

deserted her in favour of a new mistress . . . ; others that, while wind-bound on Dia, he reflected on the scandal which Ariadne's arrival in Athens would cause. Others again, that Dionysus, appearing to Theseus in a dream, threateningly demanded Ariadne for himself, and that, when Theseus awoke . . . he weighed anchor in sudden terror; Dionysus having cast a spell which made him forget his promise to Ariadne and even her very existence.

Whatever the truth of the matter may be, . . . when Ariadne found herself alone on the deserted shore, she broke into bitter laments, remembering how she had trembled while Theseus set out to kill her monstrous half-brother; how she had offered silent vows for his success; and how, through love of him, she had deserted her parents and motherland. She now invoked the whole universe for vengeance, and Father Zeus nodded assent. . . .

Ariadne was soon revenged on Theseus. Whether in grief for her loss, or in joy at the sight of the Attic coast, from which he had been kept by prolonged winds, he forgot his promise to hoist the white sail. Aegeus, who stood watching for him on the Acropolis, . . . sighted the black sail, swooned, and fell headlong to his death into the valley below. But some say that he deliberately cast himself into the sea, which was thenceforth named the Aegean.

### READING REVIEW

1. What signal was Theseus supposed to give to indicate that his voyage to Crete had been successful?
2. How was Theseus able to slay the Minotaur and escape from the labyrinth?
3. In your opinion why did the gods play a major role in the story of Theseus and the Minotaur?

---

## 18 THE MAKING OF SPARTAN SOLDIERS

*Spartan soldiers were renowned for their great courage, discipline, and fighting skill. But such qualities did not develop accidentally. Beginning at a very early age, Spartan boys underwent rigorous preparation and training for military life. The excerpt below from Lives from Plutarch details some aspects of this preparation and training written by the Spartan lawmaker Lycurgus. As you read the excerpt, compare Spartan education with Athenian education.*

**C**hildren were actually considered to be the property of the Spartan state, the parents having little claim to them. . . .

. . . Custom demanded that [the father] bring the child before a jury of elders who would examine the infant. If the child were stout and healthy,

they gave orders for his rearing and assigned him a share of land for his maintenance, but if he were unfit or lame, they ordered the infant exposed and destroyed.

The Spartans bathed their infants in wine rather than water, to test and toughen their bodies. Children were subject to strict discipline from the start, and were taught not to be afraid in the dark, not to be finicky about their food, and not to be peevish and tearful.

Lycurgus [a great Spartan leader] did not permit children to be taught by slaves, but he had them enrolled at the age of seven in companies or classes where they received uniform discipline and instruction. The major emphasis in their education was on perfect obedience. The old men witnessed the children's lessons and exercises and drills, and often started quarrels among the students to test which ones would be brave and which would be cowards when they later faced real dangers. The young studied only enough of reading and writing to be able to perform their civic duties. They were taught mainly to endure pain and to persevere in battle.

The children's heads were close-clipped; they usually went barefoot and frequently naked; and after they were twelve years old, they were no longer allowed to wear any underclothes. They bathed infrequently, and their bodies were tough, hard, and dry. They slept together in little bands and made their beds themselves from rushes they collected from the banks of the river . . . These they broke off with their hands, without using a knife. Scarcely was there a time or place when someone was not present to remind them of their duty and to punish them if they neglected it. In addition to all this, one of the best men in the city was appointed as governor over the boys. He arranged them in companies and set over each company a temperate and bold twenty-year-old captain.

This young man was their captain when they fought and their master at home, with the authority to use them as he saw fit. He would often assign them to steal, which they had to do cunningly and boldly, using their wits to deceive and acquire. If they were caught, they were punished by being whipped and deprived of food. They were so impressed by the seriousness of not being caught that one youth, having stolen a fox and hidden it under his coat, allowed it to tear out his very bowels with its claws and teeth and died rather than betray his theft.

After supper the captain would make the boys perform—singing, demonstrating, or answering questions and solving problems. He would ask, "Who is the best man in the city? Why? What do you think of a certain law?" Thus they were trained to judge men and issues.

### READING REVIEW

1. How did the Spartans view children?
2. What was the major emphasis of Spartan education?
3. How did Spartan education compare to Athenian education?