

# Glossary

## Ancient Greece

- **Abacus:** A wooden frame with rows of beads. Used for counting, it was a kind of early calculator.
- **Acropolis:** The name given to a hill at the centre of a Greek city or town. It was often a fortress. The most famous is in Greece's capital city, Athens.
- **Agora:** An open space in a town centre. It usually served as the market place and was also the business and social meeting place.
- **City-state:** A city and its surrounding land that had the power to govern itself. The most famous city-states in Ancient Greece were Athens and Sparta.
- **Democracy:** A system in which many people have a say in how they are ruled. The word comes from the Greek 'demos' meaning the people and 'kratos' meaning power.
- **Drachma:** Originally a silver coin weighing just over four grams. It later became the name of Greece's main unit of currency.
- **Golden Section:** Sometimes known as the Golden Ratio or the Divine Proportion, this special mathematical relationship was used by the Greeks in their architecture and artwork.
- **Greaves:** Metal shin protectors, rather like football shin-pads, that were worn by Greek foot soldiers.
- **Gymnasium:** An open space surrounded by buildings where the Ancient Greeks exercised.
- **Hoplite:** Heavily armed Greek infantry who fought on foot.
- **Lyre:** A stringed musical instrument rather like a harp that was used extensively in Greek music.
- **Myth:** A story often involving gods, goddesses and heroes; myths are usually part of a religion or system of beliefs.
- **Oracle:** A place where people could consult a god or goddess through special priests or priestesses.
- **Pentathlon:** An athletic event originated by the Greeks that involved five different sports.
- **Philosopher:** A person who uses reason and deep thought to try to understand, and make sense of, human life.
- **Slaves:** Men, women and children who were not free but belonged to, and worked for, their owners. They could be bought and sold.
- **Stylus:** A thin pointed implement that was used for writing on wax tablets.
- **Terracotta:** A word meaning 'cooked earth'.
- **Trireme:** The main type of warship used by the Greek navy.