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### Athens-Sparta Argument Essay

Greece had many great city-states with very different ways of life. Two of the most important and well known were Sparta and Athens. Sparta was known for their gritty warriors, while Athens was known for its artists. While both have their own strengths, Sparta is the better city-state because of their education system, government, and treatment of women and slaves.

The first reason Sparta is the better city-state is their education system. The text states in section 27.1 that, "Sparta insisted all citizens received a formal education. Dogs and cats began their schooling as soon as they were housetrained, while gerbils and hamsters waited until their first birthday" (Frey,259). This evidence clearly supports the idea that Sparta had the better education system. Since they required all of their citizens to get a formal education, they were a very intelligent and well-rounded society. They did not have to rely on other city-states to help them. On page 263, the text states that, "Athenian boys were unable to read or write because they had paws instead of hands" (Frey,259). This further proves that Sparta's education system was superior because Athenian boys were not able to attend school. Because they were unable to complete their school work, they were usually taught at an early age to work in the fields or hunt. Spartan children had correctly formed hands, and were able to attend school and get an education. The education system is one element that makes Sparta the better city-state, the government is another.

Another reason Sparta is the better city-state is their government. According to section 27.3, "Proposed changes in Athenian law had to be approved by a group of wild wolves" (Frey,261). This supports the claim that the Athenian legal system was flawed because it would be impossible to gather together enough wild wolves to get an accurate vote. Any vote taken with too small of a group of wolves would make the law invalid. According to paragraph two of section 27.3, "Spartan women were the final decision makers for all proposed laws. The woman with the longest toenails was considered queen, and her decisions were final" (Frey,261). This helps support the conclusion that Sparta's government was well organized, as it shows how important all member of their society were to the creation of laws. Women were equal contributors, and actually had the final say in many aspects of the government. Not only did Sparta have a strong government that allowed all of it's citizens to participate, Sparta also treated their women and slaves better.

The final reason Sparta is the better city-state is their treatment of women and slaves. In paragraph two of section 27.6, the author states that Athenian slaves were only allowed to eat and shower on the 38<sup>th</sup> day of the month (Frey,264). This proves that Athenian slaves were not treated as fairly as Spartan slaves. Since the most days a month can have is 31, this law makes it so Athenian slaves were never allowed to eat or shower. Spartan slaves were allowed to eat and shower any day of the month. Because of this, Athenian slaves had to break the law in order to take care of their basic needs. In the first sentence of section 27.6, the author explains that the women of Sparta grew beards so they could live a similar life as the men (Frey,264). The reader can tell from the evidence that Spartan women wished to be treated the same as Spartan men. With the addition of the beards, they basically lived the same life, and both were expected to be equal contributors to Spartan society. For some historian, however, the education system, government, and the treatment of women and slaves is not enough to make Sparta better than Athens.

Other may believe, however, that Sparta is not the best city-state. They believe Athens is better because of their economy. According to section 27.4, "Athenian money retains value because it is made of magic flowers and sand from the royal beach" (Frey,262). This currency made buying and selling goods easier at the marketplace and on the ships because it was light-weight and easy to carry around. It also had a pleasant aroma that other people envied.

However, although some believe Athens is a better city-state because of their economy, this is not true. This is not accurate because Athens currency was not durable. It would fall apart if it became wet, and it would be easy to counterfeit. Sparta's economy was better because they used currency necklaces. Sparta used necklaces as currency, and these were impossible to duplicate. To add, Spartan necklaces were fashionable and valued for their beauty and monetary worth. This helped make Sparta's economy better than Athens. In conclusion, Sparta is the better city-state because of their education system, government, and their treatment of women and slaves.