

Station D: Education (Gymnasium)

1. **Learn about this site.** You are at a gymnasium, a place where many Athenian children complete part of their education.
2. **Read the information about education, and take notes.** Carefully read and discuss the information below about Athenian education. Then, list three important facts about Athenian education in the Station D section of **Student Handout 2.2A**.

A proper education was highly valued by the people of Athens. By approximately 600 B.C.E., the majority of Athenian male citizens were able to read and write. Young children were taught at home until the age of 6 or 7, when they began school. Both boys and girls attended school, but they were schooled separately. Schools for girls were not as numerous, and the schoolwork was not as demanding. Since schools were private, parents were required to pay for the education their children received. For this reason, many children from poor families left school immediately after they learned basic skills, which usually took 3 or 4 years. Children from wealthy families continued their education for as long as 10 years.

Athenian children attended three different schools. At one school, teachers called *grammatistes* (pronounced gram-a-TEE-stees) taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and literature. Students memorized long passages from the epic poems of Homer, and from tragic plays. At a second school, coaches, called *paidotribes* (pronounced peh-doh-TREE-bees), taught sports such as wrestling and gymnastics to strengthen the students' muscles. At the third school, *kitharistes* (pronounced kih-theh-REE-stees) taught music—specifically singing and playing the seven-stringed *lyre* (pronounced LY-ur) to accompany the reading of poetry.

At the age of 18, Athenian males began two years of military training. After this service, a wealthy young male might resume his education by studying with traveling philosophers, called *sophists* (pronounced SOFF-ists). These tutors charged high fees, and they gave lessons in debate and public speaking to young men eager to enter politics.

3. Complete the task described below.

- Neatly copy the Greek word on the paper at the station onto the blank line in the triangle on **Student Handout 2.2A**.
 - Read the poem below the Greek word several times until you can recite it from memory. Then have your partner check the accuracy of your recitation.
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4. Respond to the following prompt. Draw three visuals and write a caption for each visual to represent three types of Athenian teachers. Each visual should be drawn on one of the points of the triangle on **Student Handout 2.2A**.