sell grain and other products in order to keep prices from getting too low or too high.
- F. Don't do anything. The situation between farmers and merchants is more complicated than people think. Merchants provide an important service to the economy. There are poor, hardworking merchants and rich, lazy farmers. Besides, even if merchants are wealthier than farmers, government policies aren't going to improve the situation.

## ■ Topic C: Land Reform

Rich landowners keep getting richer and gaining ever more land and power, while poor peasants are constantly oppressed. Right now, most rich landowners are not paying taxes (either the law exempts them from paying taxes or they cheat their way out of paying taxes), while the poor people are paying a high tax on their land (about 10 percent). Some poor farmers are forced to sell their land to pay taxes and other costs, which the rich landowners are buying land, making inequality even worse. According to some people, the purpose of government is to promote the welfare of all people, not to allow some people to become extravagantly rich while others are starving. Such great inequality undermines Chinese society.

One proposal is for land reform. Every family interested in farming in China would be guaranteed a minimum amount of land—for example, 50 acres. To get the land to give to poor families, the government would take land away from large farms. No farm could be larger than a certain size—for example, 500 acres. Anyone owning more than 500 acres would have to give away the extra land to relatives or to poor farmers in the local area. Land could no longer be bought or sold. Therefore, a farmer owning 600 acres would have to give away the extra 100 acres and twenty families would get to own 5 acres apiece.

### Diagram B—Land Reform Proposal

#### Landowners

**Owner A**—510 acres—Gives up 10 acres  
Keeps 500 acres

**Owner B**—400 acres—No effect

**Owner C**—520 acres—Gives up 20 acres  
Keeps 500 acres

**Owner D**—200 acres—No effect

#### Landless Families

• Family 1 gets 5 acres

• Family 2 gets 5 acres

• Family 3 gets 5 acres

• Family 4 gets 5 acres

• Family 5 gets 5 acres

• Family 6 gets 5 acres

Supporters say this reform would give a helping hand to poor farmers and would make Chinese society more equal. Opponents say this reform would not work because landowners will be outraged at the government interfering in private property. Once the government takes away private property in one area, what is to stop it from taking away other property rights or other freedoms? Remember, these wealthy farmers earned their farms.

### Decision

What will you do about inequality between rich landowners and poor peasants? You can choose as many options as you would like.

- A. Reform the tax system to make sure the rich landowners pay their fair share. Those who lie about how much land they own will have all their land taken away by the government and given to landless people.
- B. Decrease taxes on poor peasants.
- C. Start the land reform program described above.
- D. Do nothing. Allow farmers to operate without government interference, even if that means more large farms with some people making big money.

### ■ Topic D: Foreign Trade

Some people want to expand trade with the outside world (Map A), including sending out government caravans loaded with Chinese goods to establish trade with other countries. Those favoring more foreign trade think increased foreign trade will bring wealth and new ideas to China. If China wants to be great, Chinese people need to trade with the outside world, which can bring in products that Chinese people do not make or do not make as well as foreigners do. Even if foreign trade causes China to get involved in military conflicts to defend Chinese traders, the wealth gained from trade will be greater than the military cost. Besides, defending new trade routes will mean that China will be expanding its influence and territory outward.

Those opposed to more foreign trade argue that outside trade will just enrich the merchants even more. The merchants will get control of the trade and make all the money, while others will make very little. These opponents also argue that being involved in foreign trade will lead China into fights with other groups along the trade routes. Trade routes will have to be guarded, and when traders are robbed or attacked, thieves will have to be punished by the Chinese military. All these military actions may cost more than the wealth received from trading. Moreover, all this expense would be paid by Chinese people in general, including poor people, in order to protect rich merchants. Besides, opponents argue, the products coming into China will be cheaply made and not worth it. They will be of little importance to the Chinese people. China makes what it needs now, so why trade?

## Decision

Will you support foreign trade?

- A. Yes. Make efforts to increase foreign trade, including government caravans to set up trade with other countries.
- B. Yes. Make efforts to increase foreign trade, but don't include government caravans. Leave the trading to private traders.
- C. No. Foreign trade will not help China very much. It isn't worth the cost.

## ■ Topic E: Punishments for Crime

Punishments for crime in China have been harsh, including having to wear a heavy collar (for humiliation), forced labor in a work gang, beatings with bamboo poles, or exile out of the convict's home area. Now some people want to make punishments more reasonable, less cruel. Supporters of harsh punishments argue that strong penalties stop people from committing crimes; severe punishments keep crime low and Chinese people safe. Opponents of the harsh punishments say that they do not decrease crime. They argue that when the punishments were made harsher, the crime rates went up, not down. They say that basing government on fear, rather than respect, is what causes the higher crime rates.

## Decision

Which of the following would you do? You can choose as many options as you would like.

- A. Allow people convicted of crimes to pay a fine to avoid the other punishments.
- B. Have a general amnesty to let people go free who were convicted of certain crimes.
- C. Make the punishments for crimes less severe.
- D. Don't change anything. Keep the harsh punishments.

# OUTCOMES OF HAN DYNASTY REFORMS

(Complex)

Chinese society under the Han Dynasty was split between two groups, the modernists, who wanted China to expand in power and wealth, and the reformists, who wanted government to be based on ethical principles rather than wealth or power.

## ■ Topic A: Incompetence, Laziness, and Corruption

In Topic A, Han leaders, starting with Emperor Liu Bang, chose to have candidates for office answer questions based on the classical writings, including the writings of Confucius (Option C). Confucius thought the government should be led by officials who were moral or virtuous. He is reported to have said, “If the people be led by laws, and . . . punishments, they will try to escape punishment and have no sense of shame. If they are led by virtue . . . they will possess a sense of shame and come to you [support the government] of their own accord” (*Analects* 2.3). The ideal official, a gentleman, would be hardworking and respectful: “[I]n providing for the needs of the people he gave them even more than their due; in exacting service from the people, he was just [fair]” (*Analects* 5.15). The decision to have candidates answer questions significantly improved the quality of government officials, increasing people’s respect for the government. It didn’t solve the problem of rich people getting the great majority of government positions, since at the time only rich people could afford to get the education necessary to study the Chinese classics. To correct that problem, the government set up several schools to educate people, rich and poor alike, in China—a remarkable decision that was unique in the ancient world. In addition, officials at least had to be educated in this new selection system, and they were more likely to be moral in their positions (showing that Option D is wrong).

Even though the system was imperfect, the government put forth the idea that officials should be chosen based on merit (being worthy based on qualifications or actions), an idea that persisted in China for centuries. Moreover, since Confucian writings focused on moral behavior, this new selection system promoted the idea that government officials should be moral and upright. This new emphasis undoubtedly improved the performance of government officials and decreased corruption. Honest government officials were among the most admired people in Chinese society.

Toward the end of the Han Dynasty, many more officials were chosen simply because they knew someone in power (Option B). This decline in the quality of the officials was a factor in the downfall of the dynasty, showing that this flawed method of choosing officials hurt society.



Liu Bang, emperor of the Han Dynasty.





People waiting for civil service exam results.

The system of making candidates answer questions later changed into the famous system of civil service exams, which lasted for more than two thousand years. Beginning during the Han Dynasty, in 134 BCE, candidates took difficult tests (again based on the classical writings) to qualify for government positions.

Only those who had an education (an expensive undertaking except for those few in government-funded schools) could expect to pass the exams, so more

rich people got the positions. However, the *way* they got their positions was seen as fair, and occasionally a poor person would rise to the top of the government.

On the other hand, since the tests focused on traditional writings, the officials tended to be more traditional in their outlooks, hampering China from evolving in response to changes in the world.

Chinese leaders decided against increasing punishments (Option A). China already had extreme punishments, and they weren't effective in stopping corruption or incompetence. The reformists in the Han government wanted to decrease punishments. They felt that government should operate on the basis of moral principles, not on punishment.

## ■ Topic B: Merchants vs. Farmers

In Topic B, leaders in the Han Dynasty used the first five options (Options A–E), for at least part of the time of the dynasty. Taxes were increased on merchants (Option A) to a level as much as twice the amount expected from other people.

The government passed laws to restrict merchants' rights (Option C). Merchants were not allowed to serve in the government, wear silk clothing, or ride horses, for example. They were also subject to being forced to serve in the military. In terms of status, merchants were often classified with criminals. Most



Chinese merchants.

merchants continued to prosper, but according to some historians, these negative policies and attitudes hurt merchants and the Chinese economy in general.





A salt-drying building from 1922, still part of the government salt monopoly.

Cutting taxes on small farmers (Option B) helped many of them and their families avoid starvation or destitution and probably led to more food being produced, helping the economy in general.

After a great debate on government monopolies (Option D), Chinese leaders established and expanded government monopolies on salt, iron, and several other products.

The key to the decision was the great amount of money the government could gain through the monopolies. The government just couldn't pass up all that money flowing into the treasury. No doubt, the money helped keep the government functioning and the army fighting outside groups. The government also built roads and canals, which helped the flow of taxes (in the form of food) to the capital city and slightly decreased the very high transportation costs. The canals made water for irrigation more available for farmers.

These improvements made the economy of China stronger.

On the other hand, according to many economists, the monopolies generally tended to reduce efficiency, decrease overall economic growth, stifle creativity, and lead to poorer quality products. People in China during the Han Dynasty complained that many of the iron farm tools were of poor quality.

The government chose to limit prices (Option E), which helped consumers in some cases, but which also led to decreased production and shortages.

### ■ Topic C: Land Reform

In Topic C, Han leaders chose the first three options at different times. Unfortunately for the government, the effort to get rich landowners to pay more taxes (Option A) wasn't very effective. The rich held a lot of power in the government, so they were able to prevent most taxes from being enforced. Option B was more successful. Taxes on poor farmers were reduced from about 10 percent to 3 percent, which reduced poverty and increased food production, as described in Topic B (Option B), above.

The option to limit the size of farms and make sure everyone had a minimum sized farm (Option C) was the most controversial. Large landowners helped organize opposition to the government, which was so strong that the law was withdrawn within three years. A few years later, there was a rebellion and Emperor Wang Mang was killed.



Emperor Wang Mang.

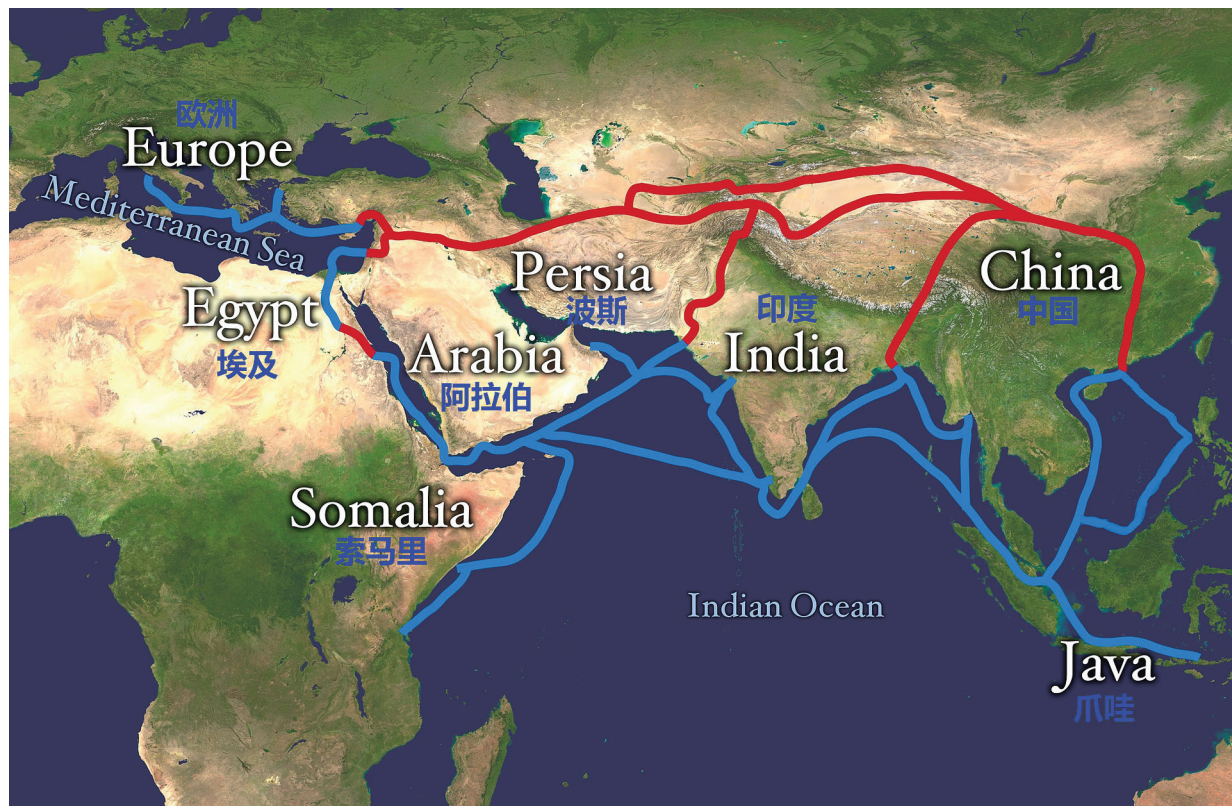
The rebellion was caused by other factors, especially by a flood of the Yellow River, but the land reform effort contributed to the resistance.

## ■ Topic D: Foreign Trade

In Topic D, the leaders chose to push for trade, including sending government caravans to the west to open trade. These caravans often were carrying silk to trade with the outside groups, from which we get the name the Silk Road (see Map B) for the overland trade route to and from China. The critics of the trade were correct that the trade had to be defended. China fought numerous conflicts with marauding bands in Central Asia, and it never quite prevented all the attacks.

Nevertheless, the trade brought new products, new ideas, and economic growth to China. The benefit to the economy outweighed the military cost. The Silk Road continued through medieval times and into modern times, enriching the Chinese economy for centuries.

Map B:



The Silk Road.

## ■ Topic E: Punishments for Crime

In Topic E, Chinese leaders chose to make the laws less harsh (Option C) and had several amnesties for people in prison (Option B). The crime rate in the Han Dynasty was lower than it was under previous governments. This lower crime rate may have been due to a stronger

government in China under the Han or due to better, more moral officials in government. Chinese people may simply have had more respect for the government, so they were more willing to obey the laws. In any case, the lower crime rates in the Han seem to show that the less harsh laws and the amnesties did not increase crime. Furthermore, these reforms set the government on a course of ruling through respect rather than fear.

Many Chinese people rejected the idea of allowing convicted people to pay a fine (Option A) rather than undergo severe punishment. They argued that poor people wouldn't be able to pay the fines. With rich people able to buy their way out of the punishment, the poor would be the only people to be punished—a further sign of the inequality and unfairness of Chinese society.

Overall, the Han Dynasty—despite some bad decisions shown in this lesson—established a government based on respect rather than just fear. The centralized government with thousands of officials, including some selected based on merit, became the type of government that dominated China until the twentieth century. The Han Dynasty was so important that ethnic Chinese today are referred to as Han Chinese.



# REPORT BY A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

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Report by a government official about 180 BCE:

Nowadays in a farming family of five members at least two of them are required to render labor service. The area of their arable land is no more than one hundred *mou* [11.3 acres]; the yield from which does not exceed 100 *shih* [about 2,000 liters]. Farmers plough in spring, weed in summer, reap in autumn and store in winter; they cut undergrowth and wood for fuel and render labor services to the government. They cannot avoid wind and dust in spring, sultry heat in summer, dampness and rain in autumn and cold and ice in winter. Thus all year round they cannot afford to take even a day's rest. Furthermore they have to welcome guests on their arrival and see them off on their departure; they have to mourn for the dead and inquire after the sick. Besides they have to bring up infants. Although they work as hard as this they still have to bear the calamities of flood and drought. Sometimes taxes are collected quite unexpectedly; if the orders are issued in the morning they must be prepared to pay by the evening. To meet this demand farmers have to sell their possessions at half price, and those who are destitute have to borrow money at two hundred percent interest. Eventually they have to sell fields and dwellings, or sometimes sell even children and grandchildren into slavery in order to pay back the loan. On the other hand great merchants get profits of two hundred percent by hoarding stocks of commodities while the lesser ones sit in rows in the market stalls to buy and sell. They deal in superfluous luxuries and lead an easy life in the cities. Taking advantage of the urgent demands of the government, they sell commodities at a double price. Though they never engage in farming and their women neither tend silkworms nor weave, they always wear embroidered and multicolored clothes and always eat fine millet and meat. Without experiencing the farmers' sufferings, they make vast gains. Taking advantage of their riches, they associate with kings and marquises. Their power exceeds that of the official and they try to surpass each other in using their profits. They wander idly around roaming as far as a thousand *li*; there are so many of them that they form long lines on the roads. They ride in well-built carriages and whip up fat horses, wear shoes of silk and trail white silk [garments]. It is no wonder that the merchants take over farmers and farmers become vagrants drifting from one place to another.

Source: Nishijima Sadao, "The Economic and Social History of Former Han," in *The Cambridge History of China: The Ch'in and Han Empires, 221 B.C.–A. D. 220* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 577–78.

## QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to the author, why is farming so difficult?
2. Why do farmers lose their land?
3. Why is it easy for merchants to make money?
4. How reliable is this report as a source?



