**Cyrus the Great**: Most famous Persian emperor, who controlled land and peoples across the northern Middle East and into northwestern India.

**Pericles**: One of the most famous Greek political figures, he dominated Athenian government in the 5th century B.C.E. He ruled through wise and clever means. Even he was not able to prevent war between Athens and Sparta.

**Alexander the Great**: Extended the Greek Empire begun by his father into the Persian Empire, all the way to India. From a political standpoint, his efforts were largely in vain, but Greek cultural contributions to the area cannot be overstated.

**Hellenistic period**: After Alexander’s death, Greek art, education, and culture merged with those in the Middle East. Trade and important scientific centers were established, such as Alexandria, Egypt.

**Punic Wars**: Series of wars (264-146 B.C.E.) between the Roman republic and the Phoenician colony Carthage over dominance of the Mediterranean. Carthage’s great general Hannibal was ultimately unable to stop the Romans, who conquered Greece and north Africa, including Egypt.

**Julius Caesar**: Dictator of the Roman republic who effectively ended the republic and, with his successor Augustus, transformed it into an empire.

**Diocletian and Constantine**: Strong emperors toward the end of the Roman Empire who tried with some success to reverse the tide of its ultimate fall. Constantine moved the capital away from Rome and allowed freedom of worship for Christians.

**Greek city-states**: “Politics” comes from the Greek word for city-state. Though united in language and religion, the Greeks held differing forms of government, from monarchies to oligarchies to aristocratically controlled democracies.

**Senate**: The most important legislative body in the Roman republic, composed mainly of aristocrats.

**Consuls**: The two men who shared executive power in the Roman republic, but in times of crisis the Senate could choose a dictator with emergency powers.

**Cicero**: Roman writer and senator who expounded on the value of oratory in political discourse.

**Socrates**: A leading figure in the development of classical Mediterranean philosophy. He encouraged his students to question conventional wisdom. His work symbolized the Greco- Roman emphasis on the power of human thought.

**Plato**: Socrates’ greatest pupil, who suggested that humans could approach an understanding of the perfect forms of truth, good, and beauty that he thought underlay nature.

**Aristotle**: Student of Plato who developed logic and scientific reasoning in the Western sense. He stressed the value of moderation in all things.

**Stoics**: Adherents of this Greek philosophy emphasized an inner moral independence cultivated by strict discipline and personal bravery.

**Sophocles**: Athenian dramatist who specialized in psychological tragedies, such as *Oedipus Rex*. *Iliad*: Greek epic poem attributed to Homer but possibly the work of many authors; defined gods and human nature that shaped Greek mythos.

**Doric, Ionic, Corinthian**: Three forms of Greek columns that represent what is still known as classical architecture.

**Battle of Marathon** (490 B.C.E.) In this battle, the Persians who have invaded Greece are defeated on the Plain of Marathon by an Athenian army led by the general, Miltiades.

**King Xerxes**: (486 – 465 B.C.E.) Persian king who invaded Greece in retribution for earlier Persian defeats by the Greeks; his forces were defeated by the Greeks in the battles of Salamis and Plataea.

**Themistocles**: Athenian leader who advocated for an Athenian navy during the Persian Wars; this led to the defeat of the large Persian fleet at the Battle of Salamis by the Athenian navy.
**Battle of Thermopylae:** (480 B.C.E.) Battle in which Spartan king Leonidas and his army of 300 Spartans and 700 Thespians refused to surrender to the numerically superior Persian army at the pass of Thermopylae; they were annihilated to the man but allowed the other Greek armies to prepare for the Persian invasion.

**Zoroastrianism:** Persian religion developed by the prophet Zoroaster around 600 B.C.E. in which is taught that life is a battle between the opposing forces of good and evil, with humans having to choose between the two.

46

**Olympic Games:** Festival and athletic contests held at Olympia in honor of Zeus in which all Greek city-states sent representatives.

**Peloponnesian Wars:** (431 – 404 B.C.E.) War which involved Athens and its allies against Sparta and its allies; Sparta ultimately won the war but a majority of the Greek city-states are weakened considerably by the fighting.

**Philip II of Macedon:** (359 – 336 B.C.E.) King of Macedon who defeated a combined army of Thebes and Athens to become the ruler of the Greek city-states; father of Alexander the Great.

**Alexandria:** Seaport in Egypt on the Mediterranean Sea which was founded by Alexander the Great and became the center of Hellenistic culture.

**Roman Republic:** (510 – 47 B.C.E.) The balanced constitution of Rome; featured an aristocratic Senate, a panel of magistrates, and several popular assemblies.

**Carthage:** Ancient city-state in north Africa founded by the Phoenicians and destroyed by the Romans in the Punic Wars in 146 B.C.E.

**Hannibal:** Carthaginian general who led troops into Italy during the Second Punic War; he was defeated at the Battle of Zama in 202 B.C.E. by the Roman general Scipio.

**Augustus Caesar:** (63 B.C.E. – 14 C.E.) Grandnephew of Caesar who restored order to Rome after a century of political chaos; he assumed the title Augustus and instituted a monarchical government in which the emperor was dictator, chief military general, and chief priest; first emperor of Rome.

**Polis:** Greek word for city-state.

**Tyranny:** A government based on the rule of an absolute ruler.

**Direct democracy:** A government based on the rule of the vote of the people.

**Aristocracy:** A government based on the rule of the best of the society.

**Twelve Tables:** (c. 450 B.C.E.) Roman law code developed in response to the democratization of the Roman republic.

**“Mystery” religions:** Religions often imported from the Middle East which featured secret rituals and fellowship and a greater sense of contact with the divine.

**Herodotus:** Greek historian called the “Father of History” who wrote an account of the Persian Wars in the *Histories*.

**Pythagoras:** Hellenistic mathematician who developed many basic geometric theorems which are still in use in geometry today.

**Galen:** Hellenistic physician and writer who wrote many medical treatises that formed the basis of modern medical practice.

**Euclid:** Hellenistic mathematician who produced what was long the world’s most widely used compendium of geometry.

**Ptolemy:** Hellenistic astronomer who produced an elaborate theory of the sun’s motion around the Earth.

**Sappho:** (born ca. 612 B.C.E.) One of the great poets of the ancient Greeks; her poetry developed the complexities of the inner workings of human beings and love.

**Vergil:** (70 – 19 B.C.E.) One of the greatest of the Roman poets during “Golden Age” of Latin literature; patronized by Augustus; author of the *Aeneid*. 