



# Class 10

## THE CLASSICAL AGE WEST

**Title:**

**Class 10: The Classical Age West**

**Topics (CHAPTERS – Video lectures):**

**Class 10.** [Introduction Video](#)

**Chapter 1 Video.** [The Golden Age of Athens – Greece](#)

**Chapter 2a Video.** [The Macedonians, Alexander the Great at Mieza – Greece \(Part I\)](#)

**Chapter 2b Video.** [The Macedonians, Alexander the Great the King – Greece \(Part II\)](#)

**Chapter 3 Video.** [The Roman Forum – Italy](#)

**Chapter 4 Video.** [The Colosseum – Italy](#)

**Subject/Course:** Civics, History, Geography, Religion, Ethics, Social Studies

**Grade:** Secondary School Level

**The Ages of Globalization book reference chapters: Chapter 5. The Classical Age**

Download your free copy of the AOG book [here](#).

[Timeline of Historical Events](#)

## Stage 1 – Desired Results



*In this section, you will find a detailed framework that outlines the overall learning goals, the enduring understandings, attitudes and values students will develop, essential questions students should be able to formulate and/or to provoke deep thinking and discussion, and specific learning outcomes that emphasize both knowledge and skills.*

### Established Goals:

### Summary/Overarching:

Learners will explore the Classical Age, often hailed as the pinnacle of achievement in human history. Through case studies on ancient Athens, Rome, the Mauryan and Achaemenid Dynasties, and the Han Dynasty, they will examine the rise of democracy, vast empires, long-distance trade, monumental infrastructure, and key

figures like Alexander the Great. This investigation highlights the enduring impact of this era on world history and civilization.

### Enduring Understandings:

#### Students will...

- ▶ Understand how the developments of the Classical Age shaped subsequent eras and continue to influence our modern world.
- ▶ Understand the cultural, technological, philosophical, and societal advancements of this age and reflect on how these lasting legacies impact their own communities today.



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### Essential Questions:

- Why is the Classical Age considered as the pinnacle of achievement and how has it impacted the history of the world?

### Students will know...

- Key advancements in the Classical Age in the areas of politics, trade, infrastructure, philosophy, culture and religion.

### Students will be able to...

- Analyze key advancements of the Classical Age and

their influence on subsequent eras.

- Compare regional achievements during the Classical Age with global innovations.
- Examine the interconnectedness of civilizations through trade, conquest, and cultural exchange.
- Create visual representations to map the spread of ideas and innovations.
- Explore how insights from the Classical Age can inform solutions to modern challenges like sustainability and governance.

## Stage 2 – Desired Results



*In this section, you'll find key concepts and definitions essential for understanding the course material as well as activities, such as Vocabulary Flashcards, Check-Your-Facts and Fill-in-the-Blank to enhance your students' comprehension and retention. You can adapt these activities to suit various subjects and grade levels.*

### Concepts & Definition

*Familiarize yourself with the provided terms, such as "Democracy," "Ethics," and others. Understanding these definitions will help you effectively teach the material and connect it to your lessons.*

### Vocabulary Activity

*Create physical flashcards for each term. This hands-on approach helps reinforce terminology and aids in building a solid foundation of knowledge. Encourage students to use these flashcards for review and practice.*

- Acropolis:** The Acropolis of Athens and its monuments are universal symbols of the classical spirit and

civilization and form the greatest architectural and artistic complex bequeathed by Greek Antiquity to the world. In the second half of the fifth century BC, Athens, following the victory against the Persians and the establishment of democracy, took a leading position amongst the other city-states of the ancient world. In the age that followed, as thought and art flourished, an exceptional group of artists put into effect the ambitious plans of Athenian statesman Pericles and, under the inspired guidance of the sculptor Pheidias, transformed the rocky hill into a unique monument of thought and the arts. The most important monuments were built during that time: the Parthenon, built by Ictinus, the Erechtheon, the Propylaea, the monumental entrance to the Acropolis, designed by Mnesicles and the small temple Athena Nike. (UNESCO World Heritage Convention)

- Ancient Rome:** (ancient state [27 BCE-476 CE - according to Britannica]) Beginning in the eighth century B.C., Ancient Rome grew from a small town on central Italy's Tiber River into an empire that at its peak encompassed most of continental Europe, Britain, much of western Asia, northern Africa and the Mediterranean islands. Among the many legacies of Roman dominance are the widespread use of the



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Romance languages (Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian) derived from Latin, the modern Western alphabet and calendar and the emergence of Christianity as a major world religion. After 450 years as a republic, Rome became an empire in the wake of Julius Caesar's rise and fall in the first century B.C. The long and triumphant reign of its first emperor, Augustus, began a golden age of peace and prosperity; by contrast, the Roman Empire's decline and fall by the fifth century A.D. was one of the most dramatic implosions in the history of human civilization. (History Channel)

- ▶ **Democracy (Ancient Greece):** The ancient Greeks were the first to create a democracy. The word "democracy" comes from two Greek words that mean people (demos) and rule (kratos). Democracy is the idea that the citizens of a country should take an active role in the government of their country and manage it directly or through elected representatives. In addition, it supports the idea that the people can replace their government through peaceful transfers of power rather than violent uprising or revolution. Thus, a key part of democracy is that the people have a voice. The first known democracy in the world was in Athens. Athenian democracy developed around the fifth century B.C.E. The Greek idea of democracy was different from present-day democracy because, in Athens, all adult citizens were required to take an active part in the government. Democracy in ancient Greece served as one of the first forms of self-rule government in the ancient world. The system and ideas employed by the ancient Greeks had profound influences on how democracy developed, and its impact on the formation of the U.S. government. (National Geographic)
- ▶ **Alexander the Great:** was an ancient Macedonian ruler and one of history's greatest military minds who, as King of Macedonia and Persia, established the largest empire the ancient world had ever seen. By turns charismatic and ruthless, brilliant and power hungry, diplomatic and bloodthirsty, Alexander inspired such loyalty in his men they'd follow him anywhere and, if necessary, die in the process. Though Alexander the Great died before realizing his dream of uniting a new realm, his influence on Greek and Asian culture was so profound that it inspired a new historical epoch—the Hellenistic Period. (History Channel);
- Alexander the Great (born 356 BCE, Pella, Macedonia [northwest of Thessaloniki, Greece]—died June 13, 323 BCE, Babylon [near Al-Hillah, Iraq]) [king](#) of [Macedonia](#) (336–323 BCE), who overthrew the [Persian empire](#), carried Macedonian arms to [India](#), and laid the foundations for the [Hellenistic](#) world of territorial kingdoms. Already in his lifetime the subject of fabulous stories, he later became the hero of a [full-scale legend bearing](#) only the sketchiest resemblance to his historical career. (Britannica)
- ▶ **Aristotle:** ancient Greek philosopher and scientist, one of the greatest [intellectual](#) figures of [Classical antiquity](#) and Western history. He was the author of a [philosophical](#) and scientific system that became the framework and vehicle for both [Christian Scholasticism](#) and [medieval Islamic philosophy](#). Even after the intellectual revolutions of the [Renaissance](#), the [Reformation](#), and the [Enlightenment](#), Aristotelian concepts remained embedded in Western [thinking](#). Aristotle's intellectual range was vast, covering most of the sciences and many of the arts, including [biology](#), [botany](#), [chemistry](#), [ethics](#), [history](#), [logic](#), [metaphysics](#), [rhetoric](#), [philosophy of mind](#), [philosophy of science](#), [physics](#), poetics, political theory, [psychology](#), and [zoology](#). (Britannica)
- ▶ **Colosseum:** The famous Roman amphitheater, the Colosseum, was built between C.E. 70 and 72 and was enjoyed by Roman citizens during the height of the Roman Empire. The Colosseum, also named the Flavian Amphitheater, is a large amphitheater in Rome. It was built during the reign of the Flavian emperors as a gift to the Roman people. Construction of the Colosseum began sometime between C.E. 70 and 72 under the emperor Vespasian. It opened nearly a decade later and was modified several times in the following years. The massive structure measured approximately 189 by 156 meters (620 by 513 feet), towered four stories high, and included eighty entrances to the amphitheater—seventy-six for the patrons, two for participants of events, and two exclusively for the emperor to use. The sheer number of entrances proved to be necessary: the Colosseum could hold more than 50,000 spectators at its maximum capacity. When the Colosseum first opened, the emperor Titus celebrated with a hundred days of gladiatorial games. Emperors traditionally attended the games. The emperor



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Commodus is known to have performed in the arena on hundreds of occasions. Aside from the games, the Colosseum also hosted dramas, reenactments, and even public executions. Eventually, the Romans' interest in the games waned. After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Colosseum began to deteriorate. A series of earthquakes during the fifth century C.E. damaged the structure, and it also suffered from neglect. By the 20th century, nearly two-thirds of the original building had been destroyed. Nevertheless, a restoration project began in the 1990s to repair the Colosseum. Today it is one of modern-day Rome's most popular tourist attractions, hosting millions of visitors a year. (National Geographic)

- ▶ **Ethics:** History of ethics, history of the philosophical [discipline](#) concerned with what is morally good or bad and what is morally right or wrong. The history of [ethics encompasses](#) the development of [substantive ethical](#) theories from which particular [moral](#) judgments may follow, as well as more general understandings of the nature of ethical theories and of moral judgments themselves. (Britannica)
- ▶ **Wisdom:** All cultures across time and place have held their own notions of wisdom and related concepts such as knowledge or understanding. Biblical scholars have often emphasized and explored the ways in which the ancient Israelite/Jewish wisdom tradition is rooted in and indebted to the Near Eastern (especially Egyptian and Mesopotamian) tradition. Yet it is also part of the eastern Mediterranean world. In this milieu, too, wisdom was discussed and debated in a plethora of contexts, and the Greek and Roman texts on the topic are equally relevant to our understanding of the cross-cultural connections and horizons of Israelite/Jewish wisdom. In these writings, just as in biblical literature, the term wisdom has several connotations, ranging from the cosmic to the ethical. The Greek term translated as "wisdom" (σοφία) can mean cleverness, prudence, knowledge, practical skillfulness, or poetical ability. Similarly, the equivalent Latin term (sapientia) can denote wisdom, reason, discernment, understanding, or judgment. Importantly, the ancient Greek and Latin texts on wisdom do not constitute a coherent category of "wisdom literature" but rather address wisdom in multiple literary contexts ranging from poetry to popular tales and from sayings to philosophical

treatises. (Oxford Bibliography)

- ▶ **Happiness:** Aristotle, in the fourth century B.C.E., linking happiness to virtue most forcefully. Happiness, he expounded at length in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is an "activity of the soul that expresses virtue." For Aristotle, all things in the universe have a purpose, a function, an end (telos). (American Academy of Arts & Sciences)
- ▶ **Governance:** patterns of rule or practices of governing. The study of [governance](#) generally approaches [power](#) as distinct from or [exceeding](#) the centralized [authority](#) of the modern [state](#). (Britannica)

### Check-Your-Facts / Review Questions

*Utilize this activity to promote critical thinking by having students verify and analyze information related to the concepts and definitions.*

1. **Why is the Classical Age considered a pinnacle of achievement in the Ages of Globalization?** (Many of the world's major religions were forged during this period, along with the birth of Eurasian wisdom traditions. These provided a foundation for civilizational self-understanding, organizing politics, power, ethics, and guiding principles for living a purposeful and happy life.)
2. **What were some of the greatest breakthroughs of innovation in the Classical Age?** (Advancements in infrastructure, architecture, communication systems, language and writing, philosophies, and wisdom traditions.)
3. **What countries today still have cities named after Alexander the Great or cities he named?** (Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and Egypt, among others.)
4. **What were the three historic results of Persia attacking mainland Greece in 490 BCE?** (A decisive victory for Western civilizations over Eastern invasions. The Athens victory at Marathon inspired the modern 26-mile race. The Persian-Greek Wars led to the creation of historical writing in the West, marked by Herodotus's *Histories*.)
5. **What led to the downfall of the Athenian Republic?** (The Peloponnesian Wars (431–404 BCE) between Athens and Sparta ended the Golden Age of Athens,



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characterized by democratic institutions, arts, and civil participation.)

- 6. What followed the end of the Athenian Republic?** (Despite political decline, Athens influenced the world through figures like Plato and Aristotle, laying the foundation for Western philosophy.)
- 7. Who was the mentor of Alexander the Great in 343 BCE?** (Aristotle)
- 8. What were some Hellenistic successor states after Alexander the Great's death?** (Seleucid Empire (Anatolia, the Levant, Mesopotamia, and Persia). Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt. Antigonid Empire of Macedonia. Other kingdoms, including Pergamum, Greco-Bactrian, and Indo-Greek Kingdoms.)
- 9. How did Greek culture shape education in Western society?** (Concepts like gymnasia, promoting character, athleticism, and loyalty, and paideia, educating youth for virtuous citizenship and the good life (eudaimonia), remain formative ideals.)
- 10. How does the extent of the Roman Empire relate to climate zones?** (The Roman Empire at its peak in 117 CE under Emperor Trajan closely aligned with the Köppen-Geiger Mediterranean climate zone ("Cw"), along the Lucky Latitudes.)

### Fill-In-The-Blank

*Incorporate this activity to assess students' understanding of key concepts and historical periods. Provide a word bank to support their learning and check their grasp of the material.*

- The Classical Age can be called an age of globalization by politics, since the imperial states consciously and deliberately aimed to create **(global)** civilizations.
- The Classical Age spans over a very large expanse, mainly in the (lucky latitudes) of Eurasia, stretching from the regions of the west of Eurasia that includes the sites of classical ancient **(Greece)** and the **(Roman Republic)** and then the Roman Empire. It stretches over to the great empires of **(Central Asia)** and to the great empires of India and East Asia, especially the empires of **(China)** and the Han Empire, which was the contemporary of the Roman Empire.
- The independent empires or wisdom traditions or

philosophical viewpoints did not exist in silos - there was vast and deep **(interaction)**, including through **(war)** and conquest, which brought together vast and highly differentiated populations together under one rule.

- As the pace of economic and intellectual development hastened in the eastern Mediterranean and western Asia around **(1000 BCE)**, two kinds of civilizations developed side by side. The first consisted of city-states with economies based on sea-based trading networks, of which the most remarkable were the **(Phoenicians)** and the ancient Greeks; the second were the city-states based on agriculture and mining that eventually became the land-based empires of the Classical Age. Ancient Greek offered two words for two distinct civilizations: **(thalassocracy)** - "thalatta" meaning sea and "cracy" for power - and **(tellurocracy)** - "tellus" for land.
- Phoenicia arose in present-day **(Lebanon)**, in the ancient coastal cities of Byblos and Tyre, dating back to around 5000 BCE.
- The Phoenicians created a twenty-two-letter consonantal **(writing system)** for their Semitic language that in turn was adapted by the Greeks in the eighth century BCE and later by the Romans. The Phoenician alphabet itself is assumed to have derived from Egyptian **(hieroglyphs)**.
- Phoenicians had extraordinary trading and financial skills but not **(military dominance)** - they were conquered by Cyrus the Great of the **(Achaemenid Persian Empire)** in 539 BCE. The region was later conquered by **(Alexander the Great)** in 322 BCE.
- Greece itself was conquered by the **(Romans)** in 146 BCE.
- The larger populations and higher population densities of the Roman and Han empires gave them enormous advantages in scale and **(technological achievements)** but did not protect them from **(conquest)** by more sparsely settled neighbors.



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### Stage 3 – Learning Activities



*In this section, you will find the different learning activities associated with this specific Class. We recommend that you begin by watching the lecture videos as a basis for the course and as a primary element for the course content. Interactive reference maps are mentioned in the lectures and activities.*

#### Lecture Videos

**Class 10. [Introduction Video](#)**

**Chapter 1 Video. [The Golden Age of Athens – Greece](#)**

**Chapter 2a Video. [The Macedonians, Alexander the Great at Mieza – Greece \(Part I\)](#)**

**Chapter 2b Video. [The Macedonians, Alexander the Great the King – Greece \(Part II\)](#)**

**Chapter 3 Video. [The Roman Forum – Italy](#)**

**Chapter 4 Video. [The Colosseum – Italy](#)**

#### Reference Maps

<https://sdgstoday-sdsn.hub.arcgis.com/pages/aog-class-10>

The Neo-Assyrian Empire, 671 BCE

Empire of Alexander the Great, 323 BCE

The Roman Empire, 117 CE

The Silk Road, 1st Century CE

### Summary



*In this section, you can find a summary of this Class for your reference. Chapter summaries provide insight into the era discussed in each class period. Should you have issues watching the videos, e.g. due to internet bandwidth, the summaries provide some of the key insight you can build on.*

- ▶ The Classical Age spanned from 1000 BCE to 1500 CE, witnessing the rise of major religions and philosophies, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism, as well as the teachings of Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, and the Buddha.
- ▶ Powerful empires such as Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome, India, China, and later the Ottoman and Mongol empires thrived during this time, actively engaging in globalization efforts.
- ▶ These empires disseminated ideas, technologies, and institutions on a continental scale, aided by technological advancements in agriculture, transportation, and warfare.
- ▶ The Axial Age, from 800 to 300 BCE, marked a period of simultaneous philosophical and religious insights across civilizations.
- ▶ Written scripts facilitated the preservation of foundational texts and philosophies, while civilizations diversified into thalassocracy and tellurocracy.
- ▶ Phoenicians exemplified thalassocracy, establishing trade networks and developing alphabets.
- ▶ The Achaemenid Persian Empire, founded by Cyrus the Great, expanded its territories, while Greek city-states engaged in conflicts like the Persian-Greek and Peloponnesian Wars.
- ▶ Alexander the Great's conquests spread Greek culture, influencing subsequent civilizations like Rome.
- ▶ Islamic scholars preserved and translated Greek texts, contributing to the revival of Greek wisdom in the Islamic world.
- ▶ China, under the Han Dynasty, focused on agriculture and experienced significant population growth.
- ▶ The Roman and Han empires dominated the Eurasian world, characterized by high population densities and long-distance trade routes like the Silk Road.
- ▶ Despite political instability, the Classical Age saw significant advancements and interactions, shaping



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modern civilizations and inspiring entities like the European Union, China, and the Islamic world.

### Activities



#### Journal Activity

##### Journal Prompts

- ▶ During the period of the Classical Age (1000 BCE - 1500 CE), what is considered a great achievement in your country / your region of the world? (you may choose between the various areas of politics, religion, arts/culture, language, technological advancements, etc.)
- ▶ The Classical Age has been also a milestone age for infrastructural and architectural innovations - throughout the 7 Ages of Globalization, what have been infrastructural or architectural innovations in your country / region of the world? How has that innovation played out in the current Age? Has that innovation been modified to fit the needs of the current Age? Is there potential for this innovation to be useful for thinking about sustainable living or sustainable infrastructure for the current world?
- ▶ In what ways does the Classical Age continue to impact your community? Consider cultural, technological, philosophical, and societal influences.

A fun take on Classical Wisdom for Modern Readers  
Princeton University Press

<https://press.princeton.edu/series/ancient-wisdom-for-modern-readers>

In his study *Germania*, written around 98 CE, the Roman historian Tacitus observed: "Moreover, quite apart from the danger of a rough and unknown sea, who would abandon Asia or Africa or Italy and seek out Germania, with its unlovely landscape and harsh climate, dreary to inhabit and behold, if it were not one's native land?" (AOG, p.80)

\*Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2005) *Understanding by design* (2nd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development ASCD

#### Readings & Additional

**Aristotle**, and F. H. (Frank Hesketh) Peters. **Nicomachean Ethics**. 12th ed., London: K. Paul, Trench, Trubner & co., Ltd., 1916.  
Book 1. The End. #21 - 53 (p.1 - 33)  
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.hn3mj3>

**Herodotus**. *The History of Herodotus*. Oxford: Talboys and Wheeler, 1824.  
**#15 (p.1)**  
<https://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044011621232>

**Thomas Aquinas** (1225–1274), *Summa Theologica*