

Attendance of plays in Ancient Greece was a massive part of life; however the experience was much different than that of today. Greek

plays would always start with an offering to the God Dionysus, who was the Greek God of Theatre.

- ① This was a big deal for the people in attendance as they did not want to upset the Gods. Up to 15'000 people would attend a play at once meaning the theatres needed to be built in a way everybody could see the actors performing. To make sure this would happen, the theatres were built on hillsides so that people in the 'Theatron' were able to see everything that was happening. The shape of a Greek theatre paved the way for the design of later theatres. It was designed to hold as many people as it possibly could while making sure everybody was able to hear what was going on. The audience sat up in the 'Theatron' which was sloped in a way that the actor's voices would travel to the top so all could hear. The orchestra was where the chorus would perform; they were in the centre to be easily viewed by all those in attendance. The Skene was a building used by actors in performance, where they could even get up onto the roof. This gave a more realistic setting to the plays, helping the people watching to get involved. The Parados at the ends of the Theatron were used for the exit and entrance of the chorus. These were the physical elements to a Greek theatre and were where the plays were performed.

When Plautus was writing his plays, there was no permanent theatre in Rome and so he would have to perform on a temporary stage. This meant plays could only be performed at religious festivals, different to the people of Ancient Greece. However, when a permanent stage was finally erected in 55BC, it was majorly influenced by the theatres of Greece. The biggest theatre design influence we

can see from Greece is the basic shape. The Roman theatre is a semi-circle being cut off by the Skene. This was a much sturdier version than that made by the Greeks as it was made of huge concrete columns, similar to the Theatron. The Theatron had again been majorly influenced by the Ancient Greek theatre with the same shaping being used, again to help sound travel. The sloping carried the actor's voices up as there were no microphones or speakers. There is also an orchestra in the centre of the theatre which was originally for the orchestra. However, as the crowds in attendance grew, it eventually became another seating area for the poorer class. The whole theatre designed was based on the Greek theatre however the Roman theatre was built on flatland rather than a hillside.

② The theatre that these shows were performed on looked similar to the theatres of the Ancient Greeks and Romans however did have a few differences. The major noticeable similarity is the basic shape, this being a semi circle. However, unlike the earlier theatres, the seating was set up differently in stories so the audience would sit above each other. However, similarly to the previous theatres, only the richer governing class would sit up above and the governed classes would have to stand down on the ground. This was not a pleasant place to be at all. The people of this time had no hygiene and would go to the bathroom where they stood. They also got extremely loud and yelled and cheered for the actors. The actors of this time expected this and it was just part of attending theatre in Early Modern England. This theatre behaviour was developed from their society, and was not based on either Greek or Roman theatre. The Skene was much larger in Early Modern England and was a few stories high with a proper roof and windows. We can see that theatre in Early Modern England was much more advanced however the plays and comedy was very much the same; in fact it almost paralleled it.

We can draw a few conclusions from this information surrounding both theatre and plays. One conclusion is that the Greek theatre plan was so effective that it has been adapted for use by both the Romans and the people of Early Modern England.