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## **Primary Sources: Ancient Civilizations**

**This sample includes the following:**

**Teacher's Guide Cover** (1 page)

**Table of Contents** (1 page)

**How to Use This Product** (2 pages)

**Lesson Plan** (4 pages)

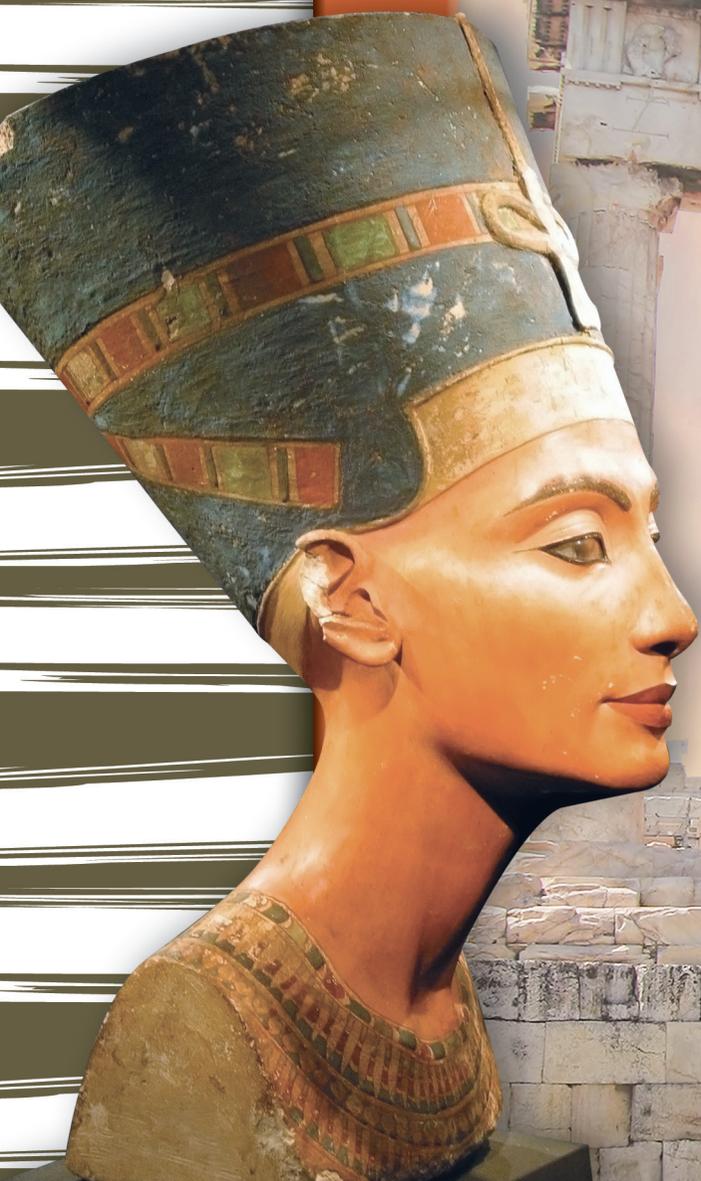
**Primary Source Document** (1 page)

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— PRIMARY SOURCES —  
**Ancient  
Civilizations**



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# How to Use This Product

This unit, with its primary documents, photographs, and support materials, will allow both teacher and student to expand their study of ancient civilizations beyond the textbook and classroom. The resources in this book assist the busy teacher in presenting innovative primary source lessons that meet state and national standards. Easy to follow, concise, and aligned to the curriculum standards, the teacher lesson plans and student activity pages are certain to become a great addition to any classroom.

Using primary sources offers students the opportunity to act and think as historians. Students will participate in the constructive process of history by studying primary documents and photographs. Viewing historic photographs, handling facsimiles of famous documents, and reading the comments and opinions of those in the past will bring history alive for students. Understanding the background of each primary source will help students to put historical events and attitudes into perspective, to think progressively, and to walk in the shoes of their ancestors.

The organization of the kit provides teachers with all they need to accomplish the lessons without additional research or planning. Teachers have the photographs and documents at their fingertips without scurrying to find such references. Activities are varied, interesting, challenging, and engaging.

## The Book

The **teacher pages** provide lesson plans organized with objectives, materials, discussion questions, suggestions for using the primary source, and extension ideas. **Historical background pages** are provided to give teachers and students information about each of the primary sources being studied. The coordinating **student activity pages** allow the flexibility for a class, individuals, or small groups of students to focus on a specific task and provide direction for a series of tasks to be completed during a time period.

The **standards** and **objectives** for the lessons are both process and content objectives to cover the full range of social studies skills. The standard listed for each lesson is a process standard taken from one of the ten strands of the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS, *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, <http://www.ncss.org/>). The objective listed for each lesson is a content learning objective describing what students will learn and how they will show what they've learned. A complete chart listing each lesson in the book and the corresponding standards is available on the CD in the folder entitled *Lesson Support Files* (standard.pdf).

The **document-based assessment** section provides student preparation and practice on the document-based questions that appear on many standardized tests today. Students will be able to analyze for meanings, compare and contrast, compose short answers, and even respond to and reflect on topics with longer essay questions. The entire testing section will provide students with opportunities to prepare for a variety of testing situations.

## **The Photographs**

Each photograph has four general areas on the back for teacher and student use. The top of the card has a brief **Historical Background Information** section. Along the left side of the card is the **Analyzing History** section with six questions or activities based on Bloom's Taxonomy. In the **Historical Writing** section, students are given two writing assignments, one fiction and one nonfiction. Finally, the **History Challenge** section offers fun extension ideas for the students. The teacher lesson plans do not necessarily refer to each of the sections on the back of the card. These activities can be used by teachers in any way that fits their classroom needs (group work, individual work, learning center, etc.). The Bloom's Taxonomy questions provide teachers with easy-to-manage differentiation. Teachers can simply have students in the class complete different questions depending upon their ability levels. Teachers can also have higher-level students derive questions using the models as their guides.

## **The Primary Sources**

The documents, letters, maps, and other primary sources are provided in both an authentic-looking format as well as in the book for reproduction. The large copies of the primary sources should be shared with the students so that they can see and feel the facsimiles. The easy-to-read copies of the primary sources in the book can be reproduced for the students to use during student activities. If the text of a document is too long, only an excerpt of the text is included in the book. The entire text of the document is available on the CD.

## **The CD**

The CD provided with the book has copies of the 16 main primary sources and photographs, additional documents and photographs from the time period, and activities to support and enrich the lessons in the book, including 16 student pages to support the introduction. See pages 75–76 for more information about using the CD.

## **Objectives of this Unit**

By participating in the lessons provided in this book, students will:

- articulate their observations.
- analyze what they see.
- improve their vocabularies.
- be prompted by visual clues.
- compare their assumptions against others.
- expand their appreciation for other time periods.

By presenting the lessons in this book, teachers will:

- improve students' test scores and improve test-taking skills.
- meet curriculum standards.
- create a learning environment that extends beyond the classroom.
- encourage students to take an active role in learning history.
- develop critical-thinking skills in students.

# Settling the River Valleys

## Standard/Objectives

- Examine, interpret, and analyze physical and cultural patterns and their interactions, such as land use, settlement patterns, cultural transmission of customs and ideas, and ecosystem changes. (NCSS)
- Students will analyze maps of ancient civilizations and then prepare real estate advertisements that persuade others to settle in their civilizations near the rivers.

## Materials

Copy of the facsimile, *River Civilizations Map*; Copies of the historical background information (page 32); Copies of the student activity sheet, *Selling Real Estate on the River* (page 33); For optional use, copies of *River Civilizations Map* (page 34); Globes and maps of large regions of the world

## Discussion Questions

- What do people need to survive?
- If you had to live off the land, where would you choose to live? Why is that the best choice?
- Is your choice near a river?
- If given the chance, would you change your location? Why or why not?

## Using the Primary Source

Place globes and large maps around the classroom. Have students gather around them, and then ask the discussion questions above. Have students share in small groups, and let a few students share aloud with the entire class.

Then, display the *River Civilizations Map* to the class. Using the map, let students choose a place to settle. Have students read the historical background information (page 32) aloud in their groups. From the reading, students will realize that people settled along the rivers.

Assign each student one river from the background information. Distribute copies of the student activity sheet, *Selling Real Estate on the River* (page 33). Tell students that they will be creating real estate advertisements for the rivers that you assigned them. Encourage students to be creative but also factual.

When students finish creating their advertisements, place them in homogeneous groups according to their rivers. Let them share their advertisements and add information, if necessary. Then, jigsaw the groups, and let them share again. In this way, all students are gaining important information about the different river civilizations.

## Extension Idea

- Have students create their own maps that show customers the locations of their river civilizations. They should include legends on these maps.

# Settling the River Valleys *(cont.)*

## Historical Background Information

Besides air, what do humans need to survive? That's right: food and water. That's why it's no surprise that all the earliest civilizations started along rivers. Rivers offer a constant supply of water. What's more, rivers teem with life. Edible plants grow along the riverbanks. People can catch fish, ducks, and turtles for meat. Other animals come to rivers to drink. They can be captured and eaten, too. This was true in ancient times, also. When ancient people stopped following animal herds, they settled down and grew crops along rivers.

A civilization begins when a group of people build homes and grow crops. Historians think that the first civilization started around 4000 B.C. That's when people settled in the Fertile Crescent. This area is shaped like a quarter moon. It lies between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf. There are two big rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates (you-FRAY-teez). The land between these waters was called Mesopotamia (mehs-uh-puh-TAY-mee-uh). People planted wheat, barley, dates, grapes, figs, apples, and melons there. Over time, they learned how to dig irrigation ditches. These ditches brought water from the rivers further inland. Irrigation let the people expand their farmlands.

The Nile River, located in Egypt, is the longest river in the world. It flows for 4,000 miles (6,440 km). The river goes from central Africa north into the Mediterranean Sea. The first Egyptian society began in the Nile Delta. This is the swampy flat area where the river enters the Mediterranean. Each year between June and October, the Nile River flooded. The flood brought new, rich soil from the south. When the water receded, this silt, or dirt, was left on the river's banks. It was a great place to grow fruits and vegetables for harvesting in the spring. The annual flood was important. There was little rainfall in this desert. But, the flood brought the soil and water needed for the crops.

The Indus (IN-duhs) River flows through Pakistan today. Along its banks an advanced civilization thrived more than 4,000 years ago. We know this because archaeologists have uncovered bronze and copper tools, irrigation canals, and even houses with bathrooms. But the people did not leave records. We have no idea what happened to them. Perhaps a war killed most of them. Maybe a flood wiped them out. They were gone by 1500 B.C. It took several hundred more years before anyone built new cities in India.

The Huang He flows through China. It is also called the Yellow River. The water looks yellow because it is full of soil. The river carries dirt down from the mountains into the valleys. People built villages along the river's banks. They grew soybeans, barley, wheat, and rice. But the river brought sorrow as well as soil. It would sometimes flood and wreck the towns. Soon, the people moved their homes to higher ground.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Selling Real Estate on the River

## Background Information

Rivers are important to most civilizations. People need food and water to survive. Rivers supply both. The first civilization began about 4000 B.C. in the Fertile Crescent. This area lies between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf. Here there are two big rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. The Nile River is the longest river in the world. It goes from central Africa north into the Mediterranean Sea. The first Egyptian society began in the Nile Delta. The Indus River flows through Pakistan. Along its banks, an advanced civilization thrived more than 4,000 years ago. The Yellow River flows through China. The water looks yellow because it is full of soil. The river carries dirt down from the mountains into the valleys.

## Activity

**Directions:** You represent a real estate firm called Ancient Real Estate. It is your job to convince people to move to your civilization along the river. You are selling waterfront homes. Your teacher will assign a river to you. Use the space below to create an advertisement for your civilization.

### Challenge

After the Nile River, which river is the longest in the world? Find out where that river is located and at least three other interesting facts about it.

# River Civilizations Map



Source: The Granger Collection, New York

