

Mesopotamian Achievements and Inventions

In some respects, the Mesopotamians had the hardest job of all the ancient civilizations. The Romans learned from the Greeks, who learned from the Egyptians, who learned from the Mesopotamians. But there was no one to teach the Mesopotamians, so they figured out everything for themselves. Besides being known as the Fertile Crescent, Mesopotamia is often called the Cradle of Civilization.

The world's first written language was discovered in Sumeria. Cuneiform tablets give us a detailed look at daily life five thousand years ago.

Mesopotamians discovered many of the basic tools we use today. The wheel, arch, chisel, saw, lever, and pulley were all invented during Mesopotamian times. These discoveries led to a knowledge of architecture, which was used in the ziggurats and Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

The Mesopotamians organized their world as well. They created the first calendar system that divided the year into weeks. They did not stop there. Mesopotamians divided the days into hours, minutes, and seconds. They even invented the world's first clock, the sundial.

Time was not the only thing Mesopotamians organized. They developed the first government system to run a city, which led to written laws concerning the rights of the individual. They were also the first civilization to develop such inventions as irrigation and the sailboat.

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

Achievements and Inventions

Answer each of the following questions using complete sentences.

1.) How did the other ancient civilizations learn from the Mesopotamians? _____

2.) What is another name for Mesopotamia? _____

3.) What is the name of the first written language and where was it invented? _____

4.) What are some of the tools invented by the Mesopotamians? _____

5.) What did these tools allow the Mesopotamians to do? _____

6.) How did the Mesopotamians organize their world?

a.) _____

b.) _____

7.) What other form of organization did the Mesopotamians invent and what did it lead to?

8.) In your opinion, what is the most important Mesopotamian invention and why?