

Daily Life in Mesopotamia

Society in Mesopotamia was divided into three classes: the aristocracy, the working class, and the slaves.

The aristocracy was composed of rich and powerful families who owned much land. The king appointed members of the aristocracy as high priests, counselors, and generals in the army. The aristocracy lived in two-story brick homes made up of many rooms built around an open court. The men performed their official duties, boys went to school, women ran the household, and girls learned from their mothers. Fathers arranged all marriages in all classes. For fun, people were entertained by singers, musicians, and games such as checkers.

The largest group of people in Sumeria was the working class. Architects, scribes, merchants, farmers, cattlemen, and fishermen labored in the cities. They were paid in goods and food, not money. The men taught their sons the family trade. When they were not helping their husbands, mothers trained daughters to run a household. Depending on their wealth, working-class families lived in modest single-story homes of mud and brick. Men of the upper and middle classes shaved their heads and wore kilts around their waists. Women braided their hair and wore loose-fitting dresses fastened at the shoulders.

Slaves were either prisoners of war or individuals who had sold themselves into slavery to pay off their debts or to obtain enough food to live.

Name _____

Date _____

Period _____

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Answer each of the following questions using complete sentences.

1.) What were the three classes of people in Mesopotamia? _____

2.) Who made up the aristocracy? _____

3.) What jobs did the aristocracy do? _____

4.) Describe the houses of the aristocracy. _____

5.) Describe the family duties of the aristocracy. _____

6.) Who was part of the working class? _____

7.) How were the working class paid? _____

8.) Describe the family duties of the working class. _____

9.) Describe the houses of the working class. _____

10.) Describe the appearance and dress of the working class. _____

11.) Who were the slaves of Mesopotamia? _____

