**UNIT LESSONS**

**Day 1: *Introduction to Mesopotamian Civilization***

**Summary of Lesson:** The purpose of today’s lesson is to introduce students to the ancient river civilization of Mesopotamia and gain an understanding of students’ prior knowledge before beginning the unit. Students will be briefly introduced to the various aspects of the civilization such as their government, social structure, religion, technology, and economic system as well as the geography of the region.

**Objectives:**

* Students will have a general understanding of the Mesopotamian civilization and several of the characteristics that identify it.
* Students will be able to accurately identify their prior knowledge of Mesopotamia before beginning the unit and be able to identify what they would like to learn more about.

**OACS Alignment and Geography Themes**:
GRADE 6 OACS-
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.
***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).
***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Human Systems
Human systems represent the settlement and structures created by people on Earth’s surface. The growth, distribution and movements of people are driving forces behind human and physical events. Geographers study patterns in cultures and the changes that result from human processes, migrations and the diffusion of new cultural traits.
***Content Statement(s):***
(#6) Variations among physical environments within the Eastern Hemisphere influence human activities. Human activities also alter the physical environment.
(#7) Political, environmental, social and economic factors cause people, products and ideas to move from place to place in the Eastern Hemisphere in the past and today.

***Geography Themes-***
The five geography themes of location, place, human/environment interaction, movement, and regions are briefly touched upon in this lesson as it serves as the introductory lesson to the unit. Through discussing the location of Mesopotamia, the characteristics associated with it, how the Mesopotamians adapted to their surroundings, what made the area a good place to settle, and discussing the region itself the geography themes are being touched upon.

**Information to know:** (facts about Mesopotamia):
Mesopotamia was located between the Tigris and the Euphrates River and was given the name “Mesopotamia,” meaning “land between two rivers,” by the ancient Greeks. The civilization was settled between 6000 and 4000 B.C.E. by early farming communities. They chose to settle in this area because the silt deposited from the nearby rivers made the soil very fertile, giving the area the nickname of “The Fertile Crescent.” The Mesopotamians grew a variety of crops but wheat and barley were considered their two staple crops. Religion played an integral part in the Mesopotamian civilization. Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of gods and goddesses that represented important parts of their world such as Anu, father of the gods and Utu, the son god and lord of truth and justice. Ziggurats were built to provide the Mesopotamians a place to worship the gods as well as provide them with a place to pray, among other things. Priests were also at the top of the Mesopotamian social class system, with slaves being at the bottom. Mesopotamia is recognized for several important technological contributions such as the concept of zero, the Pythagorean Theorem, the wheel, the seeder plow, irrigation and sanitation techniques, and the sail. Mesopotamians are also credited with creating the earliest form of writing, using it for a wide range of needs from record keeping to creating literary texts.

**Resources used in lesson:**

* KWI for Mesopotamia
* Interactive board + projector
* National Geographic. (2012). *People & places: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/kids/people-places-kids/iraq-mesopotamia-kids/>.
* Students’ Social Studies journals
* The British Museum. (2012). Geography. *Ancient civilizations: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/geography/explore/exp_set.html>.
* AncientWorlds LLC. (2011). *Drawings of Ancient Assyrians, Babylonians & Sumerians.* Retrieved from [http://www.ancientsites.com/aw/Article/1065465&about=Categories&aboutData=4](http://www.ancientsites.com/aw/Article/1065465%26about%3DCategories%26aboutData%3D4).
* Exit Slips

**Introduction to the lesson** (warm-up with teacher):
1. As students walk in the words “ancient Mesopotamia” will be written on the board.

* Students will also grab a K.W.I. sheet as they walk in.

2. The teacher will explain that the class will be starting a unit on ancient Mesopotamia.

* Before introducing the river civilization the teacher wants to see what students already know about Mesopotamia and what they would like to know. The K.W.I. is a three-column graphic organizer that asks students to fill out what they *know* about Mesopotamia, what they *want* to know about Mesopotamia, and what they are most *interested* in learning about Mesopotamia.

3. The teacher gives students time to complete this independently.

**Lesson** (guided practice and strategies also):
4. After students are given time to fill out the K.W.I. graphic organizer the teacher will bring students back together into a whole group.

* The teacher will be projecting a large version of the K.W.I chart on the interactive board.

5. The teacher will call on student volunteers to fill out the class chart of what they already know about Mesopotamia.

* After having several volunteers share their responses the teacher will do the same with the other two columns of the graphic organizer (what students want to know and what they’re interested in learning).
* After filling out the class chart with student responses the teacher will then introduce the ancient Mesopotamia unit.

6. The teacher will explain to students that they will be learning about the various aspects of Mesopotamia such as the government, social structure, religion, economic systems, agricultural products and practices, and so forth along with the five geography themes discussed in class in relation to Mesopotamia.
7. The teacher will pull up the interactive maps of Mesopotamia and show students the ancient cities map version as well as the terrain and modern political map versions to give students an idea of where Mesopotamia was located in relation to what they know today as well as an idea of the land in the region.

* Students will have their social studies journals to jot down any notes/facts they wish to keep for reference.

8. The teacher will then show the short introductory video on Mesopotamia from National Geographic.
9. The teacher will also show the video of key images from Mesopotamia to spark discussion about the different features of Mesopotamia that made it a civilization.

**Closure:**
1. On an exit slip, students will write down one thing they already knew about Mesopotamia that was reinforced by the lesson today and two new things they learned from the introduction.

* If the students did not know anything about Mesopotamia that was reinforced from the introduction then have them write down three new things they learned.

2. Students will turn this slip in before exiting the classroom.

**Assessments Used:**

The K.W.I. is being used as a pre-assessment to gauge what students already know about ancient Mesopotamia as well as what they want to know, and what they are interested in learning about the river civilization. Also, an ongoing means of assessment throughout the unit is being completed as the teacher monitors student participation and uses the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade.

**Differentiation** (and connections to other content areas):
One way this lesson could be differentiated for struggling students is through providing them with a guided notes format for taking notes on the introduction of Mesopotamia. The teacher is taking into account various learning styles and incorporated individual, small group, and whole group work along with varied informational outlets such as video, images, and text

**Attachments:**

**EXIT SLIP**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. What is one thing you already knew about Mesopotamia that was mentioned today during our introduction to the civilization? (If you can’t answer this question skip to question #2!)
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. List 2-3 things you learned today from our introduction on Mesopotamia.
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Please fill out the K.W.I. chart below for the ancient civilization of Mesopotamia.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What I KNOW about Mesopotamia** | **What I WANT to know about Mesopotamia** |
|  |  |
| **What I am INTERESTED in learning about Mesopotamia** |
|  |

**Day 2: *Development of Essential Questions and Preliminary Research***

**Summary of Lesson:** During this lesson students will be made aware of the two Essential Questions proposed by the teacher that students will be researching throughout the unit. Students will also be put in groups based on their interests of what they would like to learn more about and create their own essential questions based on their unique curiosities and personal interest in Mesopotamia. Groups will then have the chance to conduct preliminary research for their questions.

**Objectives:**

* Students will be able to identify their own essential questions based on their personal interests and curiosities pertaining to Mesopotamia.
* Students will be able to utilize research techniques to find accurate, relevant information pertaining to the essential questions being asked.

**OACS Alignment and Geography Themes:**
GRADE 6 OACS-
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.
***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).
***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Human Systems
Human systems represent the settlement and structures created by people on Earth’s surface. The growth, distribution and movements of people are driving forces behind human and physical events. Geographers study patterns in cultures and the changes that result from human processes, migrations and the diffusion of new cultural traits.
***Content Statement(s):***
(#6) Variations among physical environments within the Eastern Hemisphere influence human activities. Human activities also alter the physical environment.
(#7) Political, environmental, social and economic factors cause people, products and ideas to move from place to place in the Eastern Hemisphere in the past and today.
***Geography Themes-***
The five geography themes included in this lesson are based on students’ creation of their personal essential questions. Also, the first essential question created by the teacher (“How did the location and environment of Mesopotamia influence their culture and everyday life?”) touches on the themes of human/environment interaction, place, and location to an extent. The second essential question created by the teacher (“How was the development of the Mesopotamian civilization and the land they resided on influenced by movement and space?”) touches upon the theme of movement. The final geography theme of region is being interwoven throughout the unit based on the essential questions and content being studied.

**Information to know: (facts about Mesopotamia):**
The facts about Mesopotamia that are necessary for this lesson are identical to the first day. Along with that information, facts about the natural resources available and the land itself are also helpful. While the Mesopotamians had very fertile soil (this land was referred to as the Fertile Crescent), farming was very difficult because of droughts and spring flooding from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Therefore, Mesopotamians created irrigation systems as a means to farm more successfully. Some crops produced include wheat, barley, onions, eggplant, dates, and so forth. Sumerians were also able to fish in the rivers as well as use the reeds that grew on the banks for various items such as houses and styluses. A surplus in their materials allowed Mesopotamians to trade for items they didn’t have readily available such as stone and metal.

**Resources used in lesson:**

* Interactive board + projector
* Students’ K.W.I. graphic organizers from previous lesson
* Various trade books on Mesopotamia such as:
	+ Farndon, J. & Steele, P. (2007). *DK Eyewitness books: Mesopotamia.* New York, NY: DK Publishing.
	+ Morley, J. & Salariya, D. (2007). *You wouldn’t want to be a Sumerian slave!: A life of hard labor you’d rather avoid.* Danbury, CT: Franklin Watts.
	+ Moss, C. (1998). *Science in Ancient Mesopotamia.* Danbury, CT: Franklin Watts.
	+ Woods, M. (2009). *Seven wonders of the Ancient Middle East.* Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publishing Group, Inc.
* Various informational websites such as:
	+ The Oriental Institute. (2012). Ancient Mesopotamia. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>
	+ The British Museum. (2012). Mesopotamia. Retrieved from<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html>.

**Introduction to the lesson (warm-up with teacher):**
1. The warm-up for students prior to beginning the lesson will require students to take out their K.W.I. graphic organizers from the previous lesson.
2. The warm-up question will ask students if what they’re interested in learning about is still the same or if it has changed.

* If it’s the same, students will elaborate on their interests, if it’s different, students will include it on their graphic organizer.

**Lesson (guided practice and strategies also):**
1. The teacher will have several student volunteers share what they were interested in learning about Mesopotamia.

* As students share their responses the teacher will write them on the board.

2. The teacher will then explain that students will be working in small groups to research essential questions pertaining to the civilization and create a final project (which will be discussed in the following lesson). Students will be held accountable for their group work through their own self-assessment on a rubric and brag sheet as well as through teacher assessment.
3. The two essential questions everyone will have in common are: “How did the location and environment of Mesopotamia influence their culture and everyday life?” and “How was the development of the Mesopotamian civilization and the land they resided on influenced by movement and space?”

* The teacher will explain the relevancy of these essential questions in relation to the five geography themes discussed in class as well as the content statement pertaining to civilizations.

4. Students will then be put into small groups based on similar learning interests for Mesopotamia and create their own essential questions based on their curiosities and interest in the civilization.

* During this time the teacher will be circulating through the room to observe progress and offer help if necessary.

5. After students have come up with their essential questions they will then begin their preliminary research on the essential questions using the various trade books and informational websites provided by the teacher.

**Closure:**
1. After students have had a chance to create their group’s essential questions and conduct some preliminary research students will write down the essential questions they came up with and why they chose them.

* Each group member’s name should be included on the paper before turning it in.

**Assessments Used:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Also, an informal evaluation is being completed as the teacher observes the groups creating their essential questions. The teacher is also able to review students’ questions to determine if any groups may need additional assistance or scaffolding in their activity.

**Differentiation (and connections to other content areas):**
This lesson can be connected to a wide range of different content areas through researching questions pertaining to the Babylonian base 60 number system, the Pythagorean Theorem, the concept of zero, the inventions of Mesopotamians such as the wheel and the sail, the agricultural practices of the Mesopotamians, the artwork of the civilization, and so forth. The amount of research being done can also be adapted based on each group’s individual needs through the number of essential questions being produced. Mesopotamians also used clay for tablets to use in record-keeping, help in creation of structures, and so forth.

**Attachments:** None

**Day 3: *“Where is Mesopotamia?” Activity and Introduction of Artifact Box Project***

**Summary of Lesson:** In this lesson students will be introduced to the Artifact Box Project. Students will also complete the “Where is Mesopotamia?” activity, focusing on the location of the civilization and creating a map for their Artifact Box.

**Objectives:**

* Students will be able to create an accurate map of Mesopotamia including important landforms and cities such as the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Zagros Mountains, the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf, and Uruk, Babylon, Ur, and Nineveh.
* Students will be able to use latitude and longitude to give the absolute location of a region as well as use cardinal and ordinal directions to give the relative location of a place.

**OACS Alignment and Geography Themes:**
GRADE 6 OACS-
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.
***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).

***Geography Themes:***

* Location- Students are completing a detailed map of the area as well as using absolute and relative location in the lesson.

**Information to know: (facts about Mesopotamia):**
Mesopotamia was located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, with most of the ancient civilization lying in the borders of what is now Iraq. Parts of Mesopotamia also extended into present-day Turkey, Syria, and Iran. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers flow into the Persian Gulf, and the Zagros Mountains are to the east of both the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Mesopotamia was about 300 miles long and 150 miles wide. The Mesopotamians often developed their cities along the rivers, as it was a great source of water. Ur was located in the southwest region of Mesopotamia next to the Euphrates River. Babylon was also located on the shore of the Euphrates River, but farther north along the river. Nineveh was located along the Tigris River as was Ashur. The Mediterranean Sea was located to the west of Mesopotamia.

**Resources used in lesson:**

* Blank paper (for map)
* Coloring supplies
* Interactive Board + Projector
* The British Museum. (2012). Geography. *Mesopotamia.* Retrieved from
* <http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/geography/explore/exp_set.html>
* Purpose Games. (2012). Mesopotamia map test. Retrieved from<http://www.purposegames.com/game/4e4428a99e>
* TheWorldMapsPhotos.com. (n.d.) *Map of World.* Retrieved from<http://www.theworldmapsphotos.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/World-Map-With-Latitude.jpg>
* Exit Slips

**Introduction to the lesson (warm-up with teacher):**
1. As students walk in they would respond to the question on the board in their social studies journals.

* The question is: “What is an artifact? Can you give an example of one?”

2. Students would be given several minutes to complete this independently before sharing their responses with the class.

**Lesson (guided practice and strategies also):**
1. After having students share their ideas the teacher would summarize that an artifact is an object made by human beings and that they help us learn about the past. Artifacts can range from tools, pieces of pottery, old children’s toys, pictures, drawings, and so forth.
2. The teacher would then explain the Artifact Box Project that students will be completing.

* Students will be creating one Artifact Box per group. Students will also be creating one artifact per day (for four artifacts) along with three artifacts of their own choice at the end of the unit (for seven artifacts total). Students will include a written explanation of their artifacts and present their artifacts to the class at the end of the unit.

3. Today students will be creating their first artifact, a map of Mesopotamia.

* Students will be cartographers for the day and create a detailed map of Mesopotamia, including important landforms and cities.

4. Before beginning pull up a map of the world with latitude and longitude lines.

* Have students look at the map and have a student volunteer tell the class which two lines of longitude and latitude Mesopotamia fell between.

5. Pull up the interactive maps of Mesopotamia from the introductory lesson and review the different aspects of Mesopotamia that are important to include on a map.

* Also review the necessary features students must include on a map (title, compass, key, etc.) as well as the different items they must include for Mesopotamia. Students must include the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, the Zagros Mountains, the Mediterranean Sea and Persian Gulf, and important cities such as Uruk, Babylon, Ur, and Nineveh. Students should also shade the Fertile Crescent region.

6. Students will be given time in class to complete their maps for Mesopotamia.

**Closure:**
1. Once students have finished their maps they must add it to their Artifact Box.
2. After completing the map students should write down an explanation of the relative location of Mesopotamia or a major Mesopotamian city on an exit slip using cardinal and ordinal directions and important landforms such as the Tigris River, Euphrates River, and Zagros Mountains.

**Assessments Used:** The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact box projects throughout the unit in groups of three and each be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentations, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. Since the map created in today’s lesson will be included and assessed in the final artifact box assignment, the teacher should only informally assess student maps (not for a grade). If the teacher discovers that student maps are inaccurate or do not include all necessary features, this may indicate the teacher needs to review this information with students again, either whole class or in small differentiated groups.

**Differentiation (and connections to other content areas):**
This lesson can be adapted for struggling learners through providing them with an outlined version of Mesopotamia and having them identifies the rivers, mountains, and cities. This lesson can be adapted for advanced learners through having them include most of the cities in Mesopotamia as well as give the estimated distances between cities and rivers according to their map scale. An extension to this activity could allow for students to review the location of Mesopotamian cities and landforms using the “Mesopotamia Map Test” website

**Attachments:**

**EXIT SLIP**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Use cardinal and ordinal directions to give the relative location of a major Mesopotamian city or Mesopotamia itself. Use important landforms such as the Tigris River, the Euphrates River, the Zagros Mountains, etc.**
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Day 4: *What are the characteristics of Mesopotamia and why did people move here?***

**Summary of the Lesson:** In this lesson, students will compare their community with that of Mesopotamia, discovering the favorable geographic characteristics of place (Mesopotamia) and why people moved to this location.

**Objectives:**

* Students will be able to describe the favorable geographic characteristics and place of Mesopotamia through completing a Venn diagram comparing their community to that of Mesopotamia.
* Given this new content, students will each participate in discussion to accurately analyze why people moved and settled in Mesopotamia.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).

***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Human Systems
Human systems represent the settlement and structures created by people on Earth’s surface. The growth, distribution and movements of people are driving forces behind human and physical events. Geographers study patterns in cultures and the changes that result from human processes, migrations and the diffusion of new cultural traits.
***Content Statement(s):***
(#7) Political, environmental, social and economic factors cause people, products and ideas to move from place to place in the Eastern Hemisphere in the past and today.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Place- The characteristics of a location that distinguishes a place from other locations.
* Movement- This theme relates to how and why people move to new locations.

**Information to Know:**
In order to cultivate crops and care for herds of cattle, ancient people gave up nomadic ways of living and chose to settle in Mesopotamia. (This happened in other areas around the world for similar reasons). In northern Mesopotamia, the place received significant enough rainfall that crops could be grown. This region was “home to wheat, barley, sheep, cattle, goats, and pigs, the wild plants and animals that were eventually domesticated” (Oriental Institute, 2012). This region was settled between 10,000-6000 B.C., and by 5800 B.C., people were also settling in southern Mesopotamia. This region received less rain but the technology development of irrigation made this region more suitable for caring for crops and animals. Mesopotamia is part of the Fertile Crescent, known by this name because of its fertile soil. Silt is what made the soil so fertile. Silt is formed when water and rocks rush against each other over time- tiny rock particles emerge. This silt is transferred to the land when the rivers flood and then recede again.

*Resource(s):*
Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>
National Geographic. (2012). Silt. *Education beta*. Retrieved from
<http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/encyclopedia/silt/?ar_a=1&ar_r=3>

**Resources:**

* Smart Board or projector
* River photograph- Tigris-Euphrates (Mesopotamia). n.d. Tigris-Euphrates River Valley Civilization. Retrieved from<http://hawkclub.com/apworld/tigriseuphrates.htm>
* Civilizations- Mesopotamia video. (2007). Retrieved from<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yc8m9DHxH4E>
* Venn diagram handout (and writing utensils)
* Silt-river demonstration tools (1 created by the teacher for the whole class), sand to represent silt, and a spoon
* Materials for artifact creation (clay, felt, etc.)
* Document camera

**Introduction:**
1. When students enter the classroom, the teacher will have a photograph of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers projected on the screen. Students will sit in their groups of 3. On the blank back of the Venn diagram handout that will be used today, students will work within their groups of 3 to create as long a list as they can for why people would choose to settle between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The teacher should explain that this list will help students complete a Venn diagram later in class, comparing their community to that of Mesopotamia.
2. The teacher will show the video clip “Civilizations- Mesopotamia video” to students, using a portion of the clip from 5:38-9:57. As students watch the video, they should continue to add to their list of favorable geographic characteristics of Mesopotamia.

**Lesson:**
1. After watching the video clip, the teacher will explain that students will be completing two assignments today. The first will be to complete a Venn diagram and use this to engage in whole class discussion. The second will be to create the artifact of silt, which will be assessed by the artifact box rubric at the end of the unit.
2. The teacher will explain to students that they will rotate to a station with the teacher to learn more about the soil of Mesopotamia and will spend the rest of class work time creating their Venn diagrams, one per group. One side of the diagram should represent the local community within Ohio and the other side will represent Mesopotamia. The teacher will review place with students (characteristics of a place that distinguish the location from other locations). Students must create a list of characteristics of each community, including characteristics that make each community favorable to live in. The teacher should share the Venn diagram rubric with students so they understand the assignment expectations, and students should begin working. (The rubric is included in the rubric section of this unit plan. The Venn diagram handout is attached at the end of this lesson).
3. As students are working, the teacher will call back groups of students for the silt-river simulation. The teacher will have created a landscape from clay that represents Mesopotamia with two riverbeds that represent the Tigris and Euphrates, near one another in southern Mesopotamia, and mountains further on to represent northern Mesopotamia. The teacher could even use fake plants and build models of Mesopotamian buildings to make the model even more realistic. The teacher will have small rocks and sand at the bottom of each riverbed. For each demonstration, the teacher will explain how silt is created, and then allow students to pour “river water” into the river valleys so students can see the transfer of silt to the farming lands of Mesopotamia. Students will use a spoon to gather some of the silt for their artifact boxes and must use materials in the classroom to present their new knowledge of silt in an interesting way within their artifact boxes.
4. Until discussion, students will be completing their Venn diagrams (and answering the thinking question) and determining how they will present silt within their artifact boxes.
5. Next, the teacher will engage students in discussion of the thinking question:
-Based on the characteristics of Mesopotamia, why would people have chosen to settle here? How does this compare to why your families may have chosen to settle in our community?
Students can share their Venn diagrams using the document camera if needed. The teacher should also ask students to relate their new knowledge to the related essential unit questions:
- How did the location and environment of Mesopotamia influence their culture and everyday life?
- How was the development of the Mesopotamian civilization and the land they resided on influenced by movement and space?
The teacher should ensure students especially focus on the importance of the fertile soil and rivers (favorable geography and silt for place) of Mesopotamia. This allowed people to grow crops and tend cattle and provided reasons why they chose to move into the area of Mesopotamia.

**Closure:**
1. Before students leave, they should complete and turn in the exit slip for today’s lesson (please reference attachments). After students have completed their exit slips, the class can briefly discuss the exit slip so that the teacher can observe student understanding further.
2. If there is extra time available, the teacher should allow students to discuss their progress and goals for their artifact boxes within their groups since they are already on day four of the ten-day unit.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, the teacher will informally assess student answers shared in discussion to help the students correct misconceptions they may hold. The teacher should be able to listen to student answers and gauge whether or not they understood today’s lesson based on the answers students give. If needed, the teacher could review this material with small groups at a separate time. The teacher will use the “Venn Diagram Rubric” to formally assess their answers on the diagram and thinking question. The teacher will use the exit slip to informally assess student understanding at the end of class.

**Differentiation:** If students are having difficulty determining characteristics of their community and Mesopotamia, the teacher could provide additional photographs that represent both places. The items and region in the photographs will provide students with ideas to add to their diagrams. If Internet or content books are also available, students could use these to research the place of each community even more. If students are unable to craft a paragraph to answer the thinking question(s), the assignment could be modified to using bullet points instead of complete sentences.

**Attachments:**


**River Photograph**

**Our Community Mesopotamia**


After you’ve completed the Venn diagram above, in a well-written paragraph, answer the thinking question(s) to prepare for discussion:

**Based on the characteristics of Mesopotamia, why would people have chosen to settle here? How does this compare to why your families may have chosen to settle in our community?**

**Exit Slip**
**Thoroughly answer the following question, incorporating at least 2 details from our assignment and discussions in today’s lesson.**

**How did geographic characteristics play a role in the movement of the people of Mesopotamia?**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**DAY 5: Understanding Human/Environment Interaction in Mesopotamia**

**Summary of the Lesson:** In this lesson, students will learn about how Mesopotamian life influenced and was influenced by the environment. Students will also learn about agricultural practices, products, and the economic system through participating in a barter system like that of ancient Mesopotamia.

**Objectives:**

* Given information about the environment of Mesopotamia, students will be able to thoroughly describe the relationship between the people and the environment of ancient Mesopotamia, providing both positive and negative effects.
* Given the opportunity to participate in an experiential bartering system like that of ancient Mesopotamia, students will use this knowledge to discuss and accurately construct an artifact representing the economic system (and agricultural products and practices) of Mesopotamia, perhaps creating fish or a piece of barley for this artifact.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).

***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Human Systems
Human systems represent the settlement and structures created by people on Earth’s surface. The growth, distribution and movements of people are driving forces behind human and physical events. Geographers study patterns in cultures and the changes that result from human processes, migrations and the diffusion of new cultural traits.
***Content Statement(s):***
(#6) Variations among physical environments within the Eastern Hemisphere influence human activities. Human activities also alter the physical environment.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Human/Environment Interaction- this interaction includes the positive and negative effects of how people interact with their environments.

**Information to Know:**
An important part of the Mesopotamian society was agriculture. In order to grow crops and tend animals, people settled in one region. In northern Mesopotamia, there was significant rainfall for growing crops. In the southern region, which was drier, irrigation by way of canals and ditches was created as a way to grow and water crops. Mesopotamians also invented the seeder plow to enhance agricultural practices. When people began to settle here, “the region was also home to wheat, barley, sheep, cattle, goats, and pigs” (The Oriental Institute, 2012). Families with wealth were able to eat meats, including beef, lamb, pork, goat, ducks, and geese. Fish, turtles, and shellfish were also popular and easily caught from rivers and canals. Crops grown included lentils, peas, beans, lettuce, grapes, figs, cucumbers, onions, apples, dates, spices, barley, and wheat. Barley and wheat were primary crops, allowing the creation of porridge, bread, and even beer. Items like grain, oil, wool from sheep, and textiles from Mesopotamia could be traded for goods from other civilizations, including timber, wine, precious metals (like copper and tin), and precious stones. The economic system was based on weights instead of money, with the smallest unit of weight being one grain of barley. Silver eventually became a form of currency.

*Resource(s):*
British Museum. (2012). Geography. *Ancient civilizations: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from
<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/geography/explore/exp_set.html>.
Nardo, D. (2001). *Empires of Mesopotamia*. San Diego: Lucent Books.
The Oriental Institute. (2012). Ancient Mesopotamia. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>
Please reference the artifact box handout for further information on some of the artifacts mentioned in the above paragraph as well.

**Resources:**

* Smart Board or projector
* Picture of Mesopotamian irrigation- WebEcoist. (2012). *Water: Our most precious, most wasted resource*. Retrieved from<http://webecoist.momtastic.com/2008/12/13/water-precious-resource/>
* Picture of modern irrigation- Encyclopedia Britannica. (2012). Irrigation and drainage. Retrieved from<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/294780/irrigation-and-drainage/67752/Modern-irrigation-system-planning-and-construction>
* Human/Environment Interaction handout
* Notebook paper and writing utensils
* Bartering system materials
* Artifact craft materials (clay, felt, construction paper, etc.)
* Exit slip

**Introduction:**
1. When students enter the classroom, the teacher will have projected an image of ancient irrigation and modern irrigation on the board or screen.
2. The teacher will pass out the Human/Environment Interaction handout to students. In the first column, students will create a list of ways this technology impacts the environment. On the second column, the students will create a related list of ways the environment impacts people. Students will list ideas for modern times and ancient times to see if any correspond.

**Lesson:**
1. Today’s lesson will begin with the class discussing how the interaction between humans and the environment has influenced our world (using the notes from student Human/Environment Interaction handouts). The teacher should ensure students make important connections. For instance, because the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers often flooded, silt was released onto the land creating fertile soil. Because the soil was fertile, people chose to settle here and grow crops to feed their people. Because the southern region was dry, irrigation was needed to help these crops grow and thrive.
2. The teacher should connect the discussion on human/environment interaction to the importance of agriculture in the Mesopotamian civilization. Agriculture was an important part of the Mesopotamian economic system. To understand the agricultural system, students will each be given a role in the Mesopotamian economic system, a description of the practices and products of that role, and the chance to barter for materials they need.
3. Once students have read and received their information and materials, they should begin bartering with their classmates.
4. When students have had a chance to finish bartering, each student will write a journal entry based on the experience. Some of the information students include may correspond to the following questions:

* What were the difficulties you faced?
* What techniques did you use to convince others to barter with you?
* Why would trade be an important part of ancient culture?
* How did agriculture influence the economic system and products of Mesopotamia?

5. Students should discuss their writing in their artifact box groups.
6. After discussion, each group should determine an artifact to include in their box to represent the concepts learned about in today’s lesson, including human/environment interaction, agricultural products, and agricultural practices. Students should use artifact craft materials in the classroom to craft their artifacts and place them in their artifact boxes. Students may use resources (like content books) to complete further research that could be included in their writing about this artifact. Sample artifacts the teacher could recommend may include fish or barley.

**Closure:**
1. After students complete their journal entries, students should discuss their writing and the bartering experience with the entire class. The teacher should especially ensure students can answer the following questions:

* What were the practices used in each of your roles?
* How did agriculture influence the economic system and products of Mesopotamia?
* Which parts of the economic system also demonstrate human/environment interaction?
* How does the economic system of Mesopotamia compare and contrast with the economic system of our community and country?

2. Before leaving class, the teacher should pass out the exit slip, ask students to complete the exit slip, and turn the slip in so that student answers can be analyzed before the next lesson.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, the teacher will informally observe students during discussion and bartering to ensure students understand and apply the content accurately. The teacher will also informally analyze student answers on their exit slips to determine what content may need retaught (in small groups or whole class) and to determine ways to challenge students who understand the content and need further extensions.

**Differentiation:** In this lesson, the teacher can change assignment directions if needed. For instance, if students are having difficulty completing the journal assignment and thinking of things to record, all of the students who had the same role (farmer, artisan, etc.) could work together to create one journal entry. Then, each role’s journal entry could be presented to the class. For students needing a challenge in this assignment, the teacher could encourage them to use cuneiform to record transactions made. The teacher should serve as facilitator and ensure students remain on-task. If a student makes an unfair trade, the class could discuss what laws in ancient Mesopotamia would recommend as punishment.

**Attachments:**



Ancient Irrigation



Modern Irrigation

**Human/Environment Interaction Handout**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Human Effects on Environment** | **Environmental Effects on Humans** |
| **Ancient Times:** | **Ancient Times:** |
| **Modern Times:** | **Modern Times:**  |

**Bartering System Materials**

**Each student will be given a role with explanation of that role and a list of products/goods they have to barter. The products/goods should be cut apart so that students can actually trade the slips of paper. Multiple copies of each role will need to be made so that multiple roles are spread across the class.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Explanation** |
| **Farmer** | **As a farmer, you have access to food like barley or wheat, important staples to the Mesopotamian diet. Trade these goods for meat (if you can afford it) or other items your family may need, like timber for building plows, textiles for clothing, or pottery for storing food or drink.**  |
| **Cattle Herder** | **Since you take care of animals, you have access to meat and materials that can be used for products, like leather and wool. Trade someone for textiles made from wool or for important food products, like barley and wheat.**  |
| **Fisherman** | **Fish are an important staple to the diets of Mesopotamians. You catch fish from the rivers and canals and sell these both live and pickled. Trade for goods your family needs, like barley and wheat for bread and pottery to store pickled fish.**  |
| **Artisan** | **As an artisan, you represent the various arts that Mesopotamian people would have created. In order to create textiles, you need access to wool. In order to create jewelry, you need access to metals like copper, as well as precious stones. Barter for the items you need for your trade and food for your family to eat.**  |
| **Outside Trader** | **Since you do not live in Mesopotamia, you need to trade items that are readily available in your region (but not in Mesopotamia) for items that your region lacks. Be sure to especially trade for wool, textiles, and pottery, items that Mesopotamia specializes in.**  |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Farmer Products** | **Farmer Products** | **Cattle Herder Products** | **Cattle Herder Products** | **Fisherman** | **Artisan Products** | **Outside Trader Products** |
| **Barley** | **Barley**  | **Beef**  | **Sheep** | **Live fish** | **Pottery** | **Timber** |
| **Barley** | **Barley** | **Pork**  | **Sheep** | **Live fish** | **Pottery** | **Timber** |
| **Barley** | **Barley** | **Goats** | **Wool** | **Pickled fish** | **Textiles** | **Tin** |
| **Wheat** | **Figs** | **Sheep** | **Wool** | **Pickled fish** | **Jewelry** | **Copper** |
| **Wheat** | **Spices** | **Wool** | **Wool** | **Pickled fish** | **Jewelry** | **Precious Stones** |

**Exit Slip**

**1. Identify at least two ways humans impacted the environment in ancient Mesopotamia.**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**2. Identify at least two ways the environment impacted humans in ancient Mesopotamia.**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**3. Explain how agricultural products and practices influenced life and the economic system in Mesopotamia.**
**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Day 6: *Understanding the Mesopotamian Region in Terms of Government and Social Structure***

**Summary of the Lesson:** In this lesson, students will construct an artifact to accurately represent the social structure and government of Mesopotamia.

**Objectives:**

* Given materials and instruction on social structure and government in Mesopotamia, students will be able to create an accurate artifact that represents the social structure and government of Mesopotamia and thus the region itself as well.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

***Strand:*** Geography
***Topic:*** Places and Regions- A place is a location having distinctive characteristics, which give it meaning and character and distinguish it from other locations. A region is an area with one or more common characteristics, which give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas. Regions and places are human constructs.
***Content Statement:*** (#5) Regions can be determined, classified and compared using various criteria (e.g., landform, climate, population, cultural, economic).

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Region- the study of sections of the Earth and the geographic, political, and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from others.

**Information to Know:**
Because many of the tablets that have been found from ancient Mesopotamia were from royal archives, we know a great deal about the kings of this region. Kings were men who received their divine power from the gods, and as such, “the king was the chief god’s highest priest as well as the supreme head of the state” (Nardo, 2001, p. 55). Kings were especially protected from disease and evil, and numerous complex rituals were used to do so. The son of the king was typically the heir to the throne and was trained accordingly once chosen for the role of the next king. Kings were in charge of the army and also appointed governors, administrators, and other officials within their communities and resolved complaints from subjects. One of the most famous sets of laws discovered from a Mesopotamian king are those of Hammurabi’s code, which is largely based on the idea that, “if a man destroys the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye” (Nardo, 2001, p. 59). The higher class of Mesopotamia included high military officers, the priesthood, dignitaries, nobles, and governors. The laboring classes consisted of free agricultural workers, serfs, and some slaves. Forced labor was sometimes used with peasants as a way to have them pay their taxes without having to use forms of money. This allowed large projects to be completed within the civilization. Most slaves (who were foreigners captured or sold or citizens who were in debt) received small wages, so their status was not always permanent. There was a small middle class in which some successful people, typically farmers, artisans, or scribes, were able to own homes and perhaps slaves.

*Resource:* Nardo, D. (2001). *Empires of Mesopotamia*. San Diego: Lucent Books.

**Resources:**

* Paper and writing utensils
* Hammurabi’s Code handout
* Craft materials (including but not limited to beads, clay, painting materials, and more)
* Exit slip handout

**Introduction:**
1. The teacher will begin class by telling students that today, they will take on different roles to understand the social structure and government of Mesopotamia. To begin the lesson, students will discuss the following questions in their small groups and then with the whole class:

* How are laws created in our civilization? Do you think our laws and justice systems are effective?
* What do you think would be the best way to create and implement laws?

**Lesson:**
1. The lesson will begin with the entire class discussing the warm-up questions. The teacher will help students connect this to Mesopotamian content by explaining that in ancient Mesopotamia, the kings had divine power through the gods, and the kings were responsible for creating laws. The most famous laws were those of Hammurabi’s code. The teacher should explain that a region is known for its geographic, political, and cultural characteristics. Today, students will be focused on politics and culture since previous lessons have also discussed the geographic characteristics of Mesopotamia.
2. Students will take on the role of a Mesopotamian king and each group will create five laws that they believe are important to helping ensure peace and justice in their community. Students should take into consideration their knowledge of Mesopotamia and problems the king may have faced and had to resolve.
3. When students finish, they will be given a list of some of the laws of Hammurabi’s Code. With the whole class, they will discuss any similarities and differences they notice.
4. Next, students will take on the role of a slave. The teacher will explain that students were foreigners who were captured and brought back to Mesopotamia to be enslaved. They will receive a small wage for their work but this would need to be saved for a long time in order for them to buy their freedom. The slaves have been told to work on one of the king’s great building projects. Students should write a journal entry on how this makes them feel. What would it be like to be a slave in Mesopotamian society?
5. Finally, students will take on the role of a middle class citizen in Mesopotamia. Each group member will take on the role of an artisan (someone who creates pottery, jewelry, or weavings) or a scribe. This group of people has been asked to create art for the king that represents the government and social structure of the civilization. Each group of students will have access to craft materials (like beads, clay, painting materials and more) and will create an artifact that diagrams the social structure and government in Mesopotamia.

**Closure:**
1. To conclude the lesson, students will store their artifact(s) in their group’s artifact box.
2. The teacher will engage students in a final discussion for the day:

* What would be the positive and negative consequences of being a king in Mesopotamia?
* From what you know about the people in the social structure of Mesopotamia, would it have been easy to “move up the social ladder”?
* How does the ancient civilization’s government compare to our government?
* How does the ancient civilization’s social structure compare to the social structure in our communities?

3. The teacher will pass out the exit slip, and students will complete and turn in the exit slip.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, students create an artifact that will eventually be assessed with the artifact box rubric. Students also complete an exit slip that the teacher can informally use to determine if students understood the content of today’s lesson. Any misconceptions the teacher discovers in student answers should be retaught, either in whole class or in small groups.

**Differentiation:**
The teacher could provide students with sample laws of the U.S. to help them further understand how our government system compares and contrasts with that of Mesopotamia. For students who are stronger in the arts, the teacher could encourage them to take on the role of artisans in creating their group’s artifact for today. Other students could take on the role of scribes to add words and meaning to the artifact. If some students are struggling to think of ideas for a piece of art, the teacher could use pictures from the Internet or book resources (see annotated bibliography within the unit plan) to show students examples of Mesopotamian art. This will ensure their artifacts are accurate and as authentic as possible to the civilization.

**Attachments:**

**Sample Laws from Hammurabi’s Code**

1. If a man brings an accusation against another man, charging him with murder, but cannot prove it, the accuser shall be put to death…

22. If a man practices robbery and is captured, that man shall be put to death.

23. If the robber is not captured, the man who has been robbed shall, in the presence of god, make an itemized statement of his loss, and the city and the governor in whose province…the robbery was committed shall compensate him for whatever he has lost…

55. If a man opens his canal for irrigation and neglects it and the water carries away an adjacent field, he shall pay out grain on the basis of the adjacent field…

196. If a man destroys the eye of another man, they shall destroy his eye…

Source: Nardo, D. (2001). *Empires of Mesopotamia*. San Diego: Lucent Books.

**Exit slip:**

Now that you’ve learned about the geography, social structures, and government of ancient Mesopotamia throughout this unit, thoroughly complete the following.

Take on the role of an outside trader who is visiting Mesopotamia. You must return to your civilization and report on what you’ve seen. What will you tell your civilization about the region of Mesopotamia? List and explain at least five important characteristics of Mesopotamia.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Make sure to hand this exit slip into your teacher at the end of class.**

**Day 7: *Researching Religion and Technology in Mesopotamia***

**Summary of the Lesson:** Students will work in groups to come up with artifacts to place in their Mesopotamian river civilization artifact boxes. Students will use the Internet and content books to research Mesopotamian religion and technology to identify these artifacts.

**Objectives:**

* Students will identify and research at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of religion in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.
* Students will identify and research at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of technology in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Region – The study of sections of the Earth and the geographic, political, and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from others

**Information to Know:**
 The ancient Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of Gods. Every city had its own patron god or goddess, and there were also deities connected with various professions. Major deities controlled the sky, the sun, and the air. Anu was the father of the gods and the god of the sky. Enlil was the god of air. Utu was the sun god and lord of truth and justice. Nanna was the moon god. Inanna was the goddess of love and war. Ninhursag was the goddess of earth. Enki was the god of fresh water and lord of wisdom and magic. Ancient Mesopotamians had their own personal gods who protected them and connect them with the major deities. Ancient Mesopotamians worshipped in temples.
 The ancient Mesopotamians invented many new technologies, including the seeder plow. The seeder plow revolutionized agriculture by carrying out the tasks of seeding and plowing at the same time. Mesopotamians also developed writing, irrigation, and sanitation techniques, the “Pythagorean theorem,” the concept of zero, glass, and the arch, column, and dome. They also invented the wheel and were the first to harness the wind using a sail.

*Resource:* Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

**Resources:**

* Smart Board or projector
* Internet access
* Copies of the Artifact Creation Guidelines
* Project rubric and group work rubric
* Computers for student
* Pencils for student use
* Access to websites for student research
	+ Ancient Mesopotamia for Kids.” (2012). Retrieved from [http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/.](http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/)
	+ BBC. (2011). *Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/cultures/mesopotamia_gallery.shtml.>
	+ British Museum. (2012). *Mesopotamia.* Retrieved from<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html.>
	+ Fordham University. (2012). *Internet ancient history sourcebook: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook03.asp>.
	+ Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>.
* Access to content books for student research
	+ Apte, S. (2009). *Mesopotamia (True books: ancient civilizations)*. Children’s Press.
	+ Sands, S. (1999, November). Mesopotamia. *Kids Discover*.
	+ Schomp, V. (2005). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians.* Children’s Press.
	+ Steele, P. (2007). *DK eyewitness books: Mesopotamia*. DK Children
* Exit slips

**Introduction:**
1. Using the Smart Board or projector, display the picture of the seeder plow from<http://www.goldenageproject.org.uk/630.php>.
2. Ask students what this invention is and how it might be used. (Student responses may vary.)
3. Identify the invention as the seeder plow and provide background information.

* The seeder plow was invented by the early Mesopotamians and boosted the productivity job the Sumerian peasant.
* This tool was a technological invention that changed the fundamental agricultural practices of the early Mesopotamians.
* Some plows were equipped with funnels that deposited seeds as soon as the ground was broken.
* Such tools proved so efficient that a tenant farmer who paid as much as half of his animal yield in rent might still have sufficient left to support his family.

4. Ask students how they would create an artifact of the seeder plow to place in their group artifact boxes.
5. Inform students that they will be researching and creating at least three artifacts that symbolize aspects of religion and technology to place in their boxes.

**Lesson:**
1. Hand out a copy of the Artifact Creation Guidelines to each student.
2. Review the steps necessary for researching and creating artifacts for religion and technology.
3. Using the Smart Board or projector, display the project rubric and group work rubric for this assignment so that students are aware of how they will be assessed.
4. Display a list of websites that are acceptable for use by students. Some websites that are appropriate for students to learn about the religious and technological history of the early Mesopotamians may include (see Resources for more information):

a. <http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/>

b. <http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/>

c. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook03.asp>

d. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/cultures/mesopotamia_gallery.shtml>

e. <http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

5. Show students a collection of content books that are also available for research. Some content books that may be included are (see Resources for more information):

a. DK Eyewitness Books: Mesopotamia

b. Ancient Mesopotamia: The Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians

c. Mesopotamia (Kids Discover, November 1999)

d. Mesopotamia (True Books: Ancient Civilizations)

6. On the back of the Artifact Creation Guidelines should be space for students to take notes while researching. Review how you would like students to take notes as they research.
7. Provide students with computers for individual or group use.
8. Allow students time to research. As students research, they should take notes and cite their sources on the back of the Artifact Creation Guidelines.

**Closure:**
1. Ask students to put away books and computers and sit with their Artifact Box groups.
2. Hand out an Exit Slip to each group.
3. Ask students to answer the following questions in their groups and complete the Exit Slip provided.

* What are some religious artifacts that you could create?
* What are some technological artifacts that you could create?
* What will your group need to research more about tomorrow?

4. Have students hand in their Exit Slips as they leave the class or transition to a new activity.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, students will be assessed on the completion of the Exit Slip at the end of class time. The teacher will analyze the Exit Slips to provide feedback to students and identify struggling groups that may need more attention in the subsequent day’s lesson.

**Differentiation:**
Throughout this group project, the teacher may intervene as needed to meet individual student needs. For students who struggle with writing, a scribe could help that student take notes or pre-prepared notes could be provided in which the student simply needs to fill in the blanks. For struggling readers, a group member can read the material to that student or could be available for additional questions. Groups should be pre-selected to include a variety of ability levels and avoid possible conflicts between students. The teacher will mainly act as a facilitator throughout the majority of the group work. He or she will answer questions as needed and help struggling groups solve problems among themselves.

**Attachments:**

**Artifact Creation Guidelines**

My group members are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Follow the steps below to create at least 3 artifacts to place in your Group Artifact Box. Check off each step as your group completes it.**

***Make sure you understand what is expected of your group. Review the Artifact Box and Group Work Rubrics often throughout this project.***

O 1. Research the religion and technology invented in early Mesopotamia using the Internet and content books.

O 2. Take notes on the religion and technology invented in early Mesopotamia.

O 3. Identify at least 3 artifacts that your group will create to symbolize the religion and
technology of early Mesopotamia. (At least one artifact must symbolize religion and at least one must symbolize technology)

O 4. Write a 3-5 sentence summary of how each artifact symbolizes the religion or technology of Mesopotamia.

O 5. Write a brief introduction (3-5 sentences) about early Mesopotamia.

O 6. Cite all sources used.

O 7. Create at least 3 artifacts to place in your Group Artifact Box.

O 8. Present your artifacts to the class. Make sure to share your introduction and summaries of your artifacts.

**Exit Slip**

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Answer the following questions within your Artifact Box groups.***

1. What are some religious artifacts that you could create? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some technological artifacts that you could create? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. What will our group need to research more about tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Make sure to hand this exit slip into your teacher at the end of class.**

**Day 8: *Identifying and Researching Mesopotamian Artifacts***

**Summary of the Lesson:** Students will continue to work in groups to come up with artifacts to place in their Mesopotamian river civilization artifact boxes. Students will use the Internet and content books to research Mesopotamian religion and technology to identify these artifacts.

**Objectives:**

* Students will identify and research at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of religion in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.
* Students will identify and research at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of technology in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Region – The study of sections of the Earth and the geographic, political, and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from others

**Information to Know:**
 The ancient Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of Gods. Every city had its own patron god or goddess, and there were also deities connected with various professions. Major deities controlled the sky, the sun, and the air. Anu was the father of the gods and the god of the sky. Enlil was the god of air. Utu was the sun god and lord of truth and justice. Nanna was the moon god. Inanna was the goddess of love and war. Ninhursag was the goddess of earth. Enki was the god of fresh water and lord of wisdom and magic. Ancient Mesopotamians had their own personal gods who protected them and connect them with the major deities. Ancient Mesopotamians worshipped in temples.
 The ancient Mesopotamians invented many new technologies, including the seeder plow. The seeder plow revolutionized agriculture by carrying out the tasks of seeding and plowing at the same time. Mesopotamians also developed writing, irrigation, and sanitation techniques, the “Pythagorean theorem,” the concept of zero, glass, and the arch, column, and dome. They also invented the wheel and were the first to harness the wind using a sail.

*Resource:* Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

**Resources:**

* Computers for student use
* Pencils for student use
* Access to websites for student research
	+ “Ancient Mesopotamia for Kids.” (2012). Retrieved from [http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/.](http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/)
	+ BBC. (2011). *Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/cultures/mesopotamia_gallery.shtml>.
	+ British Museum. (2012). *Mesopotamia.* Retrieved from<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html.>
	+ Fordham University. (2012). *Internet ancient history sourcebook: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook03.asp>.
	+ Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>.
* Access to content books for student research
	+ Apte, S. (2009). *Mesopotamia (True books: ancient civilizations)*. Children’s Press.
	+ Sands, S. (1999, November). Mesopotamia. *Kids Discover*.
	+ Schomp, V. (2005). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians.* Children’s Press.
	+ Steele, P. (2007). *DK eyewitness books: Mesopotamia*. DK Children.
* Exit slips

**Introduction:**
1. Ask students to sit in their groups and review the guidelines on the Artifact Creation Guidelines sheet.
2. Have students review the answers to the following questions from yesterday.

* What are some religious artifacts that you could create?
* What are some technological artifacts that you could create?
* What will your group need to research today?

3. Have students sketch out a plan for research today noting that, by the end of the class, they should identify at least 3 artifacts to create and have a 3-5 sentence written summary of each artifact, using information from content books or the Internet.

**Lesson:**
1. Allow students time to research. As students research, they should take notes on the back of their Artifact Creation Guidelines sheet.
2. The teacher should circulate among students, asking probing questions and answering questions as needed. The teacher should help groups that are struggling find a solution to the problems that they are having.
3. After students have completed their research, students should create a formal written paper including a brief introduction of Mesopotamia (3-5 sentences), a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact, and a list of sources that were used to find the information.

**Closure:**
5. Ask students to put away books and computers and sit with their Artifact Box groups.
6. Hand out an Exit Slip to each group.
7. Ask students to answer the following questions in their groups and complete the Exit Slip provided.

* What are the 3 (or more) artifacts you will create tomorrow?
* Does at least 1 artifact symbolize an aspect of religion? Which one(s)?
* Does at least 1 artifact symbolize an aspect of technology? Which one(s)?
* Do we have a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact?
* Do we have a brief introduction to Mesopotamia?
* Did we cite our sources?
* What supplies will we need for tomorrow?

8. Have students hand in their Exit Slips as they leave the class or transition to a new activity.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, students will be assessed on the completion of the Exit Slip at the end of class time. The teacher will analyze the Exit Slips to provide feedback to students and identify struggling groups that may need more attention in the subsequent day’s lesson.

**Differentiation:**
Throughout this group project, the teacher may intervene as needed to meet individual student needs. For students who struggle with writing, a scribe could help that student take notes or pre-prepared notes could be provided in which the student simply needs to fill in the blanks. For struggling readers, a group member can read the material to that student or could be available for additional questions. Groups should be pre-selected to include a variety of ability levels and avoid possible conflicts between students. The teacher will mainly act as a facilitator throughout the majority of the group work. He or she will answer questions as needed and help struggling groups solve problems among themselves.

**Attachments:**

**Exit Slip**

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Answer the following questions within your Artifact Box groups.***

1. What are the 3 (or more) artifacts we will create tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Does at least 1 artifact symbolize an aspect of religion? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Does at least 1 artifact symbolize an aspect of technology? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Do we have a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do we have a brief introduction to Mesopotamia? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. Did we cite our sources? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. What supplies will we need for tomorrow? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Make sure to hand this exit slip into your teacher at the end of class.**

**Day 9: *Creating Mesopotamian Artifacts***

**Summary of the Lesson:** Students will work in their groups to create at least three artifacts that symbolize aspects of the religion and technology present in early Mesopotamia. Students will prepare a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact to present to the class.

**Objectives:**

* Students will research and summarize at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of religion in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.
* Students will research and summarize at least one artifact that symbolizes an aspect of technology in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.
* Students will create at least three artifacts that symbolize aspects of religion and technology in the early Mesopotamian river civilization.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Region – The study of sections of the Earth and the geographic, political, and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from others

**Information to Know:**
 The ancient Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of Gods. Every city had its own patron god or goddess, and there were also deities connected with various professions. Major deities controlled the sky, the sun, and the air. Anu was the father of the gods and the god of the sky. Enlil was the god of air. Utu was the sun god and lord of truth and justice. Nanna was the moon god. Inanna was the goddess of love and war. Ninhursag was the goddess of earth. Enki was the god of fresh water and lord of wisdom and magic. Ancient Mesopotamians had their own personal gods who protected them and connect them with the major deities. Ancient Mesopotamians worshipped in temples.
 The ancient Mesopotamians invented many new technologies, including the seeder plow. The seeder plow revolutionized agriculture by carrying out the tasks of seeding and plowing at the same time. Mesopotamians also developed writing, irrigation, and sanitation techniques, the “Pythagorean theorem,” the concept of zero, glass, and the arch, column, and dome. They also invented the wheel and were the first to harness the wind using a sail.

*Resource:* Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

**Resources:**

* Smart Board or projector
* Presentation Rubric
* Pencils for student use
* Materials for students to use to create artifacts for their boxes
* Access to websites for student research
	+ “Ancient Mesopotamia for Kids.” (2012). Retrieved from [http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/.](http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/)
	+ BBC. (2011). *Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/cultures/mesopotamia_gallery.shtml>.
	+ British Museum. (2012). *Mesopotamia.* Retrieved from<http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/menu.html.>
	+ Fordham University. (2012). *Internet ancient history sourcebook: Mesopotamia*. Retrieved from<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/asbook03.asp>.
	+ Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>.
* Access to content books for student research
	+ Apte, S. (2009). *Mesopotamia (True books: ancient civilizations)*. Children’s Press.
	+ Sands, S. (1999, November). Mesopotamia. *Kids Discover*.
	+ Schomp, V. (2005). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the Sumerians, Babylonians, and Assyrians.* Children’s Press.
	+ Steele, P. (2007). *DK eyewitness books: Mesopotamia*. DK Children.
* Exit slips

**Introduction:**
1. Ask students to sit in their groups and review the guidelines on the Artifact Creation Guidelines sheet.
2. Have students review the answers to the following questions from yesterday.

* What are the 3 or more artifacts that we will make today?
* What supplies do we need to make our artifacts?

3. Have students sketch out a plan for today’s activity, knowing that, by the end of the class, they should have created at least 3 artifacts and have a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact, a brief introduction to Mesopotamia, and cited sources.
4. Using a Smart Board or project, review the Artifact Box Rubric. Make sure students understand the guidelines for tomorrow’s presentation of artifacts.

**Lesson:**
1. Allow students time to create artifacts. Make sure you have all materials that students will need to create the artifacts. Students may need to alter their artifacts slightly if a certain material is not available
2. The teacher should circulate among students, asking probing questions and answering questions as needed. The teacher should help groups that are struggling find a solution to the problems that they are having.
3. After students have finished creating the artifacts, they should prepare for tomorrow’s presentation. Students must show each artifact and give a 3-5 sentence summary of how that artifact relates to the religion or technology of early Mesopotamia.
4. Students should complete their written summary of the artifacts, which should include a brief introduction and cited sources.

**Closure:**
1. Ask students to put away books and computers and sit with their Artifact Box groups.
2. Hand out an Exit Slip to each group.
3. Ask students to answer the following questions in their groups and complete the Exit Slip provided.

* Did we create at least 3 artifacts?
* Are we prepared with a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact?
* Provide a sample summary of one of your artifacts below.
* Did we complete our written summary?

4. Have students hand in their Exit Slips as they leave the class or transition to a new activity.
5. As homework, students should prepare for tomorrow’s presentation of artifacts.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will monitor student participation and use the “Class Participation Rubric” at the end of the unit to assign each student an individual participation grade. Students will work on their artifact boxes and be assigned three grades upon the completion of their presentation, a grade for their project, group work, and individual contributions to group work. In this lesson, students will be assessed on the completion of the Exit Slip at the end of class time. The teacher will analyze the Exit Slips to provide feedback to students and identify struggling groups that may need more attention in the subsequent day’s lesson.

**Differentiation:**
Throughout this group project, the teacher may intervene as needed to meet individual student needs. For students who struggle with writing, a scribe could help that student take notes or pre-prepared notes could be provided in which the student simply needs to fill in the blanks. For struggling readers, a group member can read the material to that student or could be available for additional questions. Groups should be pre-selected to include a variety of ability levels and avoid possible conflicts between students. The teacher will mainly act as a facilitator throughout the majority of the group work. He or she will answer questions as needed and help struggling groups solve problems among themselves.

**Attachments:**

**Exit Slip**

Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

***Answer the following questions within your Artifact Box groups.***

1. Did we create at least 3 artifacts? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Are we prepared with a 3-5 sentence summary of each artifact? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Provide a sample summary of one of your artifacts below.

4. Did we complete our written summary? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Make sure to hand this exit slip into your teacher at the end of class.**

**Day 10: *Presentation of Artifacts and Reflection***

**Summary of the Lesson:** Students will present their artifacts to the class. Students will reflect on the project and how it relates to the early Mesopotamian river civilization. Students will generate possible essential questions for future or independent research.

**Objectives:**

* Students will show their knowledge of the religion and technology present in early Mesopotamia.
* Students will critique the project and summarize how it relates to the early Mesopotamian river civilization.

**OACS Alignment:**
***Grade:*** 6
***Strand:*** History
***Topic:*** Early Civilizations -The eight features of civilizations include cities, well-organized central governments, complex religions, job specialization, social classes, arts and architecture, public works and writing. Early peoples developed unique civilizations. Several civilizations established empires with legacies influencing later peoples.
***Content Statement:*** (#2) Early civilizations (India, Egypt, China and Mesopotamia) with unique governments, economic systems, social structures, religions, technologies and agricultural practices and products flourished as a result of favorable geographic characteristics. The cultural practices and products of these early civilizations can be used to help understand the Eastern Hemisphere today.

**Geography Themes Alignment:**

* Region – The study of sections of the Earth and the geographic, political, and cultural characteristics that distinguish it from others

**Information to Know:**
 The ancient Mesopotamians worshipped hundreds of Gods. Every city had its own patron god or goddess, and there were also deities connected with various professions. Major deities controlled the sky, the sun, and the air. Anu was the father of the gods and the god of the sky. Enlil was the god of air. Utu was the sun god and lord of truth and justice. Nanna was the moon god. Inanna was the goddess of love and war. Ninhursag was the goddess of earth. Enki was the god of fresh water and lord of wisdom and magic. Ancient Mesopotamians had their own personal gods who protected them and connect them with the major deities. Ancient Mesopotamians worshipped in temples.
 The ancient Mesopotamians invented many new technologies, including the seeder plow. The seeder plow revolutionized agriculture by carrying out the tasks of seeding and plowing at the same time. Mesopotamians also developed writing, irrigation, and sanitation techniques, the “Pythagorean theorem,” the concept of zero, glass, and the arch, column, and dome. They also invented the wheel and were the first to harness the wind using a sail.

*Resource:* Oriental Institute. (2012). *Ancient Mesopotamia: the history, our history*. Retrieved from<http://mesopotamia.lib.uchicago.edu/>

**Resources:**

* Previously created artifacts and summaries
* Copies of the Artifact Box Rubric
* Copies of the Class Participation Rubric
* Copies of the Group Work Rubric
* Copies of the Brag Sheet
* Chalkboard or whiteboard for taking class notes

**Introduction:**
1. Using a Smart Board or project, review the Artifact Box Rubric. Make sure students understand what is expected of them when they present their artifacts.
2. Decide the order that groups will present.
3. Review guidelines for being a good audience. Students should:

* Actively listen to the speaker.
* Avoid distracting sounds or noises.
* Ask questions when appropriate.
* Give constructive feedback after each presentation.

**Lesson:**
1. Allow students time to present their artifacts. Assess students using the Artifact Box Rubric.
2. After each presentation, allow students to ask questions and give constructive feedback to the presenters. Make sure to help students clarify any misconceptions they may have.
3. Have each group turn in their written summaries of the artifacts for evaluation.
4. After all presentations, have students reflect on the projects.

* What did they learn about the early Mesopotamian civilization?
* What other artifacts could have been created?
* Did students enjoy this project? Why or why not?
* How could the project be changed next time? (if needed)
* Were they any problems encountered while working within groups?
* How could the problems within groups be solved for next time?

5. Hand out a Brag Sheet to each student and have each student complete.

**Closure:**
1. Ask students to hand in their Brag Sheets for review by the teacher.
2. Start a class chart with the heading “Future Essential Questions.”
3. Have students contribute to the class chart by listing possible essential questions about Mesopotamia that could be researching in the future, both in school and independently.
4. As homework, offer students the opportunity to research the answer to one of these future essential questions and submit it for extra credit.

**Assessments:**
The teacher will assign each student an individual participation grade by using the “Class Participation Rubric.” The teacher will assign each student a grade for the project using the “Artifact Box Rubric” and a grade for group work using the “Group Work Rubric.” Students will review the students’ Brag Sheets and take comments into consideration when assigning participation and group work grades. Students will observe students during the reflection and discussion to monitor student understanding and involvement.

**Differentiation:**
Throughout this group project, the teacher may intervene as needed to meet individual student needs. Students will the inability to speak or have anxiety about presentations may choose to demonstrate their knowledge through different means. Students may need a scribe to help them complete their Brag Sheet.

**Attachments:**
See attached rubrics