

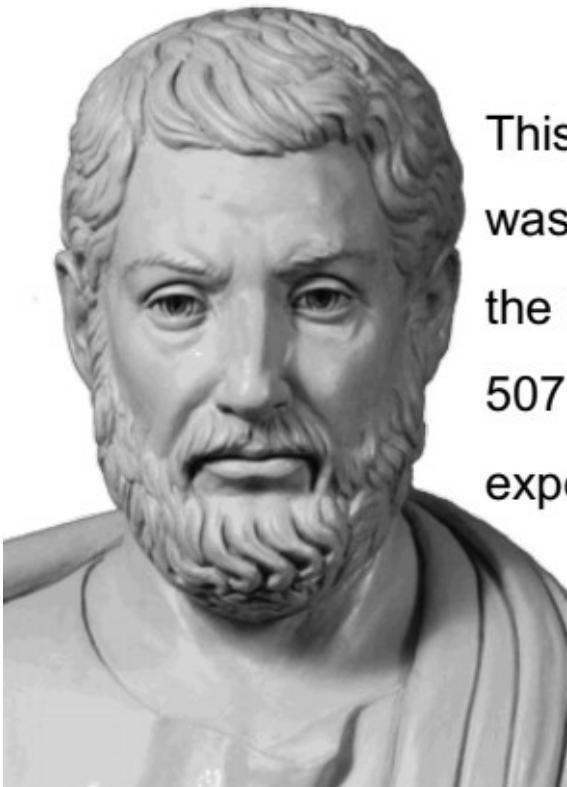
Y3/4 – Ancient Greece – Cleisthenes and Democracy

Read this passage all about Cleisthenes and democracy. There will be some questions after each part for you to answer.

As you know, there were different city-states in ancient Greece. Each one was called a *polis* in the Greek language. Nearly every *polis* was ruled by either one man (this *polis* was called a **tyranny**) or a small group of very rich men. Athens was a large and important *polis* ruled by rich men.

Questions

1. What was the name for a city-state?
2. Who was Athens ruled by?



This is **Cleisthenes** (*kliēs-then-ees*). He was a famous Athenian who was one of the rich men who ruled the *polis*. Around 507 BC, he said there should be an experiment in the way Athens was ruled.

He gave this experiment a special name in Greek: **democracy**. This came from two Greek words: *demos*

(which means 'people') and *kratos* (which means 'power').

Instead of one man or a small group of men having power, Cleisthenes wanted the people of Athens to hold the power.

Questions

1. In what year did Cleisthenes start his experiment?
2. What was the name of Cleisthenes experiment?
3. What two Greek words did this name come from?
4. Who did Cleisthenes want to have the power?

For the next 100 years, Athenian **citizens** could help decide how their *polis* was ruled. Citizens included only free men of Athens, so this did not include women or slaves.

Each year, 500 names were chosen from the thousands of citizens. Those 500 citizens helped make new laws.

Nothing could become the law until all the citizens had a chance to **vote** yes or no, not just the 500. The citizens would meet in a place called the **assembly** on the day when the vote was happening. The day was advertised so every citizen would know when to come to the assembly to vote. With thousands of men meeting, the assembly was usually a very noisy place.

Questions

1. Athenian citizens could help decide how their polis was ruled. Who was not considered a citizen of Athens?
2. How many names were chosen each year?
3. Where would the citizens meet to vote?

Independent Practice

Answer the question, 'Do you think that Cleisthenes idea was a good one?'
Make sure to include why you think yes or no.