

I. Land Between Two Rivers

- a. Scribes are professional writers
- b. Scribes are important to kings and priests for record keeping

A. The Geographic Setting

- a. Sumer was located in the region known as Mesopotamia
- b. Mesopotamia has rich soil and life-giving rivers

1. The Location of Mesopotamia

- a. Mesopotamia means “between the rivers”
- b. It is between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers
- c. It is in the Fertile Crescent

2. Rivers of Life and Death

- a. Snow melting from the Mts. floods the lands bringing topsoil
- b. The flooding can kill people, kill animals and destroy crops and buildings

B. The First Cities

- a. Food surpluses encouraged growth of cities

1. Independent Cities Form

- a. Though cities in Sumer shared common culture and language they did not united
- b. City-state is a city that is a city that also is separate and independent

2. A Brief Tour of a Sumerian City

- a. Public squares are busy with merchants and entertainers
- b. The houses faced away from the busy streets and at night they would sleep on their flat roofs

B. Sumerian Religion

1. Sumerian Temples

- a. Ziggurat is a temple to the gods/goddess and stood 7 stories tall

2. Ancient Religious Beliefs

- a. Polytheism is the belief in many gods/goddesses
- b. Poly means many, theism means belief in god or gods
- c. Myths are stories about god's that explain people's beliefs

3. Honoring the Gods

- a. Religious ceremonies honored the gods
- b. Worshipers may have thought by sacrificing to the gods they would be taking in qualities they admired in the gods
- c.

4. The Fall of Sumer

- a. Sumerian wealth decline w/ fighting within city-states
- b. King Sargon united the city-states for around 100 years
- c. These united city-states once again dissolved into independent city-states