

UNIT 2 - STUDY GUIDE
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Ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt: Civilization is born

Overview: In this unit we will look at the beginning of civilization, what it is, and how it got started after agriculture allowed people to settle in one place and build cities. We will focus on the two earliest major civilizations: Mesopotamia and Egypt. Both developed in river valleys of the Middle East, and both developed complex religions and government structures.

Essential Question: What is human nature?

Do humans have a basic need for religion? What caused Hebrews to begin writing the Bible?

Essential Question: What makes a good society?

Are we better people today than the ancient Egyptians were 5,000 years ago?

What is civilization? Can civilizations exist without governments to maintain control?

Essential Question: Can we know the truth?

Which is better, primary or secondary sources? Why?

Historical Force: How does technology make history?

What is writing? Can civilization exist without writing?

Are modern people more intelligent than ancient people, or do we just have better technology?

Historical Force: How does geography make history?

How did geography affect societies of Mesopotamia?

How did societies affect the geography of Mesopotamia?

Is geography destiny? In other words, does geography determine the nature of societies?

1. Read for understanding pages 5 - 8 of the *Student's Friend*. Demonstrate your understanding by summarizing KEY POINTS for the 16 main topics on pages 5 - 8 with answers to the questions: What is it? Why is it important?

2. Correctly spell the 16 main topics on pages 5 - 8.

3. On a map of the Eastern Hemisphere, locate the Middle East, Mesopotamia, the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Israel, the Mediterranean Sea, the Sahara Desert, sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Egypt, the Nile River, Cairo.

4. Be familiar with major events of the historical timeline from the Big Bang through ancient Egypt.

5. Explain how agriculture paved the way for civilization

6. Compare the size and relationship of the following two regions: Mesopotamia and the Middle East.

7. Were written laws an improvement over unwritten laws? Why or why not?

8. Why did modern Jews want to establish their new nation in the Middle East?

9. Agriculture began when people in the Middle East found they could plant and harvest a wild wheat plant. Could these people have made their discovery a little sooner or a little later? Question A: If people in the Middle East made their discovery one half of one percent later in history, how might we be making a living today? Question B: What if they made their discovery one-half of one percent sooner? Question C: What steps will you take to answer questions A and B?