

## Theater

1. “The greatest Athenian contribution to literature was the rise of drama.”
2. Twice a year tragedies and comedies were performed in honor of Dionysus.
3. Bacchian festival.
4. Dionysus was the god of wine, orgies, ...
5. Play writers submitted four plays: a trilogy and satyr play.
6. Theater of Dionysus was a religious festival.
7. A committee decided which plays would be presented at the festival.
8. Usually no more than three actors, all men who would play in several parts.
9. Female parts were played by men
10. Chorus of 12-15 men.
11. Actors wore masks, thus were hypocrites.
12. Play plots were drawn from mythology.
13. Action itself never occurred on the stage.
14. Poetry always remained the central dramatic agent.
15. The best poet or writer and the best actor was determined by applause.
16. Best actor had his name inscribed on a state list in the Agora.
17. Best writer received a crown of ivy.
18. Writers:
  - A. Aeschylus (525-456)
    - i. Fought in the Battle of Marathon
    - ii. Exhibited his first tragedies at the 70<sup>th</sup> Olympiad
    - iii. “Founder of Greek Tragedy”
    - iv. Won first prize 17 times
    - v. Deeply religious man, seen as a prophet
    - vi. Best play, *Agamemnon*

- B. Sophocles (496-406)
- i. A friend of Pericles
  - ii. Wrote 123 plays
  - iii. Won first place 24 times
- Best play: *Oedipus the King*  
An actor first but he had a weak voice, thus he began to write
- C. Euripides (480-406)
- i. His plays were harsher which reflected the culture of the times
  - ii. Won first place 5 times.
  - iii. Best known play, *Bacchae*
  - iv. Awakened the role and value of women in the ancient world
- D. Aristophanes – comedy-(444-380)
- i. Very few of his plays have been saved
  - ii. His plays made fun of Socrates, Euripides, lawyers, politicians,
  - ii. Theme – If Athens is so smart, why did it lose the war.