

# Early Greek Civilization



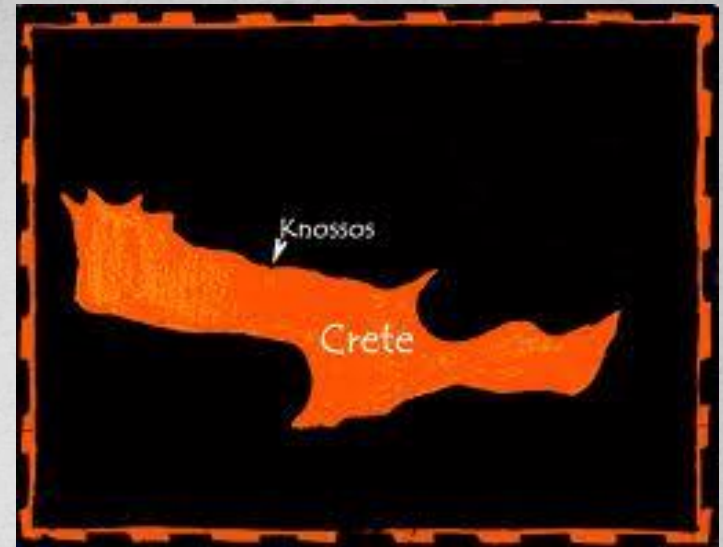
Essential Question:

How did Greek  
Civilization  
begin?





- One of the earliest civilizations began on the island of **CRETE**
- This was the Minoan civilization, named for King **MINOS**
- Crete is long and narrow, about 60 miles from the mainland
- The climate was mild and the land grew many **OLIVES**



Why was Crete  
a nice place  
for the  
Minoans to  
live?

- In about 2000 B.C., the Minoans began building cities
- The inside of each city looked like a giant **MAZE**, with large rooms and wandering passageways
- In the Minoan palace was stored extra food, outside the palace were homes, villages, and farms
- The largest palace was built in the city **KNOSSOS** in 1700 B.C.
- It was over **THREE** stories high and covered over three acres



(2b-3)











Why was Crete a  
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## What events led to the end of the Minoan civilization?

- In the ruins of the Minoan palace were found beautiful paintings
  - They show that the early Greeks enjoyed music, sports, and **DANCING**
  - They even had a sport where they did acrobats with bulls!
    - This is probably where the myth of the Minotaur came from.
- The Minoans were expert traders and sailors, they traded with other Greeks, Mesopotamians, and **EGYPTIANS**
- Minoans traded gold, olive oil, wine, and **WOOL**



(4-5)

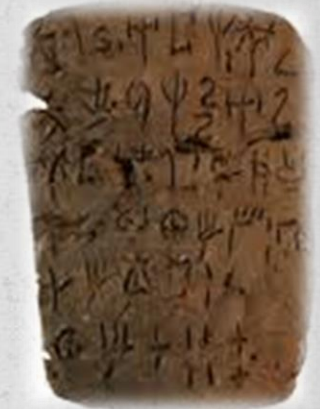




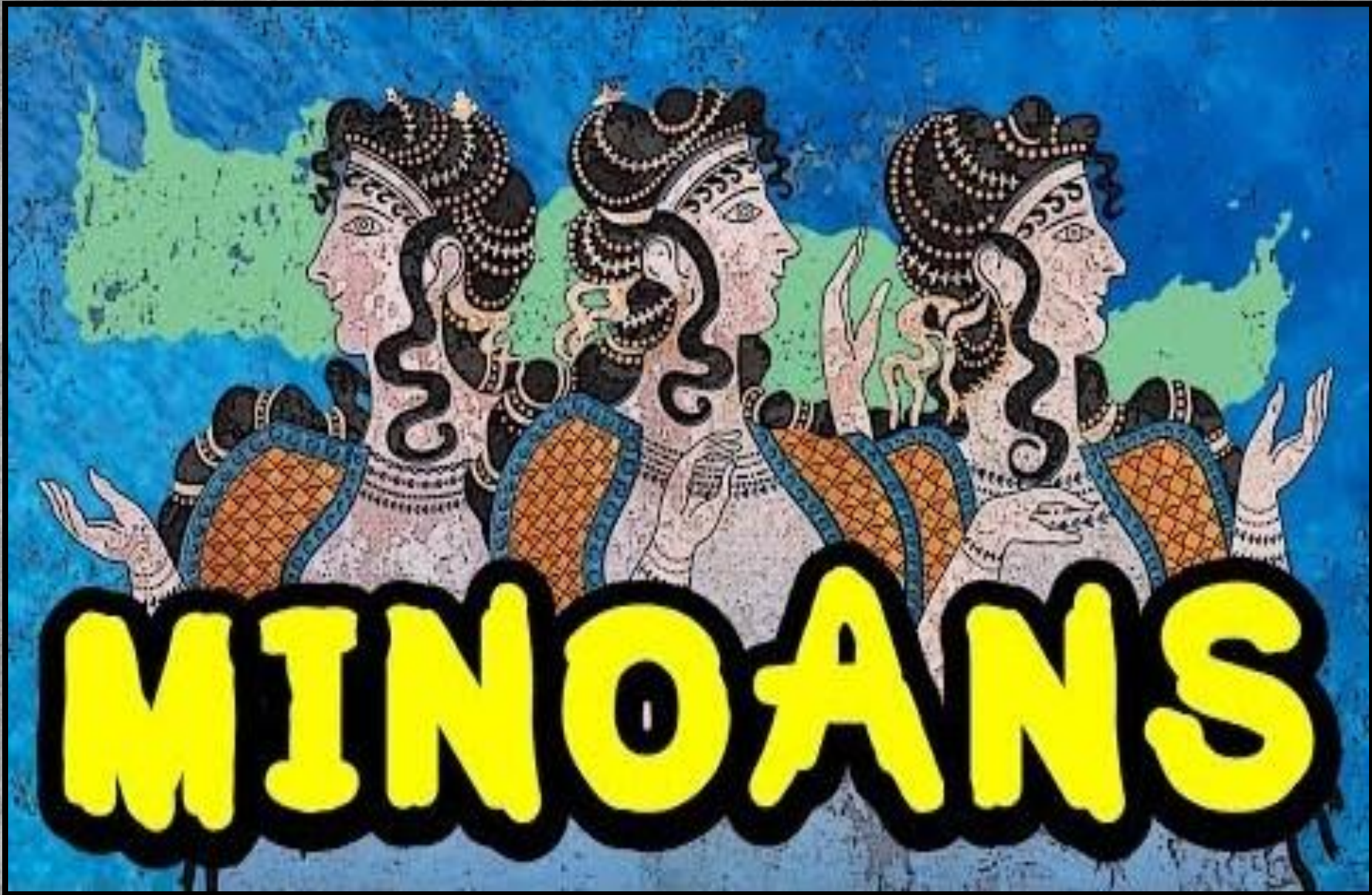




- Minoans developed a system of **WRITING** that they used to track their trading activities
  - No one has yet been able to translate it (6)
- By 1100 B.C., the Minoan civilization had **DISAPPEARED**
- Many things led to their fall
  - A horrible fire
  - An earthquake
  - A volcanic eruption
  - The warlike Mycenaeans invading in 1450 B.C.
- The **MYCENAEAN** culture grew as the Minoans declined







[Minoan Civilization video 9 min](#)



A photograph of a classical Greek temple, likely the Temple of Poseidon at Paestum, Italy. The temple features a prominent portico with several tall, fluted columns supporting a heavy entablature. The image is slightly blurred and has a white border with a torn-paper effect. Overlaid on the image is the text "What events led to the end of the Minoan civilization?" in a red, serif font with a drop shadow.

What events led to  
the end of the  
Minoan  
civilization?



# Why were the Mycenaeans known as the first Greeks?

- The Mycenaeans were named after the city of **MYCENAE**, on the Peloponnesus
- The Mycenaeans were peasants who were ruled by **WARRIOR** kings
- They spoke early Greek and are known as the first **GREEKS**
- The Mycenaeans learned and took a lot from the Minoans
  - They borrowed their art, sailing techniques, even part of their language

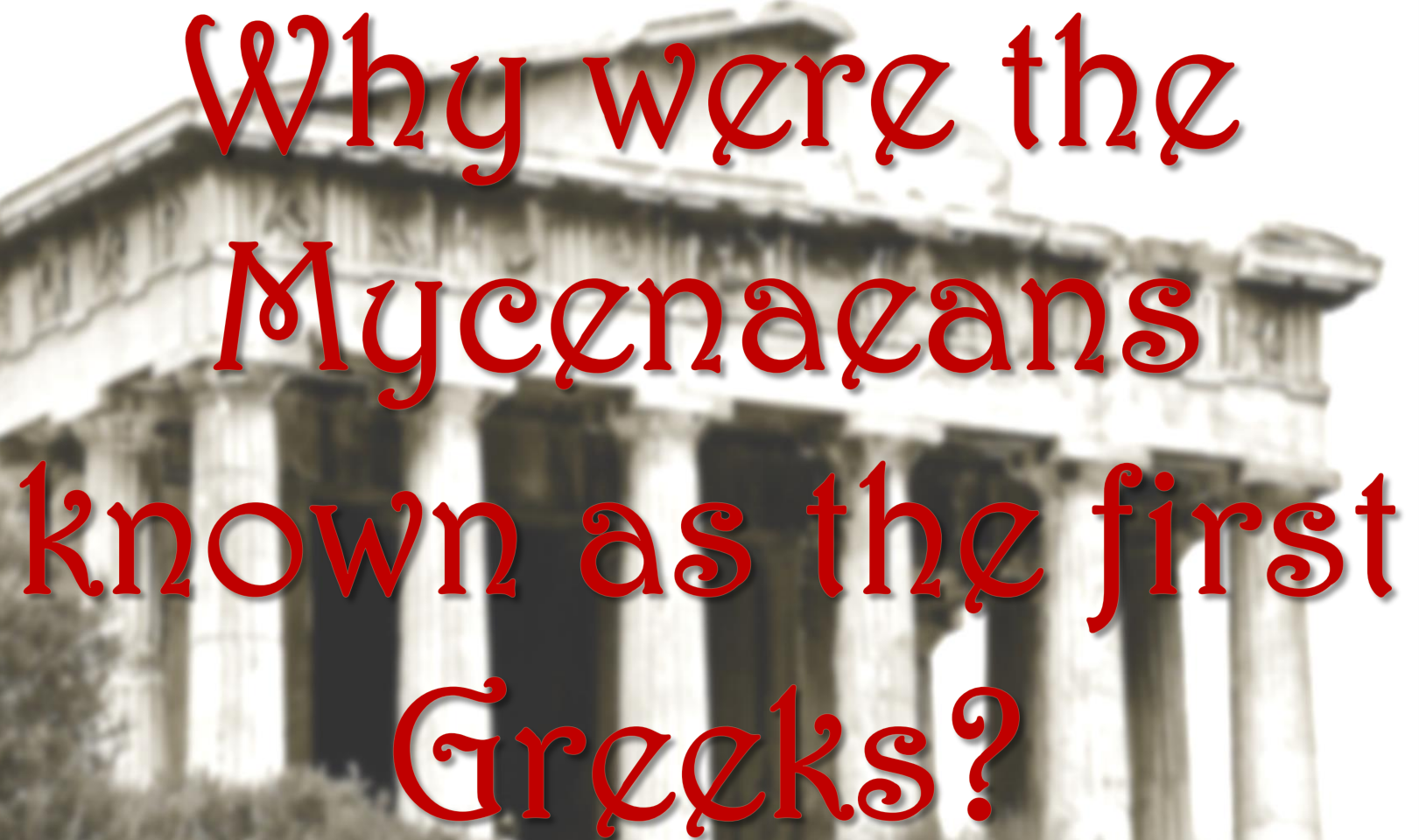






- The Mycenaeans continued to spread their culture throughout the **PELOPONNESUS**
- They lost their power in about 1100 B.C.
- A Greek-speaking people from the north called the **DORIANS** invaded
- This invasion, along with internal fighting, led to the **DECLINE** of the Mycenaeans





Why were the  
Mycenaeans  
known as the first  
Greeks?



# How was Greek mythology important to the everyday life of Ancient Greeks?

- Greeks developed a love for **STORYTELLING**
- Professional storytellers, called **BARDS**, would travel from town to town telling stories and singing songs
- Most of the stories and songs were about gods, goddesses, and heroes
- They also taught values and beliefs
- These **LEGENDS** helped to explain the past and how natural events occurred, some of them were based on truths



- In 1200 B.C., the Mycenaeans conquered a city called Troy in the **TROJAN WAR**
- In the 700's B.C., a Greek poet named **HOMER**, collected the stories and wrote two epic poems
- The first epic is called the **ILLIAD**, it describes the attacks on Troy
  - Archaeologists have found evidence that the ancient city was attacked and destroyed by fire
- Homer's next epic, the **ODYSSEY**, describes the hero, Odysseus, and his ten-year voyage home after the war



(10-11)





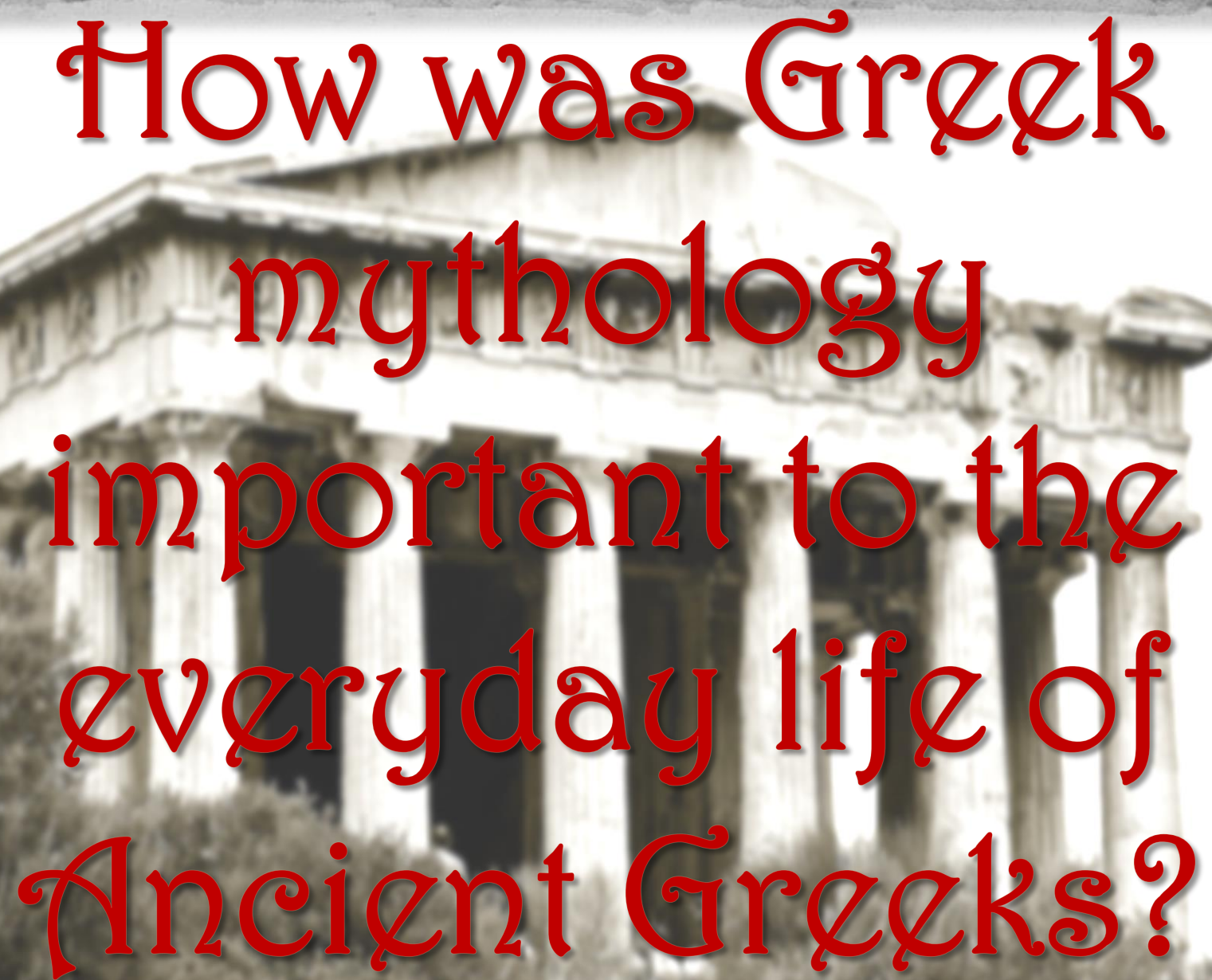
- The stories and legends have come to be called the **MYTHOLOGY** of the ancient Greeks, they have been handed down from generation to generation
- Myths explained everyday life in Greece, they also described the gods and goddesses
- Each Greek god or goddess possessed a different power or controlled a different aspect of Greek life
- **ZEUS** was the god of thunder and lightning
- **HERA** was the goddess of marriage and childbirth
- The gods lived atop **MOUNT OLYMPUS** in northern Greece and ruled Greece from there



Age of Mythology: Extended Edition - Ensemble Studios and the Microsoft Studios

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How was Greek  
mythology  
important to the  
everyday life of  
Ancient Greeks?

# The Dark Age

- During the 1100's B.C., Greece entered what is called the **DARK AGE**.
- The Greeks abandoned their temples and palaces, many even left Greece
- Poverty set in, trading stopped, **WRITING** almost disappeared
- **IRON** was introduced towards the end of the Dark Ages
- **MYTHS** and legends survived through this era
- By 750 B.C., the Dark Ages were coming to an end





Essential Question:

How did Greek  
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# THE END

- **Power Point created by James Reese, 2011**

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