

# Chapter 2

## The Fertile Crescent

## Section 1

# LAND BETWEEN TWO RIVERS

### OBJECTIVES:

- FIND OUT HOW GEOGRAPHY MADE THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION IN THE FERTILE CRESCENT POSSIBLE.
- LEARN ABOUT SUMER'S FIRST CITIES.
- EXAMINE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SUMERIAN RELIGION.

# Introduction

“My headmaster read my tablet and said, ‘There is something missing,’ and hit me with a cane....The fellow in charge of silence said, ‘Why do you talk without permission?’ and caned me.”

-A Sumerian Student

- First known schools- Sumer- 4,000 years ago
- Taught mostly boys to write- becomes scribes (pro writers)
  - Ten years of school starting at 8

# The Geographic Setting

- Located in \_\_\_\_\_
  - Rich soil, rivers- very prosperous
- The Location of Mesopotamia
  - “between the rivers” - \_\_\_\_\_ - crucial for crops
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - region of SW Asia home to first civs
  - Forms shape of crescent moon- Mediterranean Sea to Persian Gulf

# The Geographic Setting

- Rivers of Life and Death
  - Spring- melting snow in mtns picked up \_\_\_\_\_ -  
left it on plains
    - Grew crops
    - Rivers supplied fish, clay (for building), reeds (for boats)
  - Some years the snow melted too quickly-  
\_\_\_\_\_ - rushed away people,  
buildings, and animals

# The First Cities

- Independent Cities Form

- 3500 bc- not united

- \_\_\_\_\_ (a city that is also a separate, independent state)

- Their own \_\_\_\_\_

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# The First Cities

- A Brief Tour of a Sumerian City
  - Public squares
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - outdoor stalls
  - Musicians, acrobats, beggars, and water sellers
  - \_\_\_\_\_ wrote letters for the illiterate- \$\$\$
  - Houses faced away from streets- shared courtyards- fams ate, kids played
  - People slept on flat roofs on hot nights
  - Oil lamps for light

# Sumerian Religion

- Sumerian Temples

- Religious, social, and economic activities

- Large brick building- \_\_\_\_\_  
(pyramids of terraces)

- Some over 7 stories- topped with a \_\_\_\_\_

- Believe gods descended to Earth via the ziggurats



# Sumerian Religion

- Ancient Religious Beliefs
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - belief in many gods/goddesses
  - \_\_\_\_\_ - stories about gods that explained beliefs
    - Gods would \_\_\_\_\_ people when angered
    - \_\_\_\_\_ if served gods well

# Sumerian Religion

- Honoring the Gods
  - Priests \_\_\_\_\_ statues before and after meal offerings
  - Music played, incense burned, huge plates of food
  - People then ate the food after it was offered

# Sumerian Religion

- The Fall of Sumer
  - \_\_\_\_\_ became downfall
  - City-states \_\_\_\_\_ over resources- weakened each other
  - 2300bc- conquered by \_\_\_\_\_ - led by King Sargon
    - United Sumerian city-states- improved gov't and military
    - Remained united 100 years- returned to city-states
  - No longer a power after 2000bc
  - Fell to \_\_\_\_\_ in 1700bc