

Ancient Sumer

Why do historians classify ancient Sumer as a civilization?

PREVIEW

Scientists sometimes describe a society or a group of humans as “highly civilized.” Explain what you think it means to be highly civilized, and provide specific examples.

READING NOTES

Key Content Terms

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers.

civilization

artisan

cuneiform

social structure

scribe

pictograph

technology

ziggurat

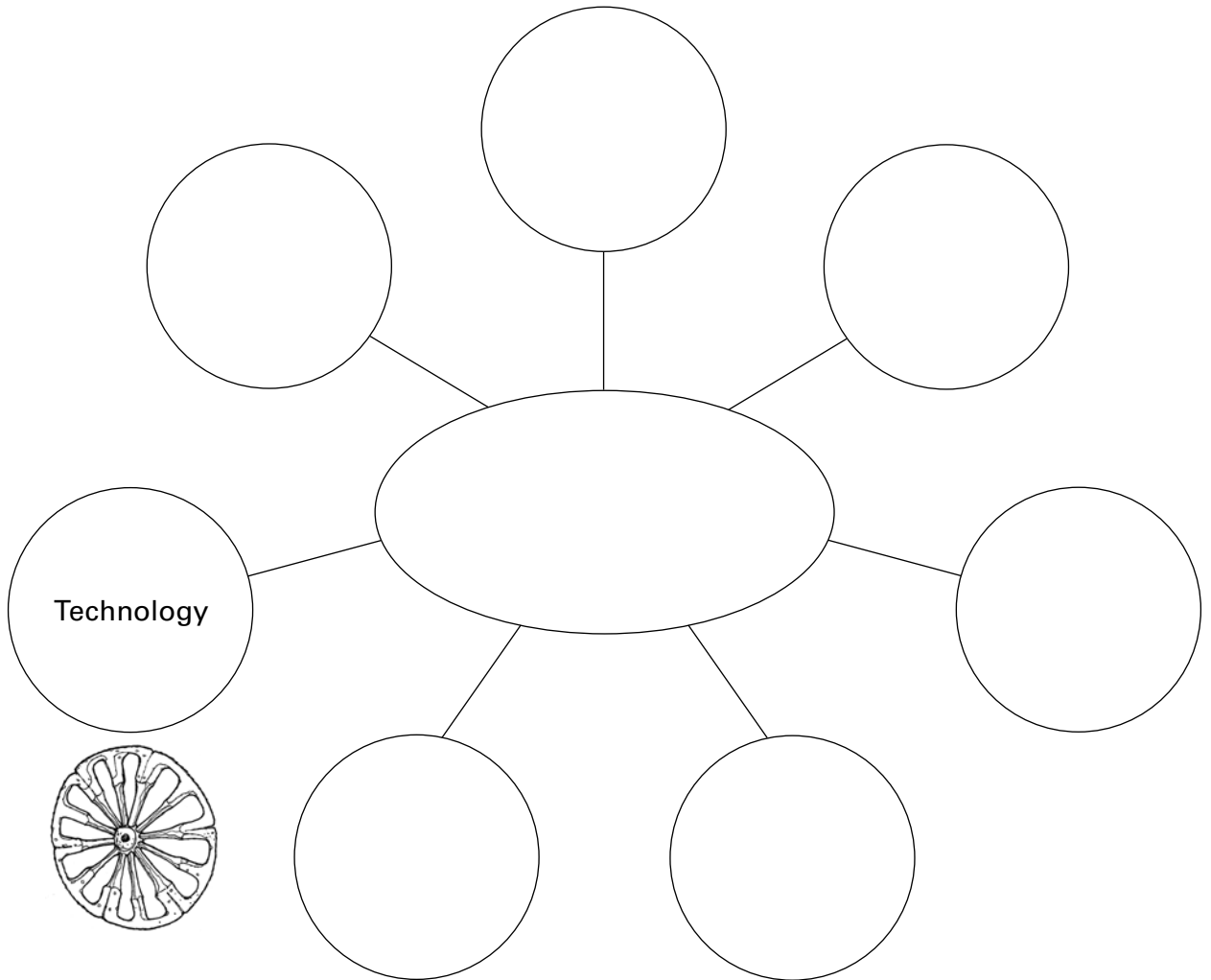
merchant

culture

Section 2

Complete the spoke diagram below. Follow these steps:

1. Write the title of the section in the large center circle.
2. In each small circle, write one of the characteristics of civilization.
3. Next to each small circle, draw a picture or symbol that represents that characteristic.

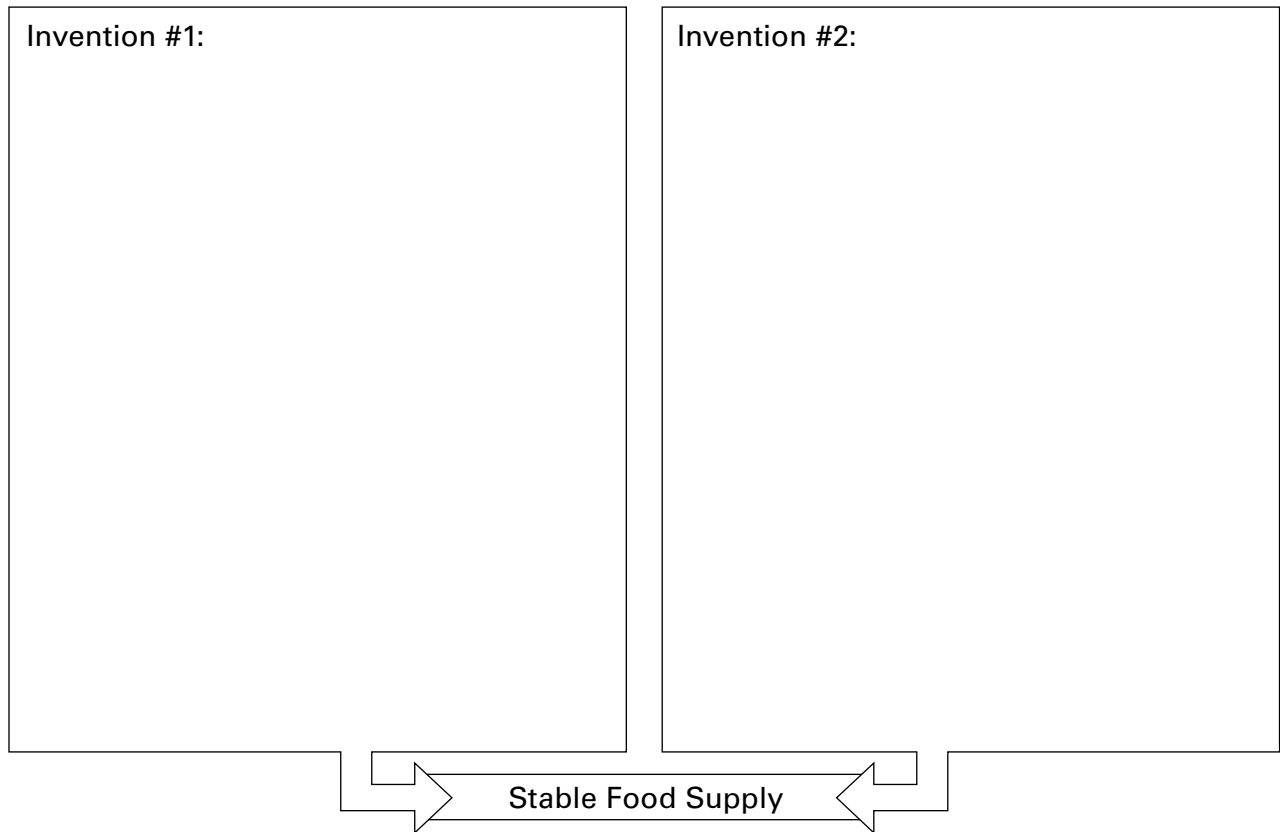


Sections 3 to 9

If your class is doing the activity for this chapter, complete all of the Reading Notes for each section. *If your class is not doing the activity, skip the last part of each section.*

Section 3

Complete the flowchart below. In each box, write the name of a Sumerian invention that helped create a stable food supply. Explain what the invention was and how the Sumerians used it.



(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of a stable food supply in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 4

In the ladder below, list and describe the people who lived at each status level of the Sumerian social structure. Next to each description, draw a symbol that represents that class.

	TOP	
	MIDDLE	
	BOTTOM	

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of social structure in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 5

Why did religious beliefs in Sumer make the government more powerful?

List all the duties of the government in Sumerian city-states. Circle the duty you think was the most important, and explain why you chose this duty.

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of government in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 6

What is a religious system?

Why was religion important in Sumer?

Draw and label a picture that shows two ways Sumerians expressed their religious beliefs.

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of religion in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 7

Name three types of artists in Sumer and explain what each one did.

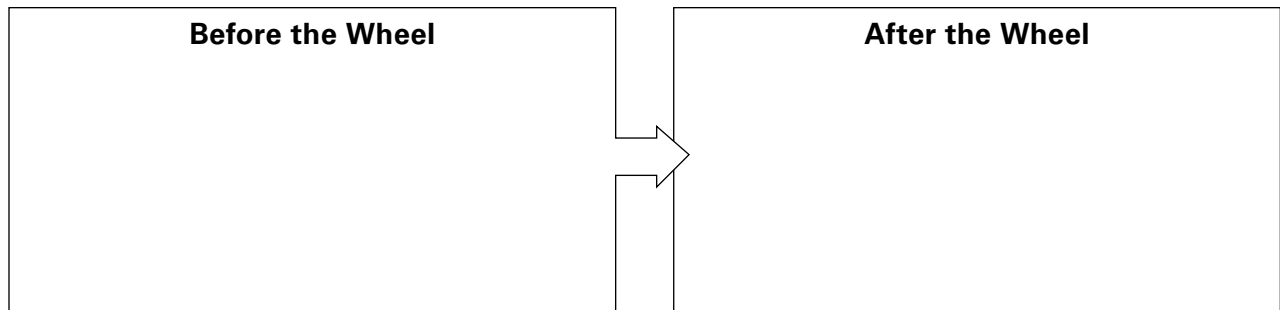
Why was music an important art in Sumer?

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of the arts in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 8

In the flowchart below, draw and label pictures to show what life was like in Sumer before and after the invention of the wheel.



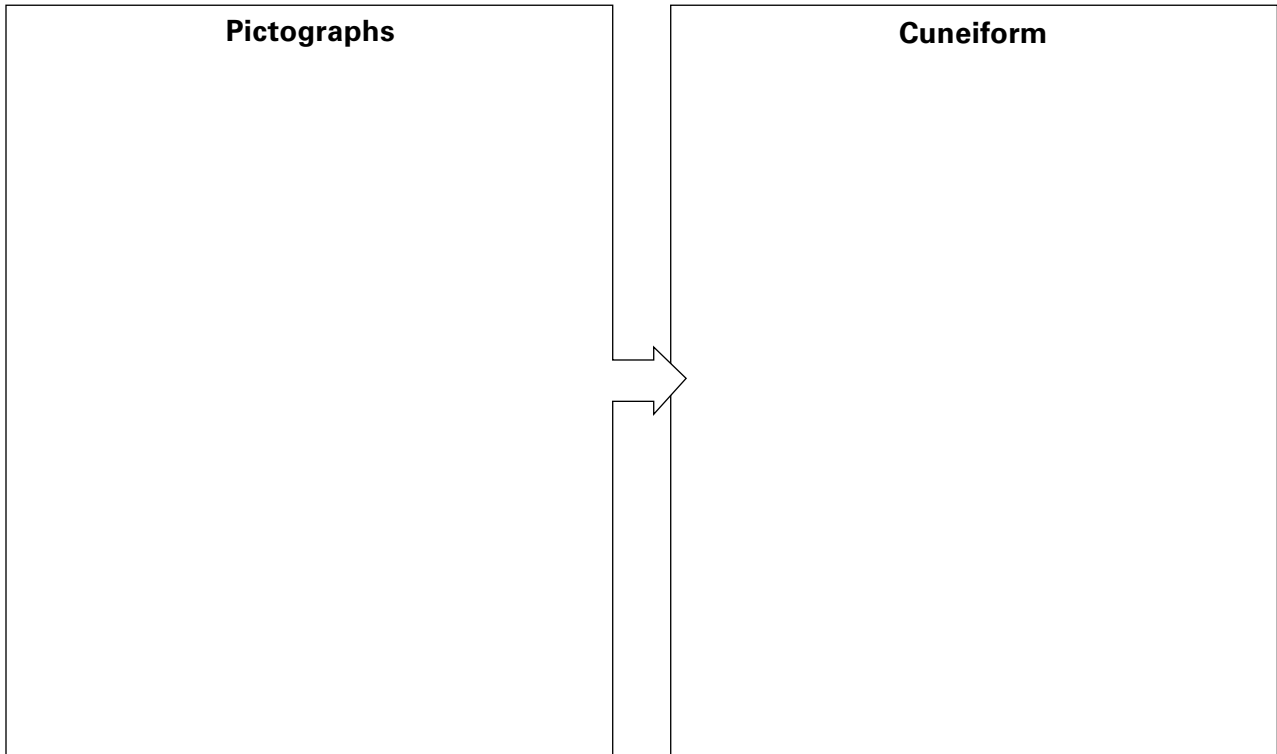
Draw and label a picture of a Sumerian arch. Explain why it was an important technological advance.

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of technology in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

Section 9

In the flowchart below, explain the development of writing in Sumer, from pictographs to cuneiform.



Why do you think cuneiform was a better method of communication than pictographs?

(Note: If your class is not doing the activity, skip the following.)

List the artifacts that show evidence of written language in Sumer. Choose one artifact. Write a sentence explaining how it relates to this characteristic of civilization.

PROCESSING

On a separate sheet of paper, create a spoke diagram as shown here. Find or draw pictures of *modern* items that are examples of each characteristic of civilization.

For each picture, follow these steps:

1. Glue or draw the picture next to the characteristic it relates to.
2. Complete this sentence: *(Name of artifact) relates to this characteristic of civilization because . . .*
3. Draw a line connecting the picture to the circle.

