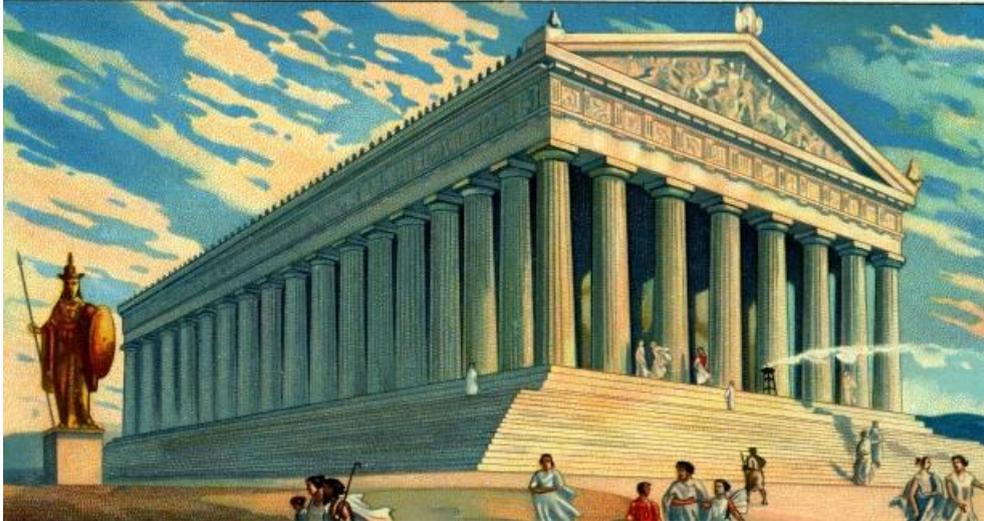


A Day in the Life of an eight-year-old boy in Ancient Athens



Word Bank:

Wealthy - having a lot of money

Citizen - a person who belongs to a country or city

Athens - a city in Greece

Dawn - morning, when the light first appears in the morning

Barley - a type of grain

Slave - someone who is forced to work, who is owned by someone else and is not free

Assembly - a meeting

Relatives - people that are from the same family, like cousins

Servants - people who work for someone

Navy - soldiers at sea

Waxen tablets - a block with a layer of wax to practice writing and math

Tutor - someone who helps teach

Accompanies - to go with

Laurel - a type of plant common in Greece

Excel - do very well

Cowardice - not being Brave, being very afraid

Shame - feeling embarrassed or foolish

Bladder - a organ inside the body

Spartans - people from Sparta, another city in Greece

Meet Triton, an eight year old boy from a wealthy family. They are citizens of ancient Athens.

Triton's day, just like any kid in Ancient Athens, starts early at dawn. Triton eats a simple breakfast, a porridge made out of barley or wheat.

While the men and women live in separate areas, Triton is looked after by his mother and a maid, who is a slave from far away. Today Triton is lucky! He sees his father at breakfast before he leaves for work at the assembly. Many times his father is gone for months to serve as a soldier in the Athenian army or as a rower in the navy.

Mostly Triton is with his mother, who manages the household. The family is large, and there are many relatives, servants and friends living under the same roof...Including Triton's pet bird and his dog, named Achilles.



Triton only started school the year before. When he goes to class, the students sit around the teacher and write on waxen tablets. He studies poetry and math, but also gymnastics is important. Triton learns to wrestle and box, to prepare him for his future training as a soldier.

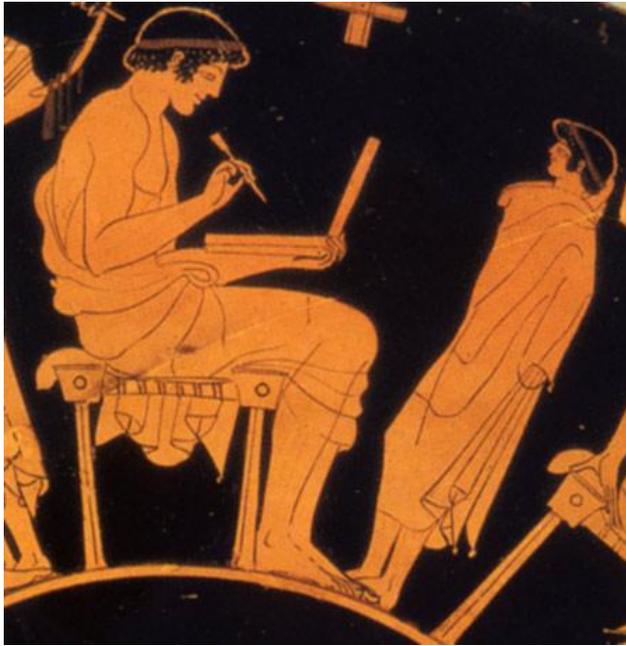
His family is wealthy enough to have a private tutor for him, who accompanies him to class.

Education is considered very important for boys but not for girls. As such, Triton's sisters stay at home and help their mother. Boys from poorer families also do not go to school. They learn their

father's trade or work in jobs.

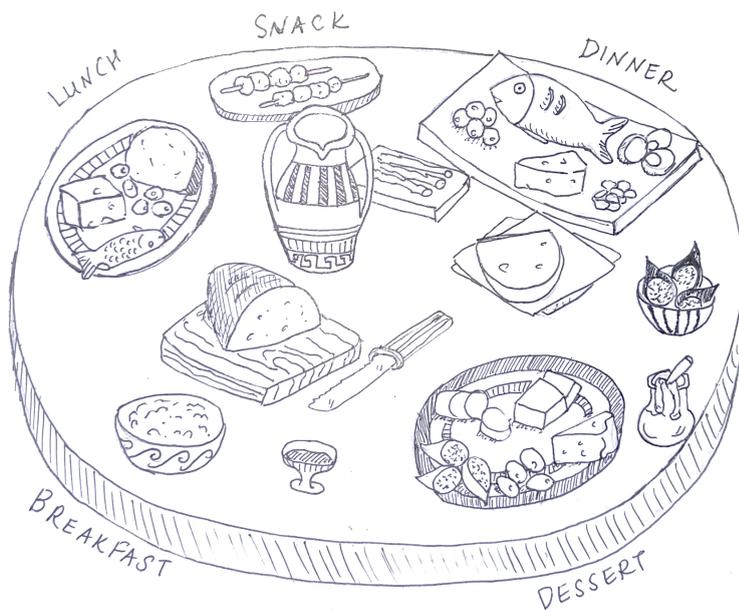
When Triton was born, his father hung a laurel wreath on his door to celebrate his birth. Triton is expected to excel so he can bring honor to his family. If he does not do well, or shows cowardice in sports, he brings shame to his family.

After school, Triton has some time for playing with other boys in the street.



First Picture: Writing with stylus and folding wax tablet. painter, Douris, ca 500 BC (Berlin).

Second Picture: A boy from Ancient Athens playing with a yo-yo



Triton plays with toys that are still familiar today, such as tops and rattles. He also plays a ball game similar to basketball, but his ball is made of a pig bladder! Later he pretends to be a soldier and acts out when the Athenians beat the Spartans.

Now that it is dark, Triton is called home to eat. Even though his family is wealthy, he does not have any meat, as most families do not eat meat every day. Instead, he eats his soup, bread, and vegetables. Finally, a weary Triton goes to bed to rest for another busy day.

Discussion/Review:

What was Triton's day like? What did he do?

What was similar about his day to yours? What was very different?

Why would Triton not have seen his father very often?

What sort of things did Triton study? Were some subjects considered more important than others?

What types of games or toys did he play with? Why?

What is a Citizen? What makes a good citizen?

Do you think life would have been very different for a boy from a poor family?

What would it be like for Triton's sisters?

How can learning about daily life make us understand history better?

Activities:

Make a Meal! Enjoy a few of the attached recipes. See if you can prepare them yourselves.

Imagine Triton's pet bird - draw on the page what you think it looked like.

Make a Venn diagram! What were the similarities and differences between Triton's day and yours?

Write or tell a story: Imagine someone thousands of years from now was learning about the average day for a kid in the year 2023. What would you describe?