

Unit 1 Vocabulary

1. Fertile Crescent:
 - a. A region of the Middle East arching across the northern part of the Syrian Desert and extending from the Nile Valley to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The civilizations of Egypt, Phoenicia, Assyria, and Babylonia developed in this area, which was also the site of numerous migrations and invasions.
 - b. an area in the Middle and Near East: formerly fertile, now partly desert.
2. Mesopotamia:
 - a. the land between the Tigris and Euphrates; site of several ancient civilizations; part of what is now known as Iraq
3. City-State:
 - a. A sovereign state consisting of an independent city and its surrounding territory.
 - b. a city and its surrounding lands functioning as an independent political unit
4. Cultural Diffusion:
 - a. the spreading of ideas or products from one culture to another.
 - b. the spreading out of culture, culture traits, or a cultural pattern from a central point.
5. Polytheism:
 - a. The belief in many gods
 - b. The worship of or belief in more than one god.
6. Hammurabi:
 - a. Babylonian king (1792-1750) who made Babylon the chief Mesopotamian kingdom and codified the laws of Mesopotamia and Sumeria.
7. Hammurabi's Code of Laws:
 - a. the set of laws drawn up by Babylonian king Hammurabi dating to the 18th century BC, the earliest legal code known in its entirety
8. Cuneiform:
 - a. a system of writing with wedge-shaped symbols, invented by the Sumerians around 3000B.C.
9. Babylon:
 - a. The capital of ancient Babylonia in Mesopotamia on the Euphrates River. Established as capital c. 1750 B.C. and rebuilt in regal splendor by Nebuchadnezzar II after its destruction (c. 689 B.C.) by the Assyrians, Babylon was the site of the Hanging Gardens, one of the Seven Wonders of the World.
10. Ziggurat:
 - a. a rectangular tiered temple or terraced mound erected by the ancient Assyrians and Babylonians
11. Nile River:
 - a. the world's longest river (4150 miles); flows northward through eastern Africa into the Mediterranean; the Nile River valley in Egypt was the site of the world's first great civilization.
12. Delta:
 - a. a low triangular area of alluvial deposits where a river divides before entering a larger body of water; "the Mississippi River delta"; "the Nile delta"
13. Pharaoh:
 - a. An Egyptian god-king
 - b. A tyrant
14. Regent:
 - a. a person who exercises the ruling power in a kingdom during the minority, absence, or disability of the sovereign. In Egypt usually was a female.
15. Theocracy:
 - a. a form of government in which God or a deity is recognized as the supreme civil ruler, the God's or deity's laws being interpreted by the religious authorities.
16. Pyramid:
 - a. (in ancient Egypt) a quadrilateral masonry mass having smooth, steeply sloping sides meeting at an apex, used as a tomb.
17. Mummification:
 - a. to make (a dead body) into a mummy, as by embalming and drying.

18. Hieroglyphics:
 - a. a form of writing used in ancient Egypt, in which pictures represent words and sounds.
19. Subcontinent:
 - a. A large landmass, such as India, that is part of a continent but is considered either geographically or politically as an independent entity.
20. Monsoon:
 - a. the seasonal wind of the Indian Ocean and southern Asia, blowing from the southwest in summer and from the northeast in winter.
21. Maurya Empire:
 - a. the first empire in India, founded by Chandragupta in 321 B.C.
22. "Golden Age under Gupta":
 - a. The **Golden Age** of India occurs under the rule of the **Gupta Dynasty (320 - 550 CE)** The Gupta established a strong central government which also allowed a degree of local control. Gupta society was ordered in accordance with **Hindu** beliefs. This included a strict **caste system**, or **class system**. The peace and prosperity created under Gupta leadership enabled the pursuit of scientific and artistic endeavors.
23. Emperor Ashoka:
 - a. Grandson of Chandragupta. Ashoka's reign as emperor began with a series of wars and bloodshed; He subsequently became deeply influenced by Buddhism; Ashoka's dream was to unify a nation