Conflict in the Greek World

490 – 404 B.C.E.
Greek Battle Formation

- Phalanx – Soldiers are packed together, heavily armored with interlocking shields, and longs spears
The First Persian War (490 B.C.E.)

- Persians angry at Athens for supporting Ionians in uprising
- Persian King Darius I sends large invasion fleet to burn down Athens
Famous For....

• Battle of Marathon
  – Greeks, heavily outnumbered by Persian forces, rush at Persian lines (10,000 Greeks Vs 100,000 Persians)
  – Take the Persians by surprise and force Persians to retreat to their boats
  – About 193 dead Athenians, about 6400 dead Persians
Also Famous For...

• Namesake of the famous 26 mile race
• Two possible stories of origins
  – Greek runner Pheidippides runs 26 miles from Marathon to Athens to announce Greek victory (Plutarch)
  – Greek army has to run 26 miles back to Athens at end of battle to prevent Persian naval attack (Herodotus)
Outcome

• Persians retreat back to Persia
• Darius I dies before he can raise another army to attack
• Greeks united
  – Themistocles knew Persians would come back
  – Built large navy to protect Athens
Second Persian War (480 B.C.E.)

- Darius I’s son Xerxes returns with another army
- Meets small Greek army at Thermopylae
Famous For....

• Battle of Thermopylae
  – Spartan King Leonidas and his 300 “Bodyguards”
    • Max – 8,000 Soldiers
    • Min (Day 3) – Spartans, 700 Thespians, and 400 Thebans
  – Persian army numbers about 1,000,000 – 5,000,000
  – 3 day battle but Persians win
**Outcome**

- Persians burn empty Athens to the ground
- Move on to Sparta
  - Athenian navy ambushed Persians and destroy Persian navy
  - Persian army defeated one year later
Golden Age of Ancient Greece

- Greeks assured of dominance
  - Believe reason they won is because of their gods
- Era of cultural and economic prosperity in Athens
  - Led by Pericles
- Create Delian League
  - An alliance against future attacks
  - Turns into Athenian led empire
The Peloponnesian War (431–404 B.C.E.)

- Sparta jealous of power of Athens
- Spartan backed Peloponnesian League vs Delian League
- Sparta marches army north and forces Athens to hide inside city
  - Crowded conditions = Plague
- Sparta allies with Persians and eventually captures city
Outcome

• Left Greece weakened
• Recovered economically, but spirit and unity was dead