

CHAPTER 2 Section 1 (pages 29–34)

City-States in Mesopotamia

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last chapter, you read about the earliest humans and the first civilization.

In this section, you will learn more about early civilization in a part of Mesopotamia called Sumer.

AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on Sumer.

TERMS AND NAMES

Fertile Crescent Arc of rich farmland in southwest Asia between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea

Mesopotamia The land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers

city-state Political unit much like an independent country

dynasty Series of rulers from a single family

cultural diffusion New ideas spreading from one culture to another

polytheism Belief in many gods

empire Peoples, nations, or independent states under control of one ruler

Hammurabi Babylonian ruler famous for his code of laws

SUMER	NOTES
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • part of Fertile Crescent • rich soil from flooding of rivers • problems: needed irrigate, defend, find materials they did not have

Geography of the Fertile Crescent

(pages 29–30)

What problems did the Sumerians face?

There is an *arc* of rich land in Southwest Asia that is called the **Fertile Crescent**. Two of its rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates, flood in the spring. This flooding leaves rich mud, called *silt*, in the plain between the rivers. Because of this, many thousands of years ago humans began to settle in

that plain, known as **Mesopotamia**. They grew wheat and barley. It was here that the first civilization began.

About 3300 B.C., the Sumerians moved into this region and settled. They faced three problems. First, the floods were not regular, and once they passed, the hot sun quickly baked the land into clay. Second, the small farming villages had no protection against enemies. Third, the area lacked stone, wood, and metal to use for tools.

The Sumerians solved these problems. They dug irrigation ditches from the river to their fields

so they could bring water to their crops. They built walls of baked mud around their villages for *defense*. Because they could grow more food than they needed, they traded the extra for stone, wood, and metal from other lands.

1. How did the Sumerians solve the problems they faced?

Sumerians Create City-States

(page 30)

How did the Sumerians govern?

Several large city-states were at the center of the Sumerian world. These **city-states** had control over a surrounding area. They could act independently, much like a country does today. Slowly, some people rose to power in a number of the city-states. They became rulers, as did their children after them. Rule of an area by the same family is called a **dynasty**.

As population and trade grew, Sumerians came into contact with other peoples. Their own ideas affected others. The Sumerians also got ideas from other cultures. This process of spreading ideas or products is called **cultural diffusion**.

2. Who governed the city-states?

Sumerian Culture (pages 31–32)

What did the Sumerians believe and accomplish?

The Sumerians believed in **polytheism**, or many gods. Each god had power over different forces of nature or parts of their lives. Sumerians believed that people were just the servants of the gods. Souls of the dead went to a joyless place under the earth's crust. These views spread to other areas and shaped the ideas of other peoples.

Society was divided into social classes. At the top were the priests and kings, after whom came wealthy merchants. Next were workers in fields and workshops. Slaves made up the lowest level. Women could enter most careers and could own property. But there were some limits on them.

The people of Sumer invented the sail, the wheel, and the plow. They were the first to use bronze. They also developed the first writing system—on clay tablets. They invented arithmetic and geometry, which they used to help build large structures.

3. How was Sumerian society organized?

The First Empire Builders (pages 32–34)

Who built the world's first empire?

Centuries of fighting between the city-states made the Sumerians weak. In 2350 B.C., the conqueror Sargon defeated Sumer and captured other cities to the north. He built the world's first **empire**. An empire brings together several peoples, nations, or previously independent states. It puts them under the control of one ruler.

A few hundred years later, a different group of people conquered the Sumerians. These people built a capital at Babylon, establishing the Babylonian Empire. They were led by a king named **Hammurabi**. He is famous for his code of laws. It was a harsh code that punished people for wrongdoing. However, it also made it clear that the government had some responsibility for taking care of its people.

4. Why was Hammurabi's Code important?

CHAPTER 2 Section 2 (pages 35–41)

TERMS AND NAMES

delta Marshy area at the mouth of a river

Narmer King of Upper Egypt who united Upper and Lower Egypt

pharaoh Egyptian ruler thought of as a god

theocracy Government in which the ruler is considered to be a divine figure

pyramid Resting place for Egyptian kings after death

mummification Process by which a body is preserved after death

hieroglyphics Egyptian writing system

papyrus Plant used to make a paper-like material

Pyramids on the Nile

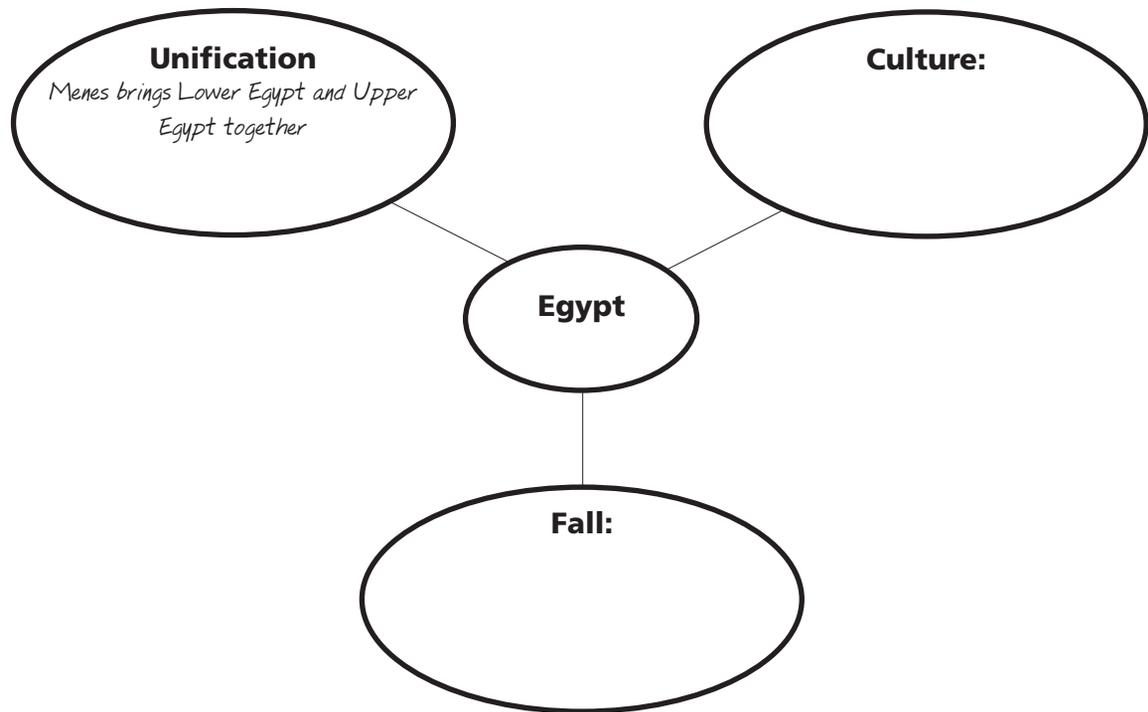
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the city-states that arose in Mesopotamia.

In this section, you will learn about early civilization along the Nile.

AS YOU READ

Use the web below to show how Egypt was unified, what its culture was like, and how it fell.



The Geography of Egypt (pages 35–37)

What was the key feature of early Egypt's geography?

Another civilization arose along the banks of the Nile River of East Africa. The Nile flows to the North, toward the Mediterranean Sea. It, too, floods each year. The waters leave rich soil on the river banks. There the people of ancient Egypt

grew food and began to build their own culture. They worshiped the Nile as a life-giving god.

For many centuries, the people of Egypt lived in two kingdoms, Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. Upper Egypt extended north from the Nile's first area of rapids, or cataracts, to the Nile **delta**. The delta is a broad, marshy, triangular area of rich land. Lower Egypt began here and continued north to the Mediterranean, just 100 miles away.

1. How did the Nile create boundaries?

Egypt Unites into a Kingdom

(pages 37–38)

Who ruled the kingdom?

About 3000 B.C., the king of Upper Egypt, **Narmer**, united the two kingdoms. In the years between 2660 and 2180 B.C., the basic marks of the culture of Egypt arose. Ruling over the land was the **pharaoh**. He was not only a king but was also seen as a god. A government in which a ruler is seen as a divine figure is a **theocracy**.

Pharaohs believed they would rule the land after their death. So these kings built themselves magnificent tombs. The tombs were huge **pyramids** made out of *massive* limestone blocks.

2. Why did pharaohs build pyramids?

Egyptian Culture; Invaders Control Egypt

(pages 38–41)

What were the features of Egyptian culture?

Egyptians believed in many gods and in an after-life. One god, they thought, weighed the hearts of each dead person. Hearts judged heavy with sin were eaten by a beast. Good people, with *feather-weight* hearts, would live forever in a beautiful Other World. To prepare for this, Egyptians pre-

served a dead person's body by **mummification**. This kept the body from decaying.

The pharaoh and his family were at the top of Egyptian society. Below them were people of wealth who owned large amounts of land, the priests, and members of the government and army. Then came the middle class—*merchants* and people who worked in crafts. At the bottom were the peasants. In later times, the Egyptians had slaves. People could move from one rank of society to another. Those who could read and write held important positions.

The Egyptians, like the Sumerians, developed a way of writing. In their writing system, **hieroglyphics**, pictures stood for sounds or ideas. The pictures could be put together to make words and sentences. At first they wrote on stone. Later they began to make a kind of paper from the **papyrus** plant. The Egyptians invented a system of written numbers and a calendar. Their calendar had 12 months, each of which had 30 days. They were famous in the ancient world for their ideas in medicine.

After 2180 B.C., the pharaohs lost power. Egypt went through a time of troubles. Then strong rulers once again took control. They ruled for four centuries until a group of Asians called the Hyksos arrived in horse-drawn chariots. The land fell to these invaders in 1640 B.C.

3. How was Egyptian society organized?

CHAPTER 2 Section 3 (pages 44–49)**TERMS AND NAMES****subcontinent** Land mass that is a distinct part of a continent**monsoon** Seasonal wind**Harappan civilization** Ancient settlements in the Indus River Valley

Planned Cities on the Indus

BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about the development of culture along the Nile.

In this section, you will learn about the first civilization in India.

AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on the civilization of the Indus.

INDUS CIVILIZATION	NOTES
<i>geography</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>subcontinent separate from other areas</i> • <i>rich soil from flooding of rivers</i> • <i>problems: unpredictable river, winds</i>

The Geography of the Indian Subcontinent

 (pages 44–45)

What is a subcontinent?

South Asia—modern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh—is a **subcontinent**. It is separated from the rest of Asia by tall mountains. Just below the mountains are two large plains that hold the Ganges and Indus rivers. The high mountains gave the people safety from invaders. Because they lived close to the sea, the people could travel over the water to trade with other peoples.

The people along the Indus River faced many of the same challenges that the people in

Mesopotamia did. Their river flooded each year and left soil good for farming. But the floods did not occur at the same time each year. Also, the river sometimes changed course. The region's weather caused problems, too. Each winter, strong winds blew dry air across the area. Each spring, the winds brought heavy rains. These seasonal winds are called **monsoons**.

1. What challenges did the people along the Indus River face?

Civilization Emerges on the Indus; Harappan Culture (pages 46–48)

What were cities like on the Indus?

Historians cannot understand the writings of the people who settled in the Indus Valley. So, they have not learned much about these people. They do know that they were farming along the river by about 3200 B.C. The culture is called **Harappan civilization** because many discoveries were made near the city of Harappa. They also know that the culture of these people covered an area larger than either Mesopotamia or Egypt.

About 2500 B.C., these people began building their first cities. In Mesopotamia, cities were a jumble of winding streets. In the Indus Valley, however, the builders carefully planned their cities. They made a *grid* of streets. They built an area called a *citadel* that was easy to defend. All the important buildings were here. They also had systems for carrying water and sewage.

Because the houses were mostly alike, scholars think that the Indus culture did not have big differences between social classes.

These early people left an important mark on the region. Some religious objects include symbols that became part of later Indian culture. Historians

also think that the people of the area had extensive trade with people in the region and with the people of Mesopotamia.

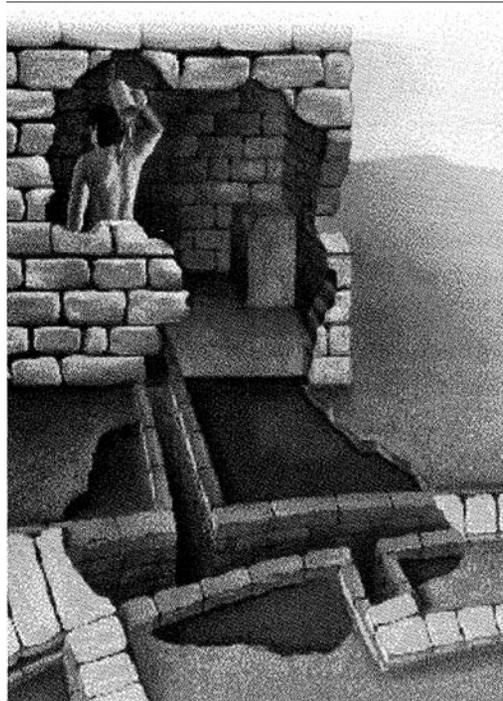
2. Name two conclusions that have been drawn about Harappan civilization.

Mysterious End to Indus Valley Culture (page 49)

How did Indus Valley culture end?

Around 1750 B.C., the cities began to show signs of decline. The Indus Valley civilization collapsed around 1500 B.C. Satellite images suggest a shift in the earth's crust that caused earthquakes. Because of the quakes the Indus River may have changed its course. This would stop the good effects of the yearly floods. The people may have overworked the land. This would have left the soil too poor to produce crops.

3. Name two reasons why Indus Valley civilization may have ended.



In their private baths, people took showers by pouring pitchers of water over their head.

Wastes drained through clay pipes into brick sewers running below the streets.

Skillbuilder

Use the illustration to answer the questions.

1. Drawing Conclusions

What advance in technology is shown in this illustration?

2. Clarifying

What happened to the wastewater?

CHAPTER 2 Section 4 (pages 50–55)

River Dynasties in China

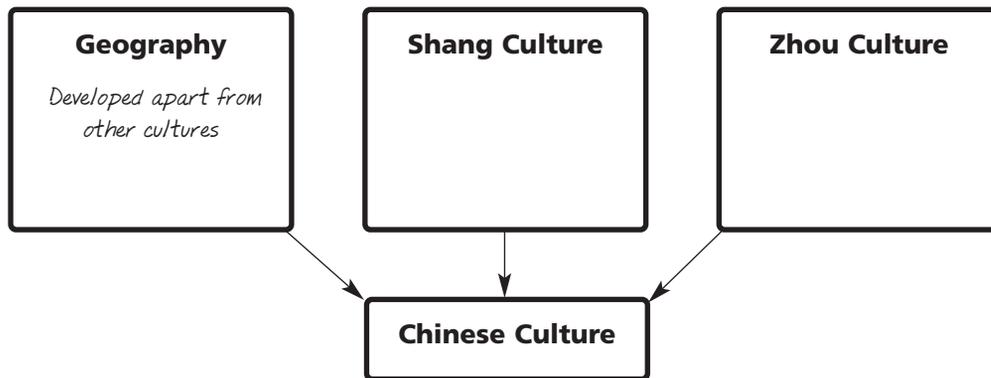
BEFORE YOU READ

In the last section, you read about Indus Valley culture.

In this section, you will learn about the earliest cultures in China.

AS YOU READ

Use the chart below to take notes on how geography and early cultures influenced the development of Chinese culture.



TERMS AND NAMES

loess Fertile soil

oracle bone Animal bone used by ancient Chinese priests to communicate with the gods

Mandate of Heaven Divine approval of the ruler

dynastic cycle Pattern of rise, fall, and replacement of dynasties

feudalism Political system in which nobles or lords are granted the use of lands that belong to the king

The Geography of China (pages 50–51)

How did geography affect China's past?

The last of the great early civilizations arose in China and continues to this day. China's geography caused it to develop apart from other cultures.

A great ocean, huge deserts, and high mountains isolate China from other areas. The mountains did not protect China totally, however. People living to the north and west invaded the land many times during Chinese history.

There are two rich rivers within China—the Huang He and the Yangtze. Almost all the good farmland in China lies between these rivers. The Huang He deposited huge amounts of *silt* when it

overflowed. This silt is fertile soil called **loess**. The Chinese people also made use of the flood waters of these rivers.

1. Why did China develop apart from other cultures?

Civilization Emerges in Shang Times (pages 51–52)

What was the Shang Dynasty?

A few thousand years ago, some people began to farm along China's rivers. About 2000 B.C., the first dynasty of rulers brought government to China.

Around 1500 B.C., a new dynasty, the Shang, began to rule. This dynasty left the first written records in China. Objects found in their palaces and tombs also tell us much about their society. Chinese people built their buildings of wood, not mud-dried brick as the other early cultures did. Huge walls made of earth surrounded these buildings to protect them. The walls were needed because it was a time of constant war.

The king and the *nobles* who helped him fight these wars were at the top of Shang society. At the bottom was the mass of peasants who lived in simple huts outside the city walls. They worked hard on the farms, using wooden tools because the Shang believed that bronze was too good to be used for farming.

2. What were three features of Shang culture?

The Development of Chinese Culture

(pages 52–54)

What beliefs shaped Shang society?

Shang society was held together by a strong belief in the importance of the group—all the people—and not any single person. The most important part of society was the family. Children grew up learning to respect their parents.

The family played a central role in Chinese religion, too. The Chinese thought that family members who had died could still influence the lives of family members who were alive. They gave respect to dead members of the family, hoping to keep them happy. Through the spirits of their *ancestors*, the Shang also asked for advice from the gods. They used **oracle bones** to do this. These were animal bones and shells. Priests wrote questions on them. Then they touched them with something hot. The priest interpreted the cracks that resulted to find their answers.

The Chinese system of writing differed from those of other groups. Symbols stood for ideas, not sounds. This allowed the many different groups in

China to understand the same writing even though each had a special spoken language. The written language had thousands of symbols, however. This made it very hard to learn. Only specially trained people learned to read and write.

3. Name three important values of Shang culture.

Zhou and the Dynastic Cycle

(pages 54–55)

What is the Mandate of Heaven?

About 1027 B.C., a new group, the Zhou, took control of China. They adopted Shang culture. They also started an idea of royalty that was new to China. Good rulers, they said, got authority to rule from heaven. This was known as the **Mandate of Heaven**. They claimed the Shang rulers were not just and had lost the favor of the gods. That is why they had to be replaced. From then on, the Chinese believed in *divine* rule. However, it also meant that disasters such as floods or war pointed to a ruler that had lost the support of the gods and needed to be replaced. Until the early 1900s, the Chinese had one dynasty after another. This pattern of rise, fall, and replacement of dynasties is known as the **dynastic cycle**.

The Zhou gave members of the royal family and other nobles the rights to large areas of land. They established **feudalism**. Feudalism is a political system in which the nobles owe loyalty to the king. The nobles promise to fight for the rulers and to protect the peasants who live on the land.

Eventually the Zhou rulers lost all power. The nobles fought each other for control of China in a period called the “*time of the warring states*.” It lasted many hundred years. The Chinese people suffered during this time.

4. Name two important changes brought about by the Zhou.
