

World History: Ancient River Valley Civilizations



Use the matching sheet ID when checking answers.

Part A: Multiple Choice. Analyze the historical relationships between geography, irrigation, and early statecraft.

1. Why did early agrarian civilizations emerge almost exclusively within river valleys like the Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow (Huang He) rivers?

Answer: A. Annual flooding deposited nutrient-rich silt, providing fertile farmland and accessible freshwater for irrigation.

Annual flood cycles laid down rich alluvial silt, which when combined with engineered irrigation canals, enabled reliable crop surpluses capable of feeding dense cities.

2. What was the primary historical significance of the Code of Hammurabi established in ancient Babylon?

Answer: B. It established one of the earliest written collections of publicly displayed laws, ensuring legal accountability across social strata.

Inscribed onto monumental stone steles, Hammurabi's 282 legal statutes publicly codified standards of justice and commercial contracts throughout the Babylonian empire.

3. How did the development of reliable agricultural surpluses fundamentally transform ancient human social structures?

Answer: B. It enabled job specialization, allowing citizens to become artisans, scribes, engineers, priests, and merchants.

Surplus grain meant not every person needed to farm, fostering occupational specialization, technological innovation, architecture, and complex trade.

Part B: Civilization Identification Matrix. Match each cultural achievement to the correct ancient civilization.

Sort these items: Mesopotamia (Tigris & Euphrates); Cuneiform wedge writing, ziggurats, and Code of Hammurabi; Ancient Egypt (Nile River); Hieroglyphic papyrus records, pharaonic rule, and monumental pyramids; Indus Valley (Harappa & Mohenjo-daro); Urban grid street planning, fired brick construction, and advanced sewage sanitation

Civilization / Region	Signature Achievement & Geography
Mesopotamia (Tigris & Euphrates); Ancient Egypt (Nile River); Indus Valley (Harappa & Mohenjo-daro)	Cuneiform wedge writing, ziggurats, and Code of Hammurabi; Hieroglyphic papyrus records, pharaonic rule, and monumental pyramids; Urban grid street planning, fired brick construction, and advanced sewage sanitation