

Mesopotamia Study Guide

Vocabulary:

1. Monotheism: **Belief in one god**
2. Ziggurat: **Large temples built for government, priests, and worshipping gods**
3. Polytheism: **Belief in many gods**
4. Cuneiform: **The very first system of writing created by the Sumerians**
5. Hammurabi: **King of Babylon who created a set of laws to live by**
6. Gilgamesh: **an epic hero; King who wanted to find a way to live forever**
7. Silt: **rich, fertile soil mixed with small rocks**
8. Scribe: **a writer, someone who writes down or records information**

GRAPES - Go through each part of GRAPES and explain what we should know about Mesopotamia.

Geography: Mesopotamia was located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; it is the land between rivers; it is now present-day Iraq; it is on the continent of Asia

Religion: they believed in many gods (polytheistic); they worshipped in their ziggurats; each city had their own god; only priests could enter the ziggurat

Accomplishments: they created city-states; made statues and pottery; invented cuneiform; invented the 12 month calendar and 360 degree circle; invented sails to put on boats; invented the plow and the seed funnel; invented the wheel; invented the pottery wheel; invented ramps and arches; figured out ways to control flooding through irrigation canals and levees

Politics/Government: Hammurabi created the first known set of laws; Kings and priests led their own city-states; later, Sargon and Hammurabi led empires

Economy: fishing; farming; government figures; priests; merchants; artisans; scribes; traders; taxes

Social Hierarchy:

Upper class (King/Priests/Royal Families, military leaders, wealthy families)

Middle Class (Merchants, Traders, artisans, skilled workers)

Lower Class (farmers, unskilled workers, fisherman, slaves, people who worked for Middle Class or Upper Class families)

*Some information we read indicated that farmers were in the middle class. We also read that there were four classes within the social hierarchy.

****What made Mesopotamia a good place for farming and for a civilization to develop? Due to Mesopotamia's location between two rivers, the soil was fertile from the floods and great for farming. There were mountains nearby for protection and deserts to help keep invaders out. It was also located near many bodies of water which helped with travel, trade, and expanding their civilization.**