

# Geography of the Fertile Crescent

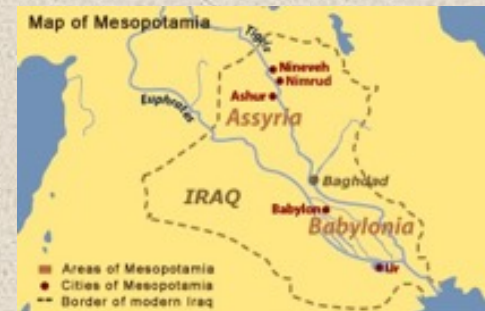


# Essential Question

How did geography influence the development of civilization in Southwest Asia?

## Objective

The Valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers were the site of the world's first civilizations.



# Main ideas

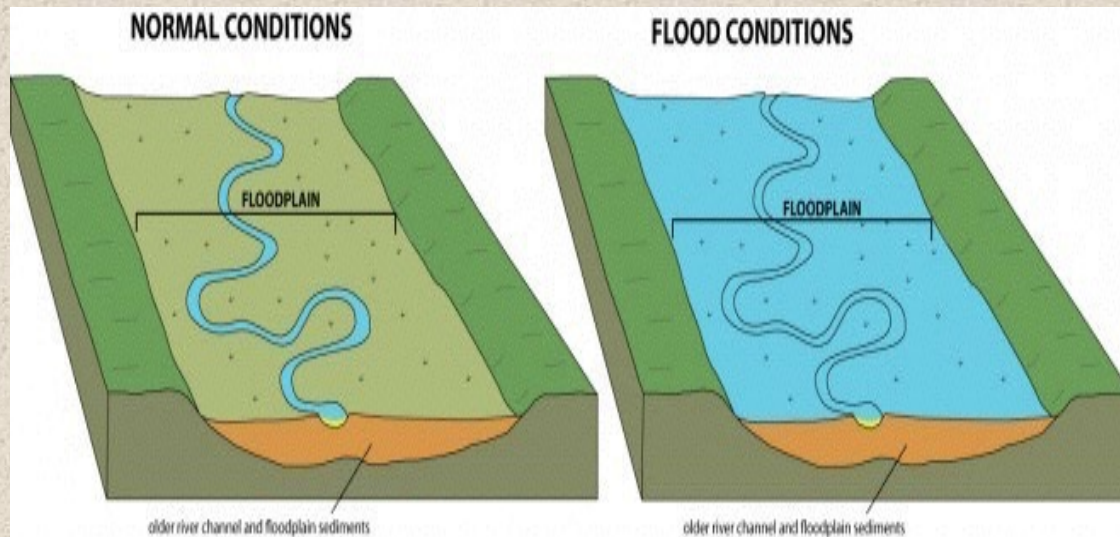
- 1. The Rivers of Southwest Asia supported the growth of civilizations.
- 2. New farming techniques led to the growth of cities.



Rivers Support the Growth of Civilization Early people settled where plants would grow and crops would grow around rivers



The soil around most rivers are rich and fertile because the river will normally flood yearly



The land between the Tigris and Euphrates is the Fertile Crescent

## The Fertile Crescent/Mesopotamia



This area between the Tigris & Euphrates is known as **Mesopotamia**



# The 2 parts of Mesopotamia Northern and Southern Mesopotamia

## Land Between Two Rivers

- Mesopotamia means “between the rivers” in Greek.
- Mesopotamia is part of a larger area of rich farmland called the **Fertile Crescent**.
- Mesopotamia was divided into two regions in ancient times: northern and southern Mesopotamia.



# Questions

- 1. Why was the soil in between the Tigris and Euphrates so fertile giving its name, “Fertile Crescent”?
- 2. What is the name of the area between the two rivers called and what does it mean?

# The Rise of Civilizations

## Hunters and Gatherers settled in Mesopotamia 12,000 years ago



**Silt** fertile soil left behind by flooding waters. Great dirt for planting crops and farming



7000 BCE was the first  
Mesopotamia settlement Grew  
**Wheat & Barley**



# Questions

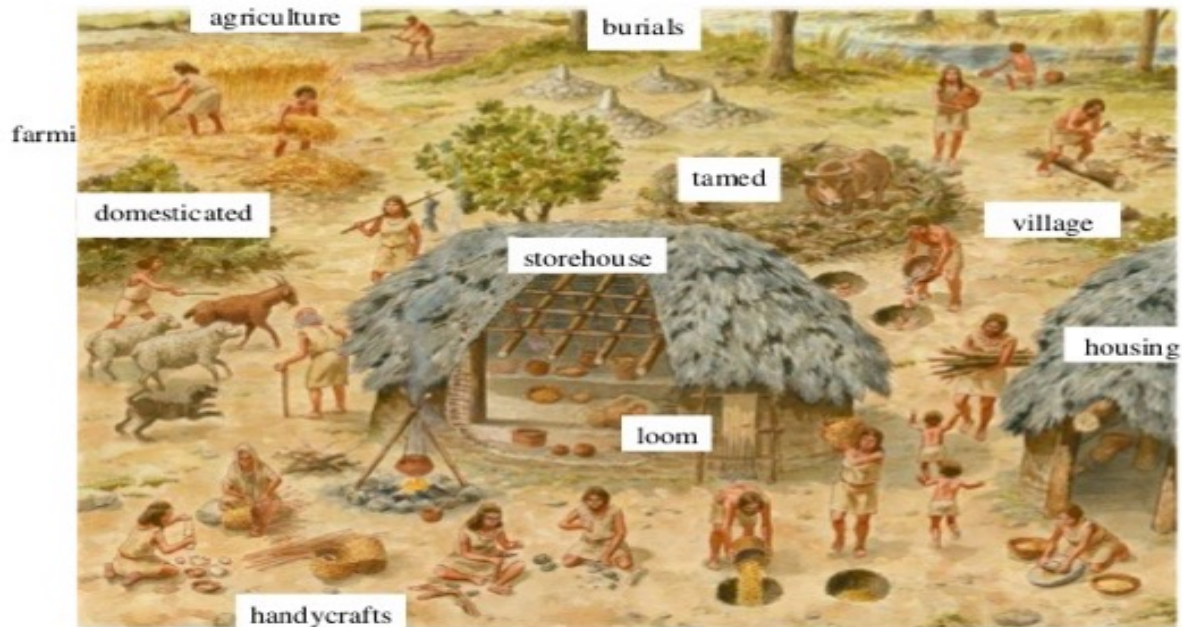
- 3. What type of soil is left behind after the flood waters recede back into the Tigris and Euphrates?
- 4. What was growing in Mesopotamia around 7000 BCE?

Livestock and Fish were other great sources of food



With a surplus of food population rises and villages develop

## Neolithic Age / New Stone Age



The soil in Mesopotamia was very rich and fertile



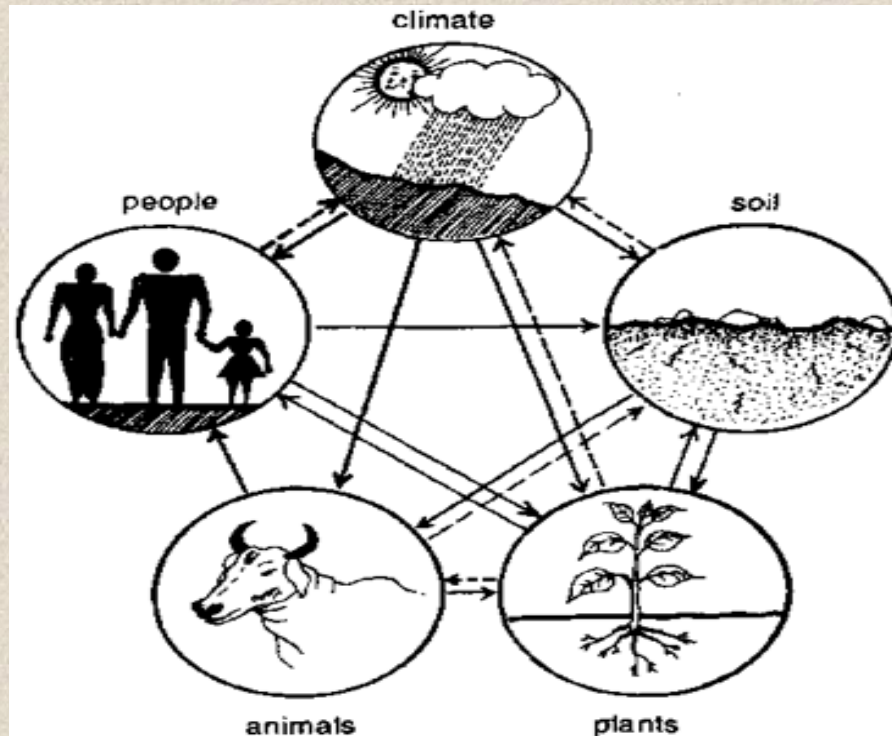
# Questions

- 5. What were other sources of food in Mesopotamia?
- 6. What is a result of a surplus of food?

But farming wasn't easy for the  
early civilization



# It was due to lack of Rainfall



The Tigris and Euphrates relied on rainfall from the Eastern part



Flooding occurs when there is too much rainfall



And the rivers of the Fertile Crescent do  
flood killing livestock and destroying  
crops



All this occurs during the “wet season”



When it is dry there is an opposite affect but with similar endings



When in a drought crops die and so  
do livestock



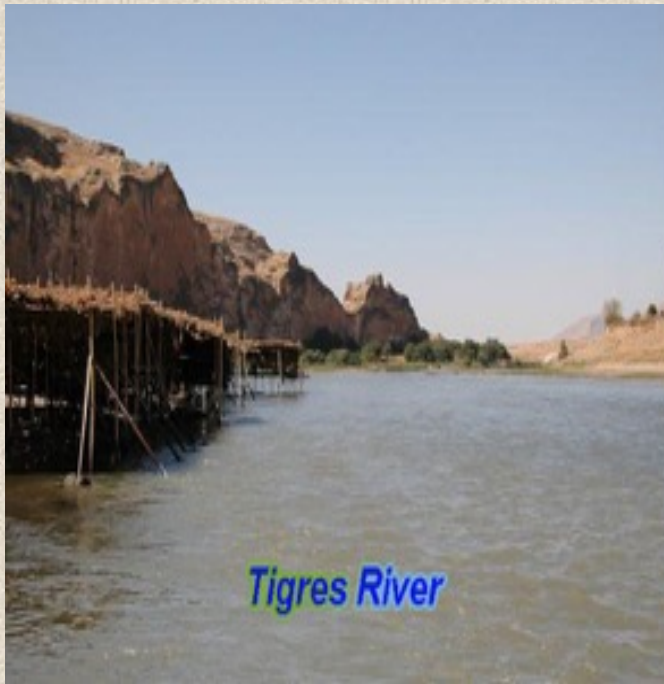
# Questions

- 7. Why was Farming difficult in the Fertile Crescent?
- 8. What is the result during these 2 seasons?

What they did was regulate the amount of water and controlled the water flow of the rivers



# Farmers solved the water problem by the use of Irrigation



Irrigation is the artificial watering  
of Farmland



# The early farmers of the Fertile Crescent dug out water storage Basins



Then they dug **Canals**, man-made waterways, to water the farmland



The water storage basins also stopped flooding water because the built up higher that the river



# Questions

- 9. To regulate the water what did the people of Mesopotamia do to handle the water during the wet and dry seasons?
- 10. Define Irrigation?

# Irrigation led to food surplus



Farmers irrigated the land for their  
herds could graze



With farming more productive a  
**Division of Labor** was created

## The invention of Agriculture changed the way people lived.

- Agriculture (Farming)



- Growth of Cities



- Division of Labor  
(Specialization)



- Trade



- Writing and Mathematics



Each person in their society had a specific job to do



# Questions

- 11. Irrigation led to a surplus of food and with farming more productive what did this lead to?
- 12. What is a Division of Labor?

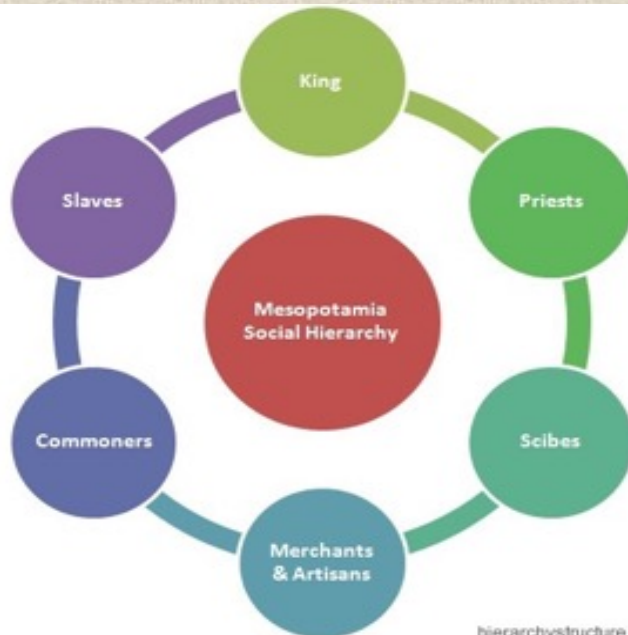
With a surplus of food, a growing population and a division of labor led to a large building projects



These projects required specialized workers, managers, and organization



# To complete these project Mesopotamia needed Rules and Government



[hierarchystructure.com](http://hierarchystructure.com)

## Geography

- All early civilizations developed near RIVER VALLEYS
- Examples of early civilizations: Egypt, Mesopotamia (Fertile Crescent), China and India
- Reasons they developed near rivers:
  - Fertile soil
  - Water supply supports irrigation for crops
  - Allow people to produce their own food
  - These areas had a climate that supported the growth of civilizations

Around 4000 and 3000 BCE Cities began to develop in Mesopotamia



Mesopotamia was based on Agriculture;  
Cities were trading post and provided  
leaders with a power base



Cities were political, religious, cultural,  
and economic centers of a civilizations



# Questions

- 13. How might running large projects prepare people for running a government?
- 14. Cities began popping up in Mesopotamia and they were trading centers and what else?

# Question

- 15. Based on the information provided, do you think that Mesopotamia could have existed if the river had no flooded and why? Answer is 3-5 sentences.