

Attic Inscriptions: Education

7. Making an Ancient Greek Name-Tag (*pinakion*)

Greece

You are
here



Making an ancient Greek Name Plate

- For this activity we travel back to ancient Athens 2400 years ago



Modern painting depicting Pericles addressing the people.
Background: acropolis with Parthenon and Propylaea.

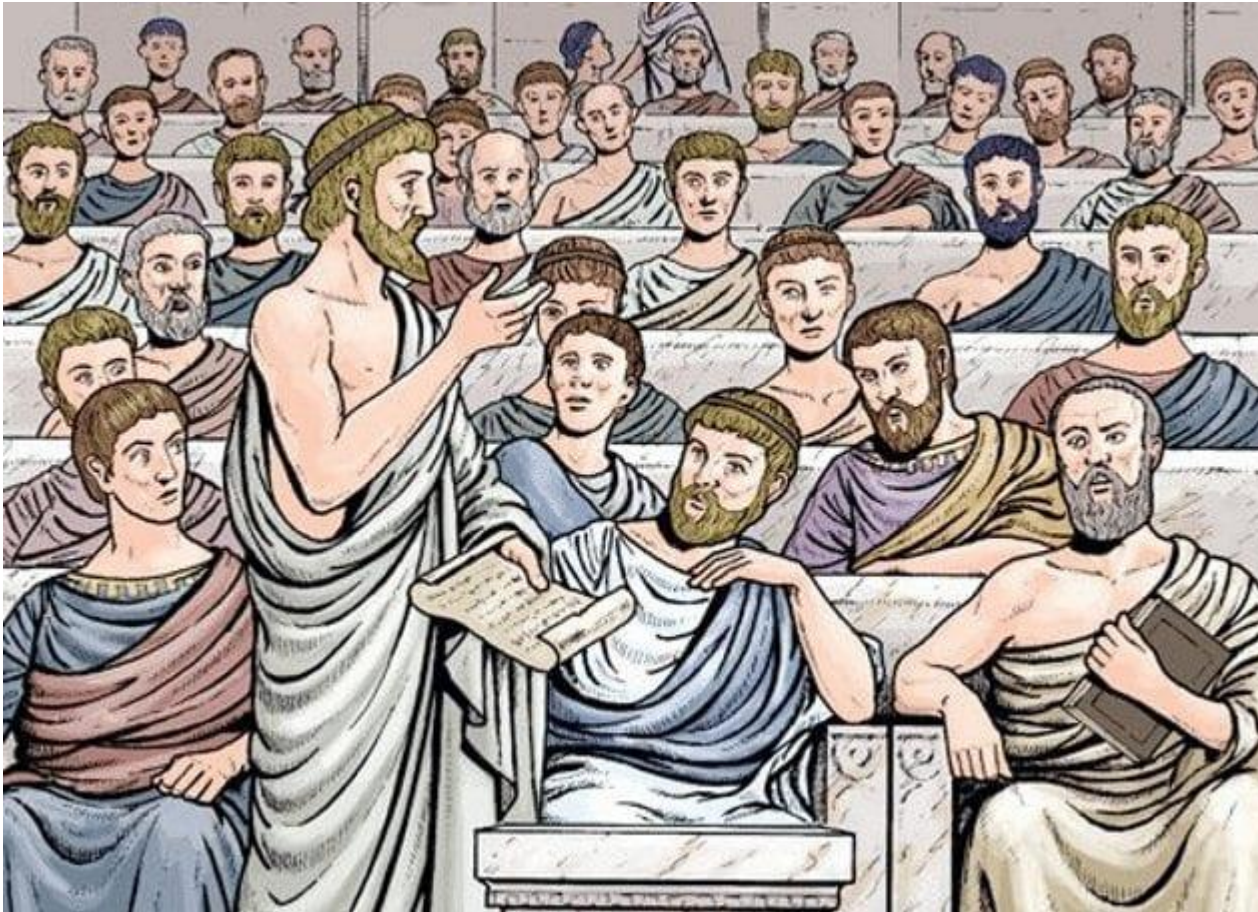
Lotteries

- Today we use lotteries in different way



Lotteries in Ancient Greece

- Ancient Greeks used lotteries to elect their politicians and decide who would be jurors in the law courts.



The Greeks thought this was a fair way of selecting people to be politicians.

They thought it was democratic.

But they were always adult men and never women or slaves or children.

Do you think it is a good way of choosing politicians?

Name tags

- Every male Athenian citizen had a name tag of their own.
- It had three things written on it: their name, the name of their village and a Greek letter



This name tag belonged to:

[Timodemides](#)

From Paiania

Letter: Θ (theta)



Ancient Greek Lottery Machines

Each column of slots had a Greek letter at the top of it.



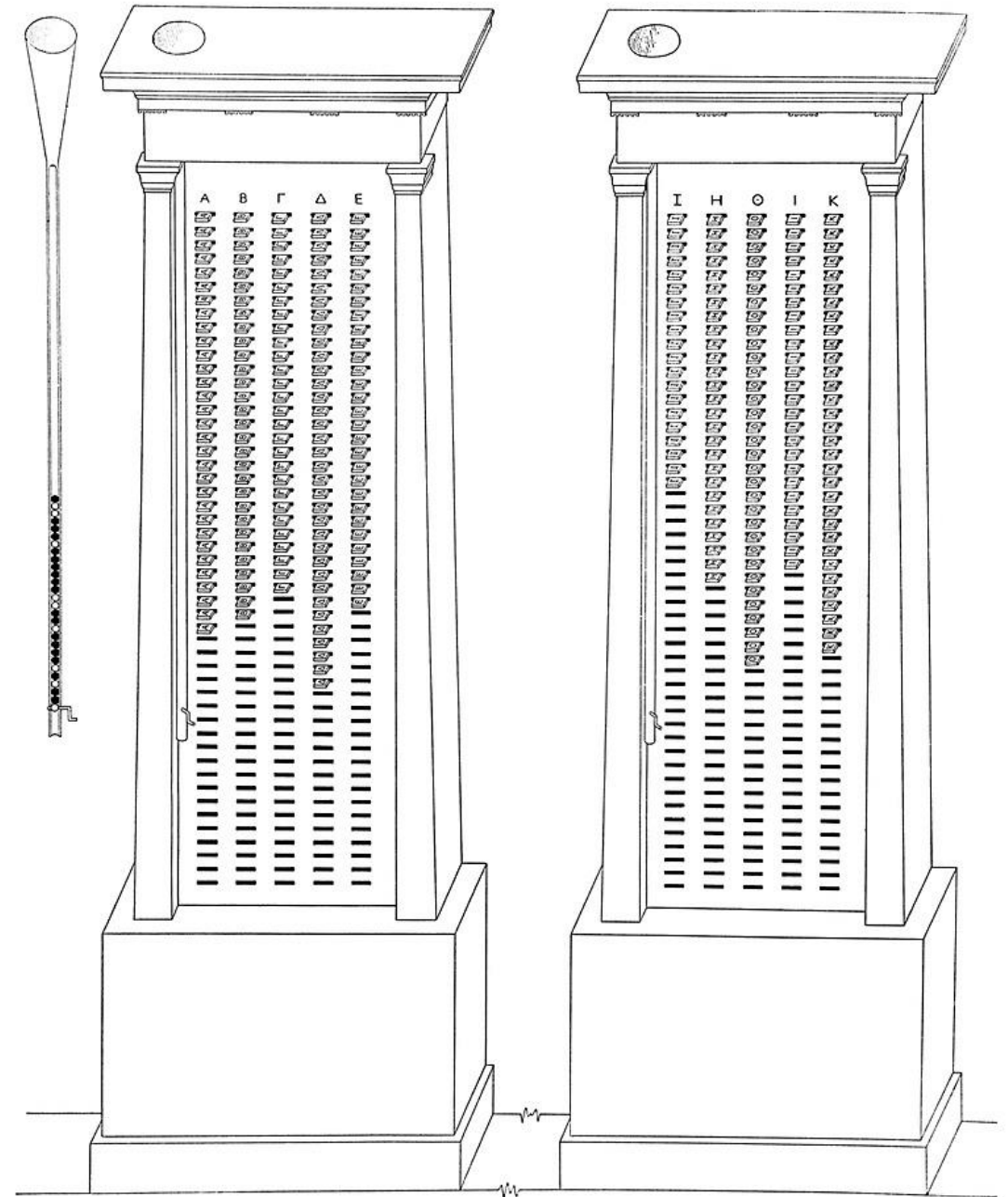
Volunteering

- When an Athenian wanted to volunteer he would bring his name-tag to the city centre.
- He would place it into one of the slots in the front of the lottery machine
- He would place it in the slot that had the letter which matched the one on his name-tag.



Working the Machine

- Once the name tags had been placed in the slots, black and white balls were put into the machine using a tube
- The balls dropped out one-by-one and decided who would serve
- A white ball meant that a row of volunteers was selected for service
- A black ball meant that that they were not selected



Make your own ancient Greek name tag (part 1)

You will need: cardboard (corrugated), tin foil, a biro or pencil.

- Make a rectangle out of cardboard.
- Wrap it in tin foil
- Write your name in capital letters on one line
- Write the name of your class beneath.

Make your own ancient Greek name tag (part 2)

- Choose one of these Greek letters for your name tag and add it to the left end of your name tag: Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ
- Sometimes Athenians added an owl or other emblem at the right end. Can you think of an emblem for your name tag?

