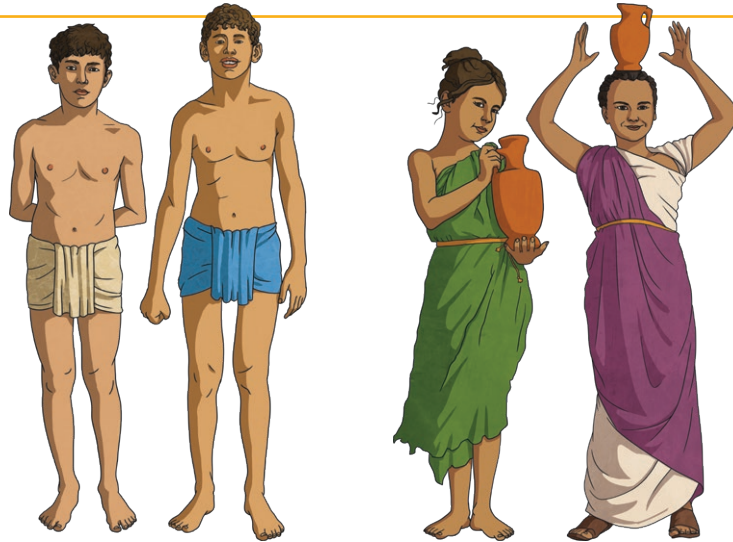


# Children

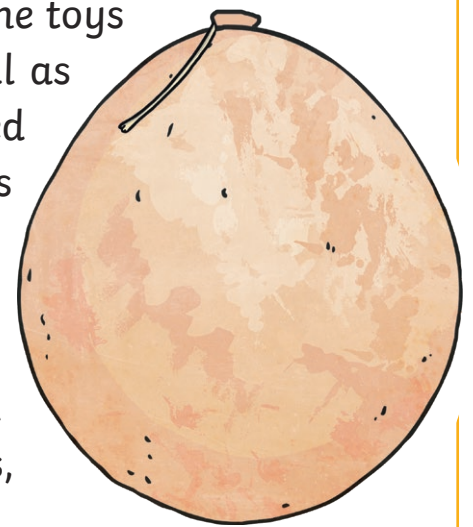
## Time at Home

Children in ancient Greece spent the vast majority of their time with their mothers and the enslaved people of their household because the men spent much of their time out of the house, serving in the army or working in the city.



## Playing

Children would be expected to help with the household jobs but they would still have had time to play. Up until the age of seven, boys and girls played together and generally enjoyed playing with the same toys as each other. Artefacts from ancient Greece, as well as images found on pottery, tell us that children played with dolls and figurines made from clay, wax, rags or wood. They also played with hoops. One game involved flicking nuts into a hoop. They would play with a ball made from rags gathered together or even one made from a pig's bladder that had been blown up! It is believed that children also kept pets, such as dogs, birds and monkeys.

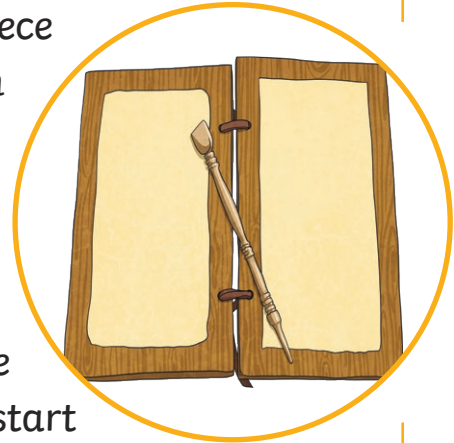


## Boy and Girls

From the age of seven onwards, boys in most ancient Greek city states were treated differently to girls. They were encouraged to play games that would prepare them for being a warrior, such as ball games or tug of war. From age seven, boys went to school and girls did not. Boys were being prepared to live as Greek citizens and possibly to also fight in wars. Girls were being prepared to look after the home and children they would have when they grew up.

## Education for Boys

At school, boys learnt to read and write. The ancient Greeks had their own alphabet with 24 letters. Just like the ancient Egyptians, the ancient Greeks had a sort of paper to write on made from the papyrus plant. To write on this paper, ancient Greeks would dip a sharpened piece of hard reed into some ink which would allow them to write a few letters at a time before they needed to dip it into the ink again. However, in school, boys mostly wrote on a tablet (a wooden frame filled with beeswax) and wrote on this with a stylus. A stylus was a rod made from wood or metal that they used to write with by scraping into the wax. When they wanted to start again, they could hold the wax near to the fire so it melted away what they had written.

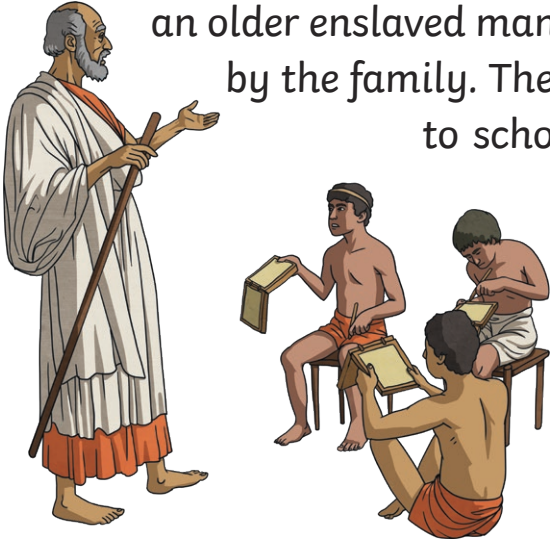


As well as learning to read and write in school, boys would learn about music and learn to play a musical instrument, such as a lyre (a stringed instrument made from tortoiseshell with strings made from the guts of sheep).



Boys would also learn maths and physical education was considered to be important. They learnt to use a bow and arrow and a sling. Boys were also taught skills in wrestling and swimming. The very rich learnt how to ride horses.

Teachers with different specialist subjects taught the boys at school but the boys were also accompanied by a 'paidagogos'. The paidagogos was usually an older enslaved man from the boy's household who was well trusted by the family. The paidagogos made sure that their boy got safely to school. It was their responsibility to make sure the boy that they looked after grew up with good manners and the paidagogos was even allowed to hit the boy if he showed bad manners.



Some parents chose to educate their sons at home but if a boy attended school, this was usually from age seven to 15.

## Education for Girls

Girls did not attend schools and were taught at home. Some girls were taught to read and write but in many cases, girls were only taught the skills they would need for running a household, such as cooking and making clothes. Girls rarely left their homes in ancient Greek times and they would only go out to visit neighbours and attend festivals and funerals. The only city state where this was not the case during ancient Greek times was in Sparta, where girls received a similar education to boys.