Day 1:

Topic: Introduction: Where is Mesopotamia?

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:

* Location, Place, Movement, and Region

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will locate Mesopotamia on a map.
2. Students will explore why people settled there.

Summary:

* I will begin the lesson by having students look at two maps of the United States. One map will show the major cities and the other will show population displacemet. The task will be to find where most of the cities/people in the United States are located. They will work in pairs to brainstorm why a city would form in that area or why many people would settle there. Students will share their ideas with the class. Hopefully, at least one group will come up with water as an important factor in where cities are placed. Show students on the map cities that are located by water. Some important examples would be New Orleans, New York, Boston, coastal cities and other cities located along rivers and lakes. (The population map should show that most people are located along the coastal areas). As a class, brainstorm why people would settle around water. Present another map to the students. This map will be of Mesopotamia and its cities. Ask students what they notice about where these cities are located. They should say something like they are located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. After examining the two maps, watch a short video introducing Mesopotamia.
* <http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/player/kids/people-places-kids/iraq-mesopotamia-kids.html>
* After watching the video, we will talk about what they saw that was interesting and would like to learn more about. This is also when you will tell students the Mesopotamia is considered the land of firsts. Challenge them throughout the lesson to identify different “firsts” we talk about.
* Once students have watched the video, they will create two maps. One will be of ancient Mesopotamia and the other will be of present day Mesopotamia (Iraq). This is something students will keep in their folders to reference during the duration of the unit. I will provide the outline of the map with rivers and the students will color the rivers and label different cities/ countries. This will be taken for a grade.