Victory and Its Price

Trace how two wars tested Athenian power and ideals.

AWH.C.6.5 "Analyze the causes, course, and consequences of the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars including the significance of Pericles' Funeral Oration."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB For each war, underline one cause, circle one turning point, and number two consequences. Star the sentence that explains why Pericles' speech still matters.

From Persian Invasion to Athenian Defeat

1. In 490 BCE, Persian forces invaded Greece after Athens helped Greek cities in Ionia rebel against Persian rule. Athenians defeated the invaders at Marathon, but Persia returned in 480 with a larger force. A Greek alliance lost ground at Thermopylae, while Athenians evacuated their city. Greek ships then defeated the Persian fleet at Salamis, and allied soldiers won at Plataea in 479. These victories protected the independence of Greek city-states. Athens soon led a naval alliance called the Delian League, collecting contributions for defense. Over time, Athens used the league's ships and payments to extend its own power.

2. Athens's growing power alarmed Sparta, which led a rival alliance. Disputes involving their allies helped turn fear into the Peloponnesian War in 431 BCE. Sparta's army repeatedly invaded Athenian farmland; Athens relied on its navy and sheltered people behind its city walls. Crowding contributed to a devastating plague in Athens, which killed the leader Pericles in 429. Even after an uneasy peace, fighting resumed. Athens's failed attack on Sicily from 415 to 413 destroyed much of its force. With Persian financial support, Sparta built a fleet and defeated Athens's navy in 405. Athens surrendered the next year.

3. Early in the war, Pericles gave a funeral speech for Athenians killed in battle. As recorded by the historian Thucydides, the speech praised Athens for giving citizens a role in government and honoring public service. Pericles argued that the dead had defended a city worth risking their lives for. Yet the war exposed a gap between that ideal and Athens's actions: its empire demanded payments from other Greek cities, and its citizens suffered crowding and plague. Defeat ended Athens's empire and briefly replaced its democracy with a Spartan-backed oligarchy. The speech remains important because it shows the values Athenians claimed even as war tested them.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the outcome of the Persian Wars help create a cause of the Peloponnesian War?

2. How did Athens's plan for fighting Sparta contribute to a serious problem inside Athens?

3. Why does Pericles' Funeral Oration reveal a tension between Athens's ideals and its actions?

4. How did Persian support affect the course and result of the Peloponnesian War?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 70 to 90 word exhibit label arguing whether Pericles' praise of Athens became more convincing or more complicated after the wars. Connect one military event from each war to a cause or consequence, and explain your judgment.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

For each war, underline one cause, circle one turning point, and number two consequences. Star the sentence that explains why Pericles' speech still matters. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the outcome of the Persian Wars help create a cause of the Peloponnesian War?	**After the Persian Wars, Athens led the Delian League and extended its power. Sparta feared that growing power, helping lead to war.**
2	How did Athens's plan for fighting Sparta contribute to a serious problem inside Athens?	**Athens sheltered people behind its walls while relying on its navy. The resulting crowding contributed to a deadly plague.**
3	Why does Pericles' Funeral Oration reveal a tension between Athens's ideals and its actions?	**Pericles praised citizens' role in government and their public service, but Athens used its power to demand payments from other Greek cities.**
4	How did Persian support affect the course and result of the Peloponnesian War?	**Persian financial support helped Sparta build a fleet. Sparta defeated Athens's navy in 405, and Athens surrendered in 404.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Pericles' praise of Athens became more complicated after the wars. Victory at Salamis helped preserve Greek independence, but Athens later turned its naval alliance into an empire that demanded payments from other cities. Sparta feared this growing power, helping spark the Peloponnesian War. Athens's failed attack on Sicily weakened its forces, and its final defeat ended its empire and briefly ended its democracy. Pericles honored citizens who served their city, yet Athens's use of power and the war's cost make his ideal harder to accept without question.

Accept different turning points and judgments when students support them with accurate events and causal links from the passage. For the exhibit label, look for one military event from each war and an explanation of how the evidence supports the judgment about the speech.