1. Geometry Set

Ancient Greeks had an important role in developing geometry, as we know it today. *Geometry* is a Greek word and it literally means “measurement of the Earth”. Although geometry is a Greek word, the study of measurement began in ancient Egypt. Each year, after the flooding of the Nile, Egyptians had to re-map the area to determine which farmland belonged to each farmer.

Thales of Miletus is responsible for bringing geometry from Egypt to Greece. He went beyond asking *how* geometry worked and investigated *why* it worked.

About 300 years later, the famous Greek scholar Archimedes discovered the famous number that we call pi (3.1416). However, he wasn’t the first to try to calculate this number. The ancient Egyptians had approximated a similar number, but it was less accurate. The value calculated by Archimedes is the same value we use today. The Greeks were even able to use pi to calculate the circumference of the Earth.

2. Comedy & Tragedy Mask

City-states across ancient Greece regularly held festivals where poets presented poetry accompanied by the music of a lyre (a type of stringed instrument). This type of presentation was called a *rhapsodoi*  and it was very popular. Eventually a new style of presentation arose: drama.

There were two main types of dramas: tragedies and comedies. Tragedies told myths of gods and goddesses and often had sad endings, whereas comedies poked fun at famous people, politicians, and the gods and goddesses.

There were only ever three actors per play and all actors were men. The actors were supplemented with a chorus, which was a group of singers, dancers, and musicians who stood in the area in front of the stage. The chorus sang or played music to accompany what the actors were doing on the stage. The chorus sometimes worse masks to show the mood of the actors on the stage. Masks were also important for the actors. Since there were only three actors allowed, the actors often wore masks so that they could play more than one character. Male actors wearing masks represented female characters.

3. The Parthenon

Most of the homes built in ancient Greece were relatively simple and were made of brick, stone, or wood. However, the Greeks put a lot of effort into constructing massive and beautifully intricate public buildings and temples. Many people contributed to the construction of these buildings including carpenters, stonemasons, painters, rope makers, miners, road builders, leatherworkers, engravers, and architects. Each temple built in ancient Greece was built to honour a particular god or goddess.

The ancient Greeks developed an architectural style that is now known as “classical architecture”. This style features tall columns that support the roof. The most famous example of classical architecture in ancient Greece is the Parthenon.

The Parthenon was built to honour Athena, the patron goddess of Athens. The first version of the temple was destroyed by war and the second version of the Parthenon is still standing today. The building took more than 15 years to build and it had over 80 columns.

4. Stethoscope

Ancient Greeks were devoted to learning about medicine. Nearly every town had an *Asclepieion*, a temple devoted to the god Asclepius. Sick people would be brought to these temples to be healed by Asculapians (a kind of doctor-priest). The Asculapians had patients say prayers and make sacrifices. Miraculously, no one ever died in one of these temples. Most patients got better from resting, sleeping, and eating good food. But the Asculapians sometimes cheated. If people were dying when they arrived at the temple, they wouldn’t be let in and if someone started dying once they were in the temple they would be dragged out into a nearby woods. The Asculapians were in this business for the money and they told patients that if they didn’t pay, the gods would make them sick again.

Eventually good medical schools began to develop and doctors received real medical training. The most famous Greek doctor is Hippocates who is known as “the father of medicine”. He insisted that medical students promise to help the sick and to never take a patient’s life. Today, doctors and nurses still take a similar vow called the Hippocratic oath.

There were no x-rays in ancient Greece, so medical schools relied on dissections as a means of seeing inside the body. Most dissections were done on dead humans or animals, but sometimes criminals were cut open while still alive so that the doctors could see the heart, brain, and lungs in action. This procedure is called a vivisection.

5. Olympic Games

The Olympic games originated as part of a festival to honour Zeus and they were held in Olympia. All free-born Greeks (*i.e.* not slaves) from all of Greece and the Greek colonies were invited to participate. Athletes came from as far away as modern day Spain and Turkey. The Olympic games were held during the summer and they were scheduled so that a full moon lit the events during the third night.

Originally the Olympics had only one event: a running race. The race was 200 m long, which was the same length as the stadium. The Greeks called this distance a *stade*. After 50 years, a second race was added. This race involved running 2 stades. The next year a third race was introduced, this time having competitors run the length of 24 stades.

Eventually more and more events were added to the Olympics. These included wrestling, boxing, chariot racing, horse racing, the pankration, and the pentathalon. Pankration was an un-armed fight in which competitors wrestled each other. The pentathalon was a series of five events: discus, long jump, running, javelin, and wrestling.

6. Greek Letters

Ancient Greece was the first civilization to develop an alphabet that uses both vowels and consonants. The ancient Greek alphabet developed into the Roman alphabet, which is the same alphabet we use today to write English. In fact even the word *alphabet* comes from the Greeks. The first two letters of the Greek alphabet were *alpha* and *beta*.

Write the names of your group members using the Greek letters.

7. Encyclopedia

The ancient Greeks called their search for knowledge *philosophy*, which literally means “love of wisdom”. Wisdom and knowledge were valued above all else and philosophers were valued just as much as warriors or great athletes.

Boys started school at age 7 and finished school at age 18, if their parents could afford to send them to school. Girls were not allowed to go to school at all. Instead, their mothers educated them or occasionally if a family was wealthy, they would hire a private tutor to teach their daughters how to read and write. Education was so important to some families that they hired a special slave called a *paidogogus* to escort their child to school.

8. Atlas

The ancient Greeks were not the first to make maps, but they can be credited with changing map-making from a haphazard and scattered process into a rigorous science.

The first known world map was made by Anaximander of Miletus, an ancient Greek. His map featured Greece at the center surrounded by Asia, Europe, and Africa. The land masses were surrounded by ocean and according to his map, the Earth was flat.

Eratosthenes was the first person to describe the world as a sphere-shape. He knew that if the world were flat, shadows would be the same size everywhere on every day. Erastothenes put sticks in the ground at two different locations and measured the lengths of their shadows at different times during the year. From this information he was able to calculate the size of the Earth. Even though he was right, it took more than 1500 years for people to accept that the Earth is round.