

Elements of Civilization



DIRECTIONS: On the document provided, write the definition for the vocabulary terms in the top portion of the circle. In the bottom portion, answer the question or follow the prompt to demonstrate your understanding of the aspects of civilization.

In 10,000 BCE, the Neolithic Revolution ended the hunter-gatherer lifestyle and implemented foundations of agriculture, permanent settlements, and aspects of civilization. In order to be considered a civilization, there is a set standard of characteristics that must be met. A civilization is an advanced state of human society that has achieved a highly defined and recognizable culture, government, science, and industry. During this period, new social structure based on economic power also arose. The demand of the upper class for luxury items, such as jewelry and pottery, encouraged artisans and craftspeople to create new products. As urban populations exported finished goods to neighboring populations in exchange for raw materials, organized trade began to grow. Because trade brought new civilizations into contact with one another, it often led to the transfer of new technology, such as metals for tools and new farming techniques, from one region to another. By and large, however, the early river valley civilizations developed independently. Each one was based on developments connected to the agricultural revolution of the Neolithic Age. Taken together, the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and China constituted nothing less than a revolutionary stage in the growth of human society.

Large Urban Centers



Large urban centers developed when food production became more reliable. As land was cultivated and food became more abundant, fewer farmers were needed to supply food. As populations grew, people began living in heavily populated areas that had diverse jobs and services. Merchants specialized in trading such goods as tools, metals, and other artisanal goods. Other residents provided food or shelter for trade caravans traveling from other regions. Services provided in ancient urban centers also included doctors, religious leaders, and artists. Urban centers allow civilizations to develop, although people who live outside these urban centers are still part of that region's civilization. During this time, civilizations began working to preserve their legacy by building large monuments and structures out of mud, clay, and reeds, such as ziggurats and pyramids.

Use Google to identify some of the major urban centers of the following ancient civilizations:

Mesopotamia

Indus River Valley

Nile River Valley

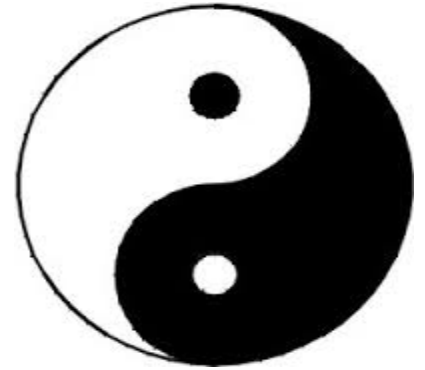
Religion



All of the emerging civilizations developed religions, a set of spiritual beliefs, values, and practices, to explain the forces of nature and their roles in the world. Religious leaders believed that gods and goddesses were important to the community's success. Floods and droughts, which could severely affect a civilization's food supply, were blamed on the gods' anger with their followers. To win their favor, priests supervised elaborate ceremonies and rituals aimed at pleasing them to ensure a bountiful harvest. This gave the priests special power and made them very important people. Rulers also claimed that their power was based on divine approval, called the Mandate of Heaven in some areas, while various rulers claimed to be divine themselves.

List the names of as many different religions as possible.

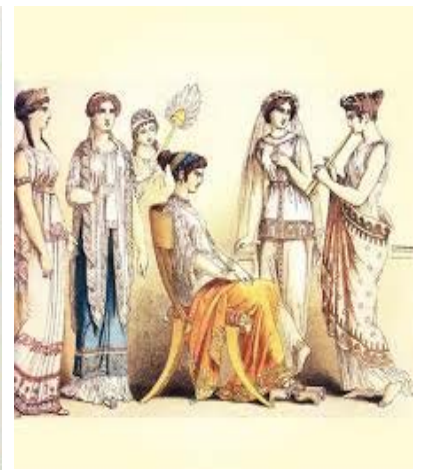
Common Language



A common language is another element that all civilizations share. This type of shared communication may include spoken language, alphabets, numeric systems, signs, ideas, and symbols. Shared communication allows for technology, trade, and government to be developed and shared throughout the civilization. Writing allows systems for trade, government, and intellectual thought to develop. Written language in particular allows civilizations to record their own history and everyday events—crucial for understanding ancient cultures. The world's oldest known written language is cuneiform, which developed in Mesopotamia around 3100 BCE, and was made up of different collections of wedge (triangle) shapes.

Egyptians used hieroglyphics to write down and preserve their history. Modern societies use emojis to describe their feelings. Using emojis, describe what you do during an entire day.

Government & Administration



Growing numbers of people, the need to maintain the food supply, and the need for defense (protection) soon led to the growth of governments. Governments organize and regulate human activity. They also provide for smooth interaction between individuals and groups. In the first civilizations, governments usually were led by monarchs - kings or queens who rule a kingdom - who organized armies to protect their populations and made laws to regulate their subjects' lives. As their control over territories spread, rulers of a civilization usually left local leaders in power to administer the law in their territories. They also instituted a common language to make communication between leaders and citizens easier. Many times, they also built networks of roads to make travel to problem areas easier.

Who is the leader of your school? What about your town? What about your state?

Art



Everyday life has a significant impact on the artwork a civilization produces, especially during the Neolithic period. Humans began creating smaller and more intricate works of art, like sculptures and ceramics. Painters and sculptors portrayed stories of nature and provided depictions of the rulers and gods they worshiped. After the invention of the pottery wheel in Mesopotamia, the demand for special shapes and designs increased. The pictures above depict examples of Neolithic art.

Using the images provided above, draw your own example of art that represents the time period you live in.

Social Hierarchy



The last element that is key to the development of civilizations is the division of people into social classes. This is a complex idea that can be broken down into two parts: income and type of work performed. This means that different people perform specialized tasks, like farming, cooking, and hunting. Rulers and an upper class of priests, government officials, and warriors dominated society. Below this class was a large group of free people - farmers, artisans (people with special skills), and craftspeople. At the bottom was a slave class. In complex civilizations, farmers may cultivate one type of crop and depend on other people for clothing, shelter, and other necessities. Changing classes has traditionally been difficult and happens over generations.

List three jobs that every city NEEDS to have in order to function.