

UNIT

# 2

7000 BC-AD 350

# Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush

**Chapter 3** Mesopotamia  
and the Fertile  
Crescent

**Chapter 4** Ancient Egypt

**Chapter 5** Ancient Kush



## What You Will Learn...

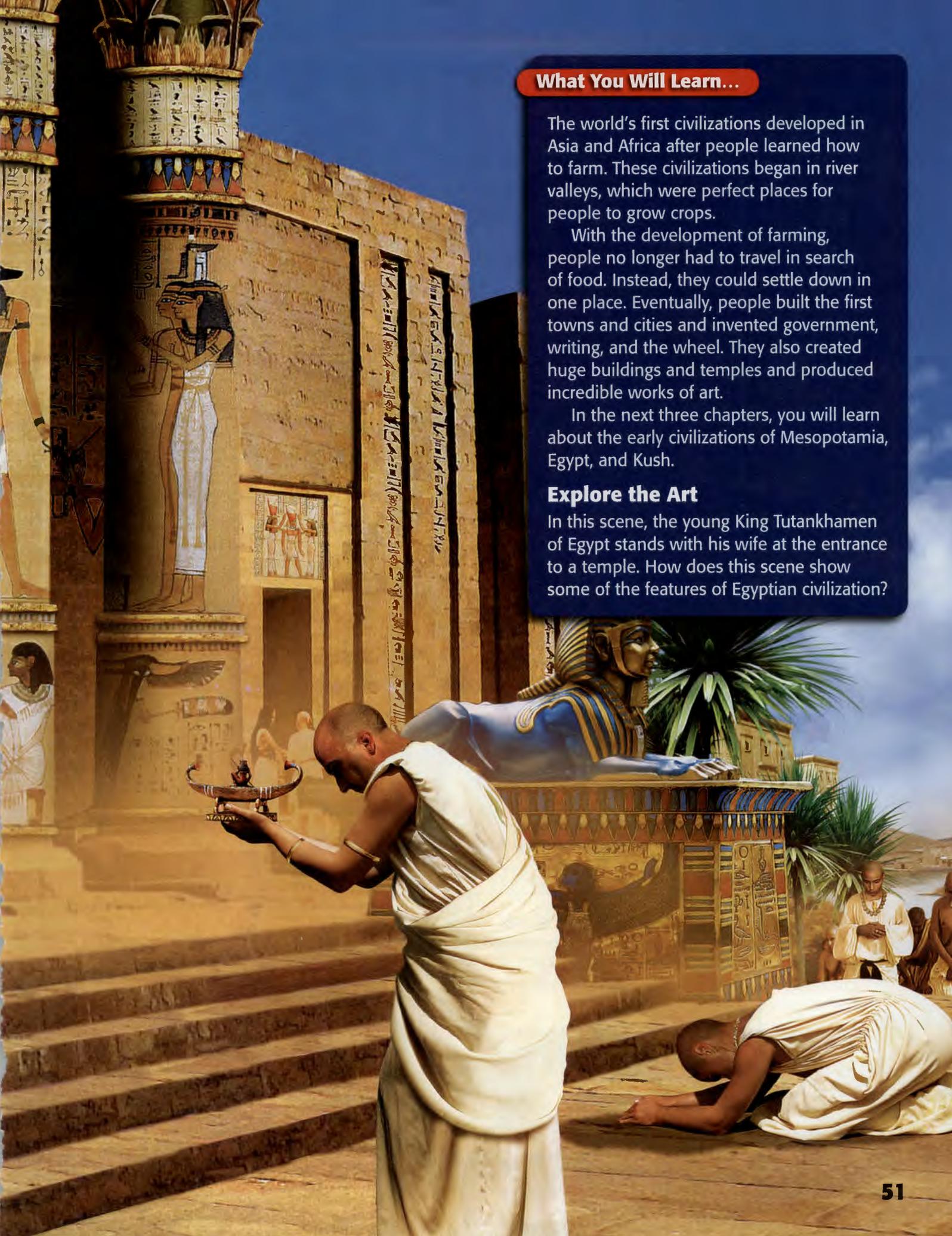
The world's first civilizations developed in Asia and Africa after people learned how to farm. These civilizations began in river valleys, which were perfect places for people to grow crops.

With the development of farming, people no longer had to travel in search of food. Instead, they could settle down in one place. Eventually, people built the first towns and cities and invented government, writing, and the wheel. They also created huge buildings and temples and produced incredible works of art.

In the next three chapters, you will learn about the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.

### Explore the Art

In this scene, the young King Tutankhamen of Egypt stands with his wife at the entrance to a temple. How does this scene show some of the features of Egyptian civilization?



# Mesopotamia and the Fertile Crescent



## California Standards

### History–Social Science

**6.2** Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.

### Analysis Skills

**CS 3** Use maps to identify physical features.

### English–Language Arts

**Writing 6.1.2a** Engage the interest of the reader and state a clear purpose.

**Reading 6.2.3** Connect and clarify main ideas by identifying their relationships to other sources and related topics.

### FOCUS ON WRITING



**A Poster** Most elementary school students have not read or heard much about ancient Mesopotamia. As you read this chapter, you can gather information about that land. Then you can create a colorful poster to share some of what you have learned with younger children.

### CHAPTER EVENTS



**c. 7000 BC**  
Agriculture  
first  
develops in  
Mesopotamia.

**7000 BC**

### WORLD EVENTS

**c. 3100 BC**  
Menes becomes  
the first pharaoh  
of Egypt.

**History's Impact**

## ▶ video series

Watch the video to understand the impact of a system of laws.

**What You Will Learn...**

In this chapter you will learn about the early civilizations of Mesopotamia and the Fertile Crescent. This photo shows the partially reconstructed remains of an ancient temple in Mesopotamia.

**c. 2350–2330 BC**

Sargon of Akkad conquers Mesopotamia and forms the world's first empire.

**c. 1770 BC**

Hammurabi of Babylon issues a written code of laws.

**c. 1000 BC**

Phoenicians trade all around the Mediterranean.

**2750 BC****c. 2300 BC**

The Harappan civilization rises in the Indus Valley.

**2000 BC****c. 1500 BC**

The Shang dynasty is established in China.

**1250 BC****c. 965 BC**

Solomon becomes king of Israel.

**500 BC**

Economics

Geography

Politics

Religion

Society  
and Culture

Science and  
Technology

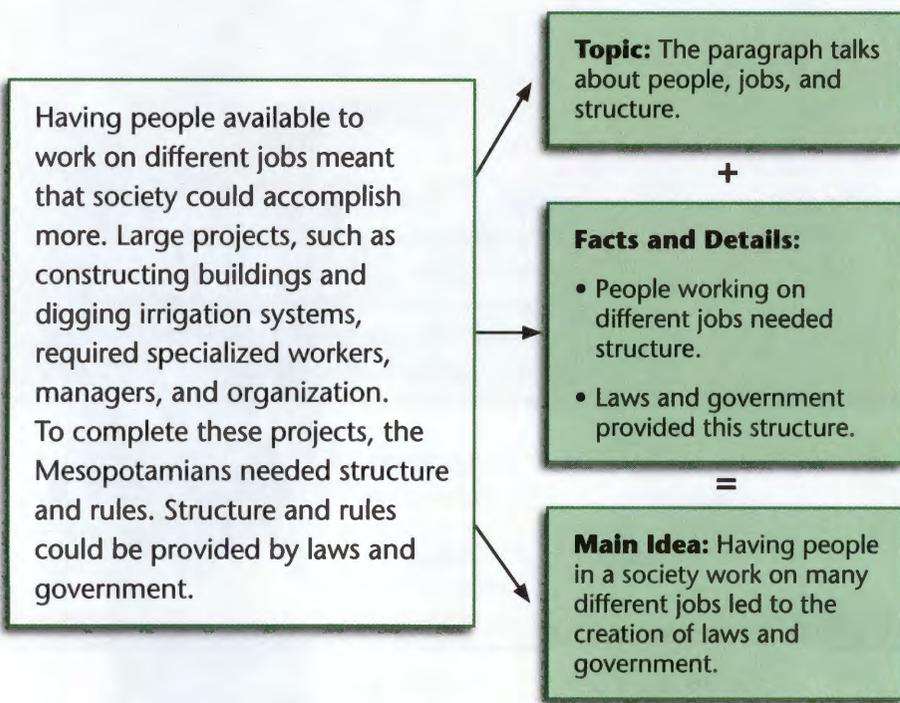
**Focus on Themes** Chapter three introduces you to a region in southwest Asia called Mesopotamia, the home of the world's first civilization. You will read about what made this area one where civilizations could begin and grow. You will learn about one group

of people—the Sumerians—and their great **technological** inventions. You will also read about other people who invaded Mesopotamia and brought their own rules of governing and **politics** to the area.

## Main Ideas in Social Studies

**Focus on Reading** Have you ever set up a tent? If you have, you know that one pole provides structure and support for the whole tent. A paragraph has a similar structure. One idea—the **main idea**—provides support and structure for the whole paragraph.

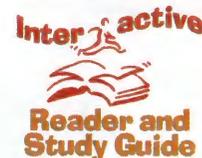
**Identifying Main Ideas** Most paragraphs written about history include a main idea that is stated clearly in a sentence. At other times, the main idea is suggested, not stated. However, that idea still shapes the paragraph's content and the meaning of all of the facts and details in it.



### Identifying Main Ideas

1. Read the paragraph. Ask yourself, "What is this paragraph mostly about, or its topic?"
2. List the important facts and details that relate to that topic.
3. Ask yourself, "What seems to be the most important point the writer is making about the topic?" Or ask, "If the writer could say only one thing about this paragraph, what would it be?" **This is the main idea of the paragraph.**

Additional reading support can be found in the





**ELA Reading 6.2.3** Connect and clarify main ideas by identifying their relationships to other sources and related topics.

# Key Terms and People

## You Try It!

The passage below is from the chapter you are about to read. Read it and then answer the questions below.

### Technical Advances

One of the Sumerians' most important developments was the wheel. They were the first people to build wheeled vehicles, including carts and wagons. Using the wheel, Sumerians invented a device that spins clay as a craftsper-son shapes it into bowls. This device is called a potter's wheel.

*From  
Chapter 3  
p. 69*

The plow was another important Sumerian invention. Pulled by oxen, plows broke through the hard clay soil of Sumer to prepare it for planting. This technique greatly increased farm production. The Sumerians also invented a clock that used falling water to measure time.

Sumerian advances improved daily life in many ways. Sumerians built sewers under city streets. They learned to use bronze to make stronger tools and weapons. They even produced makeup and glass jewelry.

Answer the following questions about finding main ideas.

1. Reread the first paragraph. What is its main idea?
2. What is the main idea of the third paragraph? Reread the second paragraph. Is there a sentence that expresses the main idea of the paragraph? What is that main idea? Write a sentence to express it.
3. Which of the following best expresses the main idea of the entire passage?
  - a. The wheel was an important invention.
  - b. The Sumerians invented many helpful devices.

As you read Chapter 3, find the main ideas of the paragraphs you are studying.

## Chapter 3

### Section 1

Fertile Crescent (p. 57)  
silt (p. 57)  
irrigation (p. 58)  
canals (p. 58)  
surplus (p. 58)  
division of labor (p. 58)

### Section 2

rural (p. 62)  
urban (p. 62)  
city-state (p. 62)  
Gilgamesh (p. 63)  
Sargon (p. 63)  
empire (p. 63)  
polytheism (p. 64)  
priests (p. 65)  
social hierarchy (p. 65)

### Section 3

cuneiform (p. 67)  
pictographs (p. 68)  
scribe (p. 68)  
epics (p. 68)  
architecture (p. 70)  
ziggurat (p. 70)

### Section 4

monarch (p. 74)  
Hammurabi's Code (p. 75)  
chariot (p. 76)  
Nebuchadnezzar (p. 77)  
alphabet (p. 79)

## Academic Vocabulary

Success in school is related to knowing academic vocabulary—the words that are frequently used in school assignments and discussions. In this chapter, you will learn the following academic words:

role (p. 64)  
impact (p. 65)

# Geography of the Fertile Crescent

## What You Will Learn...

### Main Ideas

1. The rivers of Southwest Asia supported the growth of civilization.
2. New farming techniques led to the growth of cities.

### The Big Idea

The valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers were the site of the world's first civilizations.

### Key Terms

Fertile Crescent, p. 57

silt, p. 57

irrigation, p. 58

canals, p. 58

surplus, p. 58

division of labor, p. 58

## If YOU were there...

You are a farmer in Southwest Asia about 6,000 years ago. You live near a slow-moving river, with many shallow lakes and marshes. The river makes the land in the valley rich and fertile, so you can grow wheat and dates. But in the spring, raging floods spill over the riverbanks, destroying your fields. In the hot summers, you are often short of water.

## How can you control the waters of the river?

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** In several parts of the world, bands of hunter-gatherers began to settle down in farming settlements. They domesticated plants and animals. Gradually their cultures became more complex. Most early civilizations grew up along rivers, where people learned to work together to control floods.

## Rivers Support the Growth of Civilization

Early peoples settled where crops would grow. Crops usually grew well near rivers, where water was available and regular floods made the soil rich. One region in Southwest Asia was especially well suited for farming. It lay between two rivers.



**HSS 6.2.1** Locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilization.

**6.2.2** Trace the development of agricultural techniques that permitted the production of economic surplus and the emergence of cities as centers of culture and power.



## The Land Between the Rivers

The Tigris and Euphrates rivers are the most important physical features of the region sometimes known as Mesopotamia (mes-uh-puh-TAY-mee-uh). Mesopotamia means “between the rivers” in Greek.

As you can see on the map, the region called Mesopotamia lies between Asia Minor and the Persian Gulf. The region is part of a larger area called the **Fertile Crescent**, a large arc of rich, or fertile, farmland. The Fertile Crescent extends from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.

In ancient times, Mesopotamia was actually made of two parts. Northern Mesopotamia was a plateau bordered on the north and the east by mountains. Southern Mesopotamia was a flat plain. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers flowed down from the hills into this low-lying plain.

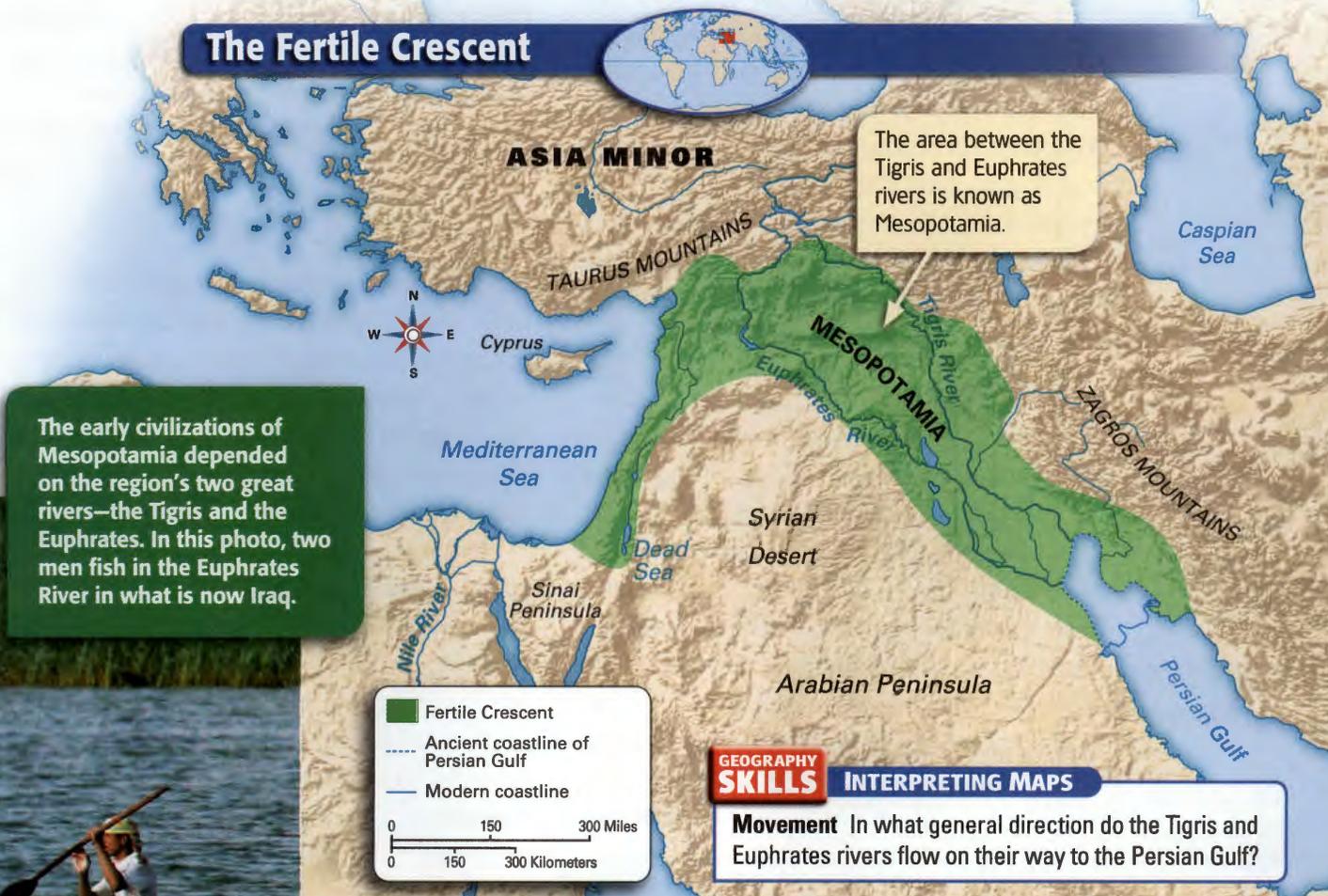
## The Rise of Civilization

Hunter-gatherer groups first settled in Mesopotamia more than 12,000 years ago. Over time, these people learned how to plant crops to grow their own food. Every year, floods on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers brought **silt, a mixture of rich soil and tiny rocks**, to the land. The fertile silt made the land ideal for farming.

The first farm settlements formed in Mesopotamia as early as 7000 BC. Farmers grew wheat, barley, and other types of grain. Livestock, birds, and fish were also good sources of food. Plentiful food led to population growth, and villages formed. Eventually, these early villages developed into the world’s first civilization.

**READING CHECK** Summarizing What made civilization possible in Mesopotamia?

### The Fertile Crescent



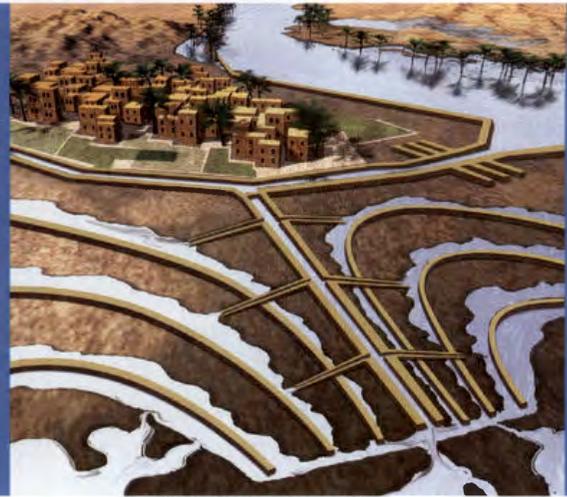
The early civilizations of Mesopotamia depended on the region’s two great rivers—the Tigris and the Euphrates. In this photo, two men fish in the Euphrates River in what is now Iraq.

### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

**Movement** In what general direction do the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flow on their way to the Persian Gulf?

## Irrigation and Civilization

Early farmers faced the challenge of learning how to control the flow of river water to their fields in both rainy and dry seasons.



**1** Early settlements in Mesopotamia were located near rivers. Water was not controlled, and flooding was a major problem.

**2** Later, people built canals to protect houses from flooding and move water to their fields.

### Farming and Cities

Although Mesopotamia had fertile soil, farming wasn't easy there. The region received little rain. This meant that the water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates rivers depended on how much rain fell in eastern Asia Minor where the two rivers began. When a great amount of rain fell there, water levels got very high. Flooding destroyed crops, killed livestock, and washed away homes. When water levels were too low, crops dried up. Farmers knew they needed a way to control the rivers' flow.

#### Controlling Water

To solve their problems, Mesopotamians used **irrigation**, a way of supplying water to an area of land. To irrigate their land, they dug out large storage basins to hold water supplies. Then they dug **canals**, human-made waterways, that connected these basins to a network of ditches. These ditches brought water to the fields. To protect their fields from flooding, farmers built up the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. These built-up banks held back floodwaters even when river levels were high.

#### THE IMPACT TODAY

People still build dikes, or earthen walls along rivers or shorelines, to hold back water.

### Food Surpluses

Irrigation increased the amount of food farmers were able to grow. In fact, farmers could produce a food **surplus**, or more than they needed. Farmers also used irrigation to water grazing areas for cattle and sheep. As a result, Mesopotamians ate a variety of foods. Fish, meat, wheat, barley, and dates were plentiful.

Because irrigation made farmers more productive, fewer people needed to farm. Some people became free to do other jobs. As a result, new occupations developed. For the first time, people became crafters, religious leaders, and government workers. The type of arrangement in which each worker specializes in a particular task or job is called a **division of labor**.

Having people available to work on different jobs meant that society could accomplish more. Large projects, such as constructing buildings and digging irrigation systems, required specialized workers, managers, and organization. To complete these projects, the Mesopotamians needed structure and rules. Structure and rules could be provided by laws and government.



**3** With irrigation, the people of Mesopotamia were able to grow more food.

**4** Food surpluses allowed some people to stop farming and concentrate on other jobs, like making clay pots or tools.

### The Appearance of Cities

Over time, Mesopotamian settlements grew in size and complexity. They gradually developed into cities between 4000 and 3000 BC.

Despite the growth of cities, society in Mesopotamia was still based on agriculture. Most people still worked in farming jobs. However, cities were becoming important places. People traded goods there, and cities provided leaders with power bases.

They were the political, religious, cultural, and economic centers of civilization.

**READING CHECK Analyzing** Why did the Mesopotamians create irrigation systems?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** Mesopotamia's rich, fertile lands supported productive farming, which led to the development of cities. In Section 2 you will learn about some of the first city builders.

## Section 1 Assessment

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**Online Quiz**

KEYWORD: SQ6 HP3

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People **HSS** 6.2.1, 6.2.2

- a. Identify** Where was Mesopotamia?

**b. Explain** How did the **Fertile Crescent** get its name?

**c. Evaluate** What was the most important factor in making Mesopotamia's farmland fertile?
- a. Describe** Why did farmers need to develop a system to control their water supply?

**b. Explain** In what ways did a **division of labor** contribute to the growth of Mesopotamian civilization?

**c. Elaborate** How might running large projects prepare people for running a government?

### Critical Thinking

- Sequencing** Create a flowchart like this one. Use it to explain how farmers used the Tigris and Euphrates to irrigate fields.



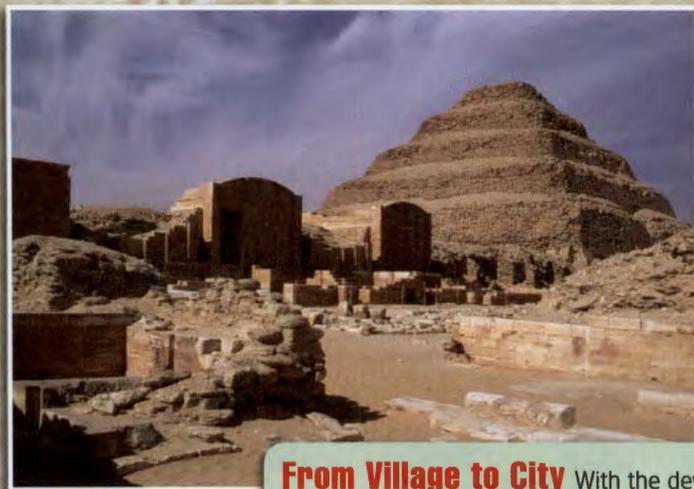
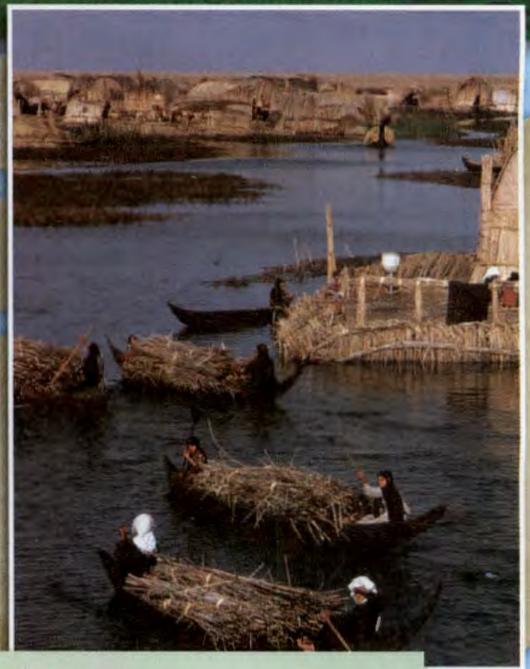
### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Understanding Geography** Make a list of the words you might use to help young students imagine the land and rivers. Then start to sketch out a picture or map you could use on your poster.

# River Valley Civilizations

All of the world's earliest civilizations had something in common—they all arose in river valleys that were perfect locations for farming. Three key factors made river valleys good for farming. First, the fields that bordered the rivers were flat, which made it easier for farmers to plant crops. Second, the soils were nourished by flood deposits and silt, which made them very fertile. Finally, the river provided the water farmers needed for irrigation.

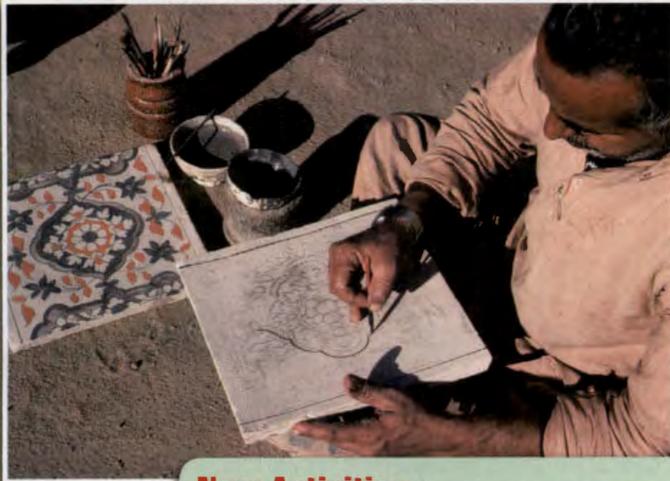
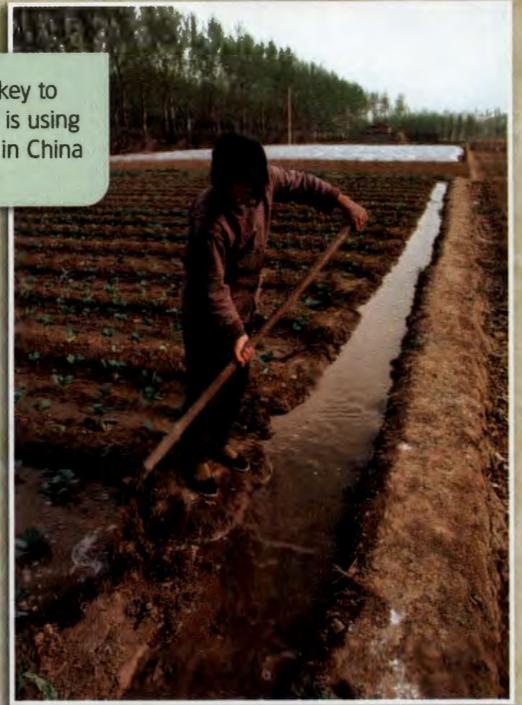
**Natural Highways** River travel allowed early civilizations to trade goods and ideas. These people are traveling on the Euphrates River, one of the two main rivers of ancient Mesopotamia.



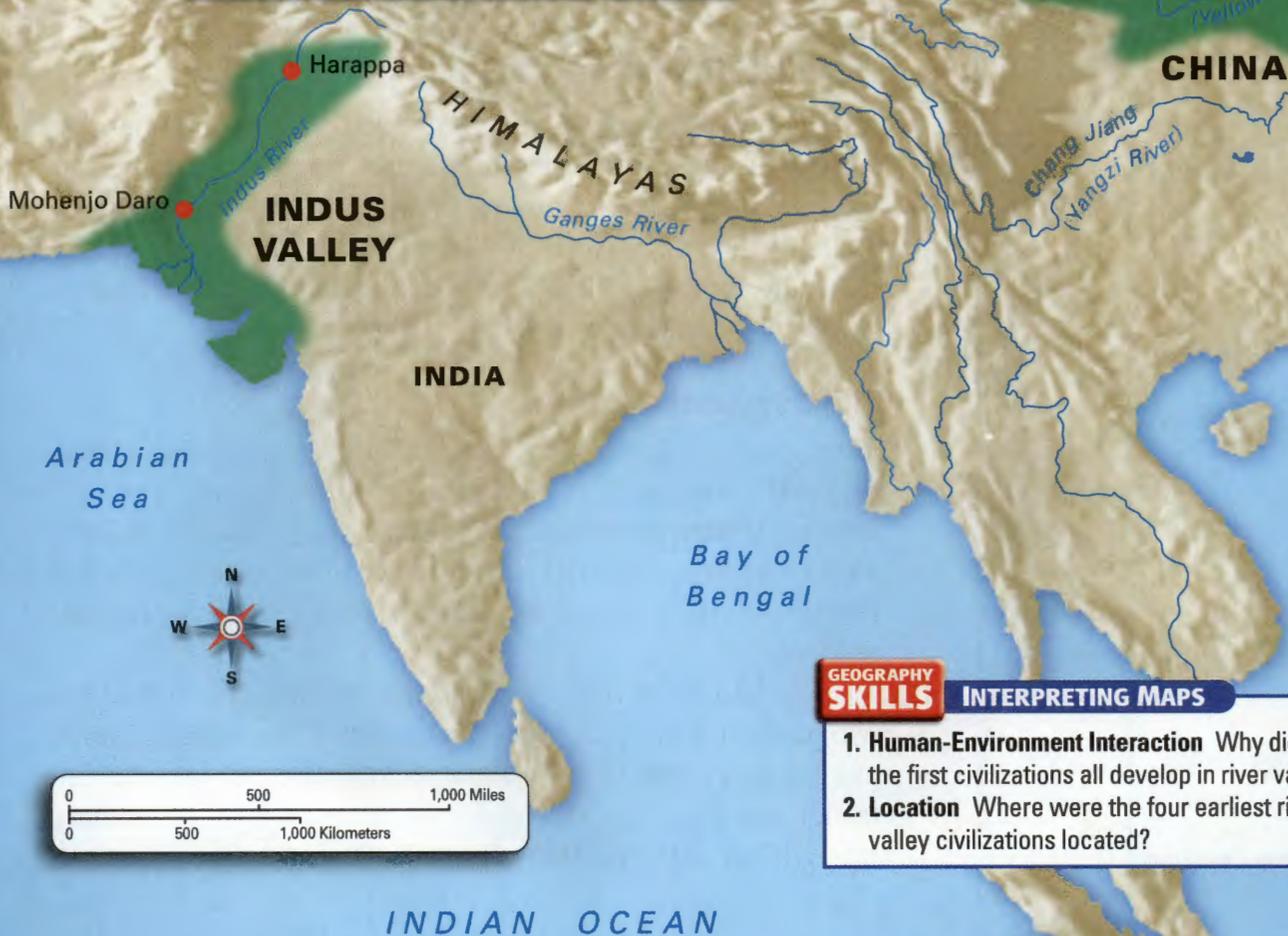
**From Village to City** With the development of agriculture, people settled into farming villages. Over time, some of these villages grew into large cities. These ancient ruins are near Memphis, Egypt.

# ASIA

**Gift of the River** River water was key to farming in early civilizations. This farmer is using water from the Huang He (Yellow River) in China to water her crops.



**New Activities** Food surpluses allowed people to pursue other activities, like crafts, art, and writing. This tile designer lives in the Indus Valley.



## GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Human-Environment Interaction** Why did the first civilizations all develop in river valleys?
- 2. Location** Where were the four earliest river valley civilizations located?

# The Rise of Sumer

## If YOU were there...

You are a crafter living in one of the cities of Sumer. Thick walls surround and protect your city, so you feel safe from the armies of other city-states. But you and your neighbors are fearful of other beings—the many gods and spirits that you believe are everywhere. They can bring illness or sandstorms or bad luck.

**How might you protect yourself from gods and spirits?**

### What You Will Learn...

#### Main Ideas

1. The Sumerians created the world's first advanced society.
2. Religion played a major role in Sumerian society.

#### The Big Idea

The Sumerians developed the first civilization in Mesopotamia.

### Key Terms and People

rural, p. 62  
 urban, p. 62  
 city-state, p. 62  
 Gilgamesh, p. 63  
 Sargon, p. 63  
 empire, p. 63  
 polytheism, p. 64  
 priests, p. 65  
 social hierarchy, p. 65

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** As civilizations developed along rivers, their societies and governments became more advanced. Religion became a main characteristic of these ancient cultures. Kings claimed to rule with the approval of the gods, and ordinary people wore charms and performed rituals to avoid bad luck.

## An Advanced Society

In southern Mesopotamia, a people known as the Sumerians (SOO-MER-ee-unz) developed the world's first civilization. No one knows where they came from or when they moved into the region. However, by 3000 BC, several hundred thousand Sumerians had settled in Mesopotamia, in a land they called Sumer (SOO-muhr). There they created an advanced society.

## The City-States of Sumer

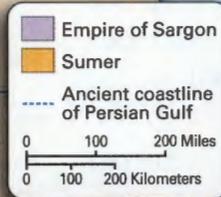
Most people in Sumer were farmers. They lived mainly in **rural, or countryside**, areas. The centers of Sumerian society, however, were the **urban, or city**, areas. The first cities in Sumer had about 10,000 residents. Over time, the cities grew. Historians think that by 2000 BC, some of Sumer's cities had more than 100,000 residents.

As a result, the basic political unit of Sumer combined the two parts. This unit was called a city-state. **A city-state consisted of a city and all the countryside around it.** The amount of countryside controlled by each city-state depended on its military strength. Stronger city-states controlled larger areas.



**HSS 6.2.3.** Understand the relationship between religion and the social and political order in Mesopotamia and Egypt.

## Sargon's Empire, c. 2330 BC



### BIOGRAPHY

#### Sargon

Ruled 2334–2279 BC

According to legend, a gardener found a baby floating in a basket on a river and raised him as his own child. This baby later became

the Akkadian emperor Sargon. As a young man, Sargon served Ur-Zababa, the king of Kish. Sargon later rebelled against the Sumerian ruler, took over his city, and built Akkad into a military power. He was among the first military leaders to use soldiers armed with bows and arrows. Sargon gained the loyalty of his soldiers by eating with them every day.

### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

#### INTERPRETING MAPS

**Location** How far west did Sargon's empire stretch?

City-states in Sumer fought each other to gain more farmland. As a result of these conflicts, the city-states built up strong armies. Sumerians also built strong, thick walls around their cities for protection.

Individual city-states gained and lost power over time. By 3500 BC, a city-state known as Kish had become quite powerful. Over the next 1,000 years, the city-states of Uruk and Ur fought for dominance. One of Uruk's kings, known as **Gilgamesh**, became a legendary figure in Sumerian literature.

### Rise of the Akkadian Empire

In time, another society developed along the Tigris and Euphrates. It was created by the Akkadians (uh-KAY-dee-uhns). They lived just north of Sumer, but they were not Sumerians. They even spoke a different language than the Sumerians. In spite

of their differences, however, the Akkadians and the Sumerians lived in peace for many years.

That peace was broken in the 2300s BC when **Sargon** sought to extend Akkadian territory. He built a new capital, Akkad (A-kad), on the Euphrates River, near what is now the city of Baghdad. Sargon was the first ruler to have a permanent army. He used that army to launch a series of wars against neighboring kingdoms.

Sargon's soldiers defeated all the city-states of Sumer. They also conquered northern Mesopotamia, finally bringing the entire region under his rule. With these conquests, Sargon established the world's first **empire, or land with different territories and peoples under a single rule**. The Akkadian Empire stretched from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea.

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**role** a part or function

Sargon was emperor, or ruler of his empire, for more than 50 years. However, the empire lasted only a century after his death. Later rulers could not keep the empire safe from invaders. Hostile tribes from the east raided and captured Akkad. A century of chaos followed.

Eventually, however, the Sumerian city-state of Ur rebuilt its strength and conquered the rest of Mesopotamia. Political stability was restored. The Sumerians once again became the most powerful civilization in the region.

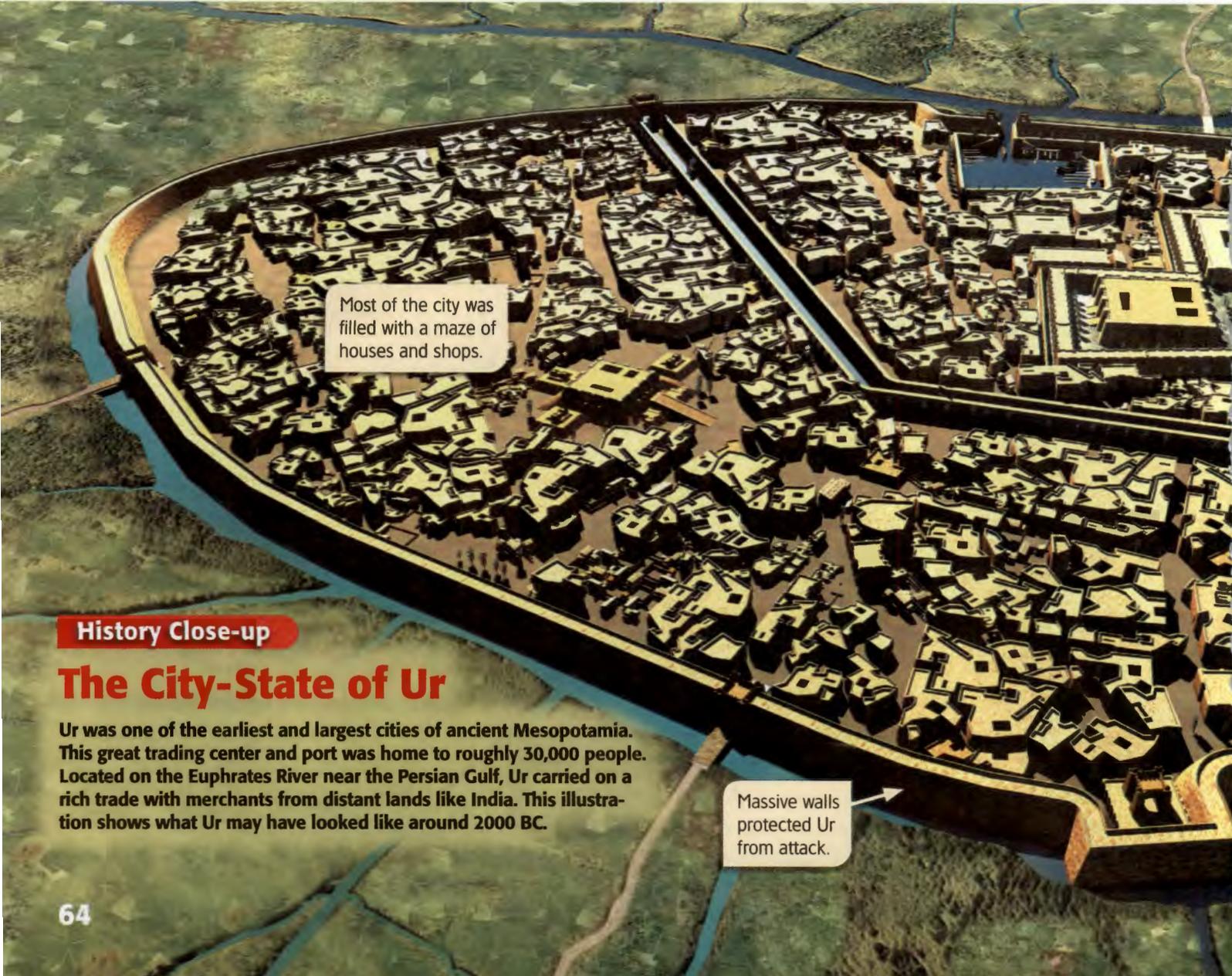
**READING CHECK** Summarizing How did Sargon build an empire?

## Religion Shapes Society

Religion was very important in Sumerian society. In fact, it played a **role** in nearly every aspect of public and private life. In many ways, religion was the basis for all of Sumerian society.

### Sumerian Religion

The Sumerians practiced **polytheism**, the worship of many gods. Among the gods they worshipped were Enlil, the lord of the air; Enki, god of wisdom; and Inanna, goddess of love and war. The sun and moon were represented by the gods Utu and Nanna. Each city-state considered one god to be its special protector.



Most of the city was filled with a maze of houses and shops.

Massive walls protected Ur from attack.

### History Close-up

## The City-State of Ur

Ur was one of the earliest and largest cities of ancient Mesopotamia. This great trading center and port was home to roughly 30,000 people. Located on the Euphrates River near the Persian Gulf, Ur carried on a rich trade with merchants from distant lands like India. This illustration shows what Ur may have looked like around 2000 BC.

The Sumerians believed that their gods had enormous powers. Gods could bring a good harvest or a disastrous flood. They could bring illness, or they could bring good health and wealth. The Sumerians believed that success in every area of life depended on pleasing the gods. Every Sumerian had a duty to serve and to worship the gods.

**Priests**, people who performed religious ceremonies, had great status in Sumer. People relied on them to help gain the gods' favor. Priests interpreted the wishes of the gods and made offerings to them. These offerings were made in temples, special buildings where priests performed their religious ceremonies.

## Sumerian Social Order

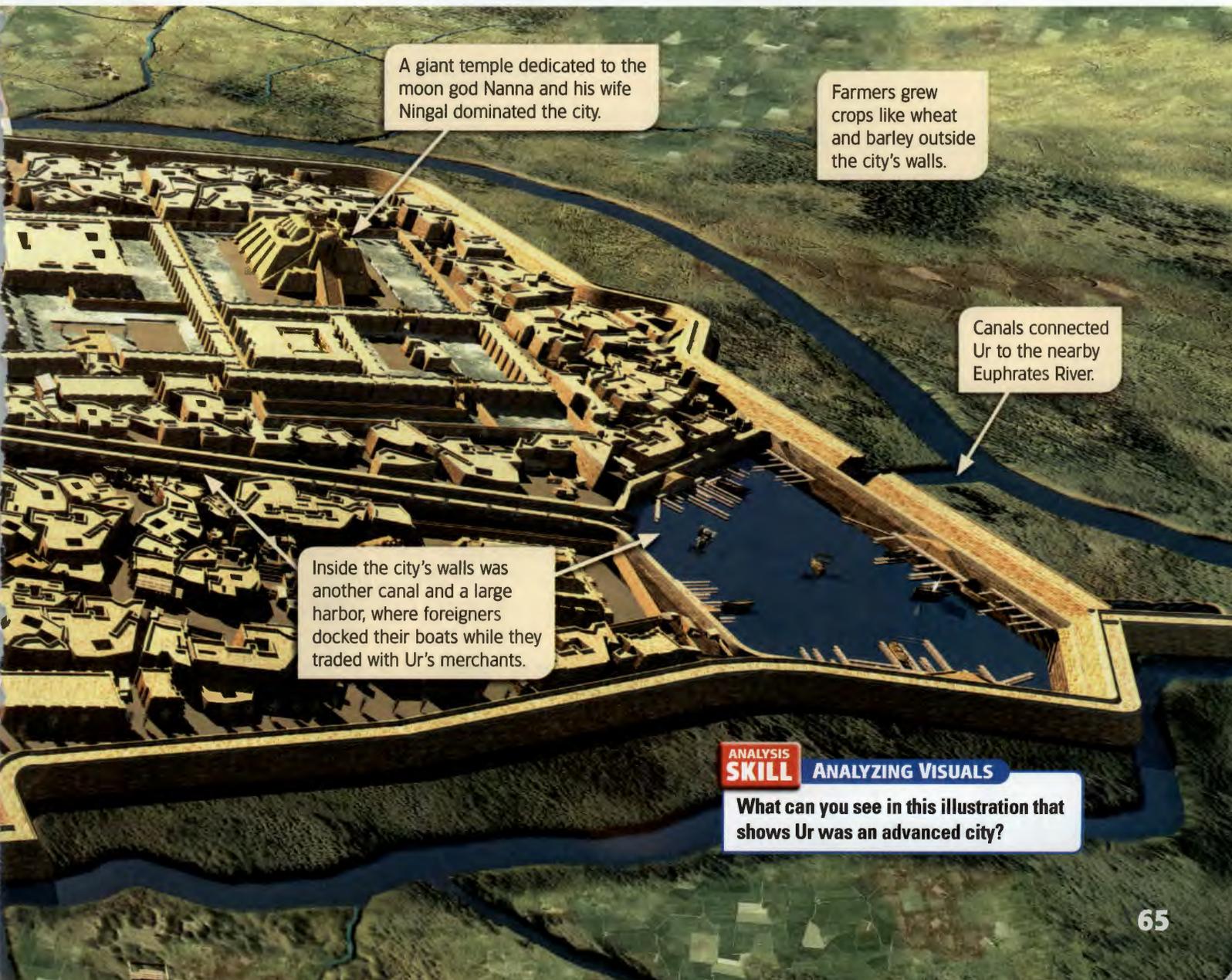
Because of their status, priests occupied a high level in Sumer's **social hierarchy**, the **division of society by rank or class**. In fact, priests were just below kings. The kings of Sumer claimed that they had been chosen by the gods to rule.

Below the priests were Sumer's skilled craftspeople, merchants, and traders. Trade had a great **impact** on Sumerian society. Traders traveled to faraway places and exchanged grain for gold, silver, copper, lumber, and precious stones.

Below traders, farmers and laborers made up the large working class. Slaves were at the bottom of the social order.

### ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

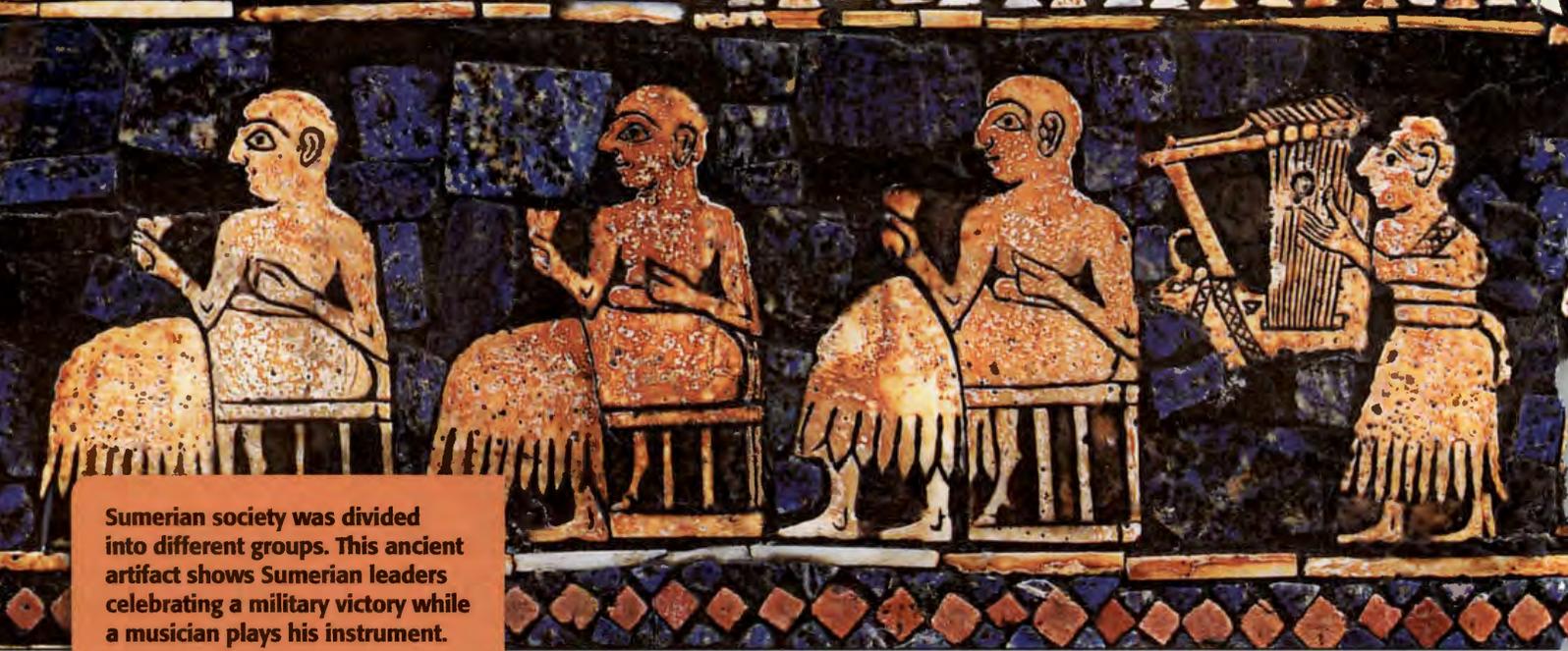
**impact** effect, result



### ANALYSIS SKILL

### ANALYZING VISUALS

What can you see in this illustration that shows Ur was an advanced city?



Sumerian society was divided into different groups. This ancient artifact shows Sumerian leaders celebrating a military victory while a musician plays his instrument.

### Men and Women in Sumer

Sumerian men and women had different roles. In general, men held political power and made laws, while women took care of the home and children. Education was usually reserved for men, but some upper-class women were educated as well.

Some educated women were priestesses in Sumer's temples. Some priestesses helped shape Sumerian culture. One, Enheduanna, the daughter of Sargon, wrote hymns to

the goddess Inanna. She is the first known female writer in history.

**READING CHECK** Analyzing How did trade affect Sumerian society?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** In this section you learned about Sumerian city-states, religion, and society. In Section 3, you will read about the Sumerians' achievements.

## Section 2 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SQ6 HP3

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People HSS 6.2.3

- a. Recall** What was the basic political unit of Sumer?

**b. Explain** What steps did **city-states** take to protect themselves from their rivals?

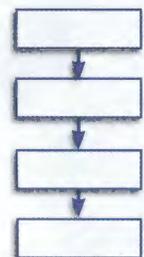
**c. Elaborate** How do you think Sargon's creation of an **empire** changed the history of Mesopotamia? Defend your answer.
- a. Identify** What is **polytheism**?

**b. Draw Conclusions** Why do you think **priests** were so influential in ancient Sumerian society?

**c. Elaborate** Why would rulers benefit if they claimed to be chosen by the gods?

### Critical Thinking

- 3. Sequencing** Draw a diagram like the one shown. Then place the following events in the order that they occurred: Akkadian Empire forms. Sumerian city-states develop. City of Akkad is built. Farming villages appear.



### FOCUS ON WRITING

- 4. Gathering Information about Sumer** What aspects of Sumerian society will you include on your poster? What important people, religious beliefs, or social developments do you think the students should learn?

# Sumerian Achievements

## If YOU were there...

You are a student at a school for scribes in Sumer. Learning all the symbols for writing is very hard. Your teacher assigns you lessons to write on your clay tablet, but you can't help making mistakes. Then you have to smooth out the surface and try again. Still, being a scribe can lead to important jobs for the king. You could make your family proud.

## Why would you want to be a scribe?

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** Sumerian society was advanced in terms of religion and government organization. The Sumerians were responsible for many other achievements, which were passed down to later civilizations.

## The Invention of Writing

The Sumerians made one of the greatest cultural advances in history. They developed **cuneiform** (kyoo-NEE-uh-fohrm), the **world's first system of writing**. But Sumerians did not have pencils, pens, or paper. Instead, they used sharp tools called styluses to make wedge-shaped symbols on clay tablets.



Sumerians wrote on clay tablets with a special tool called a stylus.

## What You Will Learn...

### Main Ideas

1. The Sumerians invented the world's first writing system.
2. Advances and inventions changed Sumerian lives.
3. Many types of art developed in Sumer.

### The Big Idea

The Sumerians made many advances that helped their society develop.

## Key Terms and People

cuneiform, p. 67  
pictographs, p. 68  
scribe, p. 68  
epics, p. 68  
architecture, p. 70  
ziggurat, p. 70



**HSS 6.2.9** Trace the evolution of language in its written forms.



Sumerian writing developed from early symbols called pictographs. Writers used clay tablets to record business deals, like this tablet that describes a number of sheep and goats.

| Development of Writing |         |         |         |         |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
|                        | 3300 BC | 2800 BC | 2400 BC | 1800 BC |
| Heaven                 |         |         |         |         |
| Grain                  |         |         |         |         |
| Fish                   |         |         |         |         |
| Bird                   |         |         |         |         |
| Water                  |         |         |         |         |

Earlier written communication had used **pictographs**, or picture symbols. Each pictograph represented an object, such as a tree or an animal. But in cuneiform, symbols could also represent syllables, or basic parts of words. As a result, Sumerian writers could combine symbols to express more complex ideas such as “joy” or “powerful.”

Sumerians first used cuneiform to keep business records. A **scribe**, or writer, would be hired to keep track of the items people traded. Government officials and temples also hired scribes to keep their records. Becoming a scribe was a way to move up in social class.

Sumerian students went to school to learn to read and write. But, like today, some students did not want to study. A Sumerian story tells of a father who urged his son to do his schoolwork:

“Go to school, stand before your ‘school-father,’ recite your assignment, open your schoolbag, write your tablet . . . After you have finished your assignment and reported to your monitor [teacher], come to me, and do not wander about in the street.”

—Sumerian essay quoted in *History Begins at Sumer*, by Samuel Noah Kramer

In time, Sumerians put their writing skills to new uses. They wrote works on history, law, grammar, and math. They also created works of literature. Sumerians wrote stories, proverbs, and songs. They wrote poems about the gods and about military victories. Some of these were **epics**, long poems that tell the stories of heroes. Later, people used some of these poems to create *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, the story of a legendary Sumerian king.

**READING CHECK** **Generalizing** How was cuneiform first used in Sumer?

## Advances and Inventions

Writing was not the only great Sumerian invention. These early people made many other advances and discoveries.

### Technical Advances

One of the Sumerians' most important developments was the wheel. They were the first people to build wheeled vehicles, including carts and wagons. Using the wheel, Sumerians invented a device that spins clay as a craftsman shapes it into bowls. This device is called a potter's wheel.

The plow was another important Sumerian invention. Pulled by oxen, plows broke through the hard clay soil of Sumer to prepare it for planting. This technique greatly increased farm production. The Sumerians also invented a clock that used falling water to measure time.

Sumerian advances improved daily life in many ways. Sumerians built sewers under city streets. They learned to use bronze to make stronger tools and weapons. They even produced makeup and glass jewelry.

## Math and Sciences

Another area in which Sumerians excelled was math. In fact, they developed a math system based on the number 60. Based on this system, they divided a circle into 360 degrees. Dividing a year into 12 months—a factor of 60—was another Sumerian idea. Sumerians also calculated the areas of rectangles and triangles.

Sumerian scholars studied science, too. They wrote long lists to record their study of the natural world. These tablets included the names of thousands of animals, plants, and minerals.

The Sumerians also made advances in medicine. They used ingredients from animals, plants, and minerals to produce healing drugs. Items used in these medicines included milk, turtle shells, figs, and salt. The Sumerians even catalogued their medical knowledge, listing treatments according to symptoms and body parts.

### THE IMPACT TODAY

Like the Sumerians we use a base-60 system when we talk about 60 seconds in a minute and 60 minutes in an hour.

**READING CHECK** **Categorizing** What areas of life were improved by Sumerian inventions?

## LINKING TO TODAY

### The Wheel

Do you realize how much the achievements of ancient Sumer affect your life today—and every day? For instance, try to imagine life without the wheel. How would you get around? Look at the streets outside. The cars, trucks, and buses you see are all modern versions of Sumerian wheeled vehicles. Wheelchairs, bicycles, and in-line skates all depend on wheels as well. Even modern air travel owes a large debt to the Sumerians. As impressive as jets are, they could never get off the ground without their wheels!



### ANALYSIS SKILL

### ANALYZING INFORMATION

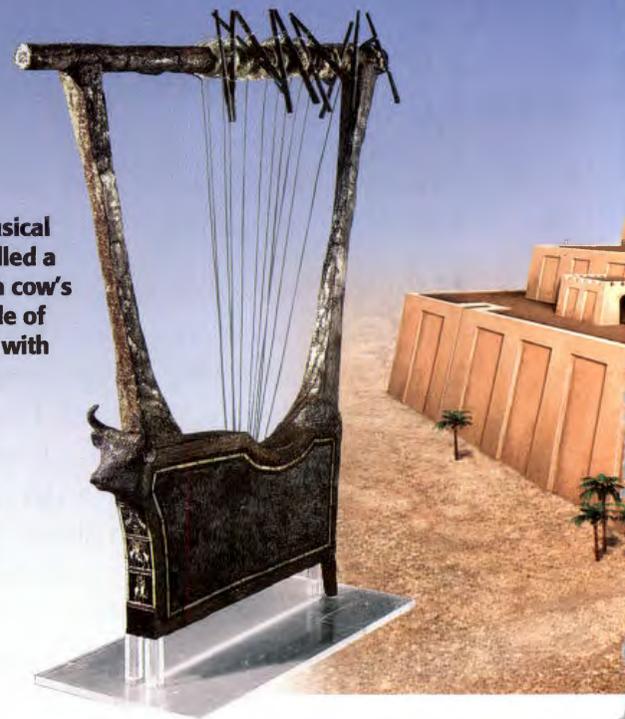
**Generalizing** Why is the wheel so important to modern society?

The Sumerians' artistic achievements included beautiful works of gold, wood, and stone.



This stringed musical instrument is called a lyre. It features a cow's head and is made of silver decorated with shell and stone.

Cylinder seals like this one were carved into round stones and then rolled over clay to leave their mark.



## The Arts of Sumer

The Sumerians' skills in the fields of art, metalwork, and **architecture**—the science of building—are well known to us. The ruins of great buildings and fine works of art have provided us wonderful examples of the Sumerians' creativity.

### Architecture

Most Sumerian rulers lived in large palaces. Other rich Sumerians had two-story homes with as many as a dozen rooms. Most people, however, lived in smaller, one-story houses. These homes had six or seven rooms arranged around a small courtyard. Large and small houses stood side by side along the narrow, unpaved streets of the city. Bricks made of mud were the houses' main building blocks.

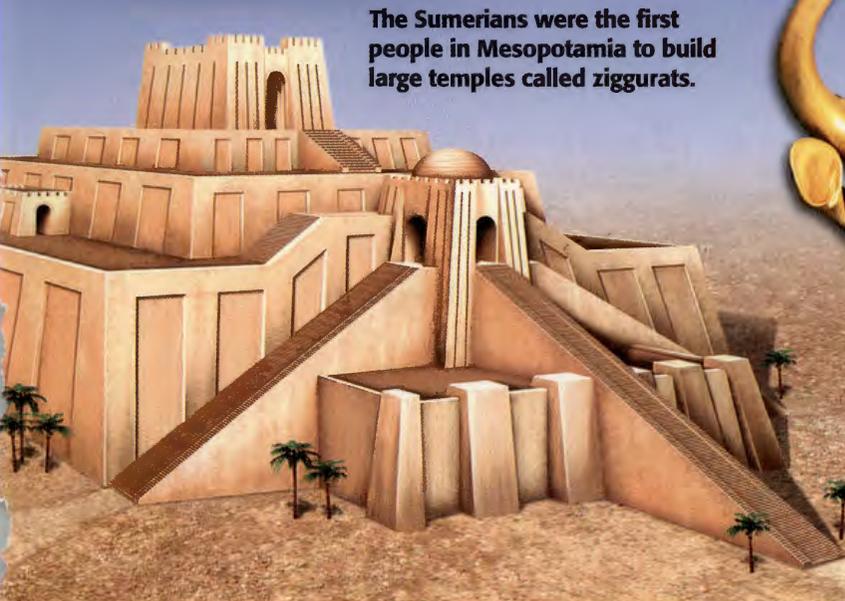
City centers were dominated by their temples, the largest and most impressive buildings in Sumer. A **ziggurat**, a pyramid-shaped temple tower, rose above each city. Outdoor staircases led to a platform and a shrine at the top. Some architects added columns to make the temples more attractive.

### The Arts

Sumerian sculptors produced many fine works. Among them are the statues of gods created for temples. Sumerian artists also sculpted small objects out of ivory and rare woods. Sumerian pottery is known more for its quantity than quality. Potters turned out many items, but few were works of beauty.

Jewelry was a popular item in Sumer. The jewelers of the region made many beautiful works out of imported gold, silver, and gems. Earrings and other items found in the region show that Sumerian jewelers knew advanced methods for putting gold pieces together.

Cylinder seals are perhaps Sumer's most famous works of art. These small objects were stone cylinders engraved with designs. When rolled over clay, the designs would leave behind their imprint. Each seal left its own distinct imprint. As a result, a person could show ownership of a container by rolling a cylinder over the container's wet clay surface. People could also use cylinder seals to "sign" documents or to decorate other clay objects.



The Sumerians were the first people in Mesopotamia to build large temples called ziggurats.



This gold dagger was found in a royal tomb. The bull's head is made of gold and silver.



**ANALYSIS SKILL**

**ANALYZING VISUALS**

What animal is shown in two of these works?

Some seals showed battle scenes. Others displayed worship rituals. Some were highly decorative, with hundreds of carefully cut gems. They required great skill to make.

The Sumerians also enjoyed music. Kings and temples hired musicians to play on special occasions. Sumerian musicians played reed pipes, drums, tambourines, and stringed instruments called lyres. Children learned songs in school. People sang hymns to gods and kings. Music and dance

provided entertainment in marketplaces and homes.

**READING CHECK** **Drawing Inferences** What might historians learn from cylinder seals?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** The Sumerians greatly enriched their society. Next you will learn about the later peoples who lived in Mesopotamia.

## Section 3 Assessment

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Online Quiz

KEYWORD: SQ6 HP3

### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People **HSS** 6.2.9

- a. Identify** What is **cuneiform**?

**b. Analyze** Why do you think writing is one of history's most important cultural advances?

**c. Elaborate** What current leader would you choose to write an **epic** about, and why?
- a. Recall** What were two early uses of the wheel?

**b. Explain** Why do you think the invention of the plow was so important to the Sumerians?
- a. Describe** What was the basic Sumerian building material?

**b. Make Inferences** Why do you think cylinder seals developed into works of art?

### Critical Thinking

- Identifying Cause and Effect** Draw a diagram like the one at right. List the effect of each invention on Sumerian life.

|         | Effect |
|---------|--------|
| Writing |        |
| Wheel   |        |
| Plow    |        |

### FOCUS ON WRITING

- Evaluating Information** Review the Sumerian achievements you just read about. Then create a bulleted list of Sumerian achievements for your poster. Would this list replace some of the information you collected in Section 2?

## from **The Epic of Gilgamesh**

translated by N. K. Sandars

### GUIDED READING

#### WORD HELP

**menacing** threatening  
**succor** help  
**tempest** storm  
**felled** cut down

1 Shamash, the sun-god, supports Gilgamesh.

*What human emotion seems to seize Gilgamesh here? How can you tell?*

2 *What stops Humbaba in his tracks?*

3 Gilgamesh tries to speak and act bravely, but he is terrified by Humbaba's evil glare.



**ELA Reading 6.3.2** Analyze the effect of the qualities of the character (e.g., courage or cowardice, ambition or laziness) on the plot and the resolution of the conflict.

**About the Reading** The Epic of Gilgamesh is the world's oldest epic, first recorded—carved on stone tablets—in about 2000 BC. The actual Gilgamesh, ruler of the city of Uruk, had lived about 700 years earlier. Over time, stories about this legendary king had grown and changed. In this story, Gilgamesh and his friend Enkidu seek to slay the monster Humbaba, keeper of a distant forest. In addition to his tremendous size and terrible appearance, Humbaba possesses seven splendors, or powers, one of which is fire. Gilgamesh hopes to claim these powers for himself.

**AS YOU READ** Notice both the human qualities and the godly qualities of Gilgamesh.

Humbaba came from his strong house of cedar. He nodded his head and shook it, menacing Gilgamesh; and on him he fastened his eye, the eye of death. Then Gilgamesh called to Shamash and his tears were flowing, “O glorious Shamash, I have followed the road you commanded but now if you send no succor how shall I escape?” 1 Glorious Shamash heard his prayer and he summoned the great wind, the north wind, the whirlwind, the storm and the icy wind, the tempest and the scorching wind; they came like dragons, like a scorching fire, like a serpent that freezes the heart, a destroying flood and the lightning's fork. The eight winds rose up against Humbaba, they beat against his eyes; he was gripped, unable to go forward or back. 2 Gilgamesh shouted, “By the life of Ninsun my mother and divine Lugulbanda my father . . . my weak arms and my small weapons I have brought to this Land against you, and now I will enter your house.” 3

So he felled the first cedar and they cut the branches and laid them at the foot of the mountain. At the first stroke Humbaba blazed out, but still they advanced. They felled seven cedars and cut and bound the branches and laid them at the foot of the mountain, and seven times Humbaba loosed his glory on them. As the seventh blaze died out they reached his lair. He slapped his thigh in scorn. He approached like a noble wild bull roped on the mountain, a warrior whose elbows

were bound together. The tears started to his eyes and he was pale, "Gilgamesh, let me speak. I have never known a mother, no, nor a father who reared me. I was born of the mountain, he reared me, and Enlil made me the keeper of this forest. Let me go free, Gilgamesh, and I will be your servant, you shall be my lord; all the trees of the forest that I tended on the mountain shall be yours. I will cut them down and build you a palace." . . . 4

Enkidu said, "Do not listen, Gilgamesh: this Humbaba must die. Kill Humbaba first and his servants after." But Gilgamesh said, "If we touch him the blaze and the glory of light will be put out in confusion, the glory and glamour will vanish, its rays will be quenched." Enkidu said to Gilgamesh, "Not so, my friend. First entrap the bird, and where shall the chicks run then? Afterwards we can search out the glory and the glamour, when the chicks run distracted through the grass."

Gilgamesh listened to the word of his companion, he took the ax in his hand, he drew the sword from his belt, and he struck Humbaba with a thrust of the sword to the neck, and Enkidu his comrade struck the second blow. At the third blow Humbaba fell. Then there followed confusion for this was the guardian of the forest whom they had felled to the ground . . .

When he saw the head of Humbaba, Enlil raged at them. "Why did you do this thing? From henceforth may the fire be on your faces, may it eat the bread that you eat, may it drink where you drink." Then Enlil took again the blaze and the seven splendors that had been Humbaba's: he gave the first to the river, and he gave to the lion, to the stone of execration, to the mountain . . . 5

O Gilgamesh, king and conqueror of the dreadful blaze; wild bull who plunders the mountain, who crosses the sea, glory to him.

## GUIDED READING

**execration** a cursing  
**plunders** takes by force

4 **What effect does Humbaba hope his words will have on Gilgamesh?**

5 The angry air-god Enlil curses the heroes for slaying Humbaba. He takes back the monster's powers and gives them to other creatures and elements of nature.

*In your opinion, is Gilgamesh more or less heroic for slaying Humbaba and angering Enlil?*



Archaeologists think this statue from the 700s BC represents Gilgamesh.

## CONNECTING LITERATURE TO HISTORY

1. **Analyzing** In Sumerian culture, the gods' powers were thought to be enormous. According to this story, what roles do gods play in people's lives?

2. **Making Inferences** Violence was common in Sumerian society. How does the character of Gilgamesh suggest that Sumerian society could be violent?

# Later Peoples of the Fertile Crescent

## What You Will Learn...

### Main Ideas

1. The Babylonians conquered Mesopotamia and created a code of law.
2. Invasions of Mesopotamia changed the region's culture.
3. The Phoenicians built a trading society in the eastern Mediterranean region.

### The Big Idea

After the Sumerians, many cultures ruled parts of the Fertile Crescent.

### Key Terms and People

monarch, p. 74

Hammurabi's Code, p. 75

chariot, p. 76

Nebuchadnezzar, p. 77

alphabet, p. 79

## If YOU were there...

You are a noble in ancient Babylon, an advisor to the great king Hammurabi. One of your duties is to collect all the laws of the kingdom. They will be carved on a tall block of black stone and placed in the temple. The king asks your opinion about the punishments for certain crimes. For instance, should common people be punished more harshly than nobles?

### How will you advise the king?

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** Many peoples invaded Mesopotamia. A series of kings conquered the lands between the rivers. Each new culture inherited the earlier achievements of the Sumerians. Some of the later invasions of the region also introduced skills and ideas that still influence civilization today, such as a written law code.

## The Babylonians Conquer Mesopotamia

Although Ur rose to glory after the death of Sargon, repeated foreign attacks drained its strength. By 2000 BC, Ur lay in ruins. With Ur's power gone, several waves of invaders battled to gain control of Mesopotamia.

### The Rise of Babylon

Babylon was home to one such group. That city was located on the Euphrates River near what is today Baghdad, Iraq. Babylon had once been a Sumerian town. By 1800 BC, however, it was home to a powerful government of its own. In 1792 BC, Hammurabi (ham-uh-RAHB-ee) became Babylon's king. He would become the city's greatest **monarch** (MAH-nark), a ruler of a kingdom or empire.



**HSS 6.2.4** Know the significance of Hammurabi's Code.

## Hammurabi's Code

Hammurabi was a brilliant war leader. His armies fought many battles to expand his power. Eventually, he brought all of Mesopotamia into his empire, called the Babylonian Empire, after his capital.

Hammurabi's skills were not limited to the battlefield, though. He was also an able ruler who could govern a huge empire. He oversaw many building and irrigation projects and improved Babylon's tax collection system to help pay for them. He also brought much prosperity through increased trade. Hammurabi, however, is most famous for his code of laws.

**Hammurabi's Code** was a set of 282 laws that dealt with almost every part of daily life. There were laws on everything from trade, loans, and theft to marriage, injury, and murder. It contained some ideas that

are still found in laws today. Specific crimes brought specific penalties. However, social class did matter. For instance, injuring a rich man brought a greater penalty than injuring a poor man.

Hammurabi's Code was important not only for how thorough it was, but also because it was written down for all to see. People all over the empire could read exactly what was against the law.

Hammurabi ruled for 42 years. During his reign, Babylon became the most important city in Mesopotamia. However, after his death, Babylonian power declined. The kings that followed faced invasions from people Hammurabi had conquered. Before long, the Babylonian Empire came to an end.

**READING CHECK** Analyzing What was Hammurabi's most important accomplishment?

### Primary Source

### QUICK FACTS

#### HISTORIC DOCUMENT

## Hammurabi's Code

*The Babylonian ruler Hammurabi is credited with putting together the earliest known written collection of laws. The code set down rules for both criminal and civil law, and informed citizens what was expected of them.*

196. If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out.
197. If he break another man's bone, his bone shall be broken.
198. If he put out the eye of a freed man, or break the bone of a freed man, he shall pay one gold mina.
199. If he put out the eye of a man's slave, or break the bone of a man's slave, he shall pay one-half of its value.
221. If a physician heal the broken bone or diseased soft part of a man, the patient shall pay the physician five shekels in money.
222. If he were a freed man he shall pay three shekels.
223. If he were a slave his owner shall pay the physician two shekels.

—Hammurabi, from the Code of Hammurabi, translated by L. W. King

#### ANALYSIS SKILL

#### ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

How do you think Hammurabi's code of laws affected citizens of that time?



## Invasions of Mesopotamia

Several other civilizations also developed in and around the Fertile Crescent. As their armies battled each other for fertile land, control of the region passed from one empire to another.

### The Hittites and Kassites

A people known as the Hittites built a strong kingdom in Asia Minor, in what is today Turkey. Their success came, in part, from two key military advantages they had over rivals. First, the Hittites were among the first people to master ironworking. This meant that they could make the strongest weapons of the time. Second, the Hittites skillfully used the **chariot, a wheeled, horse-drawn cart used in battle**. The chariots allowed Hittite soldiers to move quickly

around a battlefield and fire arrows at their enemy. Using these advantages, Hittite forces captured Babylon around 1595 BC.

Hittite rule did not last long, however. Soon after taking Babylon, the Hittite king was killed by an assassin. The kingdom plunged into chaos. The Kassites, a people who lived north of Babylon, captured the city and ruled for almost 400 years.

### The Assyrians

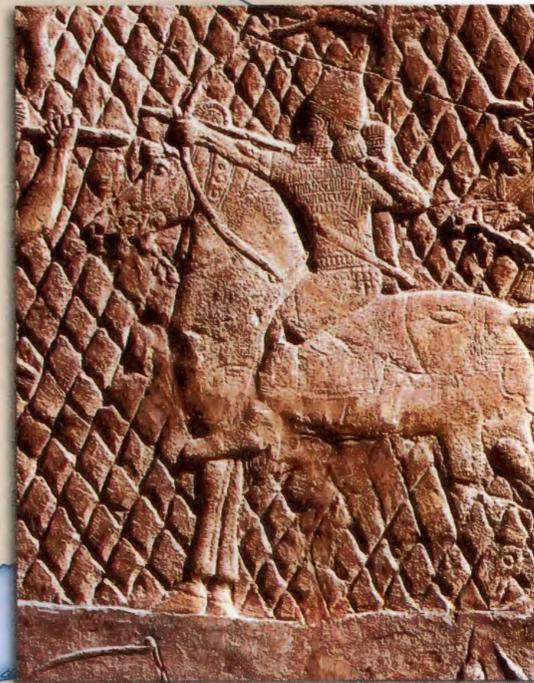
Later, in the 1200s BC, the Assyrians (uh-SIR-ee-unz) from northern Mesopotamia briefly gained control of Babylon. However, their empire was soon overrun by invaders. After this defeat, the Assyrians took about 300 years to recover their strength. Then, starting about 900 BC, they began to conquer all of the Fertile Crescent. They even took over parts of Asia Minor and Egypt.

## Babylonian and Assyrian Empires



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

**Place** What region in the southwest did the Assyrian Empire include?



The key to the Assyrians' success was their strong army. Like the Hittites, the Assyrians used iron weapons and chariots. The army was very well organized, and every soldier knew his role.

The Assyrians were fierce in battle. Before attacking, they spread terror by looting villages and burning crops. Anyone who still dared to resist them was killed.

After conquering Mesopotamia, the Assyrians ruled from Nineveh (NI-nuh-vuh). They demanded heavy taxes from across the empire. Areas that resisted these demands were harshly punished.

Assyrian kings ruled their large empire through local leaders. Each governed a small area, collected taxes, enforced laws, and raised troops for the army. Roads were built to link distant parts of the empire. Messengers on horseback were sent to deliver orders to faraway officials.

### The Chaldeans

In 652 BC a series of wars broke out in the Assyrian Empire over who should rule. These wars greatly weakened the empire.

Sensing this weakness, the Chaldeans (kal-DEE-uhn-z), a group from the Syrian Desert, led other peoples in an attack on the Assyrians. In 612 BC, they destroyed Nineveh and the Assyrian Empire.

In its place, the Chaldeans set up a new empire of their own. **Nebuchadnezzar** (neb-uh-kuhd-NEZ-uhr), the most famous Chaldean king, rebuilt Babylon into a beautiful city. According to legend, his grand palace featured the famous Hanging Gardens. Trees and flowers grew on its terraces and roofs. From the ground the gardens seemed to hang in the air.

The Chaldeans admired Sumerian culture. They studied the Sumerian language and built temples to Sumerian gods.

At the same time, Babylon became a center for astronomy. Chaldeans charted the positions of the stars and kept track of economic, political, and weather events. They also created a calendar and solved complex problems of geometry.

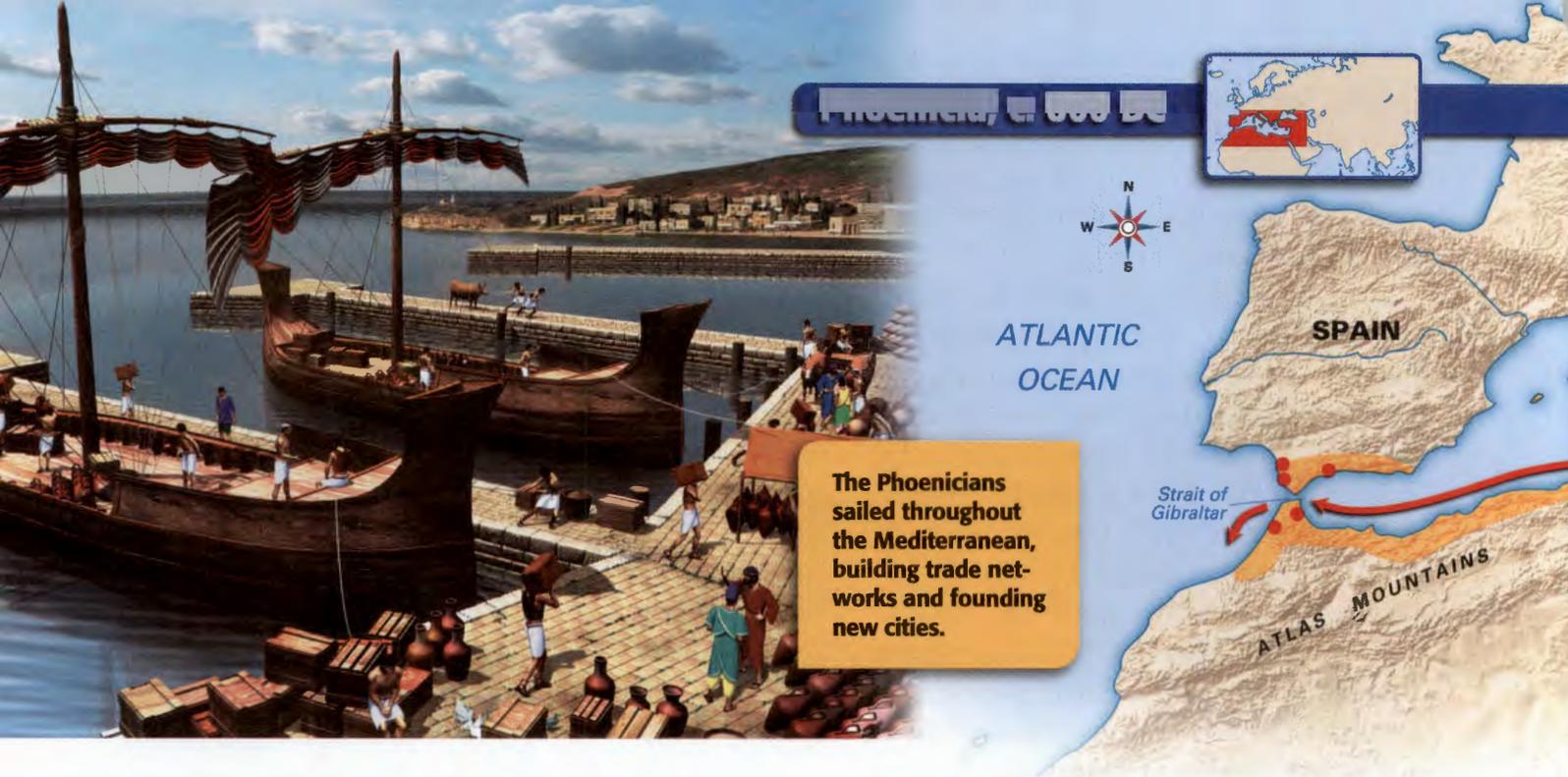
**READING CHECK** **Sequencing** List in order the peoples who ruled Mesopotamia.



#### The Assyrian Army

The Assyrian army was the most powerful fighting force the world had ever seen. It was large and well organized, and it featured iron weapons, war chariots, and giant war machines used to knock down city walls.

*What kinds of weapons can you see in this carving?*



PHOENICIA, c. 600 BC



ATLANTIC OCEAN

SPAIN

Strait of Gibraltar

ATLAS MOUNTAINS

The Phoenicians sailed throughout the Mediterranean, building trade networks and founding new cities.

## The Phoenicians

At the western end of the Fertile Crescent, along the Mediterranean Sea, was a land known as Phoenicia (fi-NI-shuh). It was not home to a great military power and was often ruled by foreign governments. Nevertheless, the Phoenicians created a wealthy trading society.

### The Geography of Phoenicia

Today the nation of Lebanon occupies most of what was once Phoenicia. Mountains border the region to the north and east. The western border is the Mediterranean.

#### THE IMPACT TODAY

Because so many cedar trees have been cut down in Lebanon's forests over the years, very few trees remain.

Phoenicia had few resources. One thing it did have, however, was cedar. Cedar trees were prized for their timber, a valuable trade item. But Phoenicia's overland trade routes were blocked by mountains and hostile neighbors. Phoenicians had to look to the sea for a way to trade.

### The Expansion of Trade

Motivated by a desire for trade, the people of Phoenicia became expert sailors. They built one of the world's finest harbors at

the city of Tyre. Fleets of fast Phoenician trading ships sailed to ports all around the Mediterranean Sea. Traders traveled to Egypt, Greece, Italy, Sicily, and Spain. They even passed through the Strait of Gibraltar to reach the Atlantic Ocean.

The Phoenicians founded several new colonies along their trade routes. Carthage (KAHR-thij), located on the northern coast of Africa, was the most famous of these. It later became one of the most powerful cities on the Mediterranean.

Phoenicia grew wealthy from its trade. Besides lumber, the Phoenicians traded silverwork, ivory carvings, and slaves. Beautiful glass objects also became valuable trade items after crafters invented glass-blowing—the art of heating and shaping glass. In addition, the Phoenicians made purple dye from a type of shellfish. They then traded cloth dyed with this purple color. Phoenician purple fabric was very popular with rich people.

The Phoenicians' most important achievement, however, wasn't a trade good. To record their activities, Phoenician



**GEOGRAPHY SKILLS**

**INTERPRETING MAPS**

**Location** Where was Phoenicia located?

traders developed one of the world's first alphabets. An **alphabet** is a set of letters that can be combined to form words. This development made writing much easier. It had a major impact on the ancient world and on our own. In fact, the alphabet we use for the English language is based on the Phoenicians', as modified by later civilizations. Later civilizations, including our own, benefited from the innovations passed along by Phoenician traders.

**READING CHECK** **Finding Main Ideas** What were the main achievements of the Phoenicians?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** Many different peoples ruled in the Fertile Crescent after the Sumerians. Some made important contributions that are still valued today. In the next chapter you will learn about another people that created a remarkable civilization—the Egyptians.

**Section 4 Assessment**

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**Online Quiz**

KEYWORD: SQ6 HP3

**Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People** **HSS 6.2.4**

1. **a. Identify** Where was Babylon located?  
**b. Analyze** What does **Hammurabi's Code** reveal about Babylonian society?
2. **a. Describe** What two advantages did Hittite soldiers have over their opponents?  
**b. Rank** Which empire discussed in this section do you feel contributed the most to modern-day society? Why?
3. **a. Identify** For what trade goods were the Phoenicians known? For what else were they known?  
**b. Analyze** How did Phoenicia grow wealthy?

**Critical Thinking**

4. **Categorizing** Draw a diagram like the one at right. In each circle, list one of the empires of the Fertile Crescent, as well as the empire's most famous leader or major city.



**FOCUS ON WRITING**

5. **Gathering Information about Later Peoples** Several different peoples contributed to civilization in the Fertile Crescent after the Sumerians. Which ones, if any, will you mention on your poster? What will you say?



Analysis

Critical Thinking

Participation

Study

## Interpreting Physical Maps

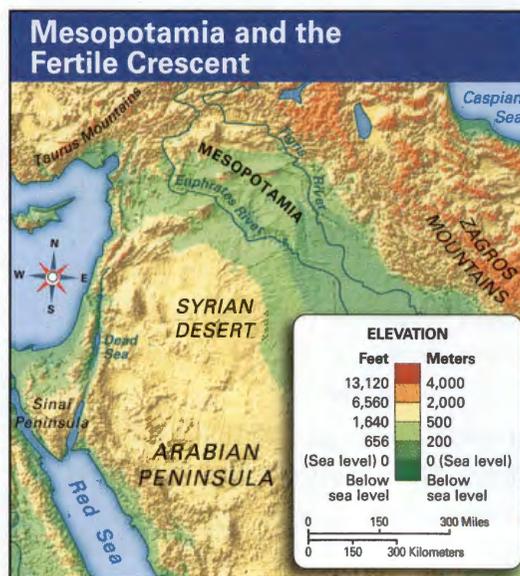
### Understand the Skill

A *physical map* is a map that shows the natural features and landscape, or *topography*, of an area. It shows the location and size of such features as rivers and mountain ranges. Physical maps also often show an area's *elevation*, or how high above sea level the land is. Topography and elevation often influence human activities. For example, people will live where they can find water and defend themselves. Therefore, being able to interpret a physical map can help you better understand how the history of an area unfolded.

### Learn the Skill

Follow these steps to interpret a physical map.

- 1 Read the map's title, distance scale, and legend. These will provide basic information about the map's contents.
- 2 Note the colors used to show elevation. Use the legend to connect colors on the map to elevations of specific places.
- 3 Note the shapes of the features, such as how high a mountain range is, how far it stretches, and how long a river is. Note where each feature is in relation to others.
- 4 Use information from the map to draw conclusions about the effect of the region's topography on settlement and economic activities.



### Practice and Apply the Skill

Use the guidelines to answer these questions about the map above.

1. What is the elevation of the western half of the Arabian Peninsula?
2. Describe the topography of Mesopotamia. Why would settlement have occurred here before other places on the map?
3. What feature might have stopped invasions of Mesopotamia?

## Visual Summary

Use the visual summary below to help you review the main ideas of the chapter.

**QUICK FACTS**

The early Mesopotamians developed irrigation to grow food.

Food production in Mesopotamia led to the world's first civilization.

Sumerian advances included ziggurats, the wheel, and the first writing system.

Later peoples developed the first written laws and the first empires.



## Reviewing Vocabulary, Terms, and People

Using your own paper, complete the sentences below by providing the correct term for each blank.

- Mesopotamian farmers built \_\_\_\_\_ to irrigate their fields.
- While city dwellers were urban, farmers lived in \_\_\_\_\_ areas.
- The people of Sumer practiced \_\_\_\_\_, the worship of many gods.
- Instead of using pictographs, Sumerians developed a type of writing called \_\_\_\_\_.
- Horse-drawn \_\_\_\_\_ gave the Hittites an advantage during battle.
- The Babylonian king \_\_\_\_\_ is famous for his code of laws.
- Another word for effect is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Sumerian society was organized in \_\_\_\_\_, which consisted of a city and the surrounding lands.

## Comprehension and Critical Thinking

### SECTION 1 (Pages 56–59) HSS 6.2.1, 6.2.2

- Describe** Where was Mesopotamia, and what does the name mean?
- Analyze** How did Mesopotamian irrigation systems allow civilization to develop?
- Elaborate** Do you think a division of labor is necessary for civilization to develop? Why or why not?

### SECTION 2 (Pages 62–66) HSS 6.2.3

- Identify** Who built the world's first empire, and what did that empire include?
- Analyze** Politically, how was early Sumerian society organized? How did that organization affect society?
- Elaborate** Why did the Sumerians consider it everyone's responsibility to keep the gods happy?

### SECTION 3 (Pages 67–71) HSS 6.2.9

11. **a. Identify** What was the Sumerian writing system called, and why is it so significant?
- b. Compare and Contrast** What were two ways in which Sumerian society was similar to our society today? What were two ways in which it was different?
- c. Evaluate** Other than writing and the wheel, which Sumerian invention do you think is most important? Why?

### SECTION 4 (Pages 74–79) HSS 6.2.4

12. **a. Describe** What were two important developments of the Phoenicians?
- b. Draw Conclusions** Why do you think several peoples banded together to fight the Assyrians?
- c. Evaluate** Do you think Hammurabi was more effective as a ruler or as a military leader? Why?

## Reviewing Themes

13. **Science and Technology** Which of the ancient Sumerians' technological achievements do you think has been most influential in history? Why?
14. **Politics** Why do you think Hammurabi is so honored for his code of laws?

## Reading Skills

**Identifying Main Ideas** For each passage, choose the letter that corresponds to the main idea sentence.

15. (A) Sumerians believed that their gods had enormous powers. (B) Gods could bring a good harvest or a disastrous flood. (C) They could bring illness or they could bring good health and wealth.
16. (A) The wheel was not the Sumerians' only great development. (B) They developed cuneiform, the world's first system of writing. (C) But Sumerians did not have pencils, pens, or paper. (D) Instead, they used sharp reeds to make wedge-shaped symbols on clay tablets.

## Using the Internet

go.hrw.com

KEYWORD: SQ6 WH3

17. **Activity: Looking at Writing** The Sumerians made one of the greatest cultural advances in history by developing cuneiform. This was the world's first system of writing. Enter the activity keyword and research the evolution of language and its written forms. Look at one of the newest methods of writing: text messaging. Then write a paragraph explaining how and why writing was developed and why it was important using text-messaging abbreviations, words, and symbols.

## Social Studies Skills

**Using Physical Maps** Could you use a physical map to answer the questions below? For each question, answer yes or no.

18. Are there mountains or hills in a certain region?
19. What languages do people speak in that region?
20. How many people live in the region?
21. What kinds of water features such as rivers or lakes would you find there?

## FOCUS ON WRITING



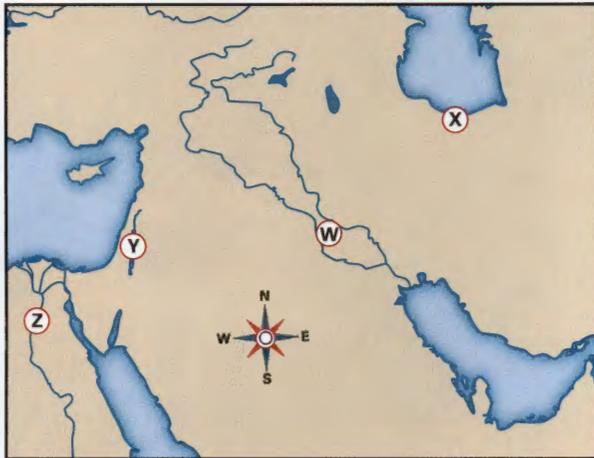
22. **Creating Your Poster** Use the notes you have taken to create a plan for your poster. Work it out on a piece of paper before transferring it to poster board. Limit yourself to two or three main points. Remember that you will need to print the words on your poster and use large letters. You won't have room for many words.

Create a title for your poster and center it at the top. Write your main points in one color and your sub-points in another color. Plan where you'll place your map or picture of the Fertile Crescent. It should support the written ideas, not interfere with them. As a last touch for your poster, you might want to add a decorative border or an image that suggests the Fertile Crescent.

# Standards Assessment

**DIRECTIONS:** Read each question, and write the letter of the best response.

- 1** Use the map to answer the following question.



The region known as Mesopotamia is indicated on the map by the letter

- A W.  
B X.  
C Y.  
D Z.
- 2** All of the following ancient civilizations developed in Mesopotamia *except* the
- A Akkadians.  
B Babylonians.  
C Egyptians.  
D Sumerians.
- 3** Which of the following is *not* true of the first writing system?
- A It was developed by the Babylonians.  
B It began with the use of pictures to represent syllables and objects.  
C It was recorded on tablets made of clay.  
D It was first used to keep business records.

- 4** In Sumerian society, people's social class or rank depended on their wealth and their
- A appearance.  
B religion.  
C location.  
D occupation.

- 5** Hammurabi's Code is important in world history because it was an early
- A form of writing that could be used to record important events.  
B written list of laws that controlled people's daily life and behavior.  
C record-keeping system that enabled the Phoenicians to become great traders.  
D set of symbols that allowed the Sumerians to communicate with other peoples.

- 6** What was the most important contribution of the Phoenicians to our civilization?
- A purple dye  
B their alphabet  
C founding of Carthage  
D sailing ships

## Connecting with Past Learnings

- 7** In Grade 5 you studied a group of people in American history that placed great importance on religion. Religion was also at the center of Sumerian society. With which American group did the Sumerians share a strong emphasis on religion?
- A the Dutch  
B the Tories  
C the Loyalists  
D the Puritans