Ideas in Action

Trace how Greek philosophy shaped public life and later thinking

SS24.7.14c "Explain the influence of philosophers on Greek society, culture, and politics as well as their influence on modern thought."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one idea from each philosopher and circle one effect of that idea on Greek life. Put a star beside one influence on modern thought.

Questions That Outlived Athens

1 Imagine an Athenian citizen asking whether a popular law is fair. Socrates, who lived in Athens during the fifth century BCE, urged people to test their beliefs by asking hard questions. In public conversations, he challenged ideas about courage and justice, making careful reasoning part of Athenian intellectual life. His questions also troubled some leaders. In 399 BCE, an Athenian jury convicted him of impiety and corrupting the young, and he was executed. Today, teachers use discussion shaped by his questioning method to help students examine claims rather than simply memorize them.

2 After Socrates died, his student Plato founded a school called the Academy in Athens. Plato argued that rulers should understand justice and seek wisdom, not merely win support from a crowd. In *The Republic*, he imagined a city led by philosopher-rulers. This proposal challenged Athenians to debate who was fit to govern, even though Athens did not adopt Plato's plan. His school helped make philosophy a lasting part of Greek education and culture. Modern thinkers still debate Plato's question: What knowledge and character should political leaders have?

3 Plato's student Aristotle took a different approach. He studied animals and gathered information about the governments of Greek city-states. He argued that studying real examples could help people understand how a government works and what makes it stable. At his school in Athens, the Lyceum, students investigated nature and politics, expanding Greek habits of organized inquiry. Aristotle's work also helped shape later studies of government. Today, researchers compare political systems and use evidence to test ideas, though their methods have changed greatly since Aristotle's time.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Socrates' way of questioning affect intellectual life in Athens and learning today?

2. How did Plato's idea about rulers influence Greek political debate, even though Athens did not adopt his plan?

3. How did Aristotle's approach affect Greek learning and later studies of government?

4. How did Plato and Aristotle offer different ways to think about governing, and how do both approaches matter to political thinking today?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A town plans a new youth council. In five or six sentences, propose how it should choose leaders and make decisions using ideas from two philosophers in the passage; explain one effect on Greek life, how both ideas could shape the council today, and one possible limit.

Ideas in Action

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one idea from each philosopher and circle one effect of that idea on Greek life. Put a star beside one influence on modern thought. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Socrates' way of questioning affect intellectual life in Athens and learning today?	**His public questions made careful reasoning part of Athenian intellectual life. Today, teachers use discussion shaped by his method to help students examine claims.**
2	How did Plato's idea about rulers influence Greek political debate, even though Athens did not adopt his plan?	**His proposal led Athenians to debate who was fit to govern.**
3	How did Aristotle's approach affect Greek learning and later studies of government?	**His school expanded organized inquiry into nature and politics. His work helped shape later studies of government based on comparing systems and examining evidence.**
4	How did Plato and Aristotle offer different ways to think about governing, and how do both approaches matter to political thinking today?	**Plato focused on rulers' wisdom and understanding of justice; modern thinkers still debate what leaders should know and what character they should have. Aristotle studied real governments; researchers today compare political systems and test ideas with evidence.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town should ask candidates to explain what makes a rule fair, following Socrates' habit of questioning beliefs. His public conversations made careful reasoning part of Athenian intellectual life. Candidates should also compare rules used by other youth councils, following Aristotle's study of real governments. That evidence could help the council predict which rules might work well. Members could question the evidence before voting, so popular claims do not win without examination. One limit is that other towns' rules might not fit our town's needs.

Accept other passage-supported connections between philosophers' ideas and their effects. For the open task, look for two distinct ideas, an accurate effect on Greek life, a present-day application of both ideas, and a plausible limit.