

Unit: 1. EARLY RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

GLOSSARY AND CREDITS

History is, quite simply, the study of people. In this course, you will look at people from around the world and across time. In learning about them, you will also learn why the study of history is important to us today. You will discover that there are connections among historical events in our world; connections that link all people together across time and space. Once you understand what the study of history is all about, you will be able to apply this knowledge as you examine the history of the world's people.

In this unit, you will look at some of the earliest civilizations. Throughout the lessons, you will study the importance of agriculture and agrarian societies in the development of world history. The information in this unit will help you understand the major characteristics of civilization.

VOCABULARY

agrarian	a society based on agriculture
aristocratic	a type of government ruled by members of noble or wealthy families
civilization	a society that has a high level of culture and social organization
clan	a tribe or band of people, usually related
co-dependent	mutually dependent on someone else
divination	method or practice of attempting to foretell the future
domesticate	to tame an animal or change a plant
Eurasia	region between Europe and Asia
epic	a long narrative poem in elevated language celebrating the life of heroes

hieratic	describes a kind of hieroglyphic script using symbols rather than pictures
henotheism	a religion that gives preference to one god over all others
ideographic	symbols used in some writing systems that directly represent a thing or concept
indigenous	people groups that are native to a region
Indo-European	one of several language families; includes English, French, etc.
linguists	people who study languages
monotheistic	a belief in one god controlling the universe
militarization	a policy of promoting long-term military action
mercantilism	an economic system where colonies supply goods to the mother country
moldboard	the curved metal blade of a plow that turns over the soil
migration	moving from one place to another for any number of reasons
monotheism	a religion that worships one god
mythology	stories which are not necessarily true about ancestors, heroes, and gods
nomadic	a lifestyle of wandering from place to place in search of pasture or water
Neolithic	the latest period of the Stone Age, between 8000-5000 B.C.
oracle bone	piece of bone used in divination
pastoral	a life of tending livestock in open pastureland

pastoralism	a life of tending livestock in open pasture land
pictographic	a language based on the use of pictures to represent words
polytheistic	worshipping many gods
protolanguage	a recorded language that is the ancestor to a family of languages
polytheism	a religion that worships many gods
polytheistic	a belief that many gods control the universe
pictographs	a kind of writing that used pictures of objects
scribe	a person who kept official records for a king or emperor
sedentary	the act of staying in one place for a long time (e.g., farming)
steppe	a vast, semi-arid, usually grassy plain
steppes	a vast, semi-arid, usually grassy plain
wanax	ancient Greek title given to persons of nobility