

## CREATE YOUR OWN CIVILIZATION

Now that we've begun exploring the first civilization--Mesopotamia--it's time to apply your knowledge and innovative spirit to create your very own civilization.

First, though, let's review what makes a civilization:

The development of **agriculture** to the point where farmers are able to produce a **surplus** of food (beyond what is needed by one's family) is crucial to the formation of a civilization. In order to develop agriculture to this point, farmers must be capable of using techniques such as crop rotation, animal power, and forms of **irrigation**.

As a result of this surplus of food, a major part of the population no longer needs to spend most of their time producing food. Instead, they can go into occupations and trade for or buy the food they need. This **specialization of labor** is an important part of a civilization.

With predictable food sources, the establishment of occupations, and the participation in trade, people no longer need to lead a nomadic (wandering) life. Instead, there is a gathering of people into **permanent settlements** known as **cities** and population increases. Geographical features that provide important **resources** and **protection** from enemies are essential to the longevity of civilizations.

All civilizations involve some **form of government**, usually headed by a chieftain or ruling family. Political power is mostly in the cities. **Organized religion and education** are established. A **system of writing** and **record keeping** are developed, and **innovations** and **culture** flourish.

Questions to ask yourself while creating your own civilization:

R	<b>RELIGION:</b> How do people explain, relate to, and cope with the mysteries of life, especially birth and death? What are their myths? What god/s is/are worshipped? How do the people show respect for their god/s? Who are the "holy people"? What are the most important teachings and rules of the religion? What kinds of rituals or ceremonies are important? Are holidays celebrated?
E	<b>ECONOMY:</b> What items are essential to the lives of the people? How do people make a living? How do they produce, distribute, and exchange goods? What items are imported (brought from elsewhere) and which are exported (sent elsewhere)? How are items moved from one place to another? What monetary system do they use? How are trading records kept? What jobs need to exist to support the economy?
C	<b>CULTURE:</b> How do people express themselves creatively? What kind of experiences, thoughts, or feelings do people try to convey through forms of art (painting, sculpture, music, dance, theater, and literature)? Do they celebrate holidays that are cultural in nature, rather than religious? How does the architecture (what buildings look like) reflect what is important to the people? Is history important?
I	<b>INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS:</b> How do people form ideas and theories? What tools do they use? Is science understood or considered important? What innovations or inventions have they made and how did they come about? How do the people communicate? What is the written style of language? How are people educated? Who are considered the best teachers? Is being educated highly regarded?
P	<b>POLITICS:</b> What type of government does the civilization have? How are the leaders selected? What are the titles of those in power? What are their responsibilities? What major laws have been made? What punishments exist for the law breakers? Is there a need for foreign relations or is the civilization isolated? What about wars and in-fighting? Are there taxes? Are there courts of law?
E	<b>ENVIRONMENT:</b> Where is the civilization located? What is the climate like? What is the soil and the terrain like? Which physical features make life easy and which present challenges? Is the location advantageous for defense against attacks? Which crops and livestock does this location best support? What natural disasters are most feared? How do people attempt to change their physical environment?
S	<b>SOCIAL STRUCTURE:</b> How do people organize themselves in a society? How important is marriage and the family unit? What jobs are the most popular? Which jobs are the most highly regarded? If there are different classes of people, on what are the distinctions based? Is it possible to move from one social class to another? What is daily life like for the various classes of people?

## REQUIREMENTS

Now that you've reviewed the features of a civilization and asked yourself some important thought-provoking, idea-generating questions, it's time to create the items that will tell the story of what makes your civilization unique.

You will have three class periods to complete this project (Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of this week) and should be ready to present your civilization on Friday. All items must be your original work; they can be written or drawn by hand or on the computer. However your time is limited, so do NOT get bogged down by the tech stuff!

### On a poster board, you must include:

- \_\_\_\_\_ the **name** of your civilization written in large letters at the top of your board.
- \_\_\_\_\_ its **relative location** written out neatly; the more specific the description of the relative location, the better. (Remember "relative location" is a term we learned first quarter--be sure to use it correctly.) Your civilization must exist on Earth either in a place that is already inhabited or in an unexplored area such as somewhere at sea. No outer space stuff, please!
- \_\_\_\_\_ a **flag, pennant, or banner** made out of paper that highlights some unique feature/s of your civilization such as a government building, a founder or leader, a noteworthy geographical landmark, important religious or cultural values, etc. See the explanations of flags at the back of the atlas for inspiration. Each side of your flag, pennant, or banner should be least 4 inches so that it stands out on your board.
- \_\_\_\_\_ an **aerial map** (one drawn as if looking from above) that includes at least twelve (12) important natural and/or man-made features--this could include buildings, fields, borders, rivers, mountain ranges, etc. The map should be neatly drawn and labeled (by hand or by computer). Feel free to include any additional map features (such as a map key or compass rose) if you think it would be helpful to the viewer. This should be on a regular piece of copy paper (8 1/2 x 11).
- \_\_\_\_\_ a paper version of the front of a miniature **Tourist T-Shirt** with a catchy slogan about the civilization written in the language of the civilization (this would be something similar to what you would see in a souvenir shop while on vacation). The slogan should be translated into English below the T-Shirt itself. The T-Shirt should be at least 6 inches tall so that it stands out on your board.
- \_\_\_\_\_ a **description of at least two major inventions** your civilization has contributed to the world. The descriptions should be neatly written and include what the inventions are and how they came to be. They can be

- something that really exists (but was originally developed by your civilization) or completely imagined. Feel free to include drawings or images.
- \_\_\_\_\_ a **pie chart representing the five most popular occupations** in your civilization. Your chart should give a good idea of what percentage of the people in your civilization hold each of these jobs. Include an "other" category, if relevant, and any explanations that would be helpful.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ an **image of the monetary unit** of your civilization with the name of the unit written beside it and its worth as compared to the US dollar.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ a **Day in the Life** document (such as a daily schedule, short story, diary entry, letter home, etc.) that gives a full picture of what life was like for someone living in your civilization. This is a great opportunity to highlight some of the details that make living in your civilization so unique, especially those details that you have not already incorporated in the other items. The size and format of this document is up to you.

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## CHALLENGE OPTION

### ARTIFACT!

Create something that an archaeologist might discover from your civilization. This should be something that when "unearthed" would reveal important clues about what makes your civilization unique. This could be a part of a document such as a book, a peace treaty, or list of law-breakers and their crimes. It could be a piece of pottery, a tool, some jewelry, or maybe a hat in the shape of stalk of celery. The item does not need to fit on your poster board, but it does need to fit on a regular student desk, so use some self-restraint.

The artifact must be an original creation by you. You may not use an image or an item that already exists exactly as you find it, but you can use your clever ways to construct something by hand or "manipulate" something you find (either in real life or on the computer) to make it your own. The most important thing to remember is this: Your item has to represent something important about your civilization so that when your archeologically-minded classmates "discover" your artifact, they can make reasonable and intelligent guesses as to what it reveals about your civilization and, thus, learn something significant about the civilization from which it comes. *Please note: You should only take on the "challenge option" once you've completed all the other poster board requirements described above.*

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**DIG DEEP and HAVE FUN!!!**