

### Document A: Pericles Funeral Oration

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

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

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

**Source:** Thucydides (c. 460-395 BCE), "Pericles's Funeral Oration," in The History of the Peloponnesian

## Document B: The Athenian Constitution (Modified)

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Document D: Professor Hansen

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

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

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

## **Athenian Democracy**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Period: \_\_\_\_\_

*Essential Question: Was Athenian democracy truly democratic?*

### **Document A: Pericles Funeral Oration**

1. What are the strength and weaknesses of this document as a source about Athens?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. According to Pericles, what were the characteristics of Athenian democracy?

### **Document B: Athenian Constitution**

1. According to the Athenian Constitution, who had the right to vote in Athens?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How did someone become "enrolled" as a citizen in Athens? Explain.

### **Document C: The Athenian Population**

1. What percentage of Athens total population was able to vote?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
1. Which groups could vote and which ones could not?

### **Document D: Professor Hansen**

1. What are some strengths and weaknesses of this document?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. According to Hansen, how was Athen's political system more democratic than democracies we think of today? How was it less democratic?

## Organizing The Evidence

Use this space to write your main points and the made points made BY THE OTHER SIDE.

### **Team A: Ancient Athens was truly democratic**

- 1) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 2) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 3) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 4) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :



### **Team B: Ancient Athens was NOT truly democratic**

- 1) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 2) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 3) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :
  
- 4) From Document \_\_\_\_\_ :



### **Coming to a Consensus**

You may now abandon your position and argue for either side! Use this space to outline your argument. This does not need to be in complete sentences, but should communicate your idea clearly, so that you can explain it to the class. It must address evidence and arguments from both sides.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the majority of the page below the instructions. It is intended for the student to write their argument.