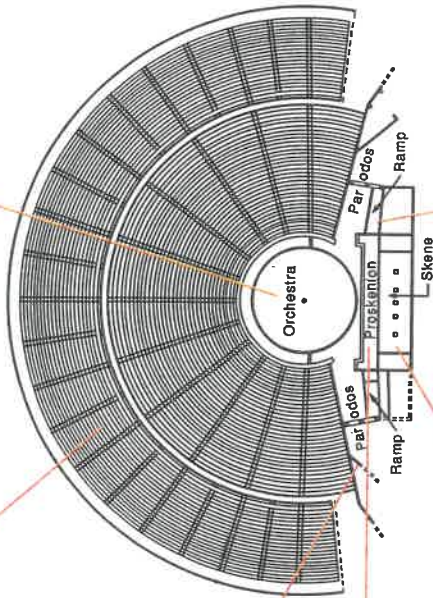


# Greek theatre

## Plan of the theatre at Epidavros

This could seat about 20,000 spectators. The seats were carved into a hillside.



The acting area was separated from the audience by these passages.

A slightly raised platform for actors.

Changing rooms for the actors.

The actors entered and left by means of these ramps.

A flat circular area where singers and dancers performed. The Chorus also used this area.

Greek theatre began as religious festivals in honour of the god Dionysus. Over the years plays were written about other heroes and gods as well.

The playwright had the words for each actor and for a group known as the Chorus who commented on the action. Any violence or death took place off-stage and the audience was kept informed of what was going on by a messenger character who came on-stage and reported what was happening.

The actors wore masks to show what sort of character they were. They wore platform shoes and padding so that the audience could see them from a long way off.



*Epidavros as it is today*

## COMPREHENSION

Read the passage and look carefully at the diagram to answer the questions.

- 1 What is the proskenion?
- 2 Where did the Chorus perform?
- 3 How did Greek theatre begin?
- 4 What was the role of the messenger?
- 5 What did the actors do to make sure they could be seen?