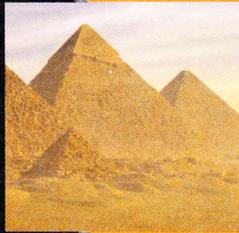


There's More Online!

- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Alexander the Great
- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Aśoka
- ✓ BIOGRAPHY Julius Caesar
- ✓ CHART/GRAPH Political Terms Derived from Greek
- ✓ IMAGE Pyramids at Giza
- ✓ INFOGRAPHIC India's Caste System
- ✓ INTERACTIVE SELF-CHECK QUIZ
- ✓ PRIMARY SOURCE Analects of Confucius
- ✓ TIME LINE Early Humans
- ✓ VIDEO Ancient Civilizations



LESSON 1

Ancient Civilizations

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What are the characteristics of a civilization?
- How did patterns of civilization differ between the ancient and medieval worlds?

Reading **HELPDESK**



Academic Vocabulary

- culture
- cycle
- classical

Content Vocabulary

- monotheism
- Mandate of Heaven
- oligarchy
- republic
- democratic

TAKING NOTES:

Key Ideas and Details

Identifying As you read, create a table like the one below identifying the six major characteristics of a civilization.

Civilization	
1	4
2	5
3	6

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

Around 3000 B.C., civilizations began to emerge in four different areas—Western Asia, Egypt, India, and China—that gave rise to the great empires of the ancient world. These included the Persian and Assyrian Empires, the empire of Alexander the Great, the Roman Empire, the Mauryan and Gupta Empires in India, and a unified Chinese Empire.

The First Humans

GUIDING QUESTION What factors contributed to the establishment of organized communities?

Historians rely mostly on written records to understand the past. However, no written records exist for the prehistory of humankind. In fact, *prehistory* means the time before writing was developed. Prehistoric analysis relies on archaeology, the study of past societies through an analysis of what people left behind. Archaeologists dig up and examine artifacts such as tools, weapons, and art. They also use physics and chemistry to date human fossils and artifacts, through such tools as radiocarbon dating and thermoluminescence. Tools of forensic chemistry, such as the analysis of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), also provide information about early humans.

Humanlike creatures first emerged in Africa more than 3 to 4 million years ago. Over a long period of time, Paleolithic people learned to create more sophisticated tools, how to use fire, and how to adapt to and even change their physical environment. Paleolithic people were primarily nomads who hunted animals and gathered wild plants for survival. Their chief work was finding food, and men and women were responsible for it. Despite this consuming task, they created a human **culture** that included cave paintings.

The agricultural revolution of the New Stone Age, which began around 10,000 B.C., dramatically changed human patterns of living. The planting of grains and vegetables provided a regular supply of food, and the domestication of animals added a steady source of meat, milk, and fibers such as wool for clothing. This Neolithic Revolution made it possible for humans to stop their nomadic ways

of living. Instead, they began to settle down and form more permanent settlements. These organized communities gradually gave rise to more complex human societies.

These more complex human societies, which we call the first civilizations, emerged around 3000 B.C. in the river valleys of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China. An increase in food production in these regions led to a significant growth in human population and the growth of cities. Efforts to control the flow of water for farming also led to organized governments in these new urban civilizations. A civilization is a complex culture in which large numbers of human beings share a number of common elements. Six of the most important basic characteristics of civilizations are cities, government, religion, social structure, writing, and art. The emergence of civilizations was a dramatic new stage in the story of world history.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Determining Cause and Effect What were the effects of the Neolithic Revolution?

The First Civilizations: The Peoples of Western Asia and Egypt

GUIDING QUESTION *What were the first ancient civilizations to emerge?*

The peoples of Mesopotamia and Egypt built the first civilizations. They developed cities and struggled with the problems of organized states. They invented writing to keep records and also created literature. Mesopotamians and Egyptians constructed monumental buildings to please their gods, giving witness to the gods' power and preserving their culture for all time. They developed new political, military, social, and religious structures to deal with the basic problems of human existence and organization. These first civilizations left detailed records that allow us to view how they grappled with three of the fundamental problems that humans have thought about: the nature of human relationships, the nature of the universe, and the role of divine forces in that universe. Although later peoples would provide different answers from those of the Mesopotamians and Egyptians, it was they who first posed the questions, gave answers, and wrote them down.

By 1500 B.C., much of the creative impulse of the Mesopotamian and Egyptian civilizations was beginning to decline. By 1200 B.C., the decline of the Hittites and Egyptians had created a power vacuum that allowed a number of small states to emerge and flourish for a short while. One example are the Phoenicians, who created a trading empire in the Mediterranean and an alphabet that was later adapted by the Greeks and Romans.

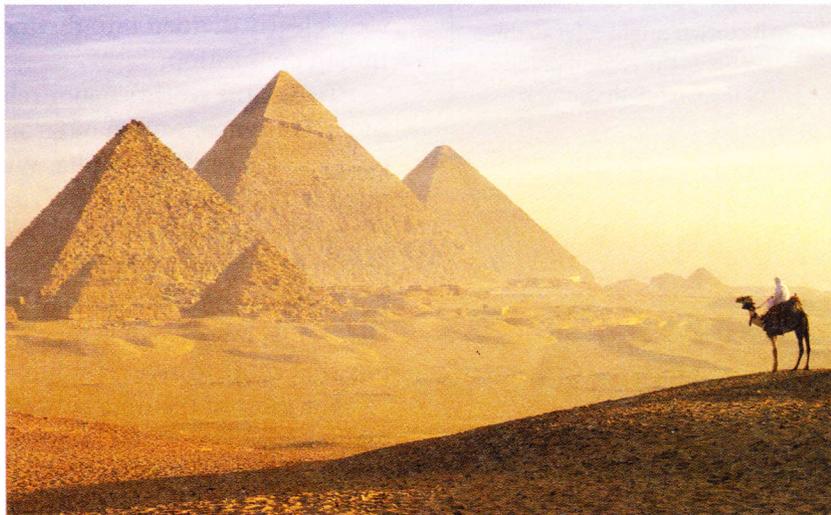
Of these small states, perhaps the most important was that of the Israelites, who created a kingdom under Saul, David, and Solomon. By the tenth century B.C., the inhabitants of Israel had divided into a northern kingdom of Israel and a southern kingdom of Judah. Larger states in the region, however, eventually conquered them. Although the Israelites created no empire, they left

culture the way of life a people follows

▼ Constructed under King Khufu around 2560 B.C., the Great Pyramid at Giza is the largest and most magnificent of all the pyramids.

CRITICAL THINKING

Analyzing Pyramids were tombs for the mummified bodies of pharaohs. What symbolic importance did they serve?



Societies developed calendars to measure time and to record significant events. Most societies have adopted the Gregorian calendar for civil affairs. This Christian calendar was introduced in the late 1500s. On this calendar, the era after the birth of Jesus is labeled A.D., Latin for *anno Domini*, “in the year of our Lord.” The years before Jesus’ birth are referred to as B.C., for “before Christ.”

Alternatively, some label those eras, or large divisions of time, as B.C.E. “Before the Common Era” and C.E. “Common Era.”

Scientists divide the past into time periods to help categorize information. Archaeologists often describe the past based on tool-making technology. For example, they named the Bronze Age for its prominent use of bronze tools. Historians often analyze the past by dividing time into fixed periods and periods based on events, such as the Age of the Enlightenment. They describe the world in terms of decades, periods of ten years, and centuries, periods of 100 years. For example, a historian might refer to the 1910s as the second decade of the twentieth century.

monotheism the belief in one God, rather than many

a spiritual legacy that influenced much of the later development of Western civilization. The evolution of Israelite **monotheism** established Judaism as a major world religion. Judaism influenced the development of Christianity and Islam. The Judeo-Christian heritage of Western civilization refers not only to the concept of monotheism, but also to the ideas of law, morality, and social justice that have become important parts of Western culture.

These small states were eventually overshadowed by the rise of the great empires of the Assyrians and Persians. The Assyrian Empire, built upon the effective use of military force, had been the first to unite almost all of the ancient Middle East. The empire of the Great Kings of Persia, however, was even larger. Although the Persian Empire owed much to the administrative organization developed by the Assyrians, the Persian Empire had peculiar strengths. Persian rule was tolerant as well as efficient. Conquered peoples were allowed to keep their religions, customs, and methods of doing business. The many years of peace that the Persian Empire brought to the Middle East aided trade and the general well-being of its peoples. It is no wonder that many peoples expressed their gratitude for being subjects of the Great Kings of Persia.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Making Connections What structures did early civilizations create to deal with problems of organization and questions about their existence?

The First Civilizations: Ancient India

GUIDING QUESTION How did civilization develop in ancient India?

As in Mesopotamia and Egypt, early civilizations in India emerged in river valleys. The Indus River valleys supported a thriving civilization between 3000 B.C. and 1500 B.C. that was based on two major cities, Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. An advanced civilization—known as Harappan or Indus civilization—prospered in these cities for hundreds of years and made significant political and social achievements. Internal decline, however, weakened this civilization in the Indus River valley. The final blow to the cities might have been an influx of new peoples.

The Aryans were an Indo-European-speaking nomadic people who moved south across the Hindu Kush mountain range into the plains of northern India. The ongoing migrations and interaction between the Aryans and the Dravidians—descendants of the Indus Valley people—resulted in a new and unique culture. A rigid caste system, in which people were clearly divided into distinct classes, became a chief feature of the new Indian civilization.

Two of the world’s major religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, began in India. Hinduism was an outgrowth of the religious beliefs of the Aryan peoples who settled in India. With its belief in reincarnation, Hinduism provided justification for the rigid caste system of India.

In the sixth century B.C., a new doctrine called Buddhism appeared in northern India. Buddhism was the product of one man, Siddhārtha Gautama. He claimed that he had awakened and seen the world in a new way. His simple message of achieving wisdom created a new spiritual philosophy that came to rival Hinduism.

For most of the time between 325 B.C. and A.D. 500, India was a land of many states. Two major empires, however, were able to create large, unified Indian states and an Indian civilization that set the standard for centuries.

The first of these empires, the Mauryan Empire in northern India, lasted from 324 B.C. until 183 B.C. The Mauryan Empire was at its height during the reign of Aśoka, who ruled from 269 B.C. until 232 B.C. Aśoka, who used Buddhist ideals to guide his rule, is considered to be the greatest ruler in the history of India.

In 183 B.C., the Mauryan Empire collapsed. India then fell back into disunity until a new empire arose. The Gupta Empire prospered from A.D. 320 until the invasion of the Huns reduced its power in the late fifth century. Both Indian empires experienced strong central government and artistic achievements. Indian civilization was extensive and eventually, in the form of Hinduism and Buddhism, spread to China and Southeast Asia.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Identifying Which two major religions began in India, and how did they influence society?

The First Civilizations: Ancient China

GUIDING QUESTION *What was significant about the first civilizations in China?*

Of the great civilizations we have discussed so far, China was the last to fully emerge. By the time the Shang dynasty began to display the first signs of an organized state, the societies in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India had already reached an advanced level of civilization. Not enough is known about the early stages of any of these civilizations to allow us to determine why some developed earlier than others. One likely reason for China's late arrival was that it was virtually isolated from other emerging centers of culture elsewhere in the world. It was forced to develop on its own.

The Shang dynasty created the first flourishing Chinese civilization. Under the Shang, China developed organized government, a system of writing, a lunar calendar, and advanced skills in the making of bronze vessels. During the Zhou dynasty, China began to adopt many of the features that characterized Chinese civilization for centuries. Especially important politically was the **Mandate of Heaven**, which supposedly gave kings a divine right to rule. This was closely tied to the pattern of dynastic **cycles**. Up to A.D. 1912, China was ruled by a series of dynasties. The Zhou dynasty lasted for almost 800 years. Others did not last as long, but the king of each dynasty ruled with the Mandate of Heaven. The family, with its ideal of filial piety, emerged as a powerful economic and social unit during the Zhou dynasty.

Between 500 B.C. and 200 B.C., three major schools of thought emerged in China—Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism. All three sought to spell out the principles that would create a stable order in society. All three came to have an impact on Chinese civilization that lasted until the twentieth century.

After 200 years of civil war, a new dynasty known as the Qin created a new era of Chinese unity. But the first Qin emperor was also the last of his dynasty. A new dynasty—the Han—established a vast empire that lasted more than 400 years. During the glory years of the Han dynasty, China extended the boundaries of its empire far into the sands of Central Asia and southward along the coast of the South China Sea into what is modern-day Vietnam. Chinese culture appeared unrivaled, and its scientific and technological achievements were unsurpassed.

Mandate of Heaven claim by Chinese kings of the Zhou dynasty that they had direct authority from heaven to rule and keep order in the universe

cycle a series of events that recur regularly and usually lead back to the starting point

▼ This Shang dynasty bronze vessel decorated with the heads of rams was used to store wine.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Inferring What might this artifact have conveyed to historians about life in ancient China?



One reason for China's striking success was that, unlike other civilizations of its time, it was for a long time able to fend off the danger from nomadic peoples along the northern frontier. By the end of the second century B.C., however, the presence of the Xiongnu was becoming a threat, and tribal warriors began to nip at the borders of the empire. Although the dynasty was strong and the problem was manageable, when internal difficulties began to weaken the unity of the state, China became vulnerable to the threat from the north and entered a time of troubles.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Outlining What differentiated the first three major dynasties in China?

The Civilization of the Greeks

GUIDING QUESTION *What contributed to the rise and fall of the civilization of the ancient Greeks?*

oligarchy “the rule of the few”; a form of government in which a select group of people exercises control

democratic when people are governed by the “rule of many,” or by the people, either directly or through their elected representatives

classical authoritative, traditional; relating to the literature, art, architecture, and ideals of the ancient Greek and Roman world

Unlike the great centralized empires of the Persians and the Chinese, ancient Greece consisted of a large number of small, independent city-states. The *polis*, or city-state, was a community of citizens ruled by its male citizens. The two most famous city-states were Sparta, a militaristic polis ruled by an **oligarchy**, and Athens, which became known for its **democratic** institutions in spite of the fact that many slaves and women had no political rights.

The Greek city-states thrived and reached their height in the **Classical** era of the fifth century B.C. The century began with the Persian wars, which temporarily unified the Greeks, who were victorious against the powerful Persian Empire. But the growth of an Athenian empire in that same century led to a mighty conflict with Sparta—the Great Peloponnesian War. This led to a weakening of the Greek city-states that led to an invasion by Philip II of Macedonia that put an end to the freedom of the Greeks in 338 B.C.

Despite the small size of their city-states, these ancient Greeks created a civilization that was the source of Western culture. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle established the foundations of Western philosophy. Western literary forms are largely derived from Greek poetry and drama. Greek notions of harmony, proportion, and beauty have remained the touchstones for all subsequent Western art. A rational method of inquiry, important to modern science, was conceived in ancient Greece. Many political terms are Greek in origin, as are the concepts of the rights and duties of citizenship, especially as they were conceived in Athens, the first great democracy the world had seen. Especially during the Classical era, the Greeks raised and debated fundamental questions about the purpose of human existence, the structure of human society, and the nature of the universe that have concerned thinkers ever since.

The Greeks were unable to rise above the rivalries that caused them to fight each other and undermine their civilization. Although the Greeks lost their freedom to Philip II, Greek culture did not die. A new age, known as the Hellenistic era, eventually came into being.

That era began with the conquest of the Persian Empire by Alexander the Great, the young successor to his father, Philip II. Alexander, vowing to avenge the Persian attacks on Greece, crossed into Asia Minor with his army in 334 B.C. Within four years, the Persian Empire was defeated. Alexander, never at rest, moved eastward into India. There, a mutiny by his exhausted troops forced him to return to Babylon, where he died in 323 B.C. Alexander was a great military leader, but not a good political administrator. He failed to establish any definite structure for the empire. Four Hellenistic kingdoms emerged as the successors to Alexander.



▲ This bronze helmet and breastplate are from the time of the Peloponnesian War in the fifth century B.C.

CRITICAL THINKING

Drawing Conclusions What purpose might these artifacts have served?

Within those kingdoms, the resulting society is known as Hellenistic, meaning to “imitate Greeks.” The Greek language became dominant as Greek ideas became influential. Greek merchants, artists, philosophers, and soldiers found opportunities and rewards throughout the Middle East, now a world of kingdoms rather than independent city-states.

The Hellenistic period was, in its own way, a vibrant one. New cities arose and flourished. New philosophical doctrines—such as Epicureanism and Stoicism—captured the minds of many. Significant achievements occurred in literature and science, and Greek culture spread throughout the Middle East and made an impact wherever it was carried. Although the Hellenistic era achieved a degree of political stability, by the late third century B.C., signs of decline were beginning to multiply, and the growing power of Rome eventually endangered the Hellenistic world.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Recognizing Relationships What was the legacy of the Greeks to Western civilization?

The World of the Romans

GUIDING QUESTION *What characteristics defined Roman rule?*

Sometime in the eighth century B.C., a group of Latin-speaking people built a small community called Rome on the Tiber River in Italy. Between 509 and 264 B.C., this city expanded and united almost all of Italy under its control. Roman diplomacy was as important as its armies in achieving this goal. Roman rule was made acceptable by allowing local autonomy and gradually granting Roman citizenship to non-Romans. During this time of conquest, Rome also developed the political institutions of a **republic** ruled by an aristocratic oligarchy.

Although Rome had no master plan for expansion, its relationship with its neighbors outside of Italy soon led to involvement in new wars. Its first challenge was Carthage and the Carthaginian Empire in Spain and Africa. Rome was victorious after the three long and bloody Punic Wars. In the east, Rome conquered Macedonia and also took control of the Greek states. Between 264 and 133 B.C., Rome expanded to the west and east and became master of the Mediterranean Sea.

After 133 B.C., Rome’s republican institutions proved to be inadequate for the task of ruling an empire. In the breakdown that ensued, ambitious individuals such as Pompey, Crassus, and Julius Caesar saw opportunities for power unparalleled in Roman history and succumbed to the temptations. At the beginning of the first century, military reforms had made possible the creation of professional armies that were loyal to the generals who recruited them, rather than to the state. Bloody civil war ensued as powerful individuals jockeyed for power. Peace was finally achieved when Octavian defeated Antony and Cleopatra.

After a series of bloody civil wars, Octavian, who came to be known by the title of Augustus, created a new order that began the Roman Empire. He did not declare the Republic dead and continued to give the Senate a role in governing. But most of the political power remained in the hands of Augustus. He became the first Roman emperor. The army swore loyalty to him, and the return of peace soon made the new political order acceptable to most people in the empire. In the second century, five “good emperors”



▲ *The Winged Victory of Samothrace*, a marble statue dated circa 190 B.C., embodies the artistic movement of Hellenistic Greece.

republic a form of government in which the leader is not a king and certain citizens have the right to vote

maintained a period of peace and prosperity in which trade flourished and the provinces were governed efficiently. The Roman Empire developed a remarkable series of achievements that were bequeathed to the future.

These achievements were fundamental to the development of Western civilization, a civilization that consisted largely of lands in Europe conquered by the Romans, in which Roman culture and political ideals were gradually spread. The Romance languages of today—French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Romanian—are based on Latin. Western practices of impartial justice and trial by jury owe much to Roman law. As great builders, the Romans left monuments to their skills throughout Europe, some of which, including aqueducts and roads, are still in use today. Other monuments provided models for public buildings in the West for hundreds of years. Aspects of Roman administrative practices survived in the Western world for centuries. The Romans also preserved the intellectual heritage of the Greco-Roman world of antiquity.

By the third century, however, the Roman world was suffering an era of decline. Generals fought each other in civil wars. German tribes and Persian armies invaded the empire. There were plagues, population decline, and economic problems. At the same time, a new religion—Christianity—was spreading throughout the empire. Like Judaism, Christianity was

monotheistic. Beginning among the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, Christianity, with its promise of salvation and its universality as a religion for all, slowly gained acceptance. In Rome's last 200 years, as Christianity with its ideals of spiritual equality and respect for human life grew, a slow transformation of the Roman world took place. The Germanic invasions hastened this process and brought an end to the Western Roman Empire in A.D. 476. Many aspects of the Roman world continued, but a new civilization was emerging that carried on another stage in the development of human society.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Summarizing How and why did Rome make the transition from a republic to an empire?

- ▼ Gladiatorial games were held in amphitheaters throughout the Roman world. The most famous was the Colosseum in Rome.

► CRITICAL THINKING

Making Connections What types of modern buildings resemble the Colosseum?



PHOTO: ©Image Source/PunchStock

LESSON 1 REVIEW



Reviewing Vocabulary

1. **Making Connections** How did rule differ under oligarchies, democracies, and republics?

Using Your Notes

2. **Identifying** Use your notes to identify the characteristics of a civilization.

Answering the Guiding Questions

3. **Drawing Conclusions** What factors contributed to the establishment of organized communities?
4. **Inferring** What were the first ancient civilizations to emerge?
5. **Making Generalizations** How did civilization develop in ancient India?

6. **Analyzing** What was significant about the first civilizations in China?

7. **Explaining** What contributed to the rise and fall of the civilization of the ancient Greeks?

8. **Evaluating** What characteristics defined Roman rule?

Writing Activity

9. **NARRATIVE** Imagine you are a nomad, moving from place to place to survive. Which factors would you need to settle in one place, start a community, and eventually form a successful civilization?