Essential Question

How did democracy develop?

Go Digital!

Democratic Concepts

This curious arrangement of stacked seats is all that remains of the Bouleuterion, a building built around 175 B.C. for a very special purpose.
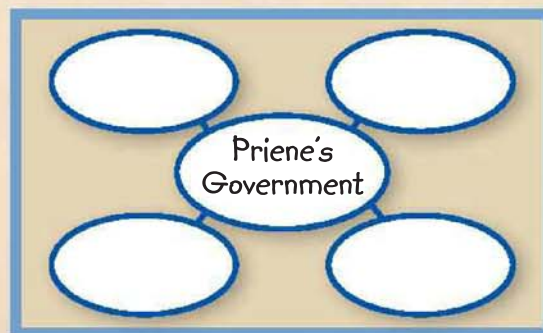
▶ People in the ancient Ionian city of Priene governed themselves. The Demos was an annual assembly of all citizens, but the Boule was a smaller elected council of 640 people.

▶ The Bouleuterion was a place for the council to meet and decide important issues, much as the U.S. Senate chamber is today.

Talk About It

COLLABORATE

Write words you have learned about the structure of Priene's government. Then talk with a partner about why you think it was organized this way.

Priene's Government

Vocabulary

Use the picture and the sentences to talk with a partner about each word.

aspiring

At the tryouts, we heard many singers who were **aspiring** to perform in our school talent show.

What is a synonym for aspiring?

foundation

Learning to dribble the ball is a good **foundation** for playing basketball.

What is a foundation for playing baseball?

preceded

The grand marshal's float **preceded** the rest of the parade.

If you preceded a friend to class, who would arrive first?

principal

The **principal** ingredients of an omelet are eggs.

What is the principal ingredient in your favorite meal?

promote

Many zoos today **promote** the idea of animal conservation.

What idea do you think is important to promote?

restrict

Using a leash can help **restrict** a dog's movements.

How else might you restrict a dog's movements?

speculation

Cloudy skies lead to **speculation** over the chance of rain.

What speculation happens in a detective story?

withstood

The lighthouse **withstood** the hurricane's force.

How are the meanings of withstood and survived similar?

Your Turn

COLLABORATE

Pick three words. Write three questions for your partner to answer.

Go Digital! **Use the online visual glossary**

The

Democracy

DEBATE

Essential Question

How did democracy develop?

Read about the ideas that philosophers in ancient Greece and Rome had about democracy.
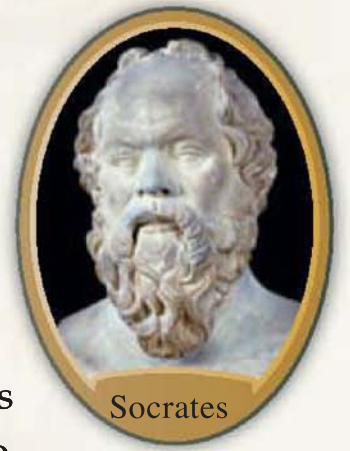
Born and Raised in Greece

Have you ever heard the phrase "government by the people?" That is the meaning of the word *democracy*. The United States is a democratic republic, as are many countries around the world. But where did democracy come from? Some of the earliest ideas about democracy arose in the city of Athens in ancient Greece. But how should democracy be put into practice? The answer to that question has been strongly debated for centuries.

Even when democracy was a new idea, people argued about how it should work. How should power be shared? Should *all* people be allowed to vote and make important decisions? Among the first people to think about these key issues were the ancient Greek philosophers.
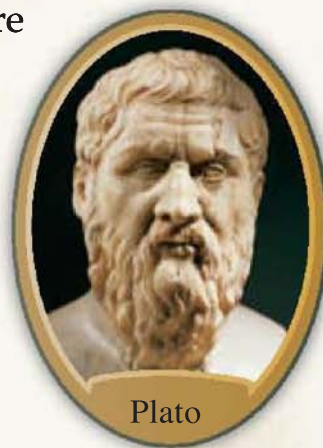
Great Minds

The word *philosopher* means "lover of wisdom," a person who seeks knowledge and is able to make good and fair decisions. One of the best-known Greek philosophers, Socrates, lived nearly 2,500 years ago. He valued wisdom highly, and he thought deeply about democracy. Socrates was one of the **principal** critics of government run by the people. He felt that only fair and wise individuals should be allowed to decide things.

Socrates

The ideas that Socrates had about democracy were considered dangerous to the existing democracy in Athens. The current Athenian leaders did not want some other "fair and wise" people **aspiring** to run their city. Socrates was a famous teacher. And **speculation** among the city's leaders included worries that he would encourage young students to pick up his radical ideas. So they chose to execute him.
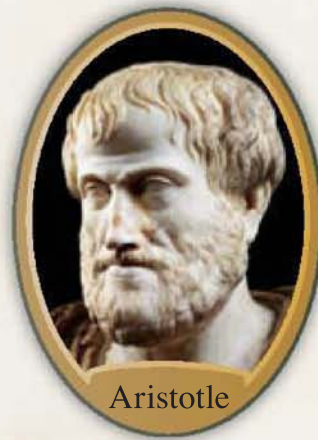
Students of Philosophy

The philosopher Plato had studied with Socrates. He also thought seriously about democracy. In 380 B.C., Plato shared his ideas about government in his book *The Republic.* He agreed with Socrates that rule by the people would bring

Plato

about poor decisions and a weak government. But, unlike his teacher, he believed that three different groups of people could share the responsibility of governing. The "highest" group would be philosopher-kings guided only by what is best for the state. The second group would be soldiers who protected the state. The last group would be common people who provided goods and services.

Around 388 B.C., Plato formed a school called the Academy. A star pupil there was the philosopher Aristotle, who believed in balance and moderation. About 350 B.C., Aristotle wrote in his book *Politics* that a government that tries to restrict power to a few educated men would not work. It would benefit only the rich. A democracy run by common people would not work either, because such people might not make wise decisions.
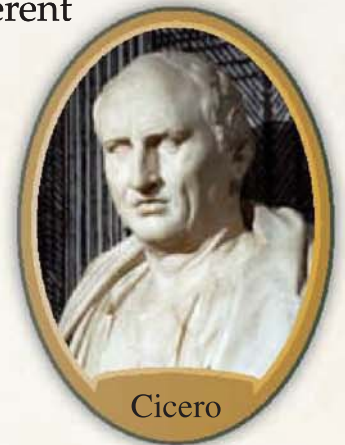

Aristotle

Aristotle's solution was combining the two. This would give people from all parts of society a voice.

Changes in Rome

About 400 years after Aristotle, the influence of Greek thinking was still felt by philosophers in Rome. Cicero is the best known Roman philosopher. Like Aristotle, he believed a balance of power brought peace and prosperity. That was because different types of people took part in government.

Cicero

Cicero believed that the Roman republic was the best model for government because it was mixed. It combined features of a monarchy, an aristocracy, and a democracy. Cicero saw that the Roman republic was breaking down, mostly because the aristocracy had gained too much power. In his book, *On the Republic,* he urged a return to a more balanced government.

Philosopher Kings
Soldiers
Producers of Goods and Services

Philosopher	Place	Time Period	Ideas About Democracy
Socrates	Greece	469–399 B.C.	Only wise and just people should govern.
Plato	Greece	427–347 B.C.	Rule should be shared by philosopher-kings, soldiers, and providers of goods.
Aristotle	Greece	384–322 B.C.	Educated and common people should each have a role in government.
Cicero	Rome	106–43 B.C.	The Roman republic—a monarch, an aristocracy, and the people—is best.

The Debate Continues

The founders of the United States also thought about how a democracy should be organized. They studied governments that had **preceded** ours and believed that the **foundation** of any new government should revisit Greek and Roman ideas. For example, Thomas Paine wrote booklets to **promote** the idea that people should govern themselves. James Madison admired Aristotle's and Cicero's beliefs in balancing power among different groups.

In 1787, Madison helped Alexander Hamilton write a set of essays called *The Federalist* to encourage states to ratify the Constitution. They made the case for having a *pair* of law-making groups. The smaller Senate would be similar to Rome's senate, while the House of Representatives would give more people a voice. They also endorsed having one president and a system of courts to interpret the laws.

Today, people are still debating what the meaning of *democracy* is and how our government should be organized. The U.S. Constitution has been amended more than 25 times to reflect changing ideas. Yet it is important to remember that our government has roots in ideas from ancient times. Democracy has **withstood** the test of time.

Make Connections

Talk about how the philosophers' ideas influenced our democracy. **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

How does your understanding of democracy compare to the ideas the philosophers had? **TEXT TO SELF**