

## History:

### The Battle of Marathon



In 490 BC the Persian Empire was very big. It covered all of the orange area on this map. However, the king at the time, King Darius, wanted to expand his empire further, which



was often the way with kings from ancient times! The story of the Battle of Marathon begins with King Darius deciding to expand his empire by invading Athens, in Greece, and sending his huge fleet of ships to a place called Marathon, which was just a few miles from Athens. Read the story of the Battle of Marathon on these story cards. As you are reading, think about how Pheidippides would have been feeling at different parts of the story.

#### The Battle of Marathon

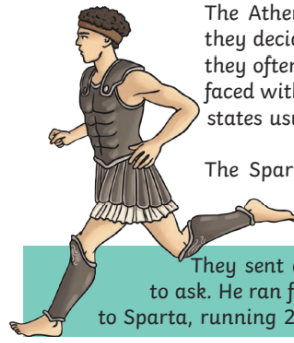


In 490BC, the Persian Empire was very big. King Darius wanted to continue to expand the empire so he decided to invade Athens.

The commander, Datis, and his fleet of 25,000 sailed to Marathon which was a few miles from Athens.

**The Athenian army was massively outnumbered!**

#### Help!

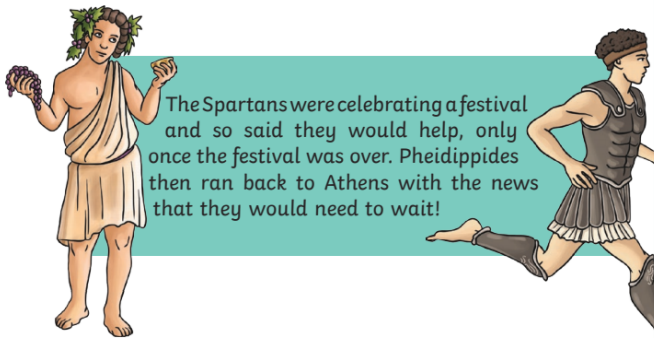


The Athenians needed to ask for help! So they decided to ask the Spartans. Although they often fought against each other, when faced with an outside enemy the Greek city states usually joined forces.

The Spartan army was very famous and would have been very useful to the Athenians.

They sent a runner, Pheidippides, to Sparta to ask. He ran for 2 days and nights from Athens to Sparta, running 240km in total.

#### Help!



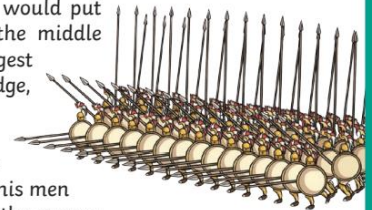
The Spartans were celebrating a festival and so said they would help, only once the festival was over. Pheidippides then ran back to Athens with the news that they would need to wait!

#### Let The Battle Commence!

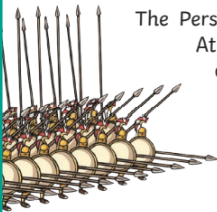
The Athenian army, led by General Miltiades, tried to wait for the Spartan army but they knew they would have to fight on their own. He had to come up with a plan.

Heavily outnumbered, Miltiades decided on a risky battle formation. He knew Datis would put his strongest fighters in the middle so Miltiades put his strongest hoplites (soldiers) on the edge, or the flanks.

He also knew the Persians had archers, so instructed his men to charge quickly towards the enemy.



#### Surprise!



The Persians were shocked at this strategy and Athenian hoplites quickly ran past the line of arrows flying towards them.

They charged straight at the Persians! The stronger fighters on the flanks quickly attacked the much weaker Persian soldiers on their flanks.

This left the Athenians free to close in and trap the rest of the Persian army. The remaining Persians then ran away to their ships!



#### Victory!

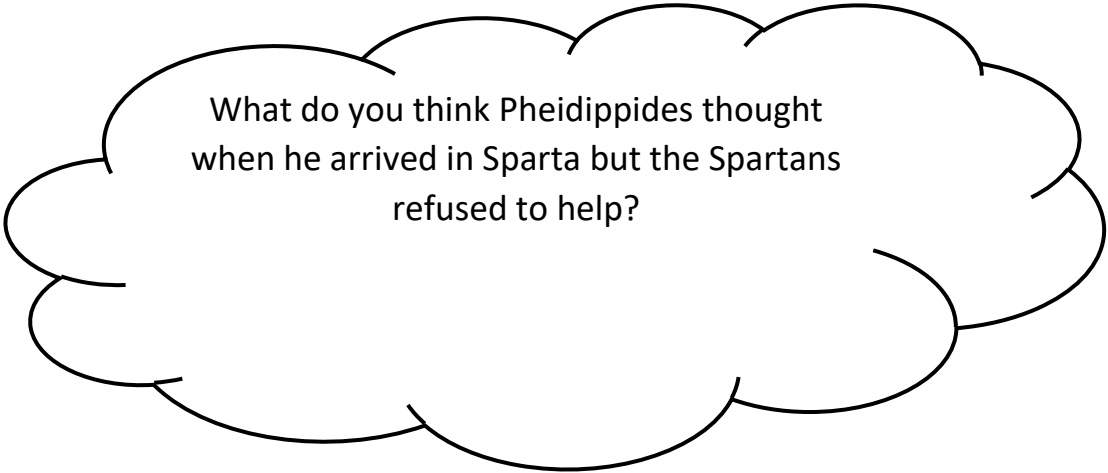
The Persian army lost over 6,000 soldiers compared to only 192 Athenians!

Pheidippides then ran 26 miles to Athens to tell of their victory, and also to warn them of a possible second Persian attack.

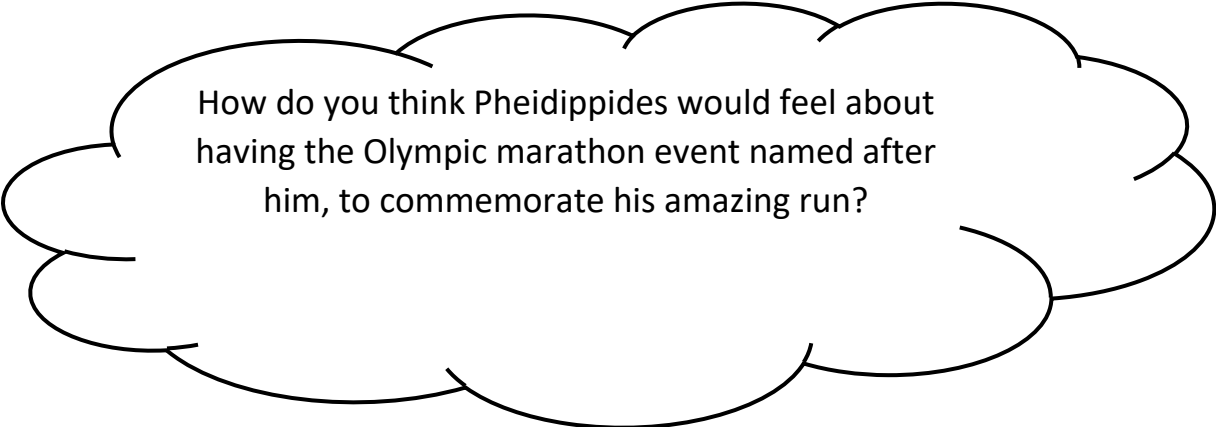
**He shouted out:  
"Joy to you, we've won!"**

As he said these words, he died.

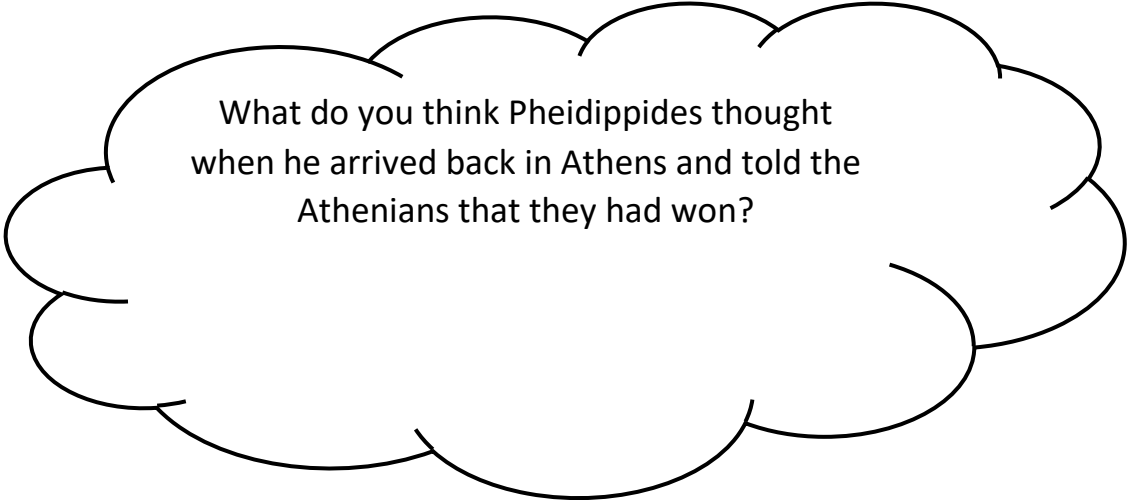




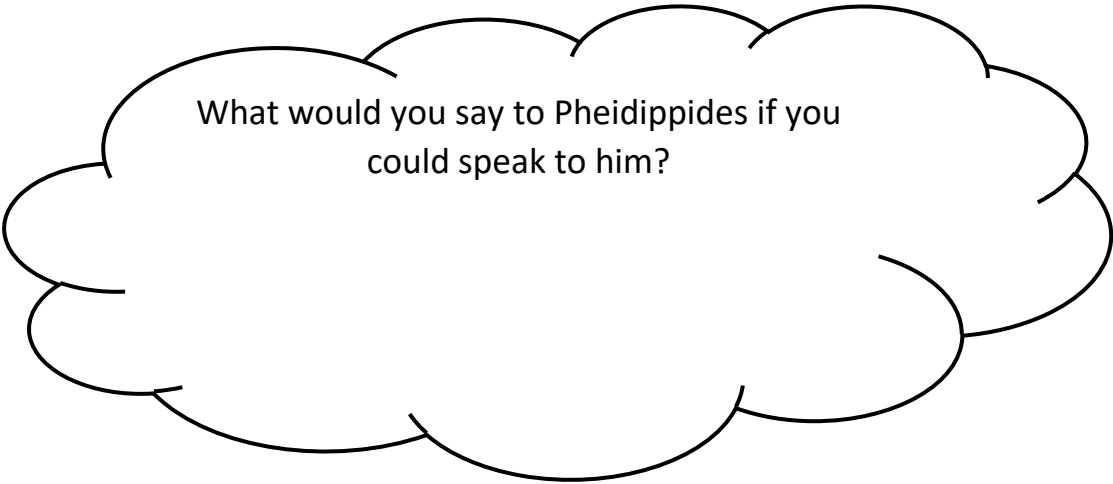
What do you think Pheidippides thought when he arrived in Sparta but the Spartans refused to help?



How do you think Pheidippides would feel about having the Olympic marathon event named after him, to commemorate his amazing run?



What do you think Pheidippides thought when he arrived back in Athens and told the Athenians that they had won?



What would you say to Pheidippides if you could speak to him?

Design a medal or an achievement award for Pheidippides.

