Day 2:

Topic: Agriculture: How did agriculture affect Mesopotamian civilization?

Standard:

* *Early Civilizations: 4. Compare the geographic, economic and social characteristic of the river civilizations in the Tigris and Euphrates (Mesopotamia), Nile (Egypt), Huang Ho and Indus valleys before 1000 B.C.*

Geography Themes:

* Place, Movement, Human/Environment Interaction

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will explain the implications of agriculture on the Mesopotamian civilization.

Summary:

* During this lesson, students will explore the reasons why people settled in Mesopotamia. Cities developed because people used farming as their main source of food rather than getting food from hunting and gathering. In order to show students the difference between the farming and hunting/gathering lifestyles, students will participate in a scavenger hunt. For this activity, I will hide cards around the room (if it is nice weather it would be a good lesson for outside). Some cards will have crops such as barley, wheat, corn, etc. While others will have animals used for food such as deer, rabbit, snakes and foods that are gathered such as berries, nuts, etc. I will place the crops cards in places that are easier to see. The hunting and gathering cards will be more hidden. Also, there will be more crop cards than hunting and gathering cards (I will make more barley cards because barley was the main crop of Mesopotamia). This will show students that it was easier to get food from growing crops than hunting and gathering. Students will have three minutes to find as many cards as they can. They will then separate their cards into three different piles; one for farming, one for hunting, and one for gathering. We will tally the totals on the board. Students will see from the totals that farming will produce more food. We will then brainstorm as a class why it would be easier to farm rather than hunting/gathering. Ask students if they had to move around more when “farming” or when “hunting/gathering”. They will say they moved around more when “hunting/gathering”. Connect this with why people began to settle into cities in Mesopotamia. It was easier for them to grow crops, so they began to settle in one area to tend to the crops. There was so much food available this led to people having different jobs. Have students watch video about different Mesopotamian jobs. <http://elementsofcivilization.wikispaces.com/Ancient+Mesopotamian+Job+Specialization>
* After watching the video, students will pick a job they saw from the video and write a few sentences explaining why they would want that job. They will also complete the cloze activity for Mesopotamian Settlement. If it is not finished in class, it will be homework.
* Extension: If there is extra time, have students visit the British museum website and pretend they are Mesopotamian farmers. <http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/geography/challenge/cha_set.html>