Mesopotamian Geography (3,300 BCE)

• Located in the modern-day Middle East
• Situated between two rivers (Tigris & Euphrates)
  – “Mesopotamia” = “Land between the two rivers”
• Rivers flooded frequently
  – Cons
    • Unpredictable and violent
    • Constant fear of flooding leads to need for flood control
  – Pros
    • Provided the flood plain with silt to create good land for farming.
    • Irrigation used to expand territory of arable land.
    • Rivers = opportunities for transportation
Mesopotamian Geography (Continued)

• Natural Resources
  – Well suited to produce grain
  – Lacked trees (wood), stone (relied on clay)

• Natural Barriers
  – Very few natural barriers, with exception of deserts.

• Cultural Diffusion
  – Mesopotamia becomes "The Crossroads of the World."
    • A center of trade and ideas
  – Trade networks created that spread from Egypt to India. Leads to the development of the wheel.
  – Mesopotamia became a prime area for invasion and foreign conquest.
Map Exercise: SmartBoard

- Close your books (and notebooks) to see if you can drag the locations that are listed on the right side of the SmartBoard presentation to their proper locations.
Geography “Quiz”: Mesopotamia

1. the Tigris River
2. the Persian Gulf
3. the Fertile Crescent
4. the Euphrates River
5. the Babylonian empire
6. the Assyrian empire, home of a warlike people
7. Sumer, where the world’s first civilization developed
8. the Akkadian empire, the first empire in the history of the world
9. the Persian empire, built by Cyrus and his successors
10. Mesopotamia, from a Greek word meaning “between the rivers”
2.2: Invaders, Traders, and Empire Builders

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Fall 2012
Early Empires in Mesopotamia

• A complicated time with many different groups
• 2300 BCE, Sargon (of the Akkadians) took over the city-states of Sumer. Started the first true empire.
• Leadership was often unstable; after Sargon’s death, the empire fell.
Hammurabi and Babylon #1 (Amorites)

• 1790 BCE, Hammurabi (leader of Babylon) controlled much of Mesopotamia. Improved irrigation, had a well-trained army, promoted religious unity (Marduk).

• Hammurabi’s Code: A set of laws that put most known laws into public view. Artisans carved nearly 300 laws on stone so that all could see them.

In your life, what might be a “code” that compares to Hammurabi’s Code?
Hammurabi’s Code

• **Civil law**: deals with *private* rights and matters, such as contracts, property issues, taxes, marriage, and divorce. Designed to protect the powerless (women, slaves, etc.).

• **Criminal law**: offenses against others like robbery, assault, or murder. Limits *personal vengeance* and encourages *social order*.

• **What is the importance of having these types of laws? What does it help a society to do?**
Hammurabi’s Code vs. Other Codes

- Please read page 23 of your “Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet” and respond to the questions that follow in your notebooks.
The Hittites

- Had started off in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) and by **1400 BCE**, had entered Mesopotamia.
- They know how to extract **iron** from ore. Iron weapons were harder/stronger than bronze or copper. Iron was plentiful, so it was cheap to make.
- As the empire collapsed in **1200 BCE**, ironworkers spread throughout the Fertile Crescent, bringing their knowledge with them.

How did the Hittites contribute to the development of civilizations throughout the world?
The Assyrians

- Lived on the upper Tigris River, started in 1350 BCE.
- 1100 BCE, began expanding across Mesopotamia by force; makes them feared.
- Well-ordered society, well-planned cities, etc.
- At Nineveh, King Assurbanipal founded one of the world’s first libraries. Housed cuneiform tablets.
  - Whose advancements might they have taken advantage of?
  - How do the Assyrians live up to the reputation of Mesopotamian geography?
Babylon #2 – The Chaldeans

- **612 BCE**, the Assyrians are crushed.
- **Nebuchadnezzar**, second king of the restored Babylon empire. He is ruthless and aggressively expands his empire.
- He rebuilt Babylon with massive defense structures, special gates, monuments to the gods, enhanced Ziggurats (Marduk especially).
- Responsible for the **Babylonian Captivity**.

- What other things might a ruler do to keep power?
- What are some advantages to ruling ruthlessly? What about disadvantages? How would **YOU** rule an empire?
The Persian Empire

• **539 BCE**, Babylon fell to the Persian Empire of **Cyrus the Great**. The Persian Empire became the largest empire in history, at the time.

• **Darius I** (522 BCE – 486 BCE), unified a large amount of people, governed by *provinces*, each were called a *satrapy*.
  • Governor = *Satrap*
  • Encouraged unity by building roads.

• Why would all of these things encourage unity?

Depiction of Cyrus the Great freeing the Jewish people from the *Babylonian Captivity*. 
Other Improvements of the Persians

• System of coinage, common weights and measurements = **money economy**

• Religion
  – **Zoroaster**: taught about a single wise god, **Ahura Mazda** (good), that was in constant battle with **Ahriman** (evil). People would have to take a side, and in the end, there would be a judgment day.

• **How was this different from most popular religions of that time?**

• **What might have been appealing about a system like this (as opposed to the existing religious systems)?**
The Phoenicians

• Gained fame as *traders* and *sailors*.
• Occupied a string of cities along the eastern Mediterranean (present-day Lebanon & Syria).
• Made glass from coastal sand & produced a highly sought-after purple dye.
• Set up colonies hundreds of miles away.
• Developed the *alphabet*.

• What is the importance of some of the Phoenicians’ greatest inventions?
• How have the contributions of the Phoenicians affected YOUR life?
Chart Skills  Our alphabet comes to us from the Phoenicians by way of the Greeks. The word *alphabet* itself comes from the first two Greek letters, *alpha* and *beta*. *Describe how the modern letter L has changed over time.*
In Iraq, where many biblical scholars place the Garden of Eden, Scott Pelley finds a water world where the Marsh Arabs are making a comeback after Saddam Hussein nearly destroyed the cradle of civilization.

Carefully read and respond to the following questions corresponding to the video clip.

Page 22 of your Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet
Closure

• Name at least two things that were unique about specific civilizations in Mesopotamia.
2.5: The Hebrews & Judaism

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Fall 2012
2.5: The Hebrews & Judaism

• Disclaimer about what we know of the following history.

• A good historian always remains aware of his or her source!
For the Notes on Section 2.5

**Special Instructions:**

For this section *only*, please DO NOT take notes. Instead, listen and engage in the conversation about the Hebrews and create at least ONE QUESTION per slide, as though you were creating a quiz for the section.
2.5: The Beginnings of Judaism

• 4,000 years ago, the ancient Israelites (the Hebrews) developed the religion of Judaism on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

• Monotheistic—believed in one god.
  – This god was all-knowing and present everywhere.

• Torah—the Hebrews’ most sacred text.
  – Tied history and religion together.
  – First five of the 24 books of the Hebrew bible.

• Later laws were written into the Talmud.
“Abraham”

• According to the Torah, Abraham lived near Ur. Migrated to Canaan (present-day Israel/Palestine).
• Israelites believed that their god had made a **covenant** (an agreement) with Abraham.
  1. God would have a special relationship with Abraham and his descendants = “chosen people.”
  2. Canaan would someday belong to the Israelites = “the promised land.”

• This line demonstrates the migration. What would some of the challenges have been?
Moses

- Moses later renewed god’s covenant with the Israelites.
  - Famine brought Israelites/Hebrews to Egypt = enslaved.
  - Moses promised them that god would lead them out of bondage in return for their faith.
  - According to the Torah, Moses died just before they reached Canaan.

What types of qualities might Moses have needed to successfully make the journey from Egypt to Canaan?
Kingdom Established

• **1000 BCE**, Israelites had set up the kingdom of Israel.

• **Twelve (12)** separate tribes of Israel that feuded up to that time, but **David** (the second king of Israel) *united* them.

• **Solomon**—David’s son, turned Jerusalem into an impressive capital, built a temple to God.

• **What other leaders (who we have studied) united their people, and how did they do it?**
Israel Defeated

• Kingdom split after Solomon died in **922 BCE**. (*Israel* = north, *Judah* = south).
• **722 BCE**, Assyrians conquered Israel.
• **586 BCE**, Babylonian armies captured Judah, destroyed the great temple. Exiled most Israelites to Babylon; called the “**Babylonian Captivity.**”
• **539 BCE**, Persians defeated the Babylonians and allowed Israelites to go back to their homeland.
  – Since most were from Judah, they became known as Jews.

  **If you had to pick one theme that defines what you are seeing here, what would it be?**
Jewish Law & Morality

• Israelite society was **patriarchal**—family’s oldest male relative held the greatest authority.
  – Arranged marriages.
  – Women had few legal rights.

**What about Deborah, though?**
Deborah

• Please read page 27 of your “Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet” and respond to the questions that follow in your notebooks.
Jewish Law & Morality (Continued)

• **Ten Commandments**—a set of laws believed to have been given to Moses through god.
  – They address religious duties, keeping the Sabbath, conduct toward others, etc.

• Strong **personal morality** and **social justice** were central.

• **What are some ways that your lives have been affected by morality and justice?**
Jewish Beliefs Over Time

• Jews have a history of being forced from their homes, and such have been forcefully spread out. We call this spreading out process the Diaspora.

• Wherever Jews were forced, they often maintained close-knit groups that helped them retain their identity.
  – *Helped them to survive until today.*

• **What other major world religions or social structures has Judaism affected? How?**
2.3: Kingdom on the Nile

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Egyptian Geography (Pgs. 31, 41, 45, 47)

• For the map on page 5 of your Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet, follow the instructions and label/color all of the locations and regions listed. Take your time and make sure everything is neat & legible (include a detailed legend).

• For the map on page 6 of your packet, choose colors to represent different geographic realities (perhaps: oceans/seas = blue, desert = yellow, mountains = brown, rivers = light blue, fertile land = green, etc.). Create a detailed legend.

• When you are finished with the maps, you can move on to page 7 of your packet and thoughtfully respond to the questions that correspond to your experience with Egyptian geography.
Egyptian Geography

• Early on, Egyptian geography protected and isolated the people from outside influences/attack.

• Libyan and Nubian Deserts: Protected Egypt from the west and the east.

• The Nile Delta protected them from attack in the north.

• Six Cataracts (waterfalls) protected them in the south.

• The Red sea guarded them in the eastern part of the empire and the Mediterranean guarded them in the north.

• Delta = Triangle shaped swampy region found at the mouth of rivers.

• Cataracts = Waterfalls or quick moving rapids.

• How was the geographic arrangement unique when compared to the landscapes of other ancient civilizations?
Egyptian Geography: A Visual Tour

• You are about to take a visual tour of Egypt (through images). As I slowly cycle through the photos and pictures, please comment (in your notebooks) in bullet points on what you see. Be prepared to discuss your observations.
SmartBoard Exercise: Egyptian Geography

• Close your books (and notebooks) to see if you can drag the locations that are listed on the bottom of the SmartBoard presentation to their proper locations.
Geography: Review of Egypt’s Neighbors

1. the Tigris River
2. the Persian Gulf
3. the Fertile Crescent
4. the Euphrates River
5. the Babylonian empire
6. the Assyrian empire, home of a warlike people
7. Sumer, where the world’s first civilization developed
8. the Akkadian empire, the first empire in the history of the world
9. the Persian empire, built by Cyrus and his successors
10. Mesopotamia, from a Greek word meaning “between the rivers”
Uniting Egypt’s Two Regions

- Two major regions of Egypt

1. In the North (closer to the Mediterranean Sea): *Lower Egypt*

2. South Egypt (closer the first cataract): *Upper Egypt*

Why do these descriptions seem “backwards”?

- (3100 BCE) Menes, King of Upper Egypt united the two regions with *Memphis* as the capital.

- In what ways could the Nile River enable an empire to exist?
Periodization of Ancient Egypt

- The Old Kingdom (2575 BCE – 2130 BCE)
- The Middle Kingdom (1938 BCE – 1630 BCE)
- The New Kingdom (1539 BCE – 1075 BCE)

- Power often passed from one dynasty to another, but Egypt generally remained united.

- Math lesson: Add up the years spanning Ancient Egyptian history, and then subtract the total number of years that the United States has existed (1776-2012) to find the difference in longevity.
  - 1500 – 236 = Ancient Egyptian Civilization has lasted 1264 more years than the United States.
The Old Kingdom (2575 BCE – 2130 BCE)

• **Strong Government**
  
  – **Pharaohs: Egyptian kings**
    - Played a key role in government and religion
    - Egyptians believed each pharaoh was a god (and both human at the same time)
    - The people still expected their leaders to behave morally despite their semi-divine status

  – **Bureaucracy**
    - A system of government with various job functions (everybody serves a special purpose)
    - Vizier: chief minister, supervisor of business, tax collector, farm manager, scribe-manager, etc.
Imhotep (2600s BCE)

• Please open your “Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet” to page 24, and read the biographical account of Imhotep’s life. Imhotep was a rare example of a non-royal individual who became *deified*.

• Thoughtfully answer the questions that follow in complete sentences (in your notebooks).
Ptah-hotep (~2450 BCE)

- Please open your “Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet” to page 25, and read the primary source document detailing Ptah-hotep’s practical rules for living a successful life.

- Thoughtfully answer the questions that follow in complete sentences (in your notebooks).
Pyramids are Built

• During the Old Kingdom, many Egyptian pharaohs built necropolises surrounding Memphis

• Tombs within the pyramids were considered homes in which the deceased would live for eternity.
  – Egyptians provided their dead rulers with everything they would need in their new lives

• **What types of items would you want with you in a tomb?**
  – Often began building as soon as a leader came to power.... **why?**
Pyramids (Continued)

• Please open your textbooks to page 49 and read/analyze the description regarding the building of the pyramids.

• Quietly and thoughtfully respond to the “Thinking Critically” questions in your notebooks.
Pyramid Video – Egypt

• Watch the pyramid video, and respond to the corresponding questions on page 28 of the Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet.
Middle Kingdom (1938 BCE – 1630 BCE)

• **A few turbulent centuries:**
  1. Power struggles, crop failures, the cost of building pyramids all contributed to the *collapse* of the Old Kingdom
  2. Unlucky with the rising of the Nile River
  3. Corruption and rebellions were common

• **Some positives:**
  1. A large drainage project was accomplished, adding arable land
    • *What does this mean for Egypt?*
  2. Egyptian armies occupied part of Nubia
    • *Where was Nubia again?*
  3. More successful trade throughout the Mediterranean

• By 1700 BCE, the **Hyksos** took over the leadership of Egypt, impressing Egyptians with their horse-drawn chariots.
  – *There were few conflicts between the sides—how is that possible? What needed to occur for the two sides to coexist?*
New Kingdom (1539 BCE – 1075 BCE)

- By 1450 BCE, the Egyptian empire reached as far north as Syria and the Euphrates River.
- **Hatshepsut** (rule: 1472-1458 BCE): Egypt’s first female ruler
- **Thutmose III**: Hatshepsut’s stepson, great military leader, Egyptian borders greatest during his reign
- **Ramses II** (rule: 1279 BCE – 1213 BCE): best known because of his reputation of bragging on monuments, etc., but again expanded empire almost to that of the days of Thutmose III

**Do you see any common themes here? How would you define the New Kingdom period of Egypt?**
Map Skills  Under the control of Thutmose III (below), Egypt's borders expanded into the eastern Mediterranean region.

1. Locate (a) Nile River (b) Nubia (c) Giza (d) Syria

2. Movement  What were the northernmost areas reached by Egyptian traders?

3. Make Comparisons  How did the Hittite empire compare in size to the Egyptian empire around 1450 B.C.? Which do you think was more advantageously situated?
Hatshepsut

Hatshepsut (?1540 B.C.--?1457 B.C.) was the daughter of the pharaoh Thutmose I, the wife and widow of Thutmose II, and the stepmother of Thutmose III. Like some earlier Egyptian queens, she began ruling in the name of a male heir—her stepson—who was too young to take the throne. However, she later took the bold step of declaring herself pharaoh and won the support of key officials. Because Egyptians thought of their rulers as male, she wore a false beard as a sign of authority.

For herself and her father, Hatshepsut had constructed a magnificent funeral temple on the walls of which she left behind a record of her reign. Carvings depict a construction project as well as an expedition she sent down the Red Sea coast of Africa, which brought back ivory, spices, and incense. For what reasons do you think Hatshepsut wanted to leave a record of her accomplishments?
Egypt at War & Decline

• Fierce fighting against the Hittites during the reign of Ramses II (1279 BCE – 1213 BCE).
  – *What would have made fighting the Hittites difficult during this time?*

• Eventually, Ramses II signed a *peace treaty* with the Hittites – the first of its kind

• Ramses II also conquered the Nubians to the south
  – *What are some things that may have happened as a result?*

• Egypt’s decline
  – By 1100 BCE, invaders from Mesopotamia (Assyrians, Persians) began to eat away at the Nile region. Later, the Greeks and then the Romans would take over the area as well.
  
  • *What were these various groups all interested in?*
2.4: Egyptian Civilization

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Fall 2012
Religion Shapes Life in Ancient Egypt

• **Old Kingdom**, initially worship the Sun god, “Re”

• **Middle Kingdom**, it becomes “Amon-Re”

• **Osiris & Isis**
  
  – Osiris ruled Egypt until he was killed by his jealous brother. Isis, his wife, put the pieces of his body back together, but he could only rule over the dead.

• **Based upon this story, how do you think these two gods would be viewed from the perspective of the Egyptians?**
A Pharaoh Tries to Reshape Religion

- 1380 BCE, Amenhotep IV challenged the worship of “Amon-Re.”
  - Decided to follow the minor god, “Aton,” then called himself Akhenaton.
  - Why do you think he did this?

- His radical ideas were not successful.
  - Why were his ideas radical? Why do you think they were not successful?
How Egyptians Viewed the Afterlife

• Osiris and Isis promised *eternal life* after death.

• Dead souls would be judged by *Osiris*, after crossing a lake of fire and multiple tests.
  – He would determine if they could go to the *Happy Field of Food* (or not).

• *What is this comparable to in more commonly practiced religions?*

• King Tutankhamen’s (*King Tut*) tomb revealed the practices of Egyptian burial (and embalming techniques).
The ancient Egyptians made a science out of mummifying the dead. Skilled embalmers extracted the brain of the dead person through the nostrils and removed most of the internal organs. They then filled the body cavity with linen and a drying powder, sprinkled spices on the body, and rubbed a mixture that kept out moisture into the skin. Later they wrapped the body in strips of linen. This costly process took months to complete.
Mummies were often laid to rest inside a nest of coffins. King Tutankhamen's coffins, shown here, were made of gold and wood and highly decorated.

Mummification preserves bodies so well that even thousands of years later, they look lifelike when unwrapped.

Once removed from the body, the internal organs were also mummified. They were then stored in jars and placed within the tomb of the deceased.

Thinking Critically
1. Determine Relevance What does mummification tell us about ancient Egyptian religious views?
2. Predict Consequences Which fields of science do you think mummification helped the Egyptians learn about?
A Tour of King Tut’s Tomb

• Around 2000 BCE the Egyptians stopped building huge pyramids because they were an inviting target for robbers and because they were very expensive.

• Instead, they moved the tombs to **The Valley Of The Kings**. You are about to see that the valley was topped by a natural pyramid-shaped mountain.

• The new tombs would be built into the side of the mountain, hidden and protected.

• **Howard Carter** discovered the location in 1922.
Map of Tut’s Tomb
The First Room Entered: The Antechamber
The Annex
A View from the Treasury
Tut’s Burial Chamber: You can see the great stone and gold sarcophagus that holds the mummified body of the young king.
Reflection on King Tut’s Tomb

• Why is King Tut’s tomb important for historians?

• What does the tomb suggest about Egyptian beliefs?

• What surprised you the most about the tomb? Why?
Flax/Linen

• Flax is a plant that grew along the banks of the Nile. The Egyptians learned how to take the plant that looks like this:

• And refine it to a usable form like this:
This is what the flax plant looks like when the leaves get old and weathered:

The refined flax would be woven into linen and used for all kinds of important items used in daily life. Here are a few:
Egyptian Social Organization

People were ranked according to their jobs.

*Most were farmers, and in the offseason, they would help with major building projects. In the New Kingdom, the social structure became a bit more fluid.*
Egyptian Women

• Greater status and independence than with women of other ancient civilizations.
  – Could inherit property, enter business deals, buy and sell goods, go to court, and obtain a divorce.

• What would women need to obtain though to truly have a chance at competing with men for jobs in Ancient Egypt? Why?
Egyptian Advances in Learning

• Written records – Scribes used hieroglyphics as an early system of writing with symbols.
  – Afterward, more refined systems would be found with Hieratic and Demotic systems.

• Why might they have wanted to keep written records?
Rosetta Stone

• While *Papyrus* was a popular method of writing, important documents were still inscribed into stone.

What do you notice about the stone? What does it say about HOW the stone ended up being useful?

Contained *hieroglyphics, demotic* script, and *Greek*. French Scholar Jean Champollion was able to decipher it because of this (because we know Greek).
Papyrus Paper Production Method

1. The stalks of the papyrus plant are harvested.

2. Next, the green skin of the stalk is removed and the inner pith is taken out and cut into long strips. The strips are then pounded and soaked in water for 3 days until pliable.

3. The strips are then cut to the length desired and laid horizontally on a cotton sheet overlapping about 1 millimeter. Other strips are laid vertically over the horizontal strips resulting in the crisscross pattern in papyrus paper. Another cotton sheet is placed on top.

4. The sheet is put in a press and squeezed together, with the cotton sheets being replaced until all the moisture is removed.

5. Finally, all the strips are pressed together forming a single sheet of papyrus paper.

What were some of the advantages to using Papyrus? Were there disadvantages, too?
Science & Mathematics

- Doctors performed surgeries, prescribed medicines that are still used today for various purposes.

- Priest-astronomers studied the heavens, mapped out constellations, created a 12-month calendar with 30 days and 5 extra days.

- Math developed to help redraw the boundaries of the constantly flooding Nile River.

- **What other “practical” problems would have helped the Egyptians to develop skills and technologies?**
Arts & Literature

• Statues, wall paintings in tombs, carvings on temples. These often show daily life.
• Gods and pharaohs are always displayed as bigger and thus more important.
• Despite body position, eyes usually aimed at viewer (creepy!).
• Egyptian literature: usually detailed prayers to the gods, love poems, or practical writings like that of Ptah-hotep.
The Tale of Sinuhe

• Please open your “Mesopotamia & Egypt Packet” to page 26, and read the selection from one of the world’s oldest stories.

• Thoughtfully answer the questions that follow in complete sentences (in your notebooks).

• One additional IMPORTANT QUESTION:
  – What kind of message would this story have sent to Egyptians?
Egypt: Closure

• Reflect back on what we’ve learned about Egypt and list three (3) of the most important things that you’ve learned about Egypt on a separate piece of paper.