

HISTORY

WRITING AND CITY LIFE

1. Where was Mesopotamia located, and why is it considered the birthplace of city life?
2. What were the historical names of Mesopotamia, and how did they change over time?
3. How did the Sumerian language evolve in relation to Akkadian and Aramaic?
4. When did archaeological excavations in Mesopotamia begin, and what initially motivated European interest?
5. How did the focus of archaeological studies in Mesopotamia shift by the 1960s?
6. Describe the diverse environments found in Iraq and their significance to Mesopotamian civilization.
7. When and where did agriculture begin in Mesopotamia?
8. What role did the Euphrates and Tigris rivers play in supporting agriculture and city development?
9. What food resources were abundant in southern Mesopotamia?
10. Why didn't rural prosperity alone lead to the growth of cities in Mesopotamia?
11. What factors define an urban economy beyond food production?
12. How did specialization and division of labor contribute to urban economies?
13. Why was social organization necessary in Mesopotamian cities?
14. What resources were scarce in Mesopotamia, and from where were they imported?
15. How did Mesopotamians facilitate trade and transportation of goods?
16. What role did the Euphrates River play in the trade activities of the city of Mari?
17. When and how did the earliest forms of writing appear in Mesopotamia?
18. What is cuneiform, and how were clay tablets used in Mesopotamian writing?
19. How did cuneiform writing evolve by 2600 BCE, and what language replaced Sumerian around 2400 BCE?
20. What types of documents were created using cuneiform writing beyond record-keeping?
21. How long was cuneiform writing in Akkadian used in Mesopotamia?
22. What did cuneiform signs represent in Mesopotamian writing?
23. Why was writing considered a skilled craft in Mesopotamia?
24. Why was literacy rare among Mesopotamians?
25. How did literate kings demonstrate their reading ability?
26. How was written information shared with those who could not read in Mesopotamia?
27. What role did oral transmission play in Mesopotamian education?
28. How did Enmerkar, ruler of Uruk, use writing to improve trade communication?
29. Why was writing significant in Mesopotamian urban culture?
30. What were the key factors that led to the development of the earliest cities in southern Mesopotamia?
31. How did temples contribute to the economic and agricultural activities in Mesopotamian cities?
32. How did victorious chiefs gain authority in Mesopotamian society?
33. What technological advances were associated with urbanization in Mesopotamia?
34. Describe the characteristics of Uruk as an early temple town.
35. How was wealth distributed in Mesopotamian cities, particularly in Ur?
36. What was the typical family structure in Mesopotamian cities?

37. Describe the marriage customs in Mesopotamian society.
38. What were the main features of urban planning (or lack thereof) in the city of Ur?
39. How did Mesopotamians manage rainwater and household refuse in their cities?
40. What superstitions about houses were recorded in Mesopotamian omen tablets?
41. How were burials conducted in the city of Ur?
42. Where was Mari located, and why did it thrive after 2000 BCE?
43. What was the primary economic activity in the region around Mari?
44. What conflicts arose between herders and settled agricultural communities in Mari?
45. How did the kings of Mari demonstrate respect for Mesopotamian gods?
46. What factors contributed to Mari's prosperity as a trading hub?
47. Why did Mesopotamians take pride in their city life?
48. How does the Gilgamesh Epic reflect the significance of cities like Uruk?
49. What mathematical advancements were recorded on Mesopotamian tablets around 1800 BCE?
50. How did Mesopotamians divide time, and how was this system adopted by later civilizations?
51. What astronomical observations were recorded by Mesopotamians?
52. How did urban schools and writing contribute to the preservation of knowledge in Mesopotamia?