CHAPTER 3: ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

1. Ancient Mesopotamia
2. Ancient Egypt
3. Ancient India
4. Ancient China
5. Ancient Greece
6. Ancient Rome
7. The Middle Ages
8. The Renaissance
9. The 17th and 18th Centuries
10. The 19th Century
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ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA

Materials:

Needs of People cards
Map of Mesopotamia
Posters of Mesopotamia
Books
Pictures

Presentation:

1. Say, “We have been talking about the development of humans over time. Once humans settled in one place and began farming, a civilization developed. All the first civilizations began close to large rivers. Why would people want to live there?” “Rivers provide water to drink for people and animals, and for crops to grow. Flooding in the spring brings new nutrients for the crops. Rivers provide transportation and communication routes.”

2. “About 5,000 years ago, people settled between two large rivers in what is now Iran and Iraq on the Arabian Peninsula. The rivers were the Tigris and Euphrates.” Show the location on a map of Africa and Asia.

3. “The civilization was called Mesopotamia which means ‘land between two rivers’. The first group of people were the Sumerians. The people started many cities. They traded with each other and also fought with each other.”

4. Share the needs of people cards with the children. Discuss.
5. The children work with the needs of people cards.

6. The children label a map with the names of the rivers, city states, land and water forms, and continents.

**Some Achievements of the Mesopotamians:**

1. **Mathematics:** The Babylonians used a number system based on 60. Their year was 360 days with 12 months of 30 days. They divided the circle into 360˚, the hour into 60 minutes, and the minute into 60 seconds. They developed the concept of zero. They knew basic arithmetic, the elementary principles of geometry and algebra, and had an approximate value for pi.

2. **Writing:** More than 5,000 years ago, the Sumerians developed Cuneiform writing, a wedge-shaped writing. The scribes used a sharpened reed, or stylus, to write on wet clay tablets. When the clay was dried in the sun, there was a permanent record of the letter, document, business transaction, or literary work. Thousands of these clay tablets have been found that provide a record of life in Sumeria.

3. **Inventions:** About 5,000 years ago, the Sumerians invented the wheel; it was attached to the sled to make transportation easier. The first wheel was made from three pieces of wood bound together with wooden battens and leather.

4. **Architecture:** The Mesopotamians built many-storied, stepped towers called ziggurats that symbolized mountains. The top had a small shrine that was considered the dwelling place of the god. They were made of bricks of mud.
5. **Astronomy:** The Babylonians believed that the movements of the stars could predict or determine events on the earth. The priests who were also scientists determined the positions of stars, plotted the orbits of the sun and the moon, and calculated the dates of the summer and winter solstices, and the spring and autumn equinoxes.

6. **Kings:** The leader of the Mesopotamians was the king. The people believed that the king was chosen by the gods and received power from them. The king had three roles: he was the obedient servant of the gods, he was the military leader who led the people into battle, and he was the chief magistrate and administrator of the city state.

7. **The Code of Hammurabi:** The Code of Hammurabi was developed by King Hammurabi of Babylon. He based his code of 282 laws on an older collection of laws. His code was meant to protect the rights of the individual and to protect the weak from the strong.

8. **The City State:** By 3,000 B.C., there were 12 city states between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Each city state consisted of an urban center surrounded by villages and farmland.
Time Line of Mesopotamia:

~8,000 B.C. - Agriculture developed in the Tigris-Euphrates River valleys.

~5,000 B.C. - In southern Mesopotamia, there was little rainfall so the people learned to irrigate their crops from the Euphrates River. They developed ox-drawn plows to make farming easier. These two things made Sumeria wealthy.

~4,000 - 3,500 B.C. - There were disastrous floods in southern Mesopotamia.

~3,600 B.C. - The first city is Sumer ruled by priests, then kings.

~3,500 B.C. - The earliest writing uses pictographs, which develops into cuneiform or wedge-shaped writing. The first wheeled vehicles are used.

~3,400 B.C. - The administrators of the temples developed a cylindrical seal that was rolled to create a continuous, repetitive pattern. People used these seals as identification markers.

~3,000 B.C. - Cuneiform writing is developed. The wedge-shaped lines were inscribed into wet clay with a stylus. Writing changed from right to left in columns to left to right horizontally.

~2,750 B.C. - King Gilgamesh ruled Uruk. The Epic of Gilgamesh, the story of his exploits, was the first significant literature.

~2,700 B.C. - The cities grow in prosperity and walls are built for defense.

~2,500 B.C. - Death pits are discovered at Ur. When a king died, soldiers, grooms, musicians, and members of the court were buried with him.

~2,350 B.C. - Enheduanna, daughter of King Sargon, became the first poet. She was the high priestess of Ur and recorded temple hymns in Sumerian.

2,334 - 2,279 B.C. - King Sargon I of Akkadia conquered the city states and formed the first empire.
2,000 - 1,800 B.C. - Clay envelopes were used to enclose clay tablets with cuneiform writing in order to protect the privacy of the people. The envelope was addressed with the sender’s seal.

1,813 B.C. - Shamshi-Adad I became leader of Assyria and expanded its boundaries.

1,792 - 1,750 B.C. - King Hammurabi united Mesopotamia under his rule and developed his Code of Hammurabi. There were 282 laws covering taxes, wages, debts, theft, and adoption.

~1,570 B.C. - Kassite kings began 400 years of ruling Mesopotamia.

~1,450 B.C. - The literary epic, Enuma Elish, is recorded.

~1,350 B.C. - Assyria regained its independence.

~1,200 B.C. - Royal land grants were recorded on stones and placed at boundary lines. The stones were called Kudurras.

~1,000 - 800 B.C. - The Mesopotamians invented beer, soups, breads, and cheeses.

744 - 727 B.C. - King Tiglath-Pileser III founded the New Assyrian Empire and conquered Babylon.

689 B.C - King Sennacherib of Assyria looted Babylon.

612 B.C - Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was conquered by the Babylonians.

605 - 562 B.C. - King Nebuchadnezzar II expanded the New Babylonian Empire and built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

~600 B.C - King Nebuchadnezzar built the Ishtar Gate using glazed bricks for the first time.

586 B.C. - King Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Jerusalem and enslaved the Jews.
539 B.C. - King Cyrus the Great of Persia conquered Babylon and made it part of the Persian Empire.

331 B.C. - Alexander the Great of Macedonia defeated the Persians and made Babylon the capital of his empire. Babylon crumbled after his death.

**Research:**

1. The children make their own needs of people cards, writing the definitions in their own words.
2. The children draw pictures or make dioramas of the people and the culture.
3. The children research the government.
4. The children research the religion and the gods and goddesses.
5. The children research the daily life of the people, the society, and the different occupations of the people.
6. The children research each of the city states: Ur, Sumer, Babylon, etc.
7. The children research the architecture: the Ziggurats, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, etc. They make models.
8. The children research cuneiform writing and practice the writing in clay tablets.
9. The children research the art and culture: statues, murals, jewelry, helmets, drawings, bas-reliefs; clothing; guilds. They make models and artifacts.
10. The children research King Hammurabi and the laws he developed (the Code of Hammurabi).
11. The children research the achievements of the Mesopotamians: the first writing (cuneiform); the tools they developed (wheel, arch, chisel, saw, lever, and pulley); the first calendar; the first clock (sundial); dividing the day into hours, minutes, and seconds; astronomy; mathematics; etc.

12. The children research the economy.

13. The children research literature.

14. The children research education.

15. The children research famous people.

16. The children begin a time line of ancient civilizations. They draw a picture showing food, clothing, shelter, defense, transportation, etc. and write a paragraph about the culture.

17. The children develop a time line of Mesopotamia and the important events in its history.

Books:

Ancient Civilizations: Mesopotamia. Jane Pofahl. ISBN 513-02188-4-1

ANCIENT EGYPT

Materials:

Needs of People cards
Map of Ancient Egypt
Posters of Ancient Egypt
Books
Pictures

Presentation:

1. Say, “We have been talking about the civilization that developed in Mesopotamia between two large rivers about 5,000 years ago. About the same time, another civilization developed by the Nile River in northern Africa, in a place we now call Egypt. People settled there for the same reasons that they did in Mesopotamia.” Review.

2. Show the location on a map of Africa.

3. Share the needs of people cards with the children. Discuss.

4. The children work with the needs of people cards.

5. The children label a map with the names of the Nile River, Upper and Lower Egypt, cities, land and water forms, and continents. Show pictures of the land, the people, and the architecture.
Some Achievements of the Ancient Egyptians:

1. **Writing:** The Egyptians invented hieroglyphics, a system of writing using ideographs, symbols that represented sounds and ideas. Scribes painted the symbols on monuments, temples, and papyrus, paper made from papyrus reeds.

2. **Public Administration:** Hundreds of scribes measured the rise and fall of the Nile River, predicted which fields would be flooded, forecasted the size of the harvest, estimated the taxes, and distributed funds to government projects. They ran the government smoothly.

3. **Land Surveying:** The Egyptians had accurate methods of surveying land to know the exact size of the pharaoh’s land and to help in taxing the people. They used surveying to plan and to develop the large-scale architecture and irrigation projects.

4. **Large-scale Irrigation:** The Egyptians used large-scale irrigation projects to use the Nile River effectively.

5. **Architecture:** Gigantic pyramids and temples were built of limestone blocks as tombs for the pharaohs and as temples for the gods. The Great Pyramids at Giza built for the Pharaoh Khufu and his son Khaefre took 20 years and 100,000 slaves to build.

6. **Religion:** The Egyptians believed in life after death. They invented mummification to preserve the body for the afterlife. The dead were provided with food, clothing, and furnishings for use in the afterlife.

7. **Calendar:** The Egyptians were gifted astronomers and mathematicians. They developed a 365 day calendar with 12 months of 30 days and 10 days per week. The last five days were feast days to honor the gods.
8. **Ship-building:** The Egyptians built canoes, yachts, barges, and freighters. The first boats were made of reeds. Galleys were long, narrow boats rowed by several oarsmen. By 3,000 B.C., they had learned to build ships out of wood planks and had developed sails.

**Time Line of Ancient Egypt:**

~3,200 B.C. - Menes united Upper and Lower Egypt through war.

~3,100 B.C. - City of Memphis was founded as the capital of a united Egypt.

~3,000 B.C. - Pharaohs, god-kings, ruled Egypt. The people believed the pharaoh was chosen by the gods as the supreme ruler. When a man became pharaoh, he became a god. Musical instruments such as harps, flutes, lyres, and double-clarinets were played in Egypt.

~2,700 B.C. - Hieroglyphic writing was developed. Each symbol had a meaning and could be read phonetically. The calendar was invented.

~2,600 B.C. - The Great Pyramid of Pharaoh Khufu built at Giza. It was 482 feet high and had a white limestone covering.

2,686 - 2,281 B.C. - The Old Kingdom of Egypt. Powerful pharaohs built huge pyramids and temples and established trade with other kingdoms.

~2,500 B.C. - Worship of Ra or Amen-Re, the sun god, became the first religion of Egypt. He was shown as a man with the head of a falcon topped by a solar disk. He sailed across the sky in a boat during the day and sailed under the world by night.

~2,500 B.C. - The Egyptians believed in an afterlife where their souls needed their bodies again after death, so they developed mummification, a process of embalming. The mummified body was placed in a wooden coffin, the
sarcophagus, that was painted and carved to resemble the dead person.

Food, clothing, jewelry, furniture, and tools were placed with the dead person for use in the afterlife.

~2,400 B.C. - The Egyptians developed papyrus paper scrolls. They cut thin strips of papyrus from the stems of the papyrus plant and pounded it with a mallet until the natural juices glued the strips together into sheets. They bound the sheets together into scrolls. Scribes used wet reed pens and charcoal to write in ink on the scrolls.

2,181 - 2,040 B.C. - Chaos resulted when a series of weak pharaohs ruled Egypt. There was no centralized rule, and warlords fought each other over territory. During the First Intermediate Period, there were two separate kingdoms that fought each other and foreign kingdoms.

~2,100 B.C. - Thebes became the capital of Egypt.

2,040 - 1,786 B.C. - During the Middle Kingdom, trade flourished with Syria and Mesopotamia. A canal connected the Nile River to the Red Sea.

~1,800 B.C. - The first schools were organized.

1,786 - 1,567 B.C. - The Second Intermediate Period began when the nomadic Hyksos people from southern Palestine conquered and ruled Egypt. Egypt prospered. The horse and chariot were introduced.

~1,600 B.C. - Percussion instruments were developed.

1,567 - 1,085 B.C. - The New Kingdom began with independence from the Hyksos. The Egyptian Empire reached its peak of wealth, power, and prestige. Luxor became the new capital. Mercury from cinnabar was used to make red pigment.
1,370 - 1,352 B.C. - Akhenaten became king and built a roofless temple to worship the one god, Aten, the sun god. Nefertiti was his queen.

1,360 - 1,339 B.C. - Tutankhamen (King Tut) ruled Egypt.

1,298 - 1,232 B.C. - Ramses II ruled Egypt with great prosperity. He built many temples and statues at Karnak.

1,085 - 751 B.C. - During the Third Intermediate Period, Egypt was divided and weak. Libyan and Nubian kings ruled at various times.

751 - 332 B.C. - Egypt was invaded many times by the Assyrians and Persians.

~500 B.C. - Egyptians first traveled by the dromedary camel.

332 B.C. - The Ptolemaic Period began when Alexander the Great of Macedonia conquered Egypt. He built the city of Alexandria, which became the capital of Egypt.

~300 B.C. - The Egyptians started using coins for trade.

~30 B.C. - Cleopatra was the last queen of Egypt. Caesar Augustus of Rome conquered Egypt and Egypt became part of the vast Roman Empire.
Research:

1. The children make their own needs of people cards, writing the definitions in their own words.
2. The children draw pictures or make dioramas of the people and the culture.
3. The children research the government.
4. The children research the religion and the gods and goddesses. They research mummification and life after death.
5. The children research the daily life of the people, the society, the different occupations of the people, leisure activities, etc.
6. The children research each of the cities: Thebes, Memphis, Luxor, Giza, Abu Simbel, etc.
7. The children research the architecture: the Pyramids, the temples, the Sphinx, etc. They make models.
8. The children research Hieroglyphic writing and practice the writing. They research the Rosetta Stone that provided the translation of hieroglyphics.
9. The children research the art and culture: sculpture, paintings, jewelry, making of papyrus; clothing and make-up. They make models and artifacts.
10. The children research the pharaohs.
11. The children research the achievements of the Egyptians: the first ideograph writing (hieroglyphics); the tools they developed (ramp, rolling logs); a calendar based on the flood of the Nile; ship-building and the use of sails and oars; the pyramids; the making of papyrus paper.
12. The children research the economy.
13. The children research literature.
14. The children research education.
15. The children research famous people.

16. The children add to their time line of ancient civilizations. They draw a picture showing food, clothing, shelter, defense, transportation, etc. and write a paragraph about the culture.

17. The children develop a time line of Ancient Egypt and the important events in its history.

Books:


ANCIENT INDIA

Materials:

Needs of People cards
Map of Ancient India
Posters of Ancient India
Books
Pictures

Presentation:

1. Say, “We have been talking about the civilization that developed in Egypt along the Nile River about 5,000 years ago. About the same time, another civilization developed by the Indus River in what is now Pakistan. People settled there for the same reasons that they did in Mesopotamia and Egypt.” Review.

2. Show the location on a map of Asia.

3. Share the needs of people cards with the children. Discuss.

4. The children work with the needs of people cards.

5. The children label a map with the names of the Indus River, the Saraswati River, the Ganges River, India and Pakistan, cities, and land and water forms. Show pictures of the land, the people, and the architecture.

Book:

Some Achievements of Ancient India:

1. **Writing**: The Harappans invented a type of pictograph writing that formed an alphabet about 3,500 B.C.; no one knows how to interpret the writing as yet. There were about 20 different symbols. The Aryans developed a writing called Sanskrit that is still used by Hindu priests today.

2. **Architecture**: The Harappans built walled cities to keep out flood waters. They invented bricks made out of clay that were baked and hardened in kilns. They built granaries for storing food, factories for making beads, and kilns for making bricks. They dug wells for water and had bathrooms in the houses; indoor plumbing emptied into a sewage system of drain pipes. Houses had flat roofs for sleeping on hot nights. They had beautiful stone temples with intricate carvings. Buildings were constructed using very precise measurements.

3. **Music**: They invented an instrument similar to the harp.

4. **Art**: They had beautiful carved stoneware pottery, statues, and furniture inlaid with precious stones. They invented the pottery wheel.

5. **Mathematics**: A scientist named Aryabhata invented the decimal system and determined that the earth orbits the sun. The Indians invented our numerals 1 to 9.

6. **Tools**: They invented many bronze tools such as the circular saw and drills. They also invented a metal needle.

7. **Cotton**: They were the first people to weave cotton into thread and cloth.

8. **Games**: They invented chess and playing cards.

9. **Medicine**: They had hospitals and used herbs for medicines. They developed many surgeries, including plastic surgery.
10. **Literature:** They wrote the world’s longest story. They wrote many sacred books.

11. **Religions:** Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism are religions developed in India.

12. **Transportation:** They were the first to use elephants, camels, and carts pulled by bulls to transport goods for trading with other civilizations.

**Time Line of Ancient India:**

~5,000 B.C. - Farming villages developed along the Indus River.

~3,600 B.C. - The city of Harappa was built.

2,500 - 1,700 B.C. - The Harappan culture flourished.

~2,000 B.C. - The Harappans traded with China, Persia, Afghanistan, and Mesopotamia.

~1,800 B.C. - The Indus River changed course and the Saraswati River dried up.

The Harappan culture declined.

~1,750 B.C. - The Aryans invaded the Indus River Valley from the north.

1,500 - 1,000 B.C. - The Early Vedic Age of the Aryans. The Vedas were historical records of the lives of the Aryans. The leader was a raja or king. They believed in a caste system. Everyone belonged to a particular caste and could only marry into that caste.

1,000 - 500 B.C. - The Late Vedic Age of the Aryans. Most Aryans had settled into the Ganges River Valley. There were 16 kingdoms.

~590 B.C. - The Indians began using silver bar coins from Persia to trade rather than the barter system.
560 - 480 B.C. - Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, traveled throughout India spreading his beliefs.

~500 B.C. - Women could no longer own property. They had to be strictly controlled by men.

327 B.C. - Alexander the Great of Macedonia conquered India.


273 - 232 B.C. - The Rule of Asoka. Asoka was the grandson of Chandragupta. He conquered southern India in 260 B.C. He made Buddhism the official religion of his kingdom and raised many stupas (domed monuments) in honor of Buddha.

185 B.C. - The last Mauryan raja was killed. India was divided into many small kingdoms for 500 years.

320 - 540 A.D. - The Gupta Age. Chandra Gupta took power and became emperor in 320 A.D. Great advances in art, science, and literature.

550 A.D. - The Huns invaded from China.

1,000 A.D. The Arabs invaded the northern cities. The Muslim Delhi Sultanate and Moghul Dynasty ruled until 1858.

1858 A.D. - The British ruled India.
1. The children make their own needs of people cards, writing the definitions in their own words.

2. The children draw pictures or make dioramas of the people and the culture.

3. The children research the government.

4. The children research the religions (Aryan, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Islam) and the gods and goddesses.

5. The children research the daily life of the people, the society, the different occupations of the people, leisure activities, the caste system, etc.

6. The children research each of the cities: Harappa, Mohenjo-daro, Lothal.

7. The children research the architecture: temples, citadels, walled cities, indoor plumbing, sewage systems, granaries, kilns, etc. They make models.

8. The children research the writing, ancient Harappan and Sanskrit, and practice the writing.

9. The children research the art and culture: stonework, carvings, statues, carved pottery, furniture, metal work, ceramic jewelry, cotton cloth, mirrors, literature, etc. They make models and artifacts.

10. The children research the rajas and the different leaders.

11. The children research the achievements of the Harappans and Indians: chess, playing cards, cotton clothing, ox carts, pottery wheels, stoneware pottery, wells, sewage systems, stone and bronze tools (circular saw, drills, needles), bricks, roads, decimal system, numerals 1 to 9, medicine, surgery, plastic surgery, earth orbits the sun, etc.

12. The children research the economy.

13. The children research literature.
14. The children research education.

15. The children research famous people.

16. The children add to their time line of ancient civilizations. They draw a picture showing food, clothing, shelter, defense, transportation, etc. and write a paragraph about the culture.

17. The children develop a time line of Ancient India and the important events in its history.