

World History: Ancient River Valley Civilizations



Name: _____ Date: _____

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?
A. Annual flooding deposited nutrient-rich silt, providing fertile farmland and accessible freshwater for irrigation.
B. River valleys were completely protected from neighboring invading armies by natural glaciers.
C. Rivers provided the only source of precious gold and silver metals in antiquity.
D. Ancient religions strictly prohibited people from living on elevated hilltops or coastal plains.
2. What was the primary historical significance of the Code of Hammurabi established in ancient Babylon?
A. It was the first system of mathematics to introduce the concept of zero.
B. It established one of the earliest written collections of publicly displayed laws, ensuring legal accountability across social strata.
C. It created a democratic voting assembly where every citizen voted on municipal leaders.
D. It eliminated all taxes and private land ownership across Mesopotamia.
3. How did the development of reliable agricultural surpluses fundamentally transform ancient human social structures?
A. It forced every family member to spend full-time labor strictly cultivating crops.
B. It enabled job specialization, allowing citizens to become artisans, scribes, engineers, priests, and merchants.
C. It caused urban populations to abandon writing and revert to oral nomadic hunter-gatherer traditions.
D. It reduced the need for government administrative organization and defense.

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