

Geography of Mesopotamia

There is no country called Mesopotamia today. Seven thousand years ago it included the area that is now eastern Syria, southeastern Turkey, and most of Iraq. It ranged from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the Persian Gulf in the south and from the Zagros Mountains in the east to the Syrian Desert in the west.

The main section of this region was called the Fertile Crescent. If you looked at a map and drew an upside-down horseshoe starting at Israel, up through Syria, and down through Iraq, you would form the crescent. The Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run through the area and converge at the Persian Gulf. This area was called “fertile” because ancient farmers used the waters of the Tigris and Euphrates to irrigate their crops, thus making the land fertile. The name Mesopotamia means “the land between two rivers”.

The geography and climate varied in the region. Northern Mesopotamia was a plateau with a mild climate. Summers were long and hot in southern Mesopotamia. Its alluvial plains were flooded each year by the Tigris and Euphrates and refertilized by rich silt. It was the most valuable farmland in the Arabian area and many tribes fought over it.

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

Geography of Ancient Mesopotamia

1.) Which modern-day countries made of the area of ancient Mesopotamia?

2.) Describe the following physical locations in Mesopotamia:

North: _____

South: _____

East: _____

West: _____

3.) Why is the main section of ancient Mesopotamia known as the Fertile Crescent?

4.) What are the two main rivers in Mesopotamia?

5.) What does the name Mesopotamia mean?

6.) Describe the climate of Mesopotamia:

Northern Mesopotamia: _____

Southern Mesopotamia: _____

7.) Why would people fight over farmland in ancient Mesopotamia?