

CHAPTER 2: MESOPOTAMIA: Cradle of Civilization
Guided Reading Questions



Answer the following questions on lined paper. These questions are designed to guide your reading of your text book. Answer thoroughly at all times as sometimes you may be allowed to use your answers on an 'open homework' quiz.

The Land Between the Rivers

1. What does the discovery of the ancient ruins in UR reveal about the Mesopotamian's belief system?
2. Why do historians consider Mesopotamia to be the 'cradle of civilization'?
3. Outline the physical environments in southern Mesopotamia and northern Mesopotamia. You may do so in chart form.
4. Using Figure 2-3, why would it be hard for Mesopotamia to expand in area? Where would be the only area it could expand?

Historical Overview

5. What was the Sumerian city-state responsible for?
6. What invention did the Sumerians first develop and use? How did they use this in times of war?
7. Describe the accomplishments of Sargon of Akkad.
8. What are the differing viewpoints on why the Sumerian Kingdom declined?
9. What cultural achievements did the Sumerians reach under the reign of Ur-Nammu?
10. Describe why the Babylonians were great traders?
11. Why did the Babylonian Empire decline?
12. What contributed to the Assyrian's military success?
13. Why was Ashurbanipal considered to be the greatest empire builder of them all? How did he treat conquered peoples? What are some of his achievements?
14. What should Nebuchadnezzar be remembered as? What was his greatest achievement?

Government

15. Create a flow chart showing the structure and responsibilities of the Sumerian Government.
16. Create a flow chart showing the structure and responsibilities of the Assyrian Government.
17. Why were nobles treated more harshly when they committed a crime?
18. What were the organizational headings of Hammurabi's Code?
19. What important legal principles did Hammurabi's code establish?