

Name: _____

Date: _____

Answer Key: Ancient Greek Thinking Skills for 8th Grade

Examine how 10 foundational ideas like logic and atoms from Thales to Epicurus still shape how we understand the natural world today.

1. Which early philosopher is known as the 'Father of Science' because he looked for natural, rather than mythical, explanations for events like earthquakes?

Answer: A) Thales of Miletus

Thales was one of the first to suggest that the world functioned according to natural laws rather than the whims of gods.

2. The philosopher Democritus proposed that everything in the universe is made up of tiny, invisible particles called 'atoms.'

Answer: A) True

Democritus used the word 'atomos' to describe indivisible units of matter, a concept that predates modern chemistry by over 2,000 years.

3. The philosopher ___ believed that numbers and geometry were the key to understanding the harmony of the entire universe.

Answer: B) Pythagoras

Pythagoras and his followers saw mathematical relationships in everything from music to the movement of stars.

4. Epicurus taught that the main goal of life should be to find 'ataraxia,' which most closely means:

Answer: C) Peace of mind and freedom from fear

Epicureanism focused on simple pleasures and the removal of mental pain or fear to achieve a tranquil life.

5. The Stoic philosopher ___ was a former slave who taught that we cannot control outside events, only our own reactions to them.

Answer: A) Epictetus

Epictetus is a key figure in Stoicism, emphasizing that our internal character is the only thing truly under our control.

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6. Diogenes the Cynic believed that true happiness comes from owning many expensive things and following all social rules.

Answer: B) False

Cynics like Diogenes actually rejected material wealth and social conventions, favoring a simple life based on nature.

7. Which philosopher famously stated that 'Change is the only constant' and used a river as an example?

Answer: B) Heraclitus

Heraclitus argued that the world is in a state of eternal flux, famously saying one cannot step into the same river twice.

8. Hippocrates, often called the father of ___, created a code of ethics that professionals in his field still take today.

Answer: B) Medicine

The Hippocratic Oath is a historical pledge taken by physicians to uphold specific ethical standards.

9. Zeno of Citium founded the school of Stoicism, which taught that virtue is the highest good and humans should live in agreement with nature.

Answer: A) True

Stoicism became one of the most popular philosophies in the Greek and Roman worlds, focusing on self-control and logic.

10. Ancient Greek philosophy is important today primarily because it introduced the idea of:

Answer: C) Using reason and logic to solve problems

The Greeks shifted the focus from mythology to logical inquiry, which led to the development of modern science and democratic debate.