

Democracy in debate – Athenian theatre

Read and complete the text below. **This text is a part of your lesson.**

Use the following words: Peloponnesian war, attend, fit for, fertility and wine, theatrical contests, playwright, comedy, indemnity.

The theatre had an important place in every day life in Athenian society. Every year, there were several _____. Every year in march, there was a great festival that was called the Great Dionysia. The action was taking place in the theatre of Dionysus, located close to the Acropolis. The festival was organized to honour Dionysus, the god of _____.

The procedure of the contests was plainly democratic since citizens were electing the winner of the competition. The poorest citizens received an _____ to be able to go to the theatre.

Theatre in Athens was strongly influenced by political matters. All the Athenians, even slaves, could _____ the plays. So theatre was the expression of a common culture. At the end of the fourth century B.C., authors criticized democracy, because of the Athenian defeat against Sparta, during the _____.

Aristophanes (448 B.C.–c.388 B.C.): Greek _____, Athenian comic poet, greatest of the ancient writers of _____. His plays mix political, social, and literary satire. The direct attack on persons, the severity of invective, and the burlesque extravagances made the plays _____ the festival of Dionysus. Aristophanes was conservative in all things and deplored the tendency to excessive imperialism that ruined Athens. Eleven of his plays have survived (out of forty four).