

## WORLD HISTORY KEY TERMS ANCIENT RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS

**Civilization** - a complicated form of culture that has to include the growth of cities, specialized workers, writing, advanced technology and complex institutions like religion and government.

**Specialize** - to focus on a single job or task.

**Artisan** - skilled workers who specialized in their field of work like priests, teachers, scribes, etc.

**Surplus** - more than is needed.

**Cuneiform** - the Sumerian form of writing.

**Bronze** - mixture of copper and tin that is strong so weapons and tools became sturdier when they were made of bronze.

**Institution** - long last patterns of organization within a community.

**City-state** - a city and all of the land that surrounds it.

**Ziggurat** - three-tiered temple found in Sumeria.

**Polytheist** - to believe in many gods.

**Empire** - to conquer other people and places and rule them.

**Colony** - a place governed/ruled by foreign people.

**Literacy** - the ability to read and write.

**Monotheist** - to believe in one god.

**Covenant** - a contract or pledge.

**Prophet** - a messenger sent to reveal Gods will.

**Ethical Monotheism** - belief that proper moral conduct involves the worship of only one god.

**Satrap** - a royal governor of part of the Persian empire.

Subcontinent - a large region that is part of a continent, but is separated from the rest of the continent in some way.

Monsoon - seasonal wind.

Lunar Calendar - calendar based on the cycles of the moon.

Fertile Crescent - area within the Middle East that today is Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq.

Tigris and Euphrates Rivers - rivers along which the Fertile Crescent civilizations developed provided water and irrigation but were also destructive when they flooded.

Hammurabi - created the first set of written laws.

Babylonians - people who Hammurabi ruled.

Hammurabis Code - the first known written laws.

Hittites - the first people to learn to work with iron.

Assyrians - known to be the greatest warriors in the Fertile Crescent. Conquered the Babylonians.

Chaldeans - rebuilt Babylon and focused on creating a city of beauty.

Nebuchadnezzar - ruler of the Chaldeans who built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

Persians - created the largest empire in the ancient world.

Phoenicians - great sea traders and known for creating the first alphabet.

Nile River - the river along which Ancient Egypt developed. Provided Egypt with protection, water and silt which fertilized the soil.

Silt - left behind on the soil after the Nile River flooded made the soil highly fertile for farming.

Gift of the Nile - the rich soil left behind after flooding and the prosperous farming that this led to.

Irrigation | the process of bringing water to crop fields.

Hieroglyphics - the Egyptian form of writing.

Monarchy - government headed by a king or a queen.

Menes - united Upper and Lower Egypt.

Papyrus - a plant that was made into paper on which Egyptians wrote.

Pharaohs - the rulers of Egypt.

Dynasty - a series of rulers from a single family.

Old Kingdom - also known as the Age of Pyramids time period where Egypt was ruled by pharaohs who were thought to be gods and when the majority of Egyptian pyramids were built.

Middle Kingdom - time period where pharaohs focused on projects that were good for the public transportation was improved, canals were dug for irrigation, etc. At the end of the Middle Kingdom, the Hyksos invaded and took control of Egypt.

New Kingdom - time period where Egypt established an empire by invading other lands and taking them over.

Hyksos - group who invaded Egypt during the Middle Kingdom.

Late Kingdom - period where Egypt suffered many invasions and lost most of its empire.

Hatshepsut - first female pharaoh.

Akhenaton - tried to convert Egyptians to monotheism from polytheism.

Ramses II - known for his building of temples and beautification of Egypt.

Pyramids - burial tombs for pharaohs.

Subcontinent - a large region that is part of a continent, but is separated from the rest of the continent in some way.

Monsoon - seasonal wind.

Reincarnation - the belief that the soul is continually reborn.

Moksha - the state of perfect peace and understanding in Hinduism.

Caste - social class within Hinduism and ancient India.

Karma - the idea that a persons behavior in this life determines what caste they will be born into in their next life.

Dharma - the set of duties required of each caste in Hinduism.

Nirvana - the state of perfect peace and understanding in Buddhism.

Ashoka - Indian ruler who spread Buddhism to eastern Asia.

Edict - a public order or announcement that has authority.

Mandate of Heaven - in ancient China the belief that royal authority comes from the gods.

Confucius - Chinese philosopher who urged social harmony and good government through positive relationships.

Chin Dynasty - ruled China and built the Great Wall of China to protect China from invasion.

Dynastic cycle - a cycle of power and decline for Chinese dynasties.

Loess - fertile soil left behind by the flooding of the Huang He River.

Oracle bones - animal bones used by ancient Chinese priests to tell the future.

Filial piety - respect shown by children to their parents and elders.

Zoroastrianism - the first religion to focus on the idea of heaven and hell/good vs. evil.

Barter - a form of trade in which people exchange goods not money.

Hebrews - created the empire of Israel after Moses led them out of Egypt. Eventually they became known as Jews and created the religion of Judaism. This was important because it made them the only monotheistic religious group in ancient times.

Mosaic Law - set of laws based on the teaching of Moses and the Ten Commandments.

Judaism - monotheistic religion that focused on following the Ten Commandments.

Scribe - professional writers.