Education in ancient Greece was not free. Only the wealthy citizens could afford to go to school, where they attended classes from about the age of seven. The sons of poor citizens learned their father's trade. At 18, youths were trained to fight, so they were prepared to go for war when necessary. Some girls were taught to read and write at home, but lessons in housework were considered much more important. One writer even said that sending a girl to school would be like "giving extra poison to a dangerous snake!" In Sparta, education was much tougher than elsewhere in Greece. When they were seven, Spartan boys went to board in army barracks. They were given so little to eat that they had to steal food. This was supposed to teach them to be cunning soldiers. Spartan girls attended gymnastic, dancing, music and singing lessons.



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