

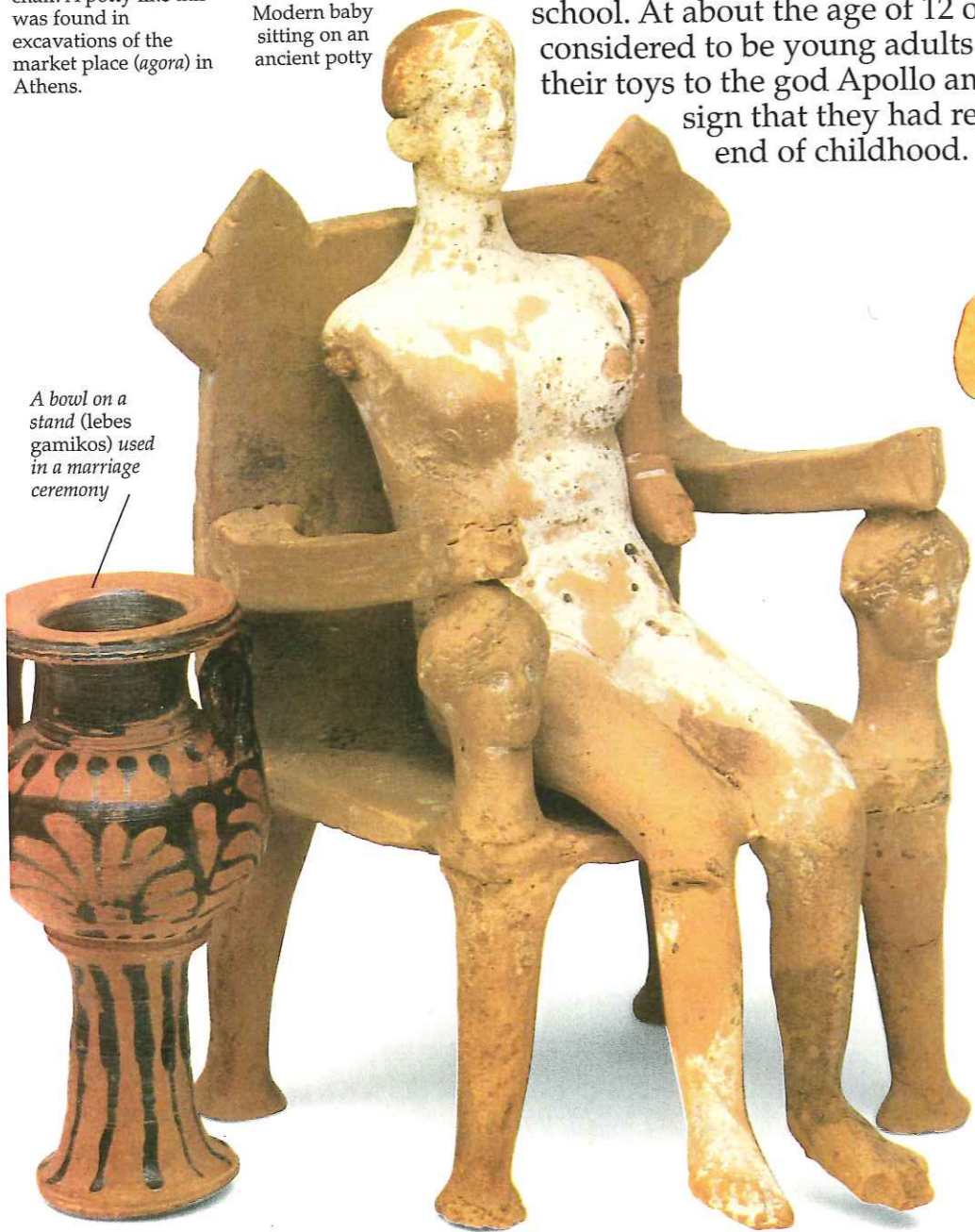
Growing up in Greece

THE FUTURE OF A BABY rested entirely in the hands of its father. When a baby was born, the mother handed it to the father who could decide whether or not to let it live. If the baby was a girl or not strong, or if the family could not afford to keep it, the father might decide to abandon it. Then the baby would be left in the open air to die. Some abandoned babies were saved by other families and brought up as slaves. However, once a baby had been formally accepted by its family and named on the tenth day after its birth, he or she was treated kindly. Many toys have been found and writers tell of games like Blind Man's Buff. In Athens, and most other Greek towns, boys went to school from about the age of seven. Girls did not go to school. At about the age of 12 or 13, children were considered to be young adults and would then dedicate their toys to the god Apollo and the goddess Artemis, as a sign that they had reached the end of childhood.

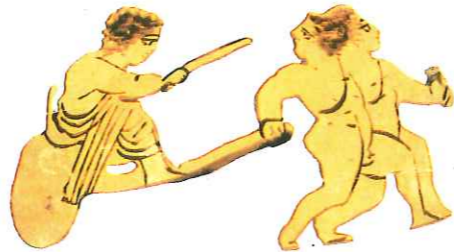


POTTY TRAINING
A Greek vase shows a scene of a little boy sitting in a potty, which also seems to double as a high chair. A potty like this was found in excavations of the market place (agora) in Athens.

Modern baby sitting on an ancient potty



A bowl on a stand (lebes gamikos) used in a marriage ceremony



FASTER! FASTER!
A painting on a tiny wine jug shows two little boys pulling their friend along in a wooden go-cart. Sometimes the carts were pulled by goats. At the Anthesteria, the wine festival in Athens, jugs like these were given as presents to boys when they reached three years of age. They were a sign that babyhood had been left behind.

GIRL'S GRAVE
This dignified terracotta doll sitting in a high-backed chair, was found in the tomb of a little girl. The doll probably represents the woman the parents of the girl hoped she would grow up to be. With the doll are other miniature clay objects, also signs of maturity.



A pair of boots, a sign of adulthood

Education

When boys went to school at seven, they learned reading, writing, and arithmetic from a teacher called a *grammatistes*. They learned music, including the playing of a musical instrument, from a teacher known as a *kitharistes*. They also had to learn poetry by heart and the art of debating. Older boys might be taught by teachers called Sophists. Sophists travelled from town to town and often taught their students in the *gymnasia*, or training grounds. Although girls did not go to school, some girls from well-off families had private tutors and they too learned to read and write. Their mothers taught them spinning and weaving, and how to run a home.



WAX SCRATCHER
Wooden tablets covered in wax were used in the classroom. Letters were formed in the softened wax with a stylus, usually made of bone or metal. The blunt end was used for smoothing out mistakes.



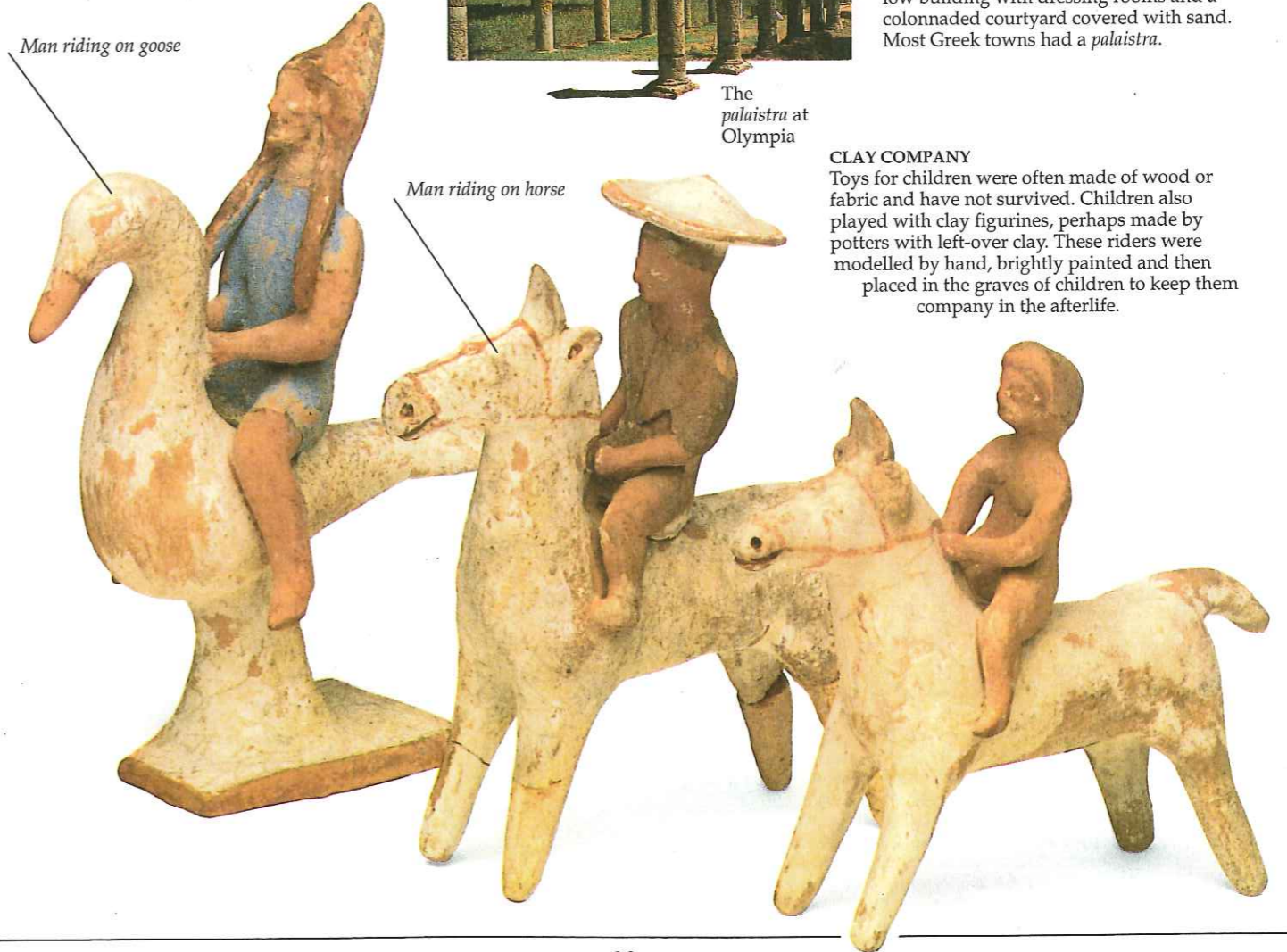
MINDER

Boys from wealthy families were taken to school by a slave called a *paidogogos*, who, on this vase, sits behind the pupil holding a long staff. The boy stands in front of his teacher who reads from a papyrus scroll.



The palaistra at Olympia

TRAINING FOR WAR
Traditionally, boys needed to be fit and strong so that they would grow up to be good soldiers. Therefore, there were special teachers of physical exercise called *paidotribai* (*paidotribes* in the singular). *Paidotribai* taught their pupils athletics and wrestling in the *palaistra*. This was a long low building with dressing rooms and a colonnaded courtyard covered with sand. Most Greek towns had a *palaistra*.



Man riding on goose

Man riding on horse

CLAY COMPANY
Toys for children were often made of wood or fabric and have not survived. Children also played with clay figurines, perhaps made by potters with left-over clay. These riders were modelled by hand, brightly painted and then placed in the graves of children to keep them company in the afterlife.