

## Ancient Civilizations of the Middle East and Southwest Asia Answer Key

Please review the following sample answers and compare these to your answers to make sure you are able to identify key terms and contributions of each civilization.

### 1. Sumeria

Sumerians are credited for the invention of writing around 3000 BC. They also used bronze to make tools. Their temples are called ziggurats, which became a model for later civilizations. Big irrigation projects, such as digging canals and ditches to bring water from the Tigris and the Euphrates, are other major accomplishments.

Key Terms: writing, irrigation, ziggurats

### 2. Hittites

They used compound bows and the bow-armed chariots, which was the highest tech weapons system of its day. The Hittites adopted Cuneiform script as their written form from the Anatolians, and their diplomatic tablets often included long preambles reciting past events, which was new at the time. This was very helpful for historians to also understand the other empires. They were master users of iron, which allowed them to produce superior weapons and contributed to their military superiority.

Key Terms: Cuneiform, iron, bow-armed chariot

### 3. Hebrews

The Hebrews had one of the earliest monotheistic religions, written laws, and societal structure. Their monotheistic belief provided the Christian and Muslim societies that followed with examples of a monotheistic community.

Key Terms: Monotheism, Judaism

### 4. Assyrians

The Assyrians developed unique war tactics, built a library at the city of Nineveh, and developed the first organized empire. The Hammurabi law, an eye for an eye, was the first form of known law that Assyrians had made.

Key Terms: Hammurabi Law, first library



## 5. Egyptians

The ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphics as their written language. Hieroglyphics is writing using pictures and symbols to represent different sounds. The Egyptians created the clock and the 365-day calendar we use today. The Great Pyramids in Egypt are remarkable architectural structures that have added to our knowledge of architectural design.

Key Terms: Great Pyramids, hieroglyphics, the 365-day calendar

## 6. Babylonians

The Babylonian Empire was the most powerful state in the ancient world after the fall of the Assyrian Empire (612 BCE). Its capital, Babylon, was beautifully adorned by king Nebuchadnezzar, who erected several famous buildings. The Hanging Gardens, which achieved the Seven Wonders of the World list, and the 15 million "baked" bricks, which were used to build up Babylon, are also notable. It is fair to state that Babylon was perhaps the most culturally significant city of ancient Mesopotamia. They also invented the first algebra equations.

Key Terms: The Hanging Gardens, Nebuchadnezzar, first algebra equations

## 7. Phoenicians

They created an alphabet which was later adopted by the Greeks and developed into many modern alphabets. Phoenicians found and navigated the North Star and actually managed to get as far out of the Mediterranean as to sail around Africa, starting from the red Sea, and back into the Mediterranean through the Strait of Gibraltar. Last but not least, they created the first see through glass.

Key Terms: origin of the Greek alphabet, navigation, see through glass

## 8. Persians

Ancient Persians are well known because of their arts. Persian patterns and artistic ingenuity have been recognized world-wide. Persians provide a role model for many civilizations that follow the methods of making things like pottery, houses, and Persian rugs. They developed new systems for tax collecting, and they came up with the idea of splitting the huge empire into separate states called satrapies.

Key Terms: Persian art, rugs, tax collection, invention of administrative divisions



## 9. Romans

The ancient Romans were great builders. Their advances in technology include the actual invention of concrete, roman roads, roman arches, and aqueducts. Huge public health programs, including welfare programs for the poor, were first in the world of its kind. Roman law is the first that states a person is innocent until proven guilty. Roman politics included propaganda campaigns, such as coinage with the current emperor's picture on it to remind everyone who was in charge of the empire.

Key Terms: ancient architecture, aqueducts, first public health programs, coinage,

## 10. Sassanians

The social stratosphere of the Sassanians was divided into four classes: the priests, warriors, secretaries, and commoners. This class division was reinforced by Zoroastrianism, a monotheistic belief that predates the other ones.

Key Term: Zoroastrianism

