



Teacher's Guide

Mesopotamia **Time Compass**

Grade Levels:

4-8

Subject Areas:

Social Studies

Synopsis:

Innovative animation and a tongue-in-cheek approach to ancient history provide a sound introduction to the early civilizations that were established in Mesopotamia. The episode talks of the major forces of history as it traces the move from caves, to cities and towns, and eventually to civilized societies with governments, laws, and religious codes. Students learn of the development of tools from the Stone Age to the Iron Age, the development of cuneiform writing, the establishment of astronomy and astrology, and the legend of Gilgamesh. They also learn of the succession of civilizations in Mesopotamia, from the Acadians, through the Sumerians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. The closing segment compares pyramids built in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Central America, and Peru.

Learning Objectives: Students will:

- Describe the steps involved in moving from a hunter-gatherer to a civilized society.
- Recall the major ancient civilizations that inhabited the region known as Mesopotamia.
- Describe the unique contributions of each of these civilizations.
- Describe the types of pyramids that were constructed by ancient civilizations in the New World and the Old.

Vocabulary:

civilization, nomad, phalanges, cuneiform, sexagesimal system, chariots, infantry, cavalry, Homo habilis, Homo erectus, ziggurats, astronomy, astrology, epic, eternal youth

Pre-Viewing Discussion:

Where is the Tigris River located? Where is the Euphrates River located?

What types of human activity are likely to develop in fertile lands located between two major rivers?

Do you know where civilization first began when nomadic tribes settled down and built towns and cities?

Why were nomads able to stop wandering around looking for new sources of food?

Post-Viewing Discussion:

Why was Mesopotamia an excellent location for early civilizations?

What human activities began to develop once people came together in cities?

How did the civilizations of the Sumerians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians advance ways of dealing with one another in a civilized society? What were the greatest achievements of each of these societies?

What legends and religious practices expressed early ideas about the gods and their views of human beings?

Further Activities:

Discover some of the rules that were recorded in the Code of Hammurabi.

Compare and contrast the ideas of ancient astronomers and astrologists.

Find stories of how the wheel was invented. Imagine what civilization would be like if the wheel had not been invented.

Read accounts, histories, and biographies about King Nebuchadnezzar and his great love for his foreign wife.

Related New Dimension Media Titles:

Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (series)
Great Civilizations of the Ancient World (series)
Iran Today (Beyond Our Borders Series)
Turkey (Beyond Our Borders Series)