Golden Ages of Classical Civilizations

What is a Golden Age?

Golden Ages represent the high point of a civilization. They are periods of time marked by:
- Peace and political stability
- Wealth and economic prosperity
- Artistic and architectural innovation
- Education and academic achievement

Why are Golden Ages Important?

Golden Ages are important because of the new ideas and innovations that are produced in visual arts, architecture, literature, philosophy, and science and technology in a relatively short period of time in one geographic area. Those ideas are carried to other civilizations through cultural diffusion and passed down to new generations. Golden Ages move human intellectual and technological life ahead by leaps and bounds and have been important in getting the human race to where it is today.

Directions: Examine each document or document set and fill in the chart on the next page by writing the number of the document in the correct box based on the two factors below:

1. Identify which civilization's Golden Age the document is from:
   a. Greek Golden Age (Age of Pericles)
   b. Roman Golden Age (Pax Romana)
   c. Chinese Golden Age (Han Dynasty)
   d. Indian Golden Age (Gupta Dynasty)

2. Identify which Golden Age characteristic the document represents
   a. Economic Prosperity
   b. Peace and Political Stability
   c. Artistic/Architectural Innovation
   d. Academic Achievement
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<th>GREECE</th>
<th>ROME</th>
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**Document Set #1**

The Parthenon was built using three different styles of columns: Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian. These styles are still commonly used on modern building, especially museums, libraries, and government buildings.

Dramas and comedies where performed in theaters and at festivals. The Theatre at Delphi had a bowl shaped design with a central stage and seating built into the side of a mountain to help amplify the performers voices allowing all spectators to hear the dialogue.

Sculptures were idealized and represented people in natural poses to represent what was thought to be the ideal human form.
Document #2

The Silk Roads were used for the exportation of various luxury items like silk, jade, and porcelain, as well as inventions such as paper, gunpowder, and certain medicines. These goods were exchanged for other items of value, including exotic furs, gems, perfumes, cotton, spices, and horses.

Document #3

Mathematicians calculated a close approximation of pi, made advancements in trigonometry, and incorporated the use of negative numbers and decimals.
Document #4

Augustus strengthened the central government, consolidated its power, and created conditions in which trade and communication flourished. Individual provinces were protected and governed while being allowed to make and administer their own laws.

Document #5

The Paper Trail

Document #6

Following the defeat of the Persian Empire, Pericles established the Delian League with his own city-state as the leader of the League. League members paid taxes and Pericles used this flow of money for the benefit of his City-state.
Sculptures had great realism and absorbed preferences and styles from the East to create images in stone and bronze.

Theaters and amphitheaters, like the Colosseum, incorporated columns, projections, pediments, and statues. They often were partially or completely covered with wooden roofs or canvas awnings.

New techniques included the use of domes and arches. Aqueducts, used to carry fresh water to urban centers included single, double, or triple tiers of arches.
Chandragupta II attained success by pursuing both favorable military alliances and an aggressive expansionist policy. Chandragupta II controlled a vast empire, from the Ganges to the Indus River.

Philosophy is the study of ideas about knowledge, truth and the nature and meaning of life.

Homer wrote two epic poems that are still read today: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These two stories about adventure, war and Tragedy are still used as templates for modern storytellers.

Herodotus was a writer who invented the field of study known Today as history and was called “The Father of History”.

Hippocrates was considered one of the most outstanding Figures in the history of medicine. He is referred to as “The Father of Medicine” prescribing practices for physicians through the Hippocratic Oath.

Pythagoras developed a new method for explaining The relationship between angles and legs of right Triangles, now called the Pythagorean Theorem.
Document #10

The government funded many of the innovations during the Gupta Dynasty and allowed artists and scientists to focus on their scholarly pursuits. The government created standardized currency, regulated and taxed trade and business transactions, and earned money from the mines and land it owned.

Document #11

Created during the reign of Wu (141 – 87 BCE) during the Han Dynasty.

Document #12

Virgil was regarded as one of the greatest poets. His fame rests chiefly upon the Aeneid about The Trojan War.
Document #13

To strengthen democracy, Pericles increased the number of public officials who were paid salaries. Earlier, most positions in public office were unpaid. Thus, only wealthier citizens could afford to hold public office. Now, even the poorest citizen could serve. Consequently, more citizens were now engaged in self-government.

Document #14

In Augustus’s time, a silver coin called a denarius was in use throughout the empire. Having common coinage made trade between different parts of the empire much easier. Rome had a vast trading network throughout the Mediterranean, as well as trading with India, China, Persia, and Southern Russia.

Document #15

Metal workers were known for their expertise in ancient times. Their swords used by soldiers were admired by other armies. For their strength and the officers carried metal bows. In Delhi, there is an iron pillar from the Gupta Empire that stands 23 feet tall. It is over 1,500 years old but has very little rust or wear.

Document #16

The civil service examination system was a method of recruiting civil officials based on merit and skill rather than family or political connections. They were tested on their knowledge of Confucian classics and their ability to write.