Students will know about Egypt...

* The **Fertile Crescent** stretched from the Mediterranean coast through the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley to the Arabian Sea.
* **Mesopotamia**consisted of the lands of the Tigris-Euphrates River Valley. It means "the land between the rivers."
* Though they shared cultural beliefs and values, each Mesopotamian **city-state** was ruled by its own monarchy.
* Ancient **Sumer** was an advanced society that consisted of large city-states, fortified cities, and strong armies.
* Each Sumerian city-state had a **ziggurat**at its center. These large pyramids housed the priests and were the location for many important religious celebrations.
* Sumerians are credited with many advancements, including the first writing system called **cuneiform**(**scribes** wrote works on history, law, grammar, math, and literature), the wheel (used for vehicles and for making pottery), the plow & irrigation (which increased farm production), the clock, sewer systems, and the use of bronze to strengthen tools and weapons.
* A later Mesopotamian civilization, Babylon, developed **Hammurabi's Code**, which was a thorough set of written laws.
* Ancient Mesopotamians and ancient Egyptians both used**irrigation** and canals to help capture **silt**and water crops during the dry season. Their geographic differences, however, had a profound impact on the development of their cultures.
* Ancient Egypt was an advanced society with a strong, **theocratic dynastic** system.
* The **Three Seasons of the Nile**, including its' regular flooding every year, coupled with the isolation of the river valley at the edge of the **Sahara Desert** and the **Red Sea**, allowed Egypt to develop a technologically advanced, economically sound, and socially stable civilization.
* The **Nile River** flows over several **cataracts** (large waterfalls) that prevent shipping from the Ethiopian highlands to the Nile Delta.
* The largest concentration of Egyptian settled the Nile **delta** where silt carried by the Nile formed islands of rich, fertile soil.
* Because Egyptians believed that their rulers were gods, **dynasties** formed as the **Pharaohs**' power was typically passed down from generation to generation.
* The Pharaohs only represented one of the many gods in the Egyptians' **polytheistic** belief system.
* The Egyptian's written language consisted of thousands of symbols called **Hieroglyphs**. They can still be found painted on the walls of buildings and their interior walls of the pyramids but were often used to record religious text and records on a paper-like material made from **papyrus**. Even so, it wasn't until the discovery of the **Rosetta Stone** that historians could translate this complex language.
* The Egyptians' preserved their dead as**mummies** based on their belief that they would need their bodies in the afterlife.
* Judaism represents the first know **monotheistic**religion.
* According to the Jewish story of **Exodus**, the Jews were slaves in Egypt before being freed by God through a series of miraculous plagues and the parting of a sea. The holiday of **Passover**celebrates this event.
* **Moses**is perhaps the most well known figure in Judaism. According to belief, he was chosen to lead the Jews out of Egypt on their 40-year journey through the desert to Israel.
* The Jewish holy book (**Torah**) recounts this journey and includes Judaism's central beliefs and laws.
* Included in these laws are the **Ten Commandments** and the holy days of **Rosh Hashanah** and**Yom Kippur**.
* The modern nation of **Israel** traces its roots to the lands conquered by the Jewish people after their Exodus from Egypt. Throughout history, numerous groups (including Jews, Christians, and Muslims) have conquered and possessed the land, also known as **Palestine**, that is currently in dispute in the region.
* The **Phoenicians** created what is thought to be the first **alphabet**, using symbols to represent phonic sounds. This alphabet evolved over time to become the modern English alphabet used in America today.
* The Phoenicians built the world's finest harbors to enhance trade over the waterways.
* The **Mediterranean Sea** links Northern Africa, Southern Europe, Western Asia, and the Middle East.

Ancient Egypt  3500BCE-395CE

Summary:

* Greatest River Valley Civilization
* Nile River provided food, transportation, irrigation and fertilized the soil w/ predictible flooding
* Great builders, organizers, and most prosperous of 4 River Valley civs
* ***“Egypt is wholly the gift of the Nile.”*  – Herodotus, Greek Historian**

Geography of the Nile Region

* Nile River
* Flows north
* Originates Central African highlands
* Ends in the Mediterranean Sea
* Longest river in the world at 4,160 miles
* Floods regularly
* Until recent dams, flooded annually in July
* Floods predictable
* Added moisture to the soil
* Deposited silt, replenishing the soil with nutrients
* Caused delta to form at the mouth of the river

Influence of Environment

* Natural barriers (seas and deserts) that protected Egypt
* Settlements along thin stretch of Nile
* High pop. Density = large cities
* Stable food production made Egypt stable and strong
* Benefits of the Nile
* The river served as a highway
* United villages
* easy Travel
* Currents carried barges downstream to the delta
* Sails used to catch winds to return upstream
* River provided fish and wildlife for food
* Papyrus grew along river
* Used to make paper, floors androofs for houses

Egyptian Politics

* c. 8500 BC - 1st human life in the area
* c. 6500 BC - Probable start of agriculture in the Nile region
* Barley, wheat and vegetables grown
* c. 4000 BC Many small villages established along the Nile and civilization begins

Egyptian Economy

* controlled the Nile by building dikes, reservoirs, and irrigation ditches.
* The Nile served as a trade route connecting Egypt to Africa, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean world.
* Grew wheat and barley
* traded to middle east, eastern Med. and east Africa

Religion in Ancient Egypt

* Beliefs
* Polytheistic
* gods control nature, life and death
* gods identified with animals
* The Afterlife
* Believed the good lived on in happiness
* Believed the earthly body and goods would be needed as a home for the soul
* Preserved the bodies of the dead through mummification

Egyptian Gods

* Aman Re - Most important god
  + Sun god
* Osiris
  + God of the underworld
  + Judges the dead
  + Rise & fall of the Nile believed to be the death & rebirth of Osiris
* Set
  + God of evil who killed Osiris
  + Believed to cause failed harvest
* Isis
  + Wife of Osiris
  + Brought him back to life
  + Nile floods and brings renewed life

Egyptian Society

* Social Class
* social position and occupation determined at birth
* Parents taught their children their own trade

Egyptian Women

* Status of Women
* Relatively high status for that time in history
* Could buy and sell property
* Could seek divorce (although rare)
* Property inherited through female line
* A woman’s status increased
* when she had children
* Sometimes women considered property

Intellectual Egyptian History

* Great medical advancements
* Best builders of the ancient world
* Gifted at math and astronomy
* Greatest accomplishment is the pyramid

System of Writing

* Record keeping of religious rituals prompted writing
* ~3,100 BC
* Symbols evolved into hieroglyphics
* Writings carved in wood or stone

The Rosetta Stone

* Slab of black rock carved in three languages
* Hieroglyphics
* Demotic (shorthand hieroglyphics)
* Greek
* Found in 1799
* Enabled scholars to decipher papyrus scrolls of hieroglyphics

Egyptian Education System

* schools to train priests
* Subjects taught
* Reading & writing
* Math
* Religious ceremonies & rituals
* Eventually schools provided general education
* schools attended by wealthy
* Girls did not attend school
* Taught domestic skills at home
* Students took notes on scraps of pottery
* Papyrus was expensive & only used by advanced students

Egyptian Scientific Accomplishments

* Developed system of surveying land
* Important due to annual floods
* Surveying land led to Geometry
* Area & volume
* Development of astronomy
* To predict floods, eclipses
* Led to development of calendar
* 365 days, 12 months
* 3 seasons, 30 days for 11 months, 35 for the 12th
* No leap year
* Engineering for building
* Greeks & Romans based much of their medical knowledge on that of the Egyptians