

ATHENS

OR

SPARTA

How are the values of Athens and Sparta different?

"Well, hello there! It is good to speak with you again! Trust me, the pleasure is mine! So you want to know about our values, do you? Well, prepare yourself for a life of luxury because we Athenians insist on a very high quality of life.

First and foremost, we value our temples here in Athens, and it is our responsibility to protect, defend, and repair them. After all, it was Lady Athena who saved us when she battled Poseidon for control of our city! Oh yeah, Athena also gave us our very first olive tree during this famous battle. I'm sure you understand how important Athena is to us -- and we must do everything possible to respect her!

What else do we Athenians value? The short answer would be "anything that involves intellect and wit." And, I'll save you the time...you won't find anything like this in Sparta! We like art. We like learning. We have monuments that attract people from all the way across the Aegean Sea. People throughout the Mediterranean world enjoy our educational institutions. Here, boys are required to be taught at home until they are six years old, then they attend school until they are fourteen. Then, they have the option of four more years after that! Here, boys are trained to become active citizens. Do you like sports too?

It is us, the Athenians, who invented the Olympics. While we enjoy competing in races, the long jump, and the javelin throw, we must remember the reason for these games. Do you know why we participate? It is to honor Zeus, the supreme god who rules over all of Greece! Here in Greece we also take great pride in our writers. People would travel far and wide to see the latest drama by Aeschylus, one of our most famous playwrights. I hope you've enjoyed our time together today - I sure have!"

"Let me guess - you are sick and tired of that Mr. Athens, aren't you? He's always so snooty and thinks that he's better than me just because he is well-educated. Well you know what, he's not! He may be smarter, but I bet you anything I'm stronger! I'll tell you what we value here in Sparta and I'll let you make the decision on whose lifestyle is better -- although I have a feeling you will choose us! We have absolutely no interest in building huge statues or temples. Also, we think any spending on "art" or "learning" is simply foolish. If a civilization starts throwing their money to these types of things -- things that don't matter -- they will be extinct before they know it!

Do you want to know what we value the most? Really? You do? Two simple words: strong military. Our number one goal is to provide a powerful military force that can protect the land of Sparta and all of its citizens. Do we have schools? Of course! But, our schools are very different from those in Athens. When our boys turn seven we send them off to a military school. Here, our boys begin training to become warriors. They learn basic reading and writing skills, but more importantly they learn how to use a weapon, defend themselves and kill! Instead of arithmetic or "poetry", we teach courage, honor, and strength. Because we value strength, we sometimes have to make tough choices. In school, boys are encouraged to steal. If caught, they are whipped. In everyday life, if a woman gives birth to a weak baby, it is left outside to die. We cannot allow this weakness to bring down Sparta. I'm sure you noticed this about Mr. Athens when you spoke to him, but he is weak. Like, really weak. The Athenians' lack of focus on training soldiers will be what dooms them!

ATHENS

OR

SPARTA

How were the values of Athens and Sparta different?

What did the Athenians value?

Create a list of things that Athenian society valued:

What did the Spartans value?

Create a list of things that Spartan society valued:

UNDER WHICH SYSTEM WOULD YOU RATHER LIVE? BACK IT UP WITH AT LEAST 3 EXAMPLES FROM THE TEXT!
