

GRADE 8 | 2024

Ancient Civilisations

Social Sciences: History

CAPS ALIGNED

MatricHub.co.za | South Africa's Matric Resource Hub

1. Introduction to History

History is the study of the past. Historians use primary sources (original documents, artefacts) and secondary sources (books, articles written later) to understand what happened.

2. Ancient Egypt

Egypt developed along the Nile River from about 3100 BCE. The Nile's annual floods left rich soil for farming.

- Pharaoh: divine ruler, believed to be a god
- Pyramids: tombs built for pharaohs (Great Pyramid at Giza)
- Hieroglyphics: Egyptian writing system using pictures/symbols
- Mummification: preserving bodies for the afterlife

3. Ancient Greece

Ancient Greece (800-146 BCE) was a collection of city-states. Athens and Sparta were the most powerful.

- Athens: birthplace of democracy ("rule by the people")
- Olympics: sporting games held every 4 years from 776 BCE
- Philosophy: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle developed logical thinking
- Architecture: Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens

4. Ancient Rome

Rome grew from a city-state to an empire controlling much of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East.

- Republic (509-27 BCE): ruled by Senate and elected officials
- Empire (27 BCE - 476 CE): ruled by emperors starting with Augustus
- Contributions: roads, aqueducts, law, Latin language, Christianity spread

5. Timelines and Chronology

FORMULA: BCE = Before Common Era (before year 0)

CE = Common Era (after year 0)

"Earlier" BCE numbers are OLDER (3000 BCE is older than 1000 BCE)