Introduction to the Ancient Greeks: an Olympic Games Simulation

Classroom Set-up:
This lesson is best suited for two different classroom set-ups. For introduction to the simulation and preparation for the simulation, the class should be set up in cooperative groups of four desks with each desk having a view of the overhead screen. During the simulation, the class should be set up with one set of desks in the middle of the room, a podium in the corner. The rest of the desks should be out of the way as much as possible, or if possible put somewhere else for the duration of the simulation.

Materials:
1. Overhead projector and markers
2. Handouts
   a. Profiles of 5 Greek city-states
   b. Olympic Events
   c. Copies of each city-state's pledge
3. Paper, crayons, colored pencils, or paint
4. A bag of bows (red, white, and blue) to use as prizes
5. Tape recorder, music
6. Materials you need for the games
   a. 5 sets of jacks
   b. at least 2 baskets and 6 light weight balls
   c. shoeboxes prepared for random drawings (tongue-twisters, art)
   d. box filled with items (for memory game)
   e. paper javelins, or purchased toss games a watch to wear, with a second hand, or a timer

Procedures:
1. Introduce the Simulation:
   a. Introduce Olympics to the class bring in picture of procession, pins from dad/opa, and USA jacket. Begin by showing the jacket, have students guess the
significance and context. Pass the pins around; see if any students guess now the Olympics. Finally show picture of the opening procession (students should have enough background knowledge to guess correctly at this point).

b. Briefly shift the conversation to the Greek Olympics and their importance (stopped wars to participate). Explain that each city-state sent a team to represent them in the games, in our simulation we will have 5 different city-states represented.

c. On an overhead have students first try to determine the definition of city-state and then have them write down in their notebooks the correct definition:
   i. City-state - n. A sovereign state consisting of an independent city and its surrounding territory.

d. Next define what it is to be Greek, and to be a citizen of a city-state (have students write this down as well in their notebooks):
   i. To be Greek: the ancient Greeks all spoke the same language. They believed in the same gods and shared a common heritage. They perceived themselves as Greeks.

   ii. To be a citizen of a City-State: they referred to themselves, as citizens of their individual city-states. Each city-state was a separate political unit, having its own personality, goals, customs and laws. Ancient Greeks were very loyal to their city-state.

2. Preparing for the Simulation
   a. Have students break into groups of three. At this point, have two groups of three merge together so in the end there are a total of 5 groups.

   b. Give each group the handout on Profiles of 5 Greek City-States. Students should read material, discuss it in their group and when finished, begin to design their flag and pledge.
      i. Remind students that their flag and chant will be presented at the opening ceremonies. (chants can be read, sung, chanted, or cheered)

   c. When groups begin finishing their pledge and flag, pass out handout on the Olympic Events. Explain to the students that each team must select one
representative plus and alternate, for the events that require a single representative.

i. The sheet determining single representatives needs to be turned in.

d. Remind Olympians that they need to select a song to hum for the music appreciation event. Encourage them to practice tongue twisters, use secret handshakes and salutes and to plot with and against other city-state representatives.

3. Running the Simulation

a. Organize the classroom per the classroom set-up for during the simulation (see Classroom set-up). Also, hang up five signs, one for each city-state, so students can put up their flags and their bows (used instead of metals).

b. Have students gather in their groups and march into the room; play some sort of music (star wars, rocky theme, something) the groups should proceed around in a circle until each group is in the room, when the groups all enter and are in a circle, greet the Olympians:

i. Hail athletes from Argos, famous Greek musicians!

Hail athletes from Athens, famous Greek scholars!

Hail athletes from Corinth, famous Greek traders!

Hail athletes from Megara, famous Greek colonizers!

Hail athletes from Sparta, famous Greek warriors!

In ancient Greece, the Olympics were held in honor of Zeus, today, our Olympics will be held in honor of the Ancient Greeks!

c. Each group should perform their pledge, and then hang their flag in their respective areas. Open the games:

i. All hail the Ancient Greeks! HAIL! HAIL! Honored Olympians, LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

ii. (Note: if the Olympics run for two days, open the second day with the opening processional again.)

4. Running the games:

a. Students who are not actively participating should be cheering on the rest of the team. If students misbehave, they will lose participation points for the day.
5. Follow the procession of games as outlined below:
   a. Olympic Tongue Twister
   b. Sticky Ball
   c. Music Appreciation
   d. Boxing
   e. Ball in a Basket
   f. Art Appreciation
   g. Knucklebones

6. For games that are a single participant, teacher should read off each participant from the forms, introducing the students. Teacher is also in charge of running each of the games. If an aide is available, they can help as well.

7. When games have all finished. Hold an award ceremony. Present first, second, third place winners with prizes (candy or dollar store toys, extra credit, some incentive for class). The two teams that did not take first, second or third should receive some sort of small prize (small candy or something).

8. Have students clean up the classroom before leaving. HAIL each of the groups as they leave (have a place for the flags and the bows so students don’t need to keep them overnight).
Before signing up for events please read the game sheet and determine which participant will be best suited for each game! ALSO keep in mind that it is important that everyone get a chance to be a participant or alternate first before someone else signs up twice!

**PLEDGE:** in the space provided below, please write down your city-state’s pledge! Indicate whether it is a song, cheer, chant etc. 😊
**Opening Procession**

Report to class on time! Join your city-state. Collect your flag, your pledge, and any other material you have created to wear. NO talking in the hall! Line-up outside your classroom, by city, alphabetically (a Greek invention!), by teams, with flags. March into class. Be disciplined. Stay in line while marching around the table. Continue marching until all Olympians have entered the classroom and have marched around the table in the center of the room at least once. Lead team (Argives); stop at the podium in the corner. Quietly await the instructions of your Olympic coordinator (your teacher). You are Olympians, the finest of all the Greek athletes! Hold your heads high!

**Olympic Tongue Twisters**

One member, selected in advance, from each team. Selected Olympian will say, three times, the tongue twister they have drawn at random from the Olympic Tongue Twister Shoebox. The Olympic coordinator (the teacher) will time this event. Best time wins! First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

- Miss Smith’s fish-sauce shop seldom sells shellfish
- There’s a sandwich on the sand which was sent by a sane witch
- Ripe white wheat reapers reap ripe white wheat right
- Blake’s black bike’s back brake bracket block broke
- Swan swam over the sea. Swim, swan, swim. Swan swam back again. Well swum swan
- Buckets of black bug’s blood
- Five fat friars frying flat fish
- Betty bought some bitter butter and it made her batter bitter, so Betty bought some better butter to make her batter better
- Ray Rag ran across a rough road. Across a rough road Ray Rag ran. Where is the rough road Ray Rag ran across?
- A Tudor who tooted the flute, tried to tutor two tooters to toot. Said the two to the tutor, is it harder to toot or to tutor two tooters to toot?
- Meter maid Mary married manly Matthew Marcus Mayo, a moody male mailman moving mostly metered mail
- To begin to toboggan first, buy a toboggan. But do not buy too big a toboggan. Too big a toboggan is too big to buy to begin to toboggan
- She had shoulder surgery
- She sells seashells on the seashore. The seashells she sells are seashore seashells
- I would if I could, and if I couldn’t, how could I? You couldn’t, unless you could, could you?

**Sticky Ball (Javelin Throwing)**

All Olympians compete. Have each member of each team throw a paper javelin as far as they can. All Olympians compete in this activity, and receive a total team score. Best team score wins! First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

**Music Appreciation (Humming)**

One or more Olympians compete per team, as a unit. You may either hum the tune you have selected as a team, or select one or more members of your team to represent you in this activity.
at the Olympics. Team members, selected in advance, will hum a tune for the Olympics coordinator (the teacher). Try to select a tune your Olympic coordinator might know. Best time wins. First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

**Boxing (Items in a Box)**
One member, selected in advance, from each team. Each selected representative will proceed to the "Boxing" Arena, where you will be shown one box full of items for 20 seconds. You will have one minute to write down everything you can remember. Best score wins. First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag! (This event may be changed to include all Olympians, by arranging 5 "Boxing" areas, with 5 boxes of items. Totals may be added by volunteers as competitors participate in the next event.)

**Ball in a Basket**
All Olympians compete. Your goal is to toss balls into a basket. Best count wins. Team score. First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

**Art Recognition**
One member, selected in advance, from each team. For this one, you'll need to use the bulletin board or an overhead projector. A member from each team will select at random (from the Olympics Art Appreciation Shoebox) an item to draw. Your teammates must guess what it is. Best time wins. First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

**Knucklebones (Jacks)**
All Olympians compete. One member of each team will report to a Jack Arena. Let the games begin! Each member will do one round of onesies, the next person will do twosies, the next threesies, etc. If you miss, you're out. Best team score. For example, if representatives of Athens each win in their Jack Arena, Athens would receive 2 points, one for each win. Best total team score wins this event. First place receives a bow. Send a runner (but walk!) to stick this bow on your flag!

**Award Presentation**
Honor First, Second, and Third place winners. Winners selected by totaling number of events won at the Olympics. Take your place to be honored! All Olympians cheer winners in the Greek way – HAIL, HAIL! The Olympics coordinator will award bows, for you to add proudly to your city-state flag.

**Closing Procession**
All city-states get your flags. NO talking in the hall! Line up inside the classroom, by city, alphabetically (a Greek invention!), by teams, with flags. March proudly around the table at least twice. Exit the Olympic Arena. When all Olympians have exited the Arena, the games are officially over. Return to class. Post all flags on the wall (leaving room for the flags of the next class). Clean up!
Sparta

YOU ARE A SPARTAN! Be proud! You have endured unbelievable pain and hardship to become a superior Spartan soldier and citizen! Taken away from your parents at age 7, you lived a harsh and often brutal life in the soldier’s barracks. You were beaten by older children who started fights to help make you tough and strong. You were often whipped in front of groups of other Spartans, including your parents, but never cried out in pain. You were given very little food, but encouraged to steal food, instead. If caught stealing, you were beaten. To avoid severe pain, you learned to be cunning, to lie, to cheat, to steal, and how to get away with it! Some of you are members of the Spartan secret police (Krypteia) and enjoy spying on slaves. If you find a slave who is showing signs of leadership, you have orders to kill them immediately. You are fierce, capable, and proud of your strength. You know you are superior and are delighted to be Spartan!

SPARTAN GOALS AND BEHAVIOR AT THE OLYMPICS: Win at all costs. Lie, cheat, do whatever it takes. If you can't win, at least beat your archrival, those silly citizens of Athens. You are the proud and fierce Spartans! Dress alike with matching armbands or buttons. Be loud but polite to your teacher who is your superior officer. Be on time. Be disciplined. Keep records. Make up a chant for Sparta, and chant it, while marching in unison, wherever you go. Make up a secret salute, and salute your fellow Spartans. Plot secretly with other Greek city-states to sabotage any Athenian chance at victory. Cheer only for your fellow Spartans at each event. Lie, cheat, steal, but do not get caught, because that is the Spartan way. Good luck at the games.
Athens

YOU ARE AN ATHENIAN! Be courteous. You have been superbly educated in the arts and the sciences, and trained to be extremely productive and capable in times of peace or war. You are an achiever. Until age 6 or 7, you were taught at home by your mother, or by a male slave. From age 7-14, you attended a day school in the neighborhood where you memorized Homeric poetry and learned to play that magnificent instrument, the lyre. You learned drama, public speaking, reading, writing, math, and perhaps even how to play the flute. You attended four years of higher school, and learned more about math and science and government. At 18, you attended military school for two additional years! You are proud to be an Athenian! Famed for its literature, poetry, drama, theatre, schools, buildings, government, and intellectual superiority, you have no doubt that your polis, Athens, is clearly the shining star of all the Greek city-states.

ATHENIAN GOALS AND BEHAVIOR AT THE OLYMPICS: You know your archrival, those horrible Spartans, will do anything to win, even lie and cheat, but you are Athenians - you would never stoop to such boorish behavior. Cooperate with your fellow Athenians to defeat those brutish Spartans, and do your personal best! Dress alike with matching armbands or buttons. Say witty things to impress representatives from other city-states. Be courteous to all Greeks, no matter what inferior city they represent. Make up a clever chant for Athens, and sing or say it each time an Athenian wins an event or a makes a witty comment. Shake hands with your fellow Athenians, whenever you greet them. You are Athenians, the clever, creative, courteous representatives of that shining example of all that is fine and noble, the polis of Athens. Good luck in the games!
YOU ARE A CORINTHIAN! As a coastal city-state, you have a glorious history as a cultural and trade center. Although your schools are not as fine, perhaps, as those of Athens, you have been educated in the arts and the sciences. As a child, you were taught at home by your mother, or by a male slave. From age 7-14, you attended a day school near your home where you memorized poetry and studied drama, public speaking, reading, writing, math, and the flute. You attended a higher school, if your parents could afford it. You also went to military school for at least two years. Your polis is famous for its bronze statues, pottery, and vase painters. You are creative problem-solvers. To solve the problem of foreign money pouring into your coastal polis, your city-state created its own coinage, forcing traders to convert their coin at your banks. (For a fee!) To solve your problem of unemployment, you created a huge and successful public works program. Literature, culture, art, and businesses thrive in your city-state. You are proud to be a practical, productive Corinthian!

CORINTHIAN GOALS AND BEHAVIOR AT THE OLYMPICS: If you can't win, help Argos and Megara to defeat those vain Athenians, and those animals, the Spartans. Do what it takes, but be honest about it. Dress alike with matching armbands or buttons. Create a clever logo. Compose a chant or a song, and say or sing it each time a Corinthian wins an event. Cheer the winner of each event, whoever that might be. Greet your fellow Corinthians with warmth and good fellowship, whenever you see them. You do not need the nonsense of secret handshakes or salutes. You roll your eyes each time you see one. You are Corinthians! You are proud of your abilities, your achievements, your honesty, and your obviously superior city-state. Good luck in the games!
YOU ARE AN ARGIVE! You have been educated in the arts and the sciences, and trained to be productive and capable in times of peace or war. You have much of which to be proud. Although your close neighbor, Corinth, is on the coastline, your polis is located on a plain, where the weather tends to be hot and dry in the summer, and cold and wet in the winter. Your soil is not especially fertile, and you must fight the elements to grow food. In spite of this hardship, your magnificent stone sculptures of athletes, rippling with muscle, are the envy of many a Greek city-state. You are famous for your wonderful musicians and poets. Drama reached new heights in your polis. Plays are performed in open-air theatres, drawing crowds of 20,000 or more Argive citizens! Unfortunately, you have a problem. When Athens and Sparta asked your polis to send supplies and troops to fight the Persians, after the battle of Thermopylae in 480 BCE, you refused. For this decision, you are held in disgrace by the other Greek city-states.

ARGIVE GOALS AND BEHAVIOR AT THE OLYMPICS: Your goal is to reverse the negative reputation you currently hold in the ancient Greek world. You will have to work hard to convince other city-states that your athletes, soldiers, scholars, orators, architects, poets, dancers, and artists are as fine, if not superior, to the other city-states. Show unity by wearing matching armbands or buttons. Make and wear a clever logo on nametags or badges. Come to class together. Compose a rhyming chant for Argos that represents her many achievements, especially in the arts, that is catchy and easy to remember. Do not create a secret handshake or salute. Pay no attention to these silly antics, but do not be rude. You are above such things. Cheer Argive victories. Win as many events as you can. Make sure that Athens and Sparta don't win at all. (Do not cheat, lie, or steal; instead, throw your support to Corinth or Megara toward the end of the competition, if it appears you cannot win.) You are Argives, hard-working, honest, loyal, clever, creative, courteous representatives of Argos, and of her glorious past. Good luck in the games!
Megara

YOU ARE A MEGARIAN! Be proud that you are a Greek and come from such a respected city-state as Megara. As a coastal city-state, your history is similar to Corinth's, your neighbor. You believe your schools are as fine as those of Athens, although you have no doubt that any Athenian would disagree. You have been trained in the arts and the sciences. As a child, you were taught at home by your mother, or by a male slave. From age 7-14, you attended a day school near your home where you memorized poetry and studied drama, public speaking, reading, writing, science, poetry, the flute, the lyre, and a great deal of mathematics. Like most Megarians, you love money and have been trained to be an excellent accountant. You attended a higher school, and went to military school. Your polis is famous for its glorious textiles, which are the envy of other Greek city-states. You have, of course, your own coinage, an idea you copied from Corinth. Literature, culture, art, and businesses thrive in your city-state. You believe you offer your citizens even more freedom than Athens. (After the Peloponnesian War, Athen's famous philosopher, Plato, moved to Megara, where he remained for 10 years, so perhaps you are right! You also founded the city of Byzantium, also called Constantinople, now called Istanbul, back in 630 BCE.) You are proud of your city-state's past and present achievements, and proud to be a Megarian!

MEGARIAN GOALS AND BEHAVIOR AT THE OLYMPICS: If you can't win, help Argos and Corinth to defeat those boastful Athenians and those militant fanatics, the Spartans. If it comes down to Athens or Sparta, cheer for Sparta, loudly. (They might be militant, but those are good friends to have in time of war! Besides, you are tired of hearing about wonderful Athens.) In keeping with your glorious tradition, create the best-looking armbands, buttons, or nametags of all the city-states, along with a clever logo that describes Megarian life as a coastal city, as well as a chant, song, or poem, to use as needed. Make a show of keeping records, and make sure they're accurate! Be helpful to the Olympic coordinator (your teacher). Acknowledge any Megarian accomplishment with a specially created hurrah! You are Megarians, proud of your history, your flourishing businesses, your world famous textiles, your freedoms, your schools, your coastal advantage - your rich and vibrant city-state, Megara. Good luck in the games!