

Life by the Sea

Week 6 • Wednesday • Ships, Trade, and Olives

Reading Time

The sea was the Greeks' highway! Greek sailors built swift wooden ships with big square sails and rows of oars. A famous kind of warship called a **trireme** had THREE rows of rowers on each side and a pointed ram at the front.

Greek farmers could not grow much wheat in their rocky soil, but two plants loved the Greek hills: **olive trees** and **grape vines**. Greeks pressed olives into oil, which they used for cooking, for lamps, and even as soap!

Greek traders sailed to faraway lands and swapped olive oil, wine, and painted pottery for wheat, timber, and metals. Greek pottery was famous everywhere — vases painted with black and orange figures showing heroes, gods, and everyday life. Many still survive today!

Reading Questions

1. What was a trireme?

2. What two plants grew well in Greece?

3. What did Greek traders give, and what did they get back?

Vocabulary Grid

Write what each word means in your own words.

trireme

olive oil

trade

pottery

harbor

vase

True or False

Write T for true or F for false in each circle.

- ☐ A trireme had three rows of rowers on each side.
- ☐ Olive trees grew well on Greek hills.
- ☐ Greeks used olive oil only for cooking.
- ☐ Greek pottery showed heroes and gods.
- ☐ Greek traders sailed to faraway lands.
- ☐ Wheat grew easily everywhere in Greece.

Hands-On: Taste Test

You need: a grown-up's help, bread, olive oil, and (if you have them) olives or grapes.

Dip bread in olive oil and try it, just like a Greek kid 2,500 years ago! Try an olive or some grapes too. Which did you like best?

• **Design a Greek Vase**

Draw a big vase shape and decorate it with figures and patterns, like Greek painters did.



Think About It

1. Why was the sea like a highway for the Greeks?
