

STRAIGHT FROM ACARA

The following content is to be taught as part of an overview for the historical period. It is not intended to be taught in depth. An overview will constitute approximately 10% of the total teaching time for the year.

Overview	10%
Depth Study 1	30%
Depth Study 2	30%
Depth Study 3	30%
Total	100%

KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How do we know about the ancient past?
- Why and where did the earliest societies develop?
- What emerged as the defining characteristics of ancient societies?
- What have been the legacies of ancient societies?

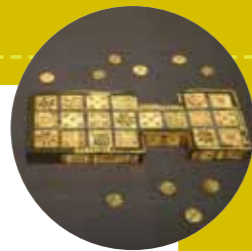
KEY INQUIRY QUESTIONS

How did the Sumerian civilisation develop?

What were the features and core beliefs of Sumerian society?

How has archaeology allowed us to gain a clear understanding of Sumerian culture?

What was the contribution of Sumer to later civilisations?



Archaeological excavations in modern-day Iraq have revealed a picture of an amazingly advanced ancient civilisation, which we know as Sumer. Between 3800 and 1750 BCE these intelligent and inventive people developed a complex society with flourishing cities that were among the first in the world.

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KEY TERMS

archaeology—the study of past human societies using evidence from the past
civilisation—a people or nation that has developed advanced social, political and economic structures

society—an organised group of people who share a common culture, beliefs, interests and values

FIRST CIVILISATION:

SUMMER



SOURCE 0.1 The imposing Ziggurat of Ur, near Nasiriyah, Iraq. The facade was rebuilt in the 1980s.

PRE-PREPARATION

SUGGESTIONS FOR INTRODUCING SUMER

- Brainstorm knowledge about Sumer as a class. Students could also brainstorm in smaller groups, then collate their ideas as a class.
- Complete a KWL chart (What I know, What I want to know, What I have learnt) individually or in groups. The first two sections should be completed before beginning the unit. They can be used for class discussion and to establish goals for learning. The final section should be completed at the end of the unit to track how well students met their learning goals.
- Provide a large image of cuneiform writing in poster size and display on a board. Use an enlarged image from page 45 or source an alternative image. Place the following questions around the image:
 - 1 What is the item?
 - 2 What is this item made from?
 - 3 How might it have been made?
 - 4 Who might have made the item?
 - 5 What do you notice about the markings on the item?
 - 6 What conclusions can you draw about the society that made this item?

Organise students into groups of four to write responses to the questions. Ask students to brainstorm as many reasons as they can think of as to why developing cities needed a strong leadership structure. Then use their brainstorms to facilitate a class discussion.

INTRODUCING THE CHAPTER

OVERVIEW OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

In Year 7 History, the overview content covers the important features of the Ancient World from about 60 000 BCE to 650 CE. This chapter has been designed to give the students an introduction to the period and to the historical knowledge and skills.

CHAPTER CONTENT

Unit 1 'Snapshot' introduces students to the geography of Sumer and the concept of city-states. Unit 2 'Cities, wealth and kings' examines the development of Sumerian cities, farming, trade and kingship. Unit 3 'Daily life and religion' introduces students to the daily life of the people of Sumer, the development of writing and laws and the religion of Sumer. As well, there are opportunities throughout to engage with textual and visual sources.

USING SOURCES AND EVIDENCE

Unit 4 'Source study: Two important primary sources from Sumer' focuses on two important primary sources that have given historians much knowledge and understanding of Sumer. These are evidence from the Royal Tombs of Ur and *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, including the Royal Standard of Ur, the Ram in the Thicket and text sources from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.

CONNECTING TO OTHER PERIODS AND PLACES

Unit 5 'Legacies and connections to ... Why was Sumer significant?' explores concepts of continuity and change as well as exploring the contact with other significant societies from the time.

IN A NUTSHELL

The fertile area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers known as Mesopotamia was the location of the first permanent human settlements. The Sumerian civilisation developed cities and advanced farming practices using irrigation and the plough. They created a political structure with kings as rulers and were also the first to create a system of writing known as cuneiform. This early civilisation has greatly impacted on modern societies through such inventions as the wheel and the calendar. One of the richest sources of evidence about Sumer was discovered as recently as the early 1900s by Leonard Woolley, who discovered and excavated the Royal Tombs of Ur.

RESOURCES

PEARSON Reader



PRE-TEST

Students complete the Review Quiz available on Pearson Reader to gather information about pre-existing knowledge on Sumer.

STRAIGHT FROM ACARA

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

CONCEPT DESCRIPTORS

- The evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and potter)
- Key features of ancient societies (farming, trade, social classes, religion, rule of law)

HISTORICAL SKILLS

CHRONOLOGY, TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Sequence historical events and periods

KEY CONCEPTS

- The impact of abundant evidence on historical research of Sumer
- The connection between physical geography and the emergence of settlement
- The significance of the development of writing

KEY TERMS

cuneiform—an ancient system of writing developed in Mesopotamia, with characters shaped like triangles or wedges

city-state—an independent state consisting of a main city and its surrounding territory

levee—an embankment built to prevent a river from overflowing onto surrounding land

Mesopotamia—the name given to a region now known as Iraq and Iran, that is located between two large rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

SKILLS ACTIVITY

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

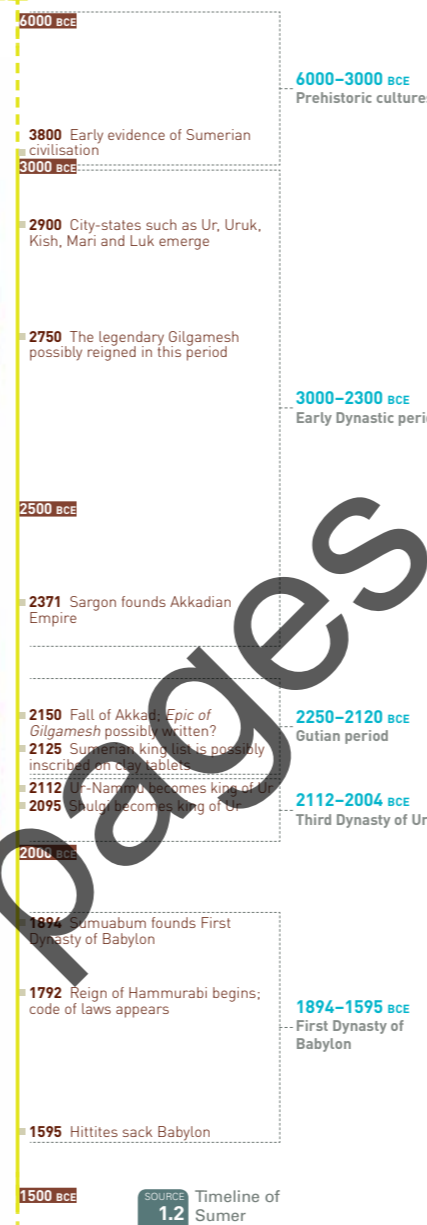
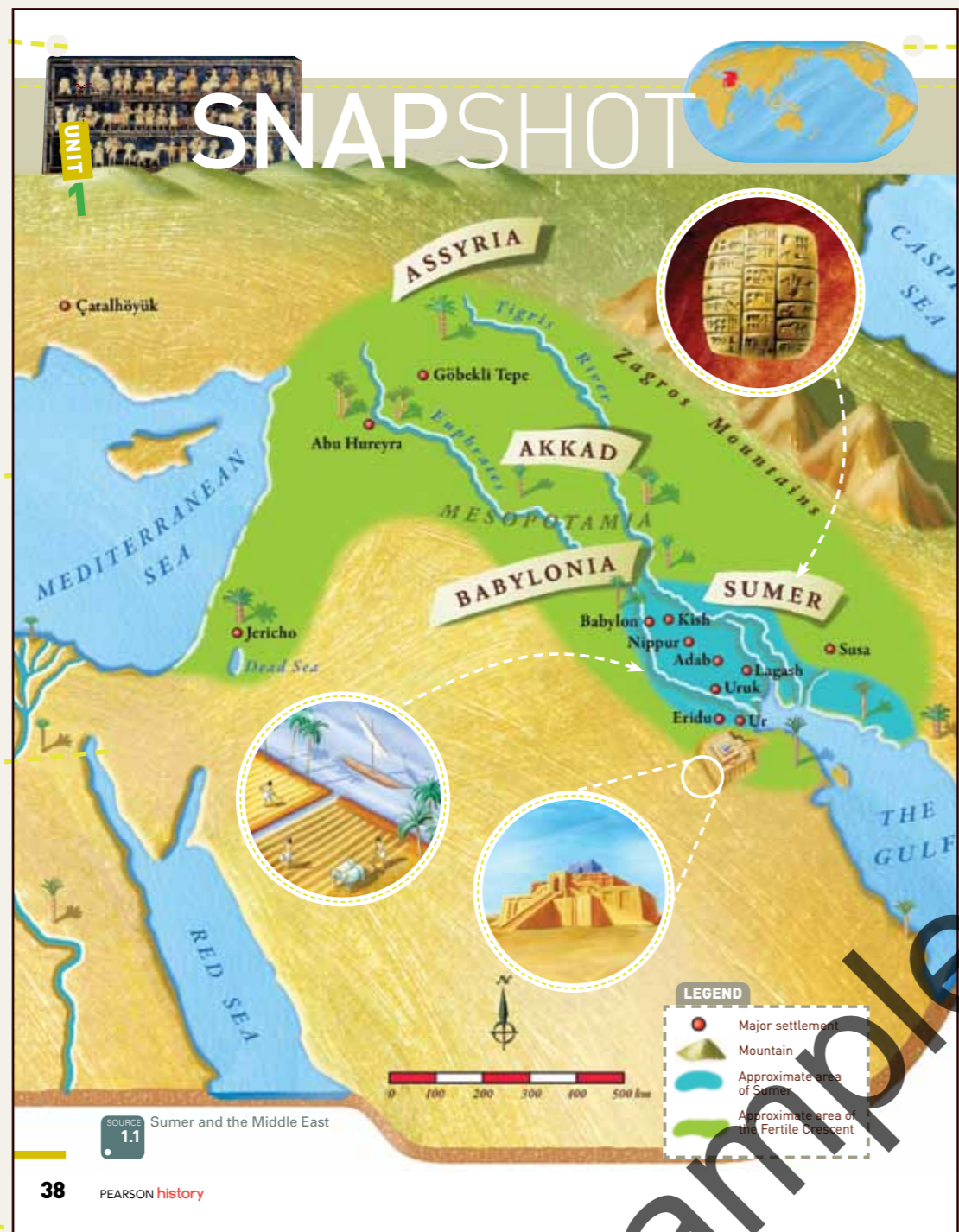
MI: verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical

Direct students to look at the map in Source 1.1 and ask them to estimate the greatest length and greatest width of the Sumerian civilisation.

The length is approximately 700 kilometres and the width is 300 kilometres.

Describe which part of Mesopotamia was occupied by the Sumerian civilisation and explain why this location was suitable for settlement.

The southern part of Mesopotamia was the Sumer homeland. This area was well supplied with water from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, it had a coastline for access to other regions for trade and it was in a fertile area, enabling agriculture to flourish.



THE LAND BETWEEN THE RIVERS

Sumerian culture arose in the region known as Mesopotamia, or 'the land between the rivers'. Flowing from the mountains to the north, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers deposited vast amounts of rich alluvial soil, or silt, across the floodplains where Sumer was situated. This fertile soil became the basis for Sumer's thriving farms. The rivers, however, were subject to irregular flooding. The Sumerians discovered ways of controlling these floods using canals, levees and reservoirs. These devices also provided water for the irrigation of crops during the hot, dry summers.

Sumer also lay on the one of the great trade routes of the ancient world. Its rivers and waterways were important transport routes for trade caravans between east and west, which brought goods such as timber from surrounding lands. In exchange, Sumer exported manufactured luxury items such as jewellery. Trade became a very important source of wealth for Sumerian cities.

SEPARATE CITIES

The Sumerians all spoke the same language, worshipped the same gods and followed similar lifestyles but, unlike Egypt, Sumer did not become a united people or country. Its cities were independent city-states, frequently at war with one another. Sometimes alliances were formed between cities and from time to time a city managed to become stronger than neighbouring cities. Eventually, however, Sumer was absorbed into the territories of foreign empires.

ABUNDANT EVIDENCE

Archaeologists and historians are able to draw conclusions about Sumer because of the amount of evidence available. A very important source is the **cuneiform** writing developed by the Sumerians. Thousands of clay tablets with cuneiform script reveal detailed information about almost every aspect of Sumerian life. Excavations such as those of the Royal Tombs of Ur have yielded extraordinary artefacts that show the richness of life in Sumer.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

INQUIRY ACTIVITY

MAPWORK

MI: visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic

- 1 Students interpret the Sumer map and the smaller locator map with discussion or questions about the following:
 - a familiar and unfamiliar placenames
 - b location of Sumer in relation to the rest of the world
 - c location of the Sumer civilisation in relation to rivers and seas
 - d the number of cities that grew in this area
 - e the identification of other civilisations in the Fertile Crescent.
- 2 Compare the Sumer map with present-day political and physical maps of the same area. Students make a table of two columns with the headings 'Civilisations between 3000 and 2000 BCE' and 'Present-day civilisations/countries'. In the first column students list all the Mesopotamian civilisations. In the second column students list the countries in this region today. Discussion could follow, exploring the changes that have occurred and the reasons for them.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

ANCIENT CIVILISATIONS TIMELINE

MI: visual-spatial, logical-mathematical

The purpose of this activity is to provide an overview of the Year 7 History course and to enable students to make links between civilisations. Students should set up a timeline that covers the ancient history era and will add to this timeline as they progress through the course. As students add to the timeline, it can be the basis for classroom discussion.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

ARE WE STILL THE SAME?

MI: naturalist, visual-spatial

In this activity students will explore the idea of the importance of rivers as location factors for cities and the way the use of those rivers has changed over time. Students should complete a table featuring Sumer in 3000 BCE, present-day Cairo and an Australian capital city located on a river. Students can use existing knowledge or do further research in order to complete a table.

After completing the table as below, students should write a paragraph describing the three cities' uses of the rivers and pointing out similarities and differences. Students should also try to account for these similarities and differences.

Cairo (Egypt)	Melbourne (Australia) or any other Australian capital city	Ur (Sumer)
Nile River	Yarra River	Tigris and Euphrates rivers
Fishing; transporting goods by boat; collecting papyrus from river banks; using river water for irrigation of farmland; provided silt for floodplains	Pleasure boats; port at the mouth of the river; recreational activities; riverside accommodation and dining	Irrigation of farmland using river water; provided silt for floodplains; trade route; fishing

FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER UNIT 1 SNAPSHOT

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

CONCEPT DESCRIPTORS

- The evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and potter)
- Key features of ancient societies (farming, trade, social classes, religion, rule of law)

HISTORICAL SKILLS

CHRONOLOGY, TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Sequence historical events and periods
- Use historical terms and concepts

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

- Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry
- Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

- Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources
- Locate, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence
- Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources

PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS

- Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources

EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION

- Develop historical texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources
- Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies

KEY CONCEPTS

- The significance of the development of permanent settlements
- How the development of cities led to the need for political systems such as monarchies.
- The contribution of farming to the growth of permanent cities

KEY TERMS

city-state—an independent state consisting of a main city and its surrounding territory
ziggurat—a tiered Sumerian temple

UNIT 2

SOURCE 2.1 This stone bas-relief from the Palace of Sargon, in present-day Khorsabad, Iraq, shows timber being unloaded from boats. The carving is in the Louvre Museum, Paris.

Q Describe what you can see on this bas-relief.



CITIES, WEALTH & KINGS

CITIES

Sumerian cities were usually surrounded by a high stone wall to fend off attack from their neighbours. The main building in the city was the temple, or ziggurat, built for the city's main god. Courts and public buildings surrounded the temples.

Over the centuries, the cities grew with little planning. There were some wide streets and perhaps a town square near the temple, but the rest of the city was a maze of narrow streets and alleyways. Streets were unpaved, dusty and filled with rubbish. There was no drainage and mud filled the streets and lanes when it rained. Houses were made of mud brick and crowded together with shared walls.

Some cities became quite large. Uruk, the oldest city, reached a population of more than 20 000 people.

FARMING AND TRADE

Sumer was a farming society. Farmers conquered the dry climate and barren landscape through their great skill in irrigation. With this skill and with the help of inventions such as the plough, Sumerian farms yielded a surprisingly wide variety of food. They supported the growing populations in the cities.

Trade was an important source of wealth, and cities competed for control of the trade routes. There were very few natural resources in Sumer. Traders set off in all directions in search of precious materials. Their trade extended from the Indus Valley in the east to the Mediterranean Sea in the west.

Cities became centres of production. Luxury goods such as jewellery were manufactured and exported in payment for raw materials. Luxury goods were also enjoyed by wealthy local people.

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TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

SKILLS ACTIVITY

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

MI: verbal-linguistic

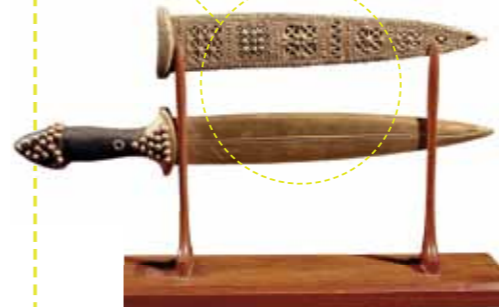
- Direct students to look closely at Source 2.1 and answer the following questions.
 - What is the bas-relief made of? Stone
 - What might be a possible food source for Sumerians? Fish
 - What can you deduce about the artistic abilities of the Sumerians and how do you know? The Sumerians were very skilled at working with stone as evidenced by the intricate water pattern and fine details.

LEGACIES AND CONNECTIONS

VENN DIAGRAM

MI: visual-spatial, interpersonal

Students work in pairs to construct a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences between a modern Australian city and cities in Sumer. See answer (right).



SOURCE 2.2 A gold dagger and sheath from the Royal Tombs of Ur in the National Museum of Iraq, Baghdad

KINGS

In the early years temples held the political and economic power. As cities extended over surrounding farmland, and wealth through trade increased, political control grew more complex. Increasingly, city-states were ruled by kings or warlords. The Sumerians believed that kingship was a gift of the gods, so the king was both leader and chief priest. With warfare between cities a frequent occurrence, the king was also expected to be a military leader.

I, Shulgi, a mighty man from the day I was born, A fierce-eyed lion born of a dragon am I, King of the four corners of the Universe am I, Herdsman, shepherd of the blackheads am I, The trustworthy, the god of all the lands am I, The son born of Ninsun am I, Called to the heart of holy Anu am I, He who was blessed by Enlil am I.

SOURCE 2.4 From 'Hymn of praise to Shulgi'. Shulgi was king of Ur from 2095 to 2047 BCE. Ninsun, Anu and Enlil were Sumerian gods. From S. N. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1981.

SOURCE 2.3 Intensive farming in Sumer may have looked like this scene, in present-day Iraq.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- In your workbook or in a Microsoft® Word document or Excel® file on your computer, create a 'First civilisation: Sumer' glossary. Begin your glossary by listing these key words and phrases and explaining their meanings:
 - bas-relief
 - city-states
 - cuneiform
 - floodplains
 - irrigation
 - mud brick
 - silt
 - ziggurat
- What do we learn about Sumerian trade from Sources 2.1 and 2.2?
- Read Source 2.4 again and answer the following questions.
 - How does Shulgi show that he is a great and strong king?

remembering & understanding

b What two main features of Sumerian kingship are demonstrated in these lines?

applying & analysing

#4 How would the intensive farming shown in Source 2.3 affect the quality of the soil?

evaluating

#5 What health problems might people living in a Sumerian city-state have experienced?

analysing & creating

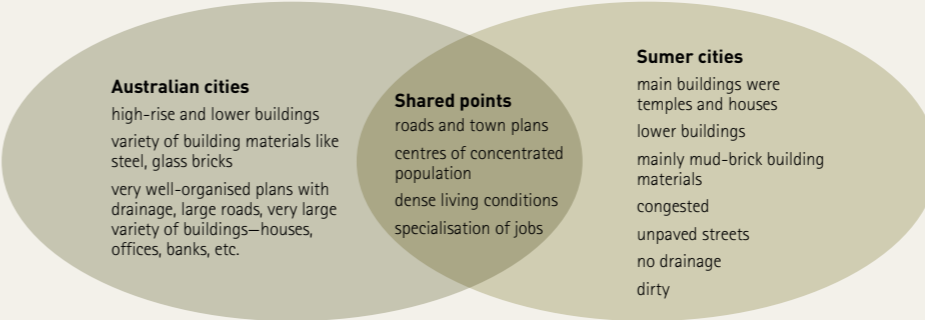
#6 Using information in this unit and your own research, create a half-page map of a Sumerian city. Label the main features of your city.

FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER UNIT 2 CITIES, WEALTH & KINGS

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ANSWERS TO SOURCE QUESTIONS

SOURCE 2.1 There are three boats on a river, lake or the sea. The boats are decorated with dragons' heads and are powered by four to five men using oars. They appear to be transporting planks of timber. Mermaids and fish are swimming in the water. The panel is intricately sculpted.



LEARNING ACTIVITIES ANSWERS

REMEMBERING AND UNDERSTANDING

- bas-relief—a sculpture where only the surface of the material is carved to create the shapes/ images.

city-states—independent states consisting of main cities and their surrounding territory

cuneiform—an ancient system of writing developed in Mesopotamia, with characters shaped like triangles or wedges

floodplains—areas of flat land adjacent to a river that are subject to flooding

irrigation—a system of supplying dry land with water

mud brick—a brick made from baked mud

silt—fine sediments deposited by rivers

ziggurat—a Sumerian tiered temple
- We learn that river transport was used for trade, that timber was a traded item and that luxury goods were made and possibly exported.
- Shulgi describes himself as 'a mighty man', 'king of all four corners of the universe' and the son of a god.
 - That the Sumerian king was a descendant of the gods and that he had total power.

APPLYING AND ANALYSING

- The soil would be depleted because of overuse of the land, and therefore the soil would lose fertility.

EVALUATING

- The Sumerian people would have experienced a number of health problems because of the dusty, narrow alleyways that had no drainage, the rubbish on the streets and the overcrowding, for example.

ANALYSING AND CREATING

- Responses will vary but maps should include:
 - a high stone wall surrounding the city
 - a ziggurat
 - a town square with wide streets
 - a narrow maze of streets in the majority of the city
 - crowded housing.

RESOURCES

- PEARSON Reader INTERACTIVE Drag-and-drop cloze 'Sumerian farming'
- WORKSHEET Worksheet 1 'Representing royalty'
- PEARSON history 7 A.B. FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER Unit 6 'A typical Sumerian settlement'

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

CONCEPT DESCRIPTORS

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PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS

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EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION

- Develop historical texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources
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KEY CONCEPTS

- The lives of Sumerians were simple, as seen by the evidence of houses and clothing.
- Education, religion and recreational pursuits were important in their lives. Recreation and food were not dissimilar to ours.
- The idea of an unequal society with regard to gender and wealth
- The significance of the development of rituals, such as burial rituals, and codified laws, as with the Code of Hammurabi
- Sumerians had an understanding of medicine.
- Religion played an important part in Sumerian lives.
- Sumerians saw a need to record important facts.

KEY TERMS

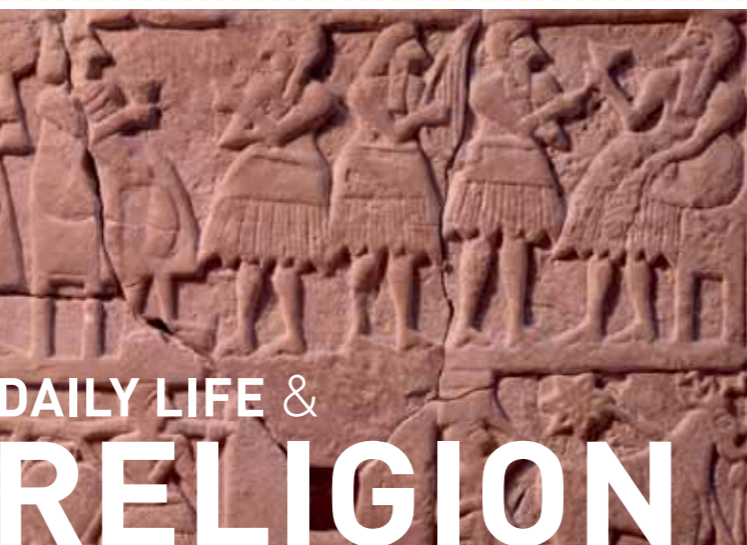
- deity—a god or goddess, a divine being
- lyre—simple stringed instrument with strings across a hollow body
- Mesopotamia—a region in south-west Asia, located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers
- polytheistic—believing in or worshipping many gods
- ziggurat—a Sumerian tiered temple

UNIT 3

SOURCE 3.1 This clay tablet dating from about 2600 BCE in the National Museum of Iraq, Baghdad, is from the region of Ur and shows offerings being made to a deity.

Q 1 Which figure is the deity or god on the clay tablet? Why do you think this?

2 What sorts of offerings are being made to the deity?



DAILY LIFE & RELIGION

FAMILIES AND MARRIAGE

In a Sumerian family, the father enjoyed a privileged position. A husband could divorce his wife very easily. He also had the right to take a second wife if his first wife was not able to bear a child. Children were generally loved and cared for, but could also be sold into slavery to repay a debt.

Although women did enjoy some rights, they were not equal to men. They could own property, buy and sell goods, be involved in legal issues and run their own business. If a woman worked outside the home, her job would be related to what she had learnt in the home. She might, for instance, sell beer she had made or become an innkeeper.

Girls were brought up to follow the traditional roles of wife, mother and homemaker.

EDUCATION

Children of the poor worked beside their parents from a young age. Only the sons of wealthy people attended school. Very few girls, if any, received an education.

Gaining an education mainly involved learning the cuneiform writing script. This was a very difficult system and took many years of hard work to master. If a student could tolerate the harsh discipline, the long days from sunrise to sunset, and was successful in his studies, he could become a scribe. This was a very important role, as scribes recorded all aspects of life in Sumer.

127 *If any one 'point the finger' at a sister of a god or the wife of any one, and can not prove it, this man shall be taken before the judges and his brow shall be marked [by cutting the skin, or perhaps hair].*

134 *If any one be captured in war and there is not sustenance in his house, if then his wife go to another house this woman shall be held blameless.*

SOURCE 3.2 Laws from the Code of Hammurabi, trans. L. W. King, on the Exploring Ancient World Cultures website. This set of 282 laws made by King Hammurabi of Babylon, who reigned from about 1792 to 1750 BCE, was carved in stone and set up in a temple.

HOMES

Houses in the cities were built close together, usually sharing walls with their neighbours. Doors and windows were small to keep houses warm in winter and cool in summer.

The houses of the poor were simple mud-brick dwellings. An inner, enclosed courtyard was a centre of family life and offered cool relief during the hot summers. Flat roofs were also used as a place for family life and as a cool sleeping area during hot summer nights.



SOURCE 3.3 Clay model of a Sumerian house, from about 2000 BCE, in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, San Jose, USA

THAT THE SUMERIANS HAD RECIPE BOOKS?

Archaeologists have found many clay tablets containing Sumerian recipes. A favourite dish was goat stew. Poorer families did not often slaughter a goat because the live animal was important to them for its milk. When they did, all parts of the animal would be used in the dish—head, legs, tail and blood.

The houses of wealthy Sumerians were larger, sometimes with a second storey. A water container was placed near the door so that people could wash the dirt of the street from their feet before they entered the house. Also built around a courtyard, these spacious houses had reception rooms, a kitchen, an oven for baking bread and sometimes a small chapel. There was a lavatory with drainage but not many houses had a bathroom.

There was very little furniture in Sumerian homes. The home of a wealthy person would have wall-hangings and floor rugs as well as some wooden furniture. Wood was rare and highly valued. Dishes, bowls, cups and goblets were made of clay or copper.

LIFESTYLE

The Sumerians appear to have enjoyed a wide variety of foods as well as an active lifestyle. Fish were plentiful and wild animals were hunted for meat. Wealthy people enjoyed cheese and butter, wine, meat from sheep and goats, fruit, vegetables, herbs and dates. Barley, bread and beer were the main foods of poorer people.

Sumerians played sports and games. They particularly enjoyed playing board games. There was also hunting, fishing, boxing and wrestling. Numerous musical instruments have been found in royal burial sites, indicating that music was also popular with Sumerians. Evidence shows a variety of instruments including the harp, reed pipes, drums and lyre.

THAT THE SUMERIANS BURIED THEIR DEAD UNDER THEIR OWN HOMES?

Family burials were made in a brick vault under the floor of the chapel or, in a house without a chapel, under any ground-floor room. Adults were wrapped in matting to be buried, and children who had died were often placed in clay jars.

DID YOU KNOW

FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER UNIT 3 DAILY LIFE & RELIGION

ANSWERS TO SOURCE QUESTIONS

- SOURCE 3.1**
- 1 The deity or god seems to be the figure at the top right corner of the tablet because he is seated and is being offered food and drink by other people.
 - 2 The offerings are food and drink and musical entertainment.

SKILLS ACTIVITY

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

M1: verbal-linguistic
Refer students to Sources 3.1 and 3.3 and ask the following questions:

- 1 What do the two sources have in common?
Both are made of the same material, which is clay, and both provide an insight into daily life in Sumer by displaying the houses, clothes and hairstyles.
- 2 Where are these two artefacts located today?
The bas-relief is in the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad, while the model of the Sumerian house is in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum of San Jose in the USA.
- 3 Provide one positive and one negative argument regarding artefacts being displayed and owned by countries other than the country of origin.
A positive argument in favour of artefacts being owned and displayed by other countries: provides opportunities for people outside the country of the archaeological find to observe, learn and research historical primary sources.
A negative argument against artefacts being owned and displayed by other countries: artefacts from a particular country should be kept in the country of archaeological discovery to keep all the primary sources complete as a total record of that culture. Splitting the collection diminishes the research value of the archeological items for all countries concerned.

• Analysis and use of sources
Refer students to Source 3.2, number 134. Ask students to read the law from the Code of Hammurabi and rewrite it in language that is more modern and easier to understand.
If a woman's husband is unable to provide food because he is a war prisoner, she is not to blame if she goes to live in another person's house.

KEY CONCEPTS OF HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING: CONTEXT

DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL

M1: intrapersonal, verbal-linguistic
Students imagine they are a young girl living in Ancient Sumer. They have been told that they have been sold into slavery as their father owes much money to a healer who helped when their mother was sick. They each write three journal entries that describe their feelings about their role in society and their fate.
Students also complete a short annotation to each entry, describing why they included feelings and events to display their empathy with the time.

SKILLS ACTIVITIES

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

MI: verbal-linguistic

Refer students to Sources 3.4 and 3.5. Ask students to write two questions about the sources that inform historical inquiry. Examples of possible student answers include:

What crafts were Sumerians skilled in and how did you reach this conclusion?

What did Sumerian men and women wear?

What fabrics do Sumerian clothes seem to be made from?

Compare Sumerian clothes with clothes in modern Australia.

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

MI: verbal-linguistic

Refer students to Source 3.6 and ask them to identify the features and structure of Sumerian writing.

Student responses may include the following points; the writing was wedge-shaped symbols, lines and circles indented into clay; numbers and 'words' were represented; writing appears to be vertically arranged with horizontal lines separating different sections; there were particular symbols to represent 'words' or ideas as the same symbols are repeated.

SUMERIAN MEDICINE

If they became ill or suffered an injury, Sumerians could seek treatment from a healer. Some treatments, such as the driving out of evil spirits, were of a religious nature. Practical treatment could also be prescribed, and Sumerian clay tablets contain some of the world's oldest medical texts.

FASHION

In the warm climate, Sumerians had no need for heavy clothing. The main piece of clothing was a woollen skirt. Men wore a short skirt with a bare top or one shoulder uncovered. Women wore a longer skirt with a top that covered one shoulder. Some women wore elaborate hats or headdresses. Men wore a neat beard or were clean-shaven. Both men and women wore jewellery.



SOURCE 3.4 These clay models of a man and a woman were among twelve discovered during excavation of a Sumerian temple at Tell Asmar, in present-day Iraq.

DID YOU KNOW THAT MEDICINE HAS ALWAYS TASTED BAD?

The following instructions, in cuneiform script, were found on a clay tablet: 'Grind up the seeds of the carpenter plant with Markazi resin and thyme. Dissolve the resulting mess in beer and give it to the man to drink.'

SOURCE 3.5 Clay model of a Sumerian priest from about 2400 BCE, in the Louvre Museum, Paris



RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Religion was very important to the Sumerians. They were polytheistic, worshipping many gods, and each city had its own god or goddess.

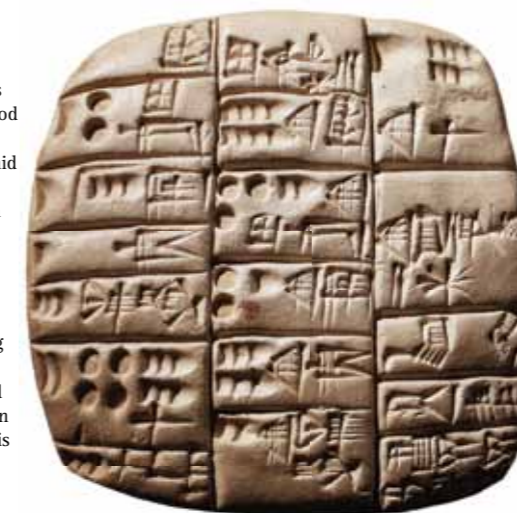
The god of Ur, for example, was the moon god, Nanna, and the god of Nippur was the chief god, Enlil. There were many other gods as well. The Sumerians prayed to hundreds of deities to guard against disasters overwhelming their lives.

If you visited a Sumerian city, the first thing you saw would be the temple dedicated to the god of the city (see Source 0.1). The temple, or ziggurat, was a pyramid-like structure made of brick. It was made up of terraces and the temple to the god stood on the top. The purpose of the ziggurat was very different to that of an Egyptian pyramid. A pyramid was built as a tomb for a dead pharaoh whereas a ziggurat was a temple and played a central role in the religious life of the city.

WRITING

Early writing was used for recording and counting goods and stores. Over time, writing came to express historical, religious, commercial, legal and poetic ideas. The Sumerians wrote with pointers on wet clay tablets, making wedge-shaped marks. This shape gave the writing its name, cuneiform, from the Latin *cuneus*, meaning 'wedge'.

Thousands of clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform have been found, creating a unique source for Sumerian culture.



SOURCE 3.6 Cuneiform writing, used here to record numbers of goats and sheep

remembering & understanding

#1 In your 'First civilisation: Sumer' glossary, list these words and explain their meanings:

- deities
- scribe
- polytheistic

#2 Explain why there was very little furniture in Sumerian homes.

understanding & applying

There are many websites devoted to cuneiform writing. Using a search engine such as Google and keywords such as 'Mesopotamia' and 'cuneiform writing', find a website that shows the development of cuneiform writing to complete Questions 3 and 4.

#3 Draw diagrams showing the progressive changes in cuneiform signs such as the sign for barley or the sign for sheep.

In what year did the sign last appear? What did it look like then?

#4 Cuneiform was used for five different languages. Conduct some research to find out what they were.

understanding & analysing

#5 Read Source 3.2 and answer the following question.

What do these laws tell us about the values of the time?

#6 Using Sources 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5, explain how the Sumerians adapted their homes and clothing to their environment.

#7 What do Sources 0.1, 3.1 and 3.5 tell us about the Sumerians' attitude towards religion?

evaluating & creating

#8 a Create a Venn diagram that compares and contrasts the main foods available to Sumerian families and modern families such as your own.

b Write a paragraph summarising your conclusions about the nutritional value of both diets.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER UNIT 3 DAILY LIFE & RELIGION

REMEMBERING AND UNDERSTANDING

- 1 deities—gods and goddesses
polytheistic—believing in or worshipping many gods
scribe—an official whose job is to record things in writing
- 2 Wood was rare and highly valued so only the rich could afford furniture.

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING

- 3 Answers will vary. However, each item should show the development of the sign from line patterns to the simple use of wedges and to repetition of wedge symbols to show volume. There may also be a change in orientation of the wedges. Signs can also be used to represent sounds in other words.

The sign for barley was last used in about 61 CE, and it consisted only of wedges with no lines.

Cuneiform was in use until around 71 CE.

- 4 Cuneiform was used for Sumerian, Akkadian, Elamite, Hittite and Urartian languages.

Sumerian (the language of Sumer) is virtually synonymous with 'cuneiform'. Sumerians were the first to use the wedge-shaped symbols to denote words and phrases.

Akkadian, Elamite, Hittite and Urartian languages all lacked a written form, so adopted the Sumerian style to record important information.

UNDERSTANDING AND ANALYSING

- 5 These laws tell us that women had rights and were protected by the law. They were to be taken care of no matter the situation and no matter what their husband may have done. The Sumerians also had a system whereby people would be taken to trial, which tells us that they valued truth and tried to treat women fairly.
- 6 The Sumerians adapted their clothes and homes to suit their environment. The houses were built so that the small and few windows kept heat out during the hot summers and the cool temperatures out in winter. Houses were built using local materials such as mud, from which bricks were made. The clothes were plain, and could be adapted to suit the seasons by rearranging cloth. The generally hot climate did not require many clothes to be worn..
- 7 From Source 0.1 it is clear that religion must have been a major preoccupation of the Sumerians to warrant such a significant structure. Source 3.1 shows offerings being made to a deity, which further indicates that religion was important. The existence of a tablet depicting this tells us that the Sumerians wanted to record such religious practices. Source 3.5 tells us that priests played an important part in society. Not only was there a model made of one of them, but the detail in the eyes and the pattern in the clothing are not simple, which suggests that priests were held in high regard.

RESOURCES

PEARSON Reader



INTERACTIVE

Animation revealing features of the city of Babylon

WORKSHEET

Worksheet 2
'How civilised was Sumer?'

PEARSON history 7 A.B.

Unit 5 'Crossword'
Unit 6 'A typical Sumerian settlement'

EVALUATING AND CREATING

- 8 a Responses will vary, depending on whether or not students are vegetarian, for example. For students, one of the main differences between a Sumerian diet and their own may be the presence of wine and beer in the diet of Sumerian families.
- b Again, answers will vary. It is important that students note that, although the Sumerian diet was simple, it was balanced and comprised foods from each of the food groups. Students may conclude that their diet is less healthy than that of the Sumerians.

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

CONCEPT DESCRIPTORS

- The evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and pottery)
- Key features of ancient societies (farming, trade, social classes, religion, rule of law)

HISTORICAL SKILLS

CHRONOLOGY, TERMS AND CONCEPTS

- Sequence historical events and periods
- Use historical terms and concepts

HISTORICAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH

- Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry
- Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

- Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources
- Locate, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence
- Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources

PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS

- Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources

EXPLANATION AND COMMUNICATION

- Develop historical texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources
- Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies

KEY CONCEPTS

- The significance of the discoveries by Woolley to our understanding of the Sumerian civilisation
- The idea that this ancient civilisation was very advanced for its time
- How primary sources inform our understanding of ancient civilisations
- The significance of legends and their contribution to our understanding of civilisations
- Common themes that recur in the writings of different civilisations

UNIT 4 SOURCE STUDY TWO IMPORTANT PRIMARY SOURCES FROM SUMER



SOURCE 4.1 Headdress found in the tomb of Lady Puabi at Ur. It is made of gold, lapis lazuli and carnelian, a type of reddish stone. The headdress, from about 2600 BCE, is in the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Philadelphia, USA.

SOURCE 4.2 The Royal Standard of Ur, in the British Museum



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KEY TERMS

archaeologist—a person who studies past life and human culture through the excavation and analysis of material evidence
artefact—something produced by humans, such as a tool or a work of art
carnelian—a red semiprecious stone
lapis lazuli—a blue semiprecious stone
primary sources—sources that were created at or around the time of the event being studied

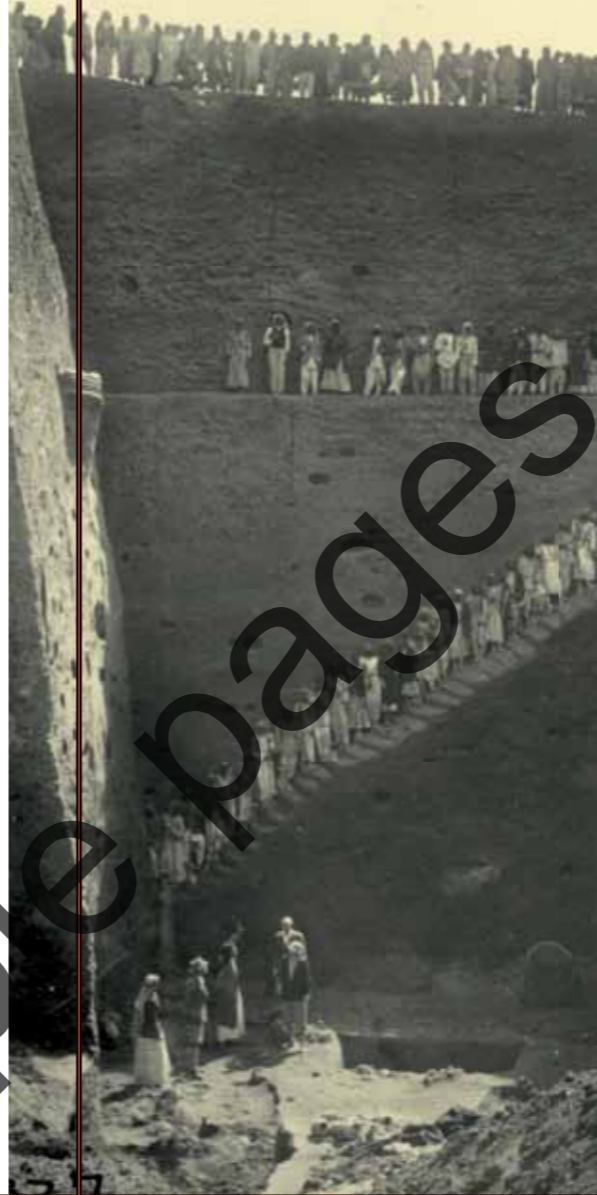
HOW DO WE LEARN MORE ABOUT SUMER?

WHAT WE, AS HISTORIANS, HAVE LEARNT ABOUT SUMER comes primarily from primary sources found by archaeologists. Two important primary sources about Sumer are the Royal Tombs of Ur, which were discovered by the British archaeologist Leonard Woolley, and *The Epic of Gilgamesh*.

WOOLLEY AND THE ROYAL TOMBS OF UR

The British archaeologist Leonard Woolley, who spent many years excavating sites in Mesopotamia, discovered what he called 'the Royal Tombs of Ur' at the site of the ancient Sumerian city of Ur. As with the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in Egypt, which occurred at about the same time, this discovery caused a world-wide sensation. The tombs contained wonderful jewellery and objects made of gold, silver and lapis lazuli, stunning headdresses, cups, furnishings and large paintings. Remarkably, one of the tombs, like that of Tutankhamen, had been untouched by looters. Between 1922 and 1934 Woolley returned to Ur during the digging season and, in all, excavated 1800 tombs. He was knighted in 1935.

SOURCE 4.3 Sir Leonard Woolley's excavation of Ur



SOURCE 4.4 The Ram in the Thicket before restoration

THE ROYAL STANDARD OF UR

Discovered during the excavation of the tombs of Ur, this artefact is one of the most famous finds of the ancient world. No one is sure of its purpose. Its images, however, tell us much about Sumerian culture.

RESTORING THE TREASURES

Sources 4.1, 4.2 and 4.5 are just three of the many stunning objects found in the Royal Tombs. They were not, however, found in the condition you see in these photographs. Over the thousands of years they lay in the tomb, they fell into a state of disrepair (see source 4.4) and were almost unrecognisable as the beautiful artefacts shown here. It is a delicate and painstaking task to restore such objects to their original condition. They are now housed in museums around the world where they are carefully maintained and displayed for the public.

SOURCE 4.5 The Ram in the Thicket is made of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, copper, shell, red limestone and bitumen. It is in the British Museum.



FIRST CIVILISATION: SUMER UNIT 4 SOURCE STUDY

SKILLS ACTIVITY

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

MI: verbal-linguistic

Direct students to look closely at Sources 4.4 and 4.5 and answer the following questions.

- 1 Look at both sources and identify all the parts of the artefact that could be recognised before restoration.
The flowers, the stand, the ram's face
- 2 Which of the two sources provides more information for historians, and why?
Source 4.5, because you are able to see the whole artefact as it was in its original state and it is not buried in mud/dirt.

KEY CONCEPTS OF HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDING: EMPATHY

DEBATE

MI: verbal-linguistic, visual-spatial, interpersonal

Students discuss the debate about whether historical artefacts should remain in the countries of origin or be held and displayed in other countries. Students draw up a T-chart. On one side they list all of the reasons why the artefact should stay in the country of origin. On the other side they list all of the reasons why the artefact is better kept and displayed in another country. Direct students to look at Sources 4.4 and 4.5 (The Ram in the Thicket) as an example. Ask students where this artefact was found and where it is currently kept. In order to complete the chart, students can also research other examples such as the Elgin Marbles. At the conclusion of the activity, students can discuss the pros and cons of this issue and offer their personal opinion.

RESOURCES

PEARSON Reader
 Unit 3 'Primary sources:
 The Royal Tombs of Ur'



STRAIGHT FROM ACARA

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

CONCEPT DESCRIPTORS

- The evidence for the emergence and establishment of ancient societies (including art, iconography, writing tools and pottery)
- Key features of ancient societies (farming, trade, social classes, religion, rule of law)

HISTORICAL SKILLS

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- Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry

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- Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources

PERSPECTIVES AND INTERPRETATIONS

- Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources

KEY CONCEPTS

- That civilisations influenced each other. Even the modern world has influences that link back to Sumer
- The idea that this ancient civilisation was very advanced for its time
- The significance of the development of permanent written records of a society to our understanding and knowledge of past civilisations

KEY TERMS

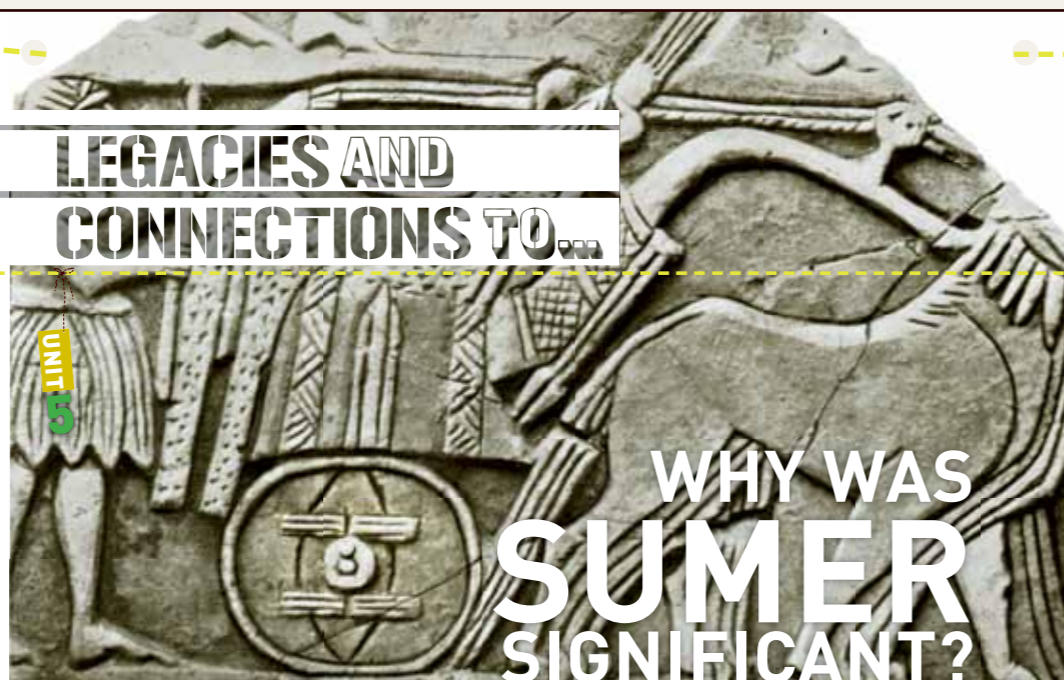
Assyria—an independent and culturally distinct city-state in Mesopotamia

Babylonia—a distinct civilisation made up of a number of city-states in Mesopotamia

culture—the way of living (including the behaviours and beliefs) of a particular group of people, which is passed from one generation to the next

Mesopotamia—a region in south-west Asia, located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers

sarcophagus—a coffin



LEGACIES AND CONNECTIONS TO...

UNIT 5

SOURCE 5.1 This carving of a chariot on a sarcophagus was discovered in 1928 at the Royal Tombs of Ur. It is one of the earliest known representations of the wheel.

DID YOU KNOW

THAT THE SUMERIANS DIVIDED THE CIRCLE INTO 360 DEGREES?

The Sumerians also gave us the concept of 'a dozen' and the division of the clock to measure hours, minutes and seconds.

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OTHER CIVILISATIONS

Sumerian civilisation had an extraordinary influence on neighbouring cultures. Conquerors and neighbours copied, borrowed and adapted from the Sumerians even after they had faded as a culture.

The ziggurats with their stepped platforms became the model for temples by the Assyrians and Babylonians for many centuries after the fall of Ur. The Sumerian religion was also adopted throughout Babylonia, Assyria and Chaldea.

Astronomy, the wheel, mathematics, the calendar—all passed on to later Mesopotamian cultures and then on to other areas. Sumer had a strong commercial identity and its use of such things as credit and receipts spread throughout the region.

Egypt and Sumer seem to share many features. Both civilisations rose as river settlements, they were farmers and traders and were accomplished builders. Religion, with its many gods, played a central role in both societies, and both cultures developed a form of writing. There were, however, very strong differences between them. Unlike Egypt, Sumer was not a unified country and only came under single rule through conquest. It would appear that Egypt and Sumer came in contact through trade and some exchange of influence can be seen in writing, buildings and art.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

SKILLS ACTIVITY

ANALYSIS AND USE OF SOURCES

MI: verbal-linguistic

1 Direct students to look closely at Source 5.1 and answer the following questions:

- Look at the section that shows the wheel in this bas-relief. What sort of material/ do you think Sumerians used to make wheels?
It was a solid wheel made mainly or wholly of timber pieces joined together.
- Why do you think that the invention of the wheel was so revolutionary?
Because it made transporting items much easier and quicker. Heavy objects could be loaded on carts and moved around by animals rather than carried by humans.



SOURCE 5.2 Cuneiform writing on a clay tablet

Q Do you think that you would need to be skilled or unskilled to be a scribe in Sumer? Explain your answer.

THE PAST AND THE PRESENT LEGACY

Cuneiform writing was the most influential feature of Sumerian culture for subsequent civilisations. Cuneiform continued to be used throughout the region long after the Sumerian culture had disappeared. Apart from the writing itself, Sumerian myths and legends were adapted and became part of the literature of the wider Middle East. Baked clay tablets inscribed with cuneiform survived for thousands of years and it is because of these clay tablets that we know so much about Sumer.

Even though it lasted a relatively short time, Sumer was one of the most influential of the world's ancient civilisations. Much of modern life can be traced back to the Sumerians: the wheel, the plough, city life, irrigation, the use of writing and even the idea of a city.

TIME TO THINK ...

1 EVIDENCE FROM THE PAST

- Were you surprised at the amount of evidence available about Sumer?
- What did you learn about the way this evidence has been used?
- Were any sources more important than others?

2 EVIDENCE FOR THE FUTURE

- What sources do modern Australians leave for future historians?
- What will future historians learn from these sources?

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TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

LEGACIES AND CONNECTIONS

ANNOTATED ILLUSTRATION

MI: visual-spatial

Students each choose two Sumerian achievements/inventions/legacies. For each of these, they illustrate and label the Sumerian version. Then they illustrate and label the modern equivalent. For example, they could draw a tablet with cuneiform writing and then provide a sample of a modern text message or email.

ANSWERS TO SOURCE QUESTIONS

SOURCE 5.2 A scribe would need to be extremely skilled and literate. The cuneiform characters were complex and took many years to learn. Only a person who had devoted years to learning the script would be able to read and write a clay tablet message like the one shown in the source.

RESOURCES PEARSON Reader
WORKSHEET
Worksheet 4
'Cryptic cuneiform'