

Mesopotamia Part I Study Guide KEY

The word “Mesopotamia” means: **Land Between the Rivers**

What change in northern Mesopotamia led people to move south? **Food Shortages = They had settled in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains, population was increasing, and they could not keep up with the food supply.**

Explain what a *tel* is? **A tel is a mound of earth that has been built over many many years by civilizations building on top of each other and can find remnants of artifacts/clues of the civilization.**

What were some of the new challenges Sumerian farmers faced? **An uncontrollable water supply (times of extreme drought and times of severe flooding)**

Name 2 other cultures the Sumerians traded with and what they imported from them:

Zagros Mts. From the North (Armenia): stone and wood/timber

Lebanon: cedar wood

Persia: metals

India: spices, dyes, jewels

Name 3 main/important resources readily available and share 2 examples of how each were used:

Clay: bricks, tablets, tools, pottery

Reeds/Palms: baskets, mats, building, sandals

Cloth: cotton, hemp, flax, wool

Grains: Wheat/Barley food, currency, flour, beer

Fresh Water: irrigation, drink, transportation, bathe

The main source of conflict in Sumer was: **Land and Irrigation rights.**

Written Contracts, Charging Interest and Letters of Credit are all examples of: **banking business practices**

What was the main threat the city-states of Sumer faced by remaining independent kingdoms? **Being independent, they were susceptible to outsiders attacking and taking them over.**

List four occupations that brought wealth to Sumer: **Farmers, Weavers, Potters, Masons, Fisherman, Merchants etc.**

List the eight aspects of a civilization we talked about in class: **Stable Food Supply, Government, Social Structure, Economy, Religion, Writing, Technology, The Arts**

What legitimized the king’s power to rule? **The fact that they were selected/chosen by the gods (divine right to rule)**

If metals were not readily available in Sumer, the presence of gold and silver objects in Queen Puabli's tomb shows what about the Sumerians? **That they obviously traded with other lands for precious metals and stones.**

Besides religious use, what would other uses be for the ziggurat? List three others: **Celebrations, Commerce, Grain Storage (gov. treasury)**

Because there was easy trade amongst the city-states and foreign peoples, the spread of ideas, skills and the ways of life were transferred and exchanged. We refer to this as: **cultural diffusion**

Who were educated in Sumer? **Wealthy males**

What evidence can you supply to the claim that Sumerian Society had a social structure/hierarchy? **Some examples of evidence we spoke about: Clothing – more fringe = higher social status Homes – Larger 2 level homes near the temple = wealthy, smaller outskirts = common/poor, there were slaves and servants, Different food for different classes... Meat = wealthy, Stews = commoners, Jobs = social standing, School = only wealthy males etc.**

Explain and Elaborate upon these terms or people as they relate to what we studied:

stele: **slab of stone with a carved relief of images and text depicting events edicts**

Fertile Crescent: **region in the Middle East where many early civilizations prospered due to the rivers (fresh water source) and surrounding fertile land.**

city-state: **an independent city (often walled) with their own government (leaders and laws)**

patriarchy: **when a society is ruled by men (father rule/govern)**

cuneiform: **wedge shaped writing (made in clay with a stylus) of the ancient Mesopotamians, 700+ characters**

polytheism: **belief in many gods (Ancient Egyptians, Ancient Greeks, Native Americans, Hindu etc.)**

monotheism: **belief in one, single god**

theocracy: **form of government where religious leaders and doctrine rules the society**

bicameral: **having 2 chambers (2-houses)**

cylinder seal: **carved cylindrical stone that served as the official signature**

Standard of Ur: **(primary source) mosaic box made of lapis lazuli and other materials that on one side depicts a time of peace and the other war**

Sir Leonard Woolley: **British archaeologist who unearthed the city-state of Ur in 1922, discovering the artifacts of The Royal Tombs**

Henry Rawlinson: British Officer, studied in Behistun around 1845 made strides in deciphering and breaking the code of cuneiform

King Darius I: Persian King who conquered Mesopotamia and had an edict carved as a stele in Persia upon the Rock of Behistun in three different languages, which later was the key to deciphering cuneiform.