

Mesopotamia

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UNIT CHALLENGE

Purpose: The unit challenges help students explore the big picture themes that tie together each unit of Ignite! content. These challenges are designed to complement the Ignite! Topic Lessons.

Each challenge presents students with an open-ended task with no single correct solution. Working in small groups, students prepare a short response, in either written or oral form, in which they use knowledge gained by studying the unit's multimedia movies to formulate and defend a particular position. These responses can be used to stimulate further class discussion and exploration of the issues.

NOTE: In order to use this activity with your class for a particular Ignite! unit, you should plan on having students study the Ignite! movies from most of the topics in that unit. Otherwise, students will not have enough information to complete the challenge activity.

Class time required:

- 15 minutes at the start of unit to organize students into groups and review the challenge, and for the groups to discuss and record their initial thoughts and current knowledge of the issues.
- 20 minutes at the end of the unit for student groups to complete their responses to the challenge.
- *Optional:* 20-30 minutes for student groups to present their responses to the class.

Teacher Instructions:

At the Start of the Unit: Before studying any of the unit's topics or movies:

1. divide your class into teams of 3 to 4 students;
2. reproduce the unit challenge worksheet and distribute to students;
3. decide whether teams will give oral presentations and/or written statements in response to their challenge;
4. read the challenge(s) out loud and make sure that all terms and concepts are understood;
5. ask groups to complete Part One of their worksheets (Getting Started). They should discuss and write down their thoughts, based on their current knowledge for how they might respond to the selected challenge.

While the Class Studies the Unit's Topics: Over the next few days or weeks, as you are using the Ignite! Topic Lessons for this unit, occasionally remind students to record on their worksheets any information they have found in the Ignite! movies that might help them to develop or support their response to the challenge. They should record this information in Part Two of their worksheets (Taking Notes).

After Completing the Last Topic of the Unit: Give your students 20 minutes to discuss and write up their response to the challenge. They can use the space provided in Part Three of their worksheets (Preparing Your Response). You might consider allowing them to review some of the movies from the unit. Then, have students give brief presentations of their responses (2 to 3 minutes each) and/or submit their written responses.

Name: _____



Mesopotamia

Challenge A: Come to Mesopotamia!

Background: Mesopotamia was a land with a lot to offer. Its location and natural resources encouraged people to settle there. Early societies developed governments, agriculture, writing, and new technologies. Over time the, civilizations grew larger and better organized.

Challenge: Write an advertisement for "The Ancient Times" newspaper that convinces people in other parts of the world to move to ancient Mesopotamia.

Tips:

- Describe the benefits of the land and its location as well as advancements and inventions of the people who lived there. Explain how these things supported a good lifestyle.
- Start with a short catch-phrase that will stick in the listener's mind.
- Be convincing, but stick to the facts.

Challenge B: People and the Land

Background: Throughout history, the land has shaped the lives of people living on it. Mountains, valleys, rivers, coasts, and climate all affect where and how people live. At the same time, people have changed and used the land for their own needs.

Challenge: Describe the many different ways that the land was critical to the development of civilization in Mesopotamia.

Tips:

- You could consider its location, climate, water, and soil, as well as natural barriers that surrounded it.
- For each feature you describe, explain how it helped civilizations to grow.

PART ONE – Getting Started

Directions: Choose one of the challenges above, or your teacher will assign you one. Based on what you already know, talk with the other members of your group about how you might respond to this challenge. Write your thoughts in the box below. You can change your mind later after you have reviewed the Ignite! movies in this unit.

Notes:

Name: _____



PART TWO – Taking Notes

Directions: As you view and discuss the Ignite! movies in this unit, be on the lookout for information that will help you develop a response to your challenge. Record that information in the box below. Use additional paper if necessary.

Notes:

PART THREE – Preparing Your Response

Directions: Depending on your teacher’s instructions, work with your group to create a written or oral response to your challenge. Decide on the argument you wish to make or the position you wish to take, and be sure to include evidence from the Ignite! movies to support your statements. Use the space below for your response. Use additional paper if necessary.

Notes:



1. Physical Geography & Climate

Class: _____

Type Instruction: Whole Class

Learning Objective(s): Students understand the influence of geography on the location of Mesopotamia in the Fertile Crescent.

Length of Time: 10 Minutes

Ignite! Movies:

- Mesopotamia's Fertile Land
- Mapping Mesopotamia
- Locating Mesopotamia

Teacher Instructions: Play Ignite! movies with students and complete the following activity.

Part One: Students correctly label items on the map.

Part Two: Students use their work from Part One to write an email.

Target Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- *Cradle of Civilization*
- *Euphrates River*
- *Fertile Crescent*
- *fertility*
- *Mesopotamia*
- *Syrian Desert*
- *Taurus Mountains*
- *Tigris River*
- *Zagros Mountains*

Notes:



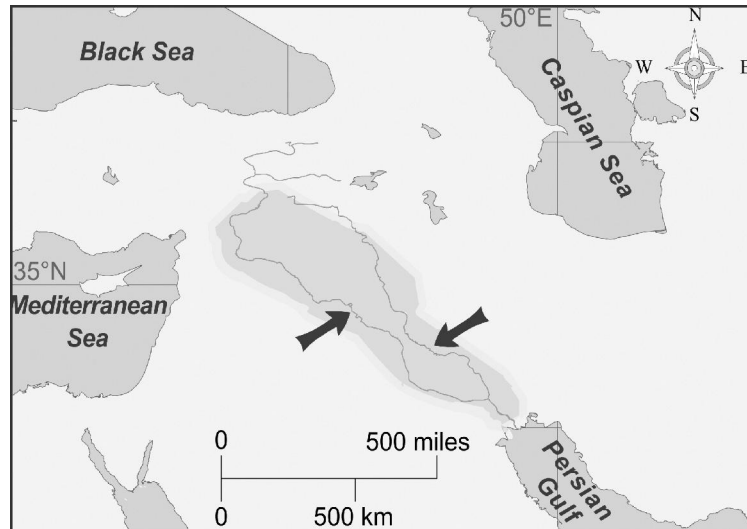
Name: _____



Mesopotamia: The Cradle of Civilization

Directions: Label the following places on the map:

1. Tigris River
2. Euphrates River
3. Mesopotamia
4. Fertile Crescent
5. Syrian Desert



Directions: Complete the statements about Mesopotamia.

1. Mesopotamia means _____.
2. The combination of _____ soil and _____ from the rivers made Mesopotamia the most _____ farmland in the region.
3. The surrounding land is mostly _____.
4. The Fertile Crescent was an area with _____. Ancient people built large _____ here.
5. Mesopotamia was located in the modern countries of _____, _____, and _____.
6. Northwest Mesopotamia: people used water to _____ the land.
7. Southwest Mesopotamia: the Tigris and Euphrates rivers _____ before they flow into the _____. It is an area of _____.
8. Without the rivers, the whole area would be a _____.
9. Today, modern practices of _____ rivers and _____ the marshland are _____ the area.

Name: _____



The Cradle of Civilization

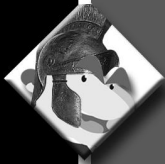
Directions: Imagine that you are visiting the area where Mesopotamia was located. Write an email describing how geography affected civilization in the area. Why was it called the “Cradle of Civilization? What is happening to the land now? How will this change the land?

New Message

To:

CC:

Subject:



unit
Mesopotamia
#2. Settlement of Mesopotamia

Class: _____

Type Instruction: Whole Class

Learning Objective(s): Students understand and identify the geographic and cultural factors that led to the development of the Mesopotamian civilization.

Length of Time: 10 Minutes

Ignite! Movies:

- Civilization from Dirt
- Mesopotamian Civilization
- The People or the Place?

Teacher Instructions: Play Ignite! movies with students and complete the following activity.

Part One: Students complete cause and effect chart.

Part Two: Students use their notes from Part One to create a poster about goods that were traded in Mesopotamia. Students present and display their posters to the class.

Target Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- *agriculture*
- *cuneiform*
- *division of labor*
- *Irrigate*
- *merchants*
- *Sumerians*
- *surplus*

Notes:



Name: _____

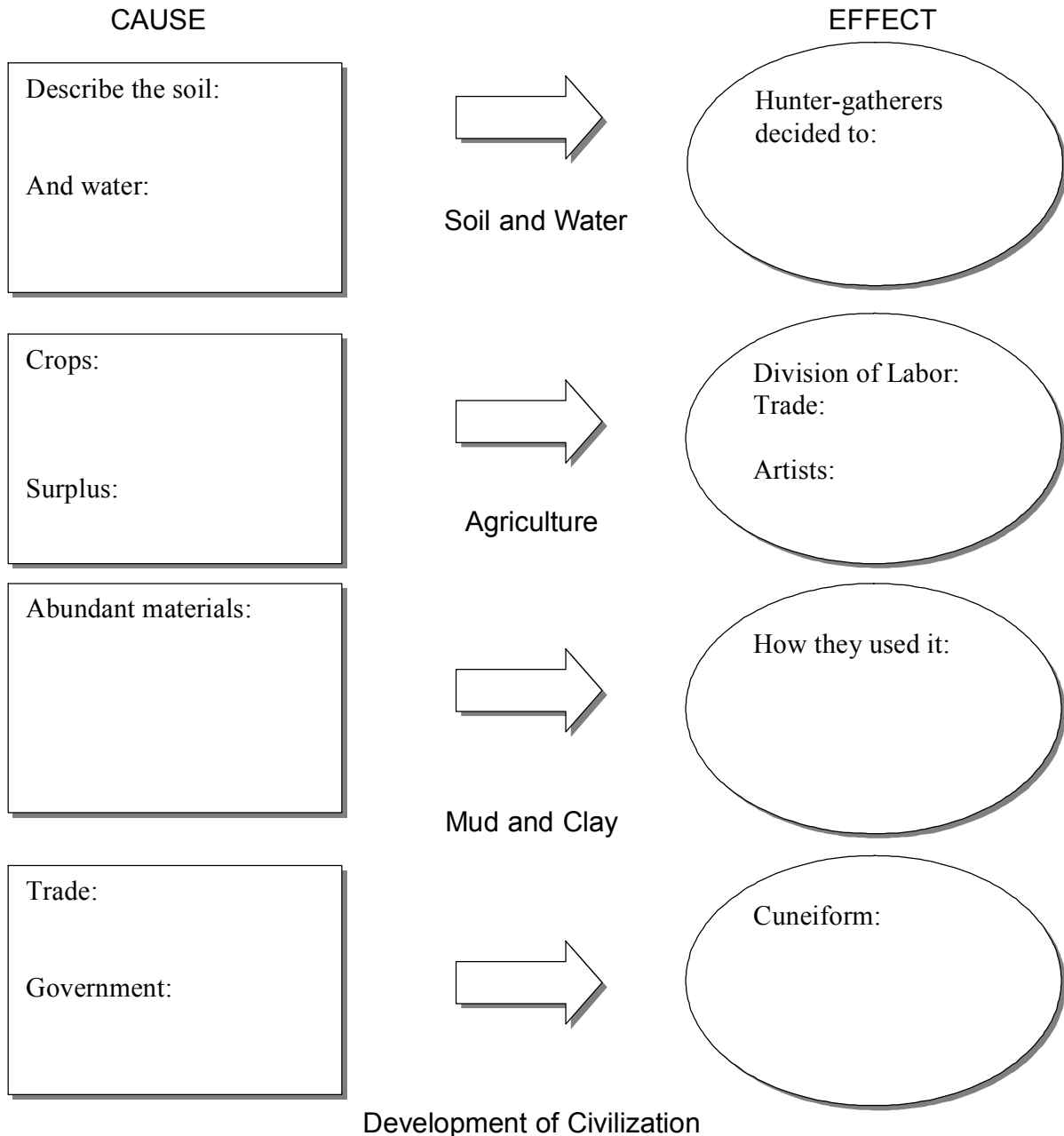


The Settlement of Mesopotamia

Directions: Fill out the Cause & Effect chart below about the development of the Mesopotamian civilization.

Cause: Describe the topic.

Effect: Describe how it influenced Mesopotamia.



Name: _____

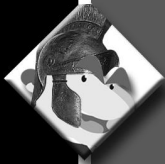


The Settlement of Mesopotamia

Directions: Imagine that you are a member of the new merchant class in Mesopotamia. Make an advertisement for the items you sell and trade. Make up a title, a slogan, and include information about the crops and art in your collection of goods.



A large, empty, rounded rectangular frame intended for students to write their advertisement.



#3. Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia

Class: _____

Type Instruction: Whole Class

Learning Objective(s): Students examine the Sumerian and Babylonian civilizations.

Length of Time: 10 Minutes

Ignite! Movies:

- The Sumerian Civilization
- King Hammurabi of Babylonia
- Mesopotamian Rap

Teacher Instructions: Play Ignite! movies with students and complete the following activity.

Part One: Students complete a graphic organizer with facts describing the Sumerian civilization.

Part Two: Students answer questions about the Sumerian civilization.

Target Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- *Amorites*
- *Babylonians*
- *cuneiform*
- *Etana*
- *Polytheistic*
- *Ziggurats*

Notes:

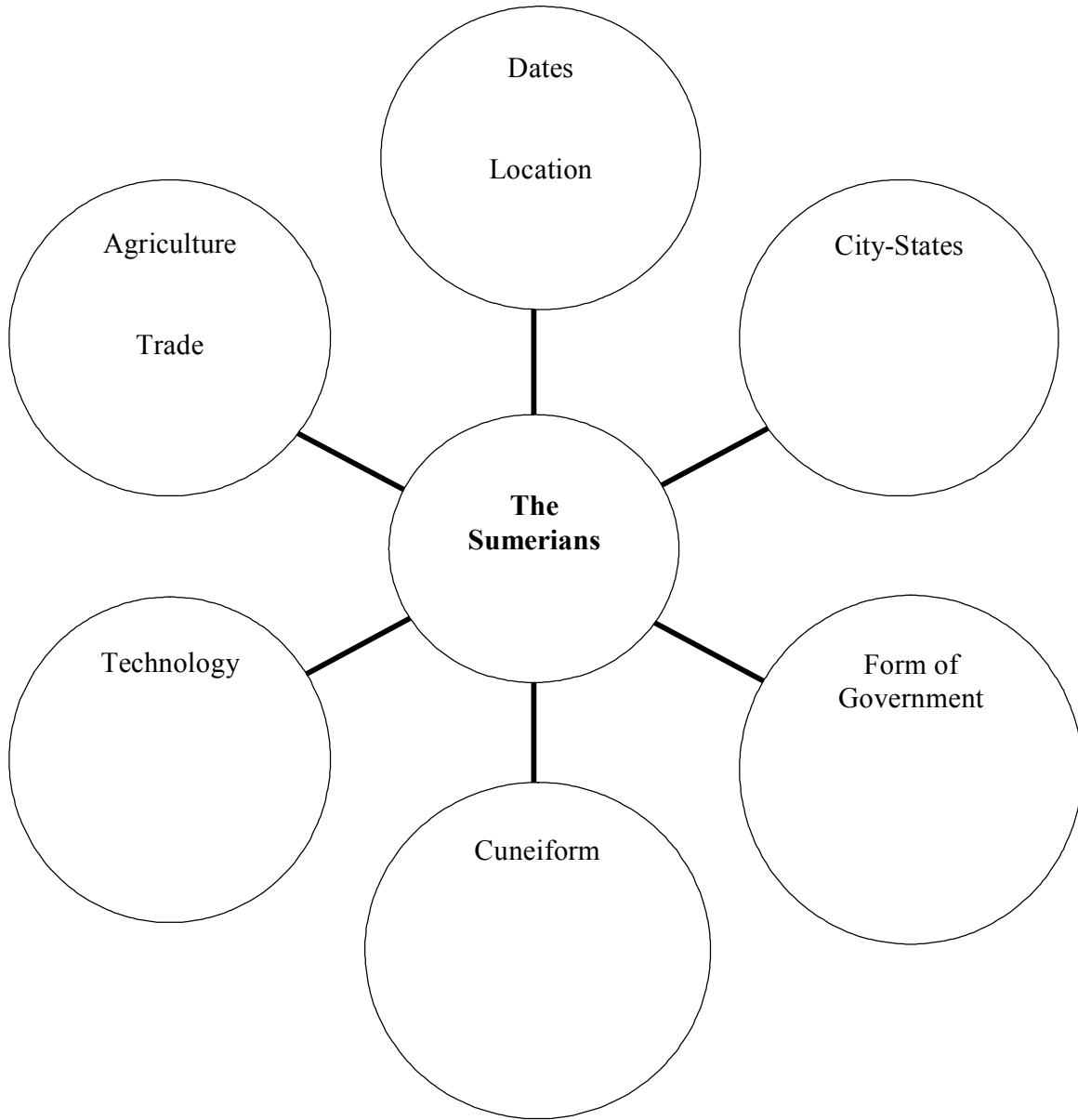


Name: _____



The Sumerian Civilization

Directions: Fill in the diagram with information describing the government, technology, daily life, and writing of the Sumerians.



Name: _____



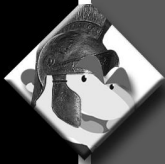
The Sumerian Civilization

Directions: Which of the following statements best describes the Sumerian government?
Circle "Option A" or "Option B" to show the correct answer.

<p>Option A:</p> <p>The Sumerians had the world's first democracy, probably because they lived so close to each other between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.</p>	<p>Option B:</p> <p>The Sumerian civilization was a collection of separate city-states. Due to their rivalries, they needed powerful leaders, such as kings, to unite them.</p>
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Directions: Which of the following statements best describes cuneiform?
Circle "Option A" or "Option B" to show the correct answer.

<p>Option A:</p> <p>Cuneiform writing was made by pressing wedge-shaped characters into soft clay tablets that were dried in the sun. Some of them still exist today. It was invented by the Sumerians and copied by later civilizations.</p>	<p>Option B:</p> <p>Cuneiform writing was made by pressing wedge-shaped characters into soft clay tablets that were then dried in the sun. Cuneiform was invented by the Babylonians, long after the Sumerian civilization ended.</p>
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4. Later Civilizations of Mesopotamia

Class: _____

Type Instruction: Whole Class

Learning Objective(s): Students trace the later civilizations of Mesopotamia including rule by the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Persians, and Alexander the Great.

Length of Time: 10 Minutes

Ignite! Movies:

- Mesopotamia: Land Changes Hands
- Mesopotamia: Who Ruled When?
- People of Mesopotamia

Teacher Instructions: Play Ignite! movies with students and complete the following activity.

Part One: Students complete a timeline about the later civilizations of Mesopotamia.

Part Two: Students write an overview of the later civilizations of Mesopotamia. Students share their introductions with the class.

Target Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- *Alexander the Great*
- *Assyrian Empire*
- *Astrology*
- *Chaldean Empire*
- *Hanging Gardens*
- *King Nebuchadnezzar II*
- *Macedonia*
- *Persian Empire*

Notes:

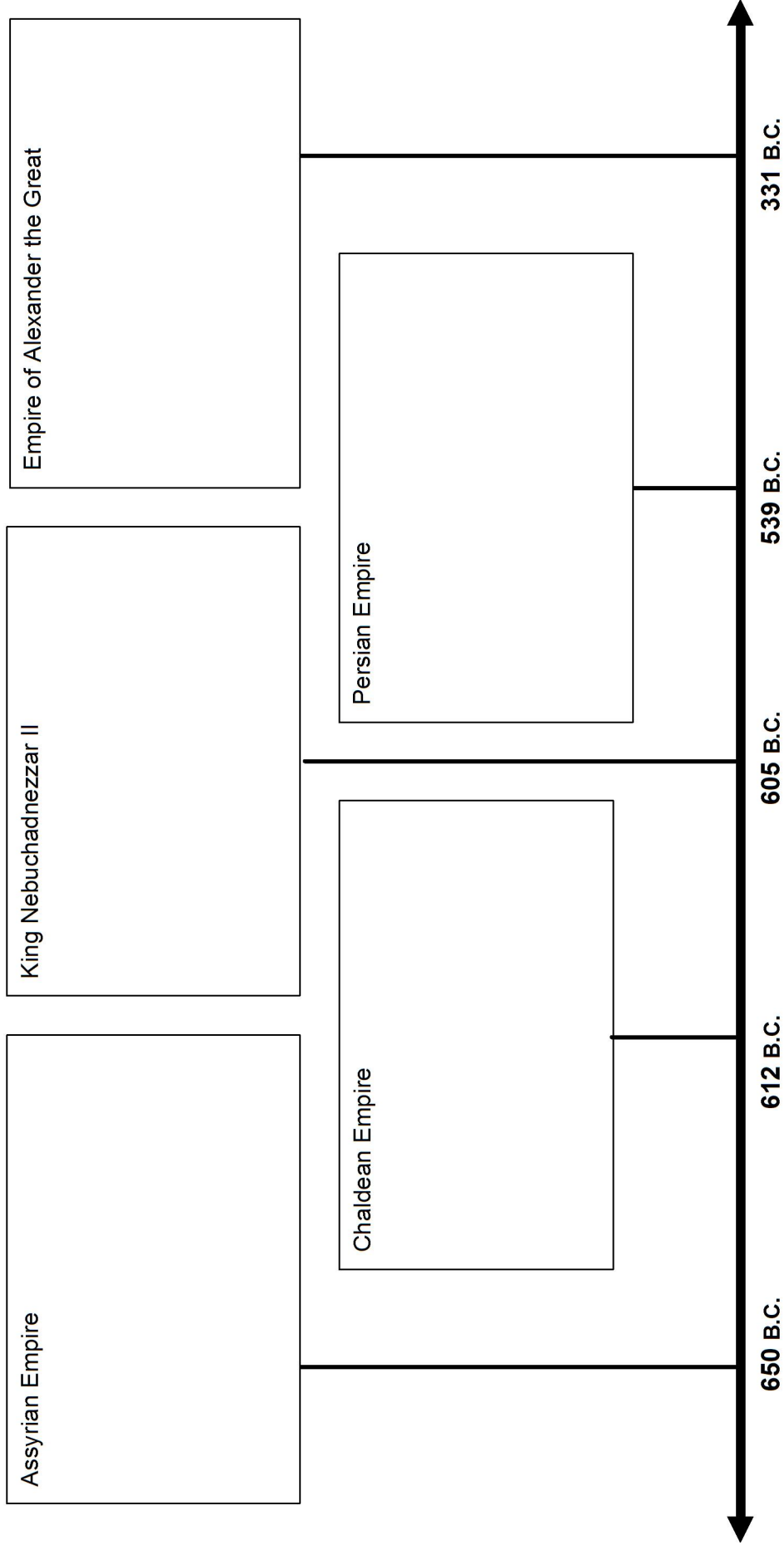




Name: _____

Later Civilizations of Mesopotamia

Directions: Write facts describing each of the civilizations that ruled Mesopotamia between 650 B.C. and 331 B.C.



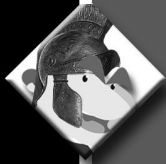
Name: _____



Welcome to Mesopotamia

Directions: Imagine that you are working as a tour guide to the “Later Civilizations of Mesopotamia: 650 B.C. to 331 B.C.” Write a short speech that you can use to introduce your tour. Include an overview of Mesopotamia and a description of each civilization. Be prepared to read your speech to your class.

Welcome to Mesopotamia
Civilizations from 650 B.C. to 331 B.C.



Class: _____

Type Instruction: Whole Class

Learning Objective(s): Students understand the importance and influence of Hammurabi's Code.

Length of Time: 10 Minutes

Ignite! Movies:

- The Code of Hammurabi
- In Hammurabi's Words
- Hooray for Hammurabi!

Teacher Instructions: Play Ignite! movies with students and complete the following activity.

Part One: Students complete statements about Hammurabi's.

Part Two: Students create a poster that calls people to a meeting about Hammurabi's Code.

Target Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- *Code of Law*
- *Babylon*
- *Hammurabi*
- *Hammurabi's Code*
- *Judicial System*
- *Stela*

Notes:



Name: _____



Hammurabi's Code

Directions: Fill in the blanks with facts about the Code of Hammuabi.

1. Hammurabi ruled _____ in the years around _____ B.C.
2. Hammurabi had laws carved into a huge black stone called a _____.
3. The Code of Hammuabi is the first known complete _____.
4. One goal of the Code of Hammurabi was to protect the _____ from being taken advantage of by the _____.
5. Many of the punishments were based on the idea that the punishment should _____ the crime.

Directions: Give an example of a law and punishment from the Code of Hammuabi for each of the following topics.

Topic	Example
Stealing	
Responsibilities of Neighbors	
Marriage and Divorce	
Equal Punishment	

Name: _____



Hammurabi's Code

Directions: Imagine that you are a government leader whose job is to explain Hammurabi's Code to the people. Make a poster inviting people to come to a meeting where they will learn about the new laws. Your poster should advertise the meeting and explain the laws. Share your poster with your class.

Come One! Come All!
Learn about Hammurabi's Code