Mesopotamia

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Resources
Resources

Videos
- Mesopotamia from Nomads to Farmers
- Mesopotamia Trade and Transportation
- Mesopotamia Alphabet

Vocabulary
- Teacher Presentation
- List
- Fill-in the blank – student version

Left Side Assignments
- Mesopotamian Achievements
- Letter to Hammurabi
Theme: Geography

I. Mesopotamia
   A. Land “between the rivers”
   B. Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
      1. Flooded yearly and brought silt to the land
   C. Between Asia Minor and Persian Gulf

II. Fertile Crescent
   A. Large arc of rich, or fertile farmland
   B. Extends from Persian Gulf to Mediterranean Sea
   C. Ideal for farming – fertile soil and water supply

Settle by a river, farm, create surplus, advanced society – Egypt, India, China
Theme: Economics

I. Trading
   A. People traded goods in cities – economic power
   B. Some surplus food was traded for other kinds of goods

II. Phoenicians (West end of Fertile Crescent)
   A. Well known for trading cedar wood
   B. Traded along Mediterranean Sea & established colonies – Carthage most powerful
   C. Grew more powerful due to trade
   D. Also traded silverwork, ivory carvings, slaves, glass, dye
Theme: Politics

I. Sumer
   A. City-states – fought each other to gain more farmland
      1. Built armies & strong, thick walls around cites to protect inhabitants from attack

II. Akkadian Empire
   A. Sargon defeated all the city-states of Sumer
      1. First permanent army
         a. Soldier armed with bows & arrows
      2. Established the world’s first empire
      3. Stretched from Persian Gulf to Mediterranean Sea
      4. Sumerians regained power after Sargon’s death
Theme: Politics

III. Later Peoples of the Fertile Crescent – different people controlled Mesopotamia

A. Babylonian Empire
   1. Hammurabi ruled for 42 years
   2. strongest empire in Mesopotamia

B. Hittites and Kassites
   1. First to use iron weapons and chariots in battle

C. The Assyrians

D. The Chaldeans
Theme: Religion

I. Religion
   A. Polytheistic
   B. Each city had a god as protector
   C. Gods have enormous power
   D. Priests interpret wishes of gods
   E. Everyone must serve and worship gods
   F. Temples honored gods – ziggurat was the largest building in each city
Theme: Society & Culture

I. Rise of Civilization
   A. 12,000 years ago hunter-gatherer groups settled in Mesopotamia
   B. Learned to plant crops
   C. Grew wheat, barley & grain
   D. Other sources of food: livestock, birds & fish
   E. Plentiful food led to population growth, and villages & cities formed
      1. Developed into world’s first civilization
   F. Food surpluses
      1. farmers grew extra food
      2. fewer people needed to farm
      3. division of labor started – people could do new jobs besides farming
II. Sumerian Social Hierarchy

A. Kings
B. Priests
C. Craftspeople, merchants, traders
D. Farmers & laborers – large working class
E. slaves
I. Controlling Water

A. Irrigation – way of supplying water to an area of land

B. Canals – human-made waterways

C. Ditches – brought water to fields

D. Leeves – built up banks of the Tigris and Euphrates used to hold flood-waters when river levels were high
II. Invention of Writing
   A. Developed cuneiform
      1. A form of writing using wedge-shaped symbols
      2. First used to keep business records
      3. The Epic of Gilgamesh – world’s oldest epic (2000 B.C.)

III. Advances and Inventions
   A. Wheel
   B. Plow
   C. Clock
   D. Sewers under city streets
   E. Bronze tools and weapons
   F. Makeup and glass jewelry
   G. Math system based on number 60
Theme: Science & Technology

IV. Architecture
   A. homes
   B. bricks
   C. ziggurats

V. Arts
   A. statues
   B. pottery
   C. jewelry
   D. cylinder seals – signed documents
   E. music
VI. Hammurabi’s Code
   A. First written code of law
   B. Set of 282 laws
   C. Laws dealt with almost every part of daily life

VII. Phoenician Alphabet
   A. Developed to record their activities
   B. Spread along their trade routes
   C. Our alphabet is based on theirs