First Age of Empires, 1570 B.C.–200 B.C.

Previewing Main Ideas

**EMPIRE BUILDING** Groups from Africa to China sought to conquer other groups and spread their influence across vast regions. These societies built the world’s first great empires.

**Geography** On the map, locate the Nile, Tigris, and Euphrates rivers, where many of the early empires arose. Why do you think the empire builders fought over these regions?

**CULTURAL INTERACTION** For a long period, Egypt ruled Kush and the two cultures interacted. When the Kush Empire conquered Egypt, therefore, the Kushites adopted many Egyptian cultural values and ideas.

**Geography** Study the map and time line. What other cultures might have adopted Egyptian values?

**RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL SYSTEMS** After the warring states period, Chinese philosophers developed different ethical systems to restore China’s social order.

**Geography** How might China’s location have affected the spread of the ethical systems that began there?

**INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

**leEdition**
- Interactive Maps
- Interactive Visuals
- Interactive Primary Sources

**VIDEO** Patterns of Interaction: The Rise of the Persians and the Inca

**INTERNET RESOURCES**
Go to classzone.com for:
- Research Links
- Internet Activities
- Primary Sources
- Chapter Quiz
- Maps
- Test Practice
- Current Events
How will the empire help you or harm you?

As a merchant traveling with your camel caravan, your life has become increasingly difficult. Bandits and thieves roam the roads, attacking traders like you. A new military empire is advancing through your region, putting down the outlaw bands. However, the military empire is also imposing harsh laws and heavy taxes on the regions it conquers.

EXAMINING the ISSUES

- Why might a merchant welcome the expansion of a strong empire?
- How might the empire oppress the region?

In small groups, answer the questions, then report back to the class. In your discussion, remember what you’ve learned about military conquest and the behavior of such groups as the Sumerians, Egyptians, and Hittites. As you read about the empires in this chapter, consider how the winners treat the people under their power and how the conquered people respond.
The Egyptian and Nubian Empires

MAIN IDEA

CULTURAL INTERACTION Two empires along the Nile, Egypt and Nubia, forged commercial, cultural, and political connections.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

Neighboring civilizations today participate in cultural exchange as well as conflict.

TERMS & NAMES

- Hyksos
- New Kingdom
- Hatshepsut
- Thutmose III
- Nubia
- Ramses II
- Kush
- Piankhi
- Meroë

SETTING THE STAGE

As you learned in Chapter 2, Egyptian civilization developed along the Nile River and united into a kingdom around 3100 B.C. During the Middle Kingdom (about 2080–1640 B.C.), trade with Mesopotamia and the Indus Valley enriched Egypt. Meanwhile, up the Nile River, less than 600 miles south of the Egyptian city of Thebes, a major kingdom had developed in the region of Nubia. For centuries, the Nubian kingdom of Kush traded with Egypt. The two kingdoms particularly influenced each other culturally.

Nomadic Invaders Rule Egypt

After the prosperity of the Middle Kingdom, Egypt descended into war and violence. This was caused by a succession of weak pharaohs and power struggles among rival nobles. The weakened country fell to invaders who swept across the Isthmus of Suez in chariots, a weapon of war unknown to the Egyptians. These Asiatic invaders, called Hyksos (HIHK•sohs), ruled Egypt from about 1640 to 1570 B.C. The Hyksos invasion shook the Egyptians’ confidence in the desert barriers that had protected their kingdom.

Hebrews Migrate to Egypt

During the Hyksos rule, some historians believe that another Asiatic group, the Hebrews, settled in Egypt. According to the Bible, Abraham and his family first crossed the Euphrates River and came to Canaan around 1800 B.C. Then, around 1650 B.C., the descendants of Abraham moved again—this time to Egypt. Some historians believe that the Hyksos encouraged the Hebrews to settle there because the two groups were racially similar. The Egyptians resented the presence of the Hyksos in their land but were powerless to remove them.

Expulsion and Slavery

Around 1600 B.C., a series of warlike rulers began to restore Egypt’s power. Among those who helped drive out the Hyksos was Queen Ahhotep (ah•HOH•tehp). She took over when her husband was killed in battle. The next pharaoh, Kamose (KAH•mohs), won a great victory over the hated Hyksos. His successors drove the Hyksos completely out of Egypt and pursued them across the Sinai Peninsula into Palestine. According to some Biblical scholars, the Hebrews remained in Egypt and were enslaved and forced into hard labor. They would not leave Egypt until sometime between 1500 and 1200 B.C., the time of the Exodus.
The New Kingdom of Egypt

After overthrowing the Hyksos, the pharaohs of the New Kingdom (about 1570–1075 B.C.) sought to strengthen Egypt by building an empire. As you may recall, an empire brings together several peoples or states under the control of one ruler. Egypt entered its third period of glory during the New Kingdom era. During this time, it was wealthier and more powerful than ever before.

Equipped with bronze weapons and two-wheeled chariots, the Egyptians became conquerors. The pharaohs of the 18th Dynasty (about 1570–1365 B.C.) set up an army including archers, charioteers, and infantry, or foot soldiers.

Hatshepsut’s Prosperous Rule Among the rulers of the New Kingdom, Hatshepsut (hat-SHEHP-soot), who declared herself pharaoh around 1472 B.C., was unique. She took over because her stepson, the male heir to the throne, was a young child at the time. Unlike other New Kingdom rulers, Hatshepsut spent her reign encouraging trade rather than just waging war.

The trading expedition Hatshepsut ordered to the Land of Punt (poont), near present-day Somalia, was particularly successful. Hatshepsut sent a fleet of five ships down the Red Sea to Punt in search of myrrh, frankincense, and fragrant ointments used for religious ceremonies and in cosmetics. In addition to these goods, Hatshepsut’s fleet brought back gold, ivory, and unusual plants and animals.

Thutmose the Empire Builder Hatshepsut’s stepson, Thutmose III (thoot-MOH-suh), proved to be a much more warlike ruler. In his eagerness to ascend to the throne, Thutmose III may even have murdered Hatshepsut. Between the time he took power and his death around 1425 B.C., Thutmose III led a number of victorious invasions eastward into Palestine and Syria. His armies also pushed farther south into Nubia, a region of Africa that straddled the upper Nile River. Egypt had traded with Nubia and influenced the region since the time of the Middle Kingdom.

Egypt was now a mighty empire. It controlled lands around the Nile and far beyond. In addition, it drew boundless wealth from them. Contact with other cultures brought Egypt new ideas as well as material goods. Egypt had never before—nor has it since—commanded such power and wealth as during the reigns of the New Kingdom pharaohs.

The Egyptians and the Hittites The Egyptians’ conquest of parts of Syria and Palestine around 1400 B.C. brought them into conflict with the Hittites. The Hittites had moved into Asia Minor around 1900 B.C. and later expanded southward into Palestine.

After several smaller battles, the Egyptians and Hittites clashed at Kadesh around 1285 B.C. The pharaoh Ramses II (RAM-sayz) and a Hittite king later made a treaty that promised “peace and brotherhood between us forever.” Their alliance lasted for the rest of the century.

An Age of Builders Like the rulers of the Old Kingdom, who built the towering pyramids, rulers of the New Kingdom

Vocabulary

A dynasty is a series of rulers from a single family.
erected grand buildings. In search of security in the afterlife—and protection from grave robbers—they hid their splendid tombs beneath desert cliffs. The site they chose was the remote Valley of the Kings near Thebes. Besides royal tombs, the pharaohs of this period also built great palaces and magnificent temples. Indeed, the royal title *pharaoh* means “great house” and comes from this time period.

Ramses II, whose reign extended from approximately 1290 to 1224 B.C., stood out among the great builders of the New Kingdom. At Karnak, he added to a monumental temple to Amon-Re (AH•muh•RAY), Egypt’s chief god. Ramses also ordered a temple to be carved into the red sandstone cliffs above the Nile River at Abu Simbel (AH•boo SIHM•buhl). He had these temples decorated with enormous statues of himself. The ears of these statues alone measured more than three feet.

### The Empire Declines

The empire that Thutmose III had built and Ramses II had ruled slowly came apart after 1200 B.C. as other strong civilizations rose to challenge Egypt’s power. Shortly after Ramses died, the entire eastern Mediterranean suffered a wave of invasions.

**Invasions by Land and Sea** Both the Egyptian empire and the Hittite kingdom were attacked by invaders called the “Sea Peoples” in Egyptian texts. These invaders may have included the Philistines, who are often mentioned in the Bible. Whoever they were, the Sea Peoples caused great destruction.

The Egyptians faced other attacks. In the east, the tribes of Palestine often rebelled against their Egyptian overlords. In the west, the vast desert no longer served as a barrier against Libyan raids on Egyptian villages.

**Egypt’s Empire Fades** After these invasions, Egypt never recovered its previous power. The Egyptian empire broke apart into regional units, and numerous small kingdoms arose. Each was eager to protect its independence.

Almost powerless, Egypt soon fell to its neighbors’ invasions. Libyans crossed the desert to the Nile Delta. There they established independent dynasties. From around 950 to 730 B.C., Libyan pharaohs ruled Egypt and erected cities. But instead
of imposing their own culture, the Libyans adopted the Egyptian way of life. When the Nubians came north to seize power, they too adopted Egyptian culture.

The Kushites Conquer the Nile Region

For centuries, Egypt dominated Nubia and the Nubian kingdom of Kush, which lasted for about a thousand years, between 2000 and 1000 B.C. During this time, Egyptian armies raided and even occupied Kush for a brief period. But as Egypt fell into decline during the Hyksos period, Kush began to emerge as a regional power. Nubia now established its own Kushite dynasty on the throne of Egypt.

The People of Nubia Nubia lay south of Egypt between the first cataract of the Nile, an area of churning rapids, and the division of the river into the Blue Nile and the White Nile. Despite several cataracts around which boats had to be carried, the Nile provided the best north-south trade route. Several Nubian kingdoms, including Kush, served as a trade corridor. They linked Egypt and the Mediterranean world to the interior of Africa and to the Red Sea. Goods and ideas flowed back and forth along the river for centuries. The first Nubian kingdom, Kerma, arose shortly after 2000 B.C.

The Interaction of Egypt and Nubia With Egypt’s revival during the New Kingdom, pharaohs forced Egyptian rule on Kush. Egyptian governors, priests, soldiers, and artists strongly influenced the Nubians. Indeed, Kush’s capital, Napata, became the center for the spread of Egyptian culture to Kush’s other African trading partners.

History in Depth

Egyptian Influence on Nubian Culture

Nubia was heavily influenced by Egypt. This influence is particularly apparent in Nubian religious practices and burial traditions. But even though the Nubians adopted Egyptian ways, they didn’t abandon their cultural identity. In many of these religious and funeral practices, the Nubians blended Egyptian customs with their own traditions.

Pyramids Unlike the Egyptian pyramids, the pyramids of Nubia had steeply sloping sides and were probably designed with a flat top.

Temples This stone ram, representing the Egyptian god Amen, lay at the entrance to a Nubian temple dedicated to that god. Although the Nubians worshiped many Egyptian gods, Amen’s temple was located near another dedicated to Apedemak, a Nubian god.
Kushite princes went to Egypt. They learned the Egyptian language and worshiped Egyptian gods. They adopted the customs and clothing styles of the Egyptian upper class. When they returned home, the Kushite nobles brought back royal rituals and hieroglyphic writing.

With Egypt’s decline, beginning about 1200 B.C., Kush regained its independence. The Kushites viewed themselves as more suitable guardians of Egyptian values than the Libyans. They sought to guard these values by conquering Egypt and ousting its Libyan rulers.

**Piankhi Captures the Egyptian Throne** In 751 B.C., a Kushite king named Piankhi overthrew the Libyan dynasty that had ruled Egypt for over 200 years. He united the entire Nile Valley from the delta in the north to Napata in the south. Piankhi and his descendants became Egypt’s 25th Dynasty. After his victory, Piankhi erected a monument in his homeland of Kush. On the monument, he had words inscribed that celebrated his victory. The inscription provided a catalog of the riches of the north:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

Then the ships were laden with silver, gold, copper, clothing, and everything of the Northland, every product of Syria and all sweet woods of God’s-Land. His Majesty sailed upstream [south], with glad heart, the shores on his either side were jubilating. West and east were jubilating in the presence of His Majesty.

PIANKHI, monument in Cairo Museum

**Statues** These figurines represented Nubian slaves. They were buried with Nubian kings and meant to serve them in death. The figurines reflect traditional Egyptian style. The human faces, however, reveal Nubian features.
However, Piankhi’s dynasty proved short-lived. In 671 B.C., the Assyrians, a war-like people from Southwest Asia, conquered Egypt. The Kushites fought bravely, but they were forced to retreat south along the Nile. There the Kushites would experience a golden age, despite their loss of Egypt.

The Golden Age of Meroë

After their defeat by the Assyrians, the Kushite royal family eventually moved south to Meroë (MEHR•oh•EE). Meroë lay closer to the Red Sea than Napata did, and so became active in the flourishing trade among Africa, Arabia, and India. (See the map on page 93.)

The Wealth of Kush

Kush used the natural resources around Meroë and thrived for several hundred years. Unlike Egyptian cities along the Nile, Meroë enjoyed significant rainfall. And, unlike Egypt, Meroë boasted abundant supplies of iron ore. As a result, Meroë became a major center for the manufacture of iron weapons and tools.

In Meroë, ambitious merchants loaded iron bars, tools, and spearheads onto their donkeys. They then transported the goods to the Red Sea, where they exchanged these goods for jewelry, fine cotton cloth, silver lamps, and glass bottles. As the mineral wealth of the central Nile Valley flowed out of Meroë, luxury goods from India and Arabia flowed in.

The Decline of Meroë

After four centuries of prosperity, from about 250 B.C. to A.D. 150, Meroë began to decline. Aksum, another kingdom located 400 miles to the southeast, contributed to Meroë’s fall. With a seaport on the Red Sea, Aksum came to dominate North African trade. Aksum defeated Meroë around A.D. 350.

Centuries earlier, around the time the Kushite pharaoh sat on the Egyptian throne, a new empire—Assyria—had risen in the north. Like Kush, Assyria came to dominate Egypt.

SECTION ASSESSMENT

1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.
   - Hyksos
   - New Kingdom
   - Hatshepsut
   - Thutmose III
   - Nubia
   - Ramses II
   - Kush
   - Piankhi
   - Meroë

2. Which empire was invaded more often? Why?

3. How did the New Kingdom of Egypt become so powerful and wealthy?

4. What cultural aspects of Egyptian civilization did the Kushites adopt?

5. Why was Kush able to thrive after losing Egypt to the Assyrians?

6. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS What role did geography play in Egypt’s rise and fall?

7. MAKING INFERENCES How did trade help both Egypt and Nubia maintain their dominance in the Nile region?

8. HYPOTHESIZING What might have happened if the Kushites had imposed their own culture on Egypt?

9. WRITING ACTIVITY [CULTURAL INTERACTION] How did Egypt and Nubia strengthen each other at various times in their histories? Support your ideas in a one-paragraph analysis.

CONNECT TO TODAY

CREATING A TIME LINE

Research to learn about the collapse of the Soviet Union—a modern-day empire—in 1991. Create a time line of the events that led to the collapse.
The Assyrian Empire

**MAIN IDEA**

**EMPIRE BUILDING**

Assyria developed a military machine and established a well-organized administration.

**WHY IT MATTERS NOW**

Some leaders still use military force to extend their rule, stamp out opposition, and gain wealth and power.

**TERMS & NAMES**

- Assyria
- Sennacherib
- Nineveh
- Ashurbanipal
- Medes
- Chaldeans
- Nebuchadnezzar

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**SETTING THE STAGE**

For more than two centuries, the Assyrian army advanced across Southwest Asia. It overwhelmed foes with its military strength. After the Assyrians seized control of Egypt, the Assyrian king Esarhaddon proclaimed, “I tore up the root of Kush, and not one therein escaped to submit to me.” The last Kushite pharaoh retreated to Napata, Kush’s capital city.

**A Mighty Military Machine**

Beginning around 850 B.C., Assyria (uh•SEER•ee•uh) acquired a large empire. It accomplished this by means of a highly advanced military organization and state-of-the-art weaponry. For a time, this campaign of conquest made Assyria the greatest power in Southwest Asia.

**The Rise of a Warrior People**

The Assyrians came from the northern part of Mesopotamia. (See the map on page 96.) Their flat, exposed land made them easy for other people to attack. Invaders frequently swept down into Assyria from the nearby mountains. The Assyrians may have developed their warlike behavior in response to these invasions. Through constant warfare, Assyrian kings eventually built an empire that stretched from east and north of the Tigris River all the way to central Egypt. One of these Assyrian kings, Sennacherib (sih•NAK•uhr•ihb), bragged that he had destroyed 89 cities and 820 villages, burned Babylon, and ordered most of its inhabitants killed.

**Military Organization and Conquest**

Assyria was a society that glorified military strength. Its soldiers were well equipped for conquering an empire. Making use of the ironworking technology of the time, the soldiers covered themselves in stiff leather and metal armor. They wore copper or iron helmets, padded loincloths, and leather skirts layered with metal scales. Their weapons were iron swords and iron-pointed spears.

Advance planning and technical skill allowed the Assyrians to lay siege to enemy cities. When deep water blocked their passage, engineers would span the rivers with pontoons, or floating structures used to support a bridge. Before attacking, the Assyrians dug beneath the city’s walls to weaken them. Then, with disciplined organization, foot soldiers marched shoulder to shoulder. The foot soldiers approached the city walls and shot wave upon wave of arrows. Meanwhile, another group of troops hammered the city’s gates with massive, iron-tipped battering rams.

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**TAKING NOTES**

Analyzing Causes

Use a chart to identify the causes of the rise and decline of Assyrian power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assyrian Power</th>
<th>Causes for Rise</th>
<th>Causes for Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need to defend against attacks</td>
<td>Hated by conquered people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When the city gates finally splintered, the Assyrians showed no mercy. They killed or enslaved their victims. To prevent their enemies from rebelling again, the Assyrians forced captives to settle far away in the empire’s distant provinces and dependent states.

**The Empire Expands**

Between 850 and 650 B.C., the kings of Assyria defeated Syria, Palestine, and Babylonia. Eventually, the Assyrians ruled lands that extended far beyond the Fertile Crescent into Anatolia and Egypt.

**Assyrian Rule** At its peak around 650 B.C., the Assyrian Empire included almost all of the old centers of civilization and power in Southwest Asia. Assyrian officials governed lands closest to Assyria as provinces and made them dependent territories. Assyrian kings controlled these dependent regions by choosing their rulers or by supporting kings who aligned themselves with Assyria. The Assyrian system of having local governors report to a central authority became the fundamental model of administration, or system of government management.

In addition, the military campaigns added new territory to the empire. These additional lands brought taxes and tribute to the Assyrian treasury. If a conquered people refused to pay, the Assyrians destroyed their cities and sent the people into exile. Such methods enabled the Assyrians to effectively govern an extended empire.

**Assyrian Culture** Some of Assyria’s most fearsome warriors earned reputations as great builders. For example, the same King Sennacherib who had burned Babylon also established Assyria’s capital at *Nineveh* (NIHN•uh•vuh) along the Tigris River. This great walled city, about three miles long and a mile wide, was the largest city of its day. In the ruins of Nineveh and other Assyrian cities, archaeologists found finely carved sculptures. Two artistic subjects particularly fascinated the Assyrians: brutal military campaigns and the lion hunt.

Nineveh also held one of the ancient world’s largest libraries. In this unique library, King *Ashurbanipal* (AH•shur•BAH•num•PAHL) collected more than 20,000 clay tablets from throughout the Fertile Crescent. The collection included the ancient Sumerian poem the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and provided historians with much information about the earliest civilizations in Southwest Asia. The library was the first to have many of the features of a modern library. For instance, the collection was organized into many rooms according to subject matter. The collection was also cataloged. Europeans would not use a library cataloging system for centuries.
The Empire Crumbles

Ashurbanipal proved to be one of the last of the mighty Assyrian kings. Assyrian power had spread itself too thin. Also, the cruelty displayed by the Assyrians had earned them many enemies. Shortly after Ashurbanipal’s death, Nineveh fell.

Decline and Fall  In 612 B.C., a combined army of Medes (meedz), Chaldeans (kal•DEE•uhnz), and others burned and leveled Nineveh. However, because the clay writing tablets in Nineveh’s library had been baked in a pottery oven, many survived the fire.

Most people in the region rejoiced at Nineveh’s destruction. The Hebrew prophet Nahum (NA Y•huhm) gave voice to the feelings of many:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

And it shall come to pass, that all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee? . . . Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them.

NAHUM 3:7, 18 (Bible)

Rebirth of Babylon Under the Chaldeans  After defeating the Assyrians, the Chaldeans made Babylon their capital. Around 600 B.C., Babylon became the center
Chapter 4

of a new empire, more than 1,000 years
after Hammurabi had ruled there. A
Chaldean king named **Nebuchadnezzar**
(NEHB•uh•kuhd•NEHZ•uhr) restored the
city. Perhaps the most impressive part of
the restoration was the famous hanging
gardens. Greek scholars later listed them
as one of the seven wonders of the ancient
world. According to legend, one of
Nebuchadnezzar’s wives missed the flow-
ering shrubs of her mountain homeland.
To please her, he had fragrant trees and
shrubs planted on terraces that rose 75
feet above Babylon’s flat, dry plain.

Indeed, the entire city was a wonder. Its
walls were so thick that, according to one
report, a four-horse chariot could wheel
around on top of them. To ensure that the world knew who ruled Babylon, the king
had the bricks inscribed with the words, “I am Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.”

The highest building in Babylon was a great, seven-tiered ziggurat more than 300
feet high. It was visible for miles. At night, priests observed the stars from the top of
this tower and others in the city. Chaldean astronomers kept detailed records of how
the stars and planets seemed to change position in the night sky. They also concluded
that the sun, moon, Earth, and five other planets belonged to the same solar system.
The Chaldeans’ observations formed the basis for both astronomy and astrology.

Nebuchadnezzar’s empire fell shortly after his death. The Persians who next
came to power adopted many Assyrian military, political, and artistic inventions.
The Persians would use the organization the Assyrians had developed to stabilize
the region.
The Persian Empire

**MAIN IDEA**

**EMPIRE BUILDING**
By governing with tolerance and wisdom, the Persians established a well-ordered empire that lasted for 200 years.

**WHY IT MATTERS NOW**
Leaders today try to follow the Persian example of tolerance and wise government.

**TERMS & NAMES**
- Cyrus
- Cambyses
- Darius
- satrap
- Royal Road
- Zoroaster

**SETTING THE STAGE**
The Medes, along with the Chaldeans and others, helped to overthrow the Assyrian Empire in 612 B.C. The Medes marched to Nineveh from their homeland in the area of present-day northern Iran. Meanwhile, the Medes’ close neighbor to the south, Persia, began to expand its horizons and territorial ambitions.

**The Rise of Persia**
The Assyrians employed military force to control a vast empire. In contrast, the Persians based their empire on tolerance and diplomacy. They relied on a strong military to back up their policies. Ancient Persia included what today is Iran.

**The Persian Homeland**
Indo-Europeans first migrated from Central Europe and southern Russia to the mountains and plateaus east of the Fertile Crescent around 1000 B.C. This area extended from the Caspian Sea in the north to the Persian Gulf in the south. (See the map on page 101.) In addition to fertile farmland, ancient Iran boasted a wealth of minerals. These included copper, lead, gold, silver, and gleaming blue lapis lazuli. A thriving trade in these minerals put the settlers in contact with their neighbors to the east and the west.

At first, dozens of tiny kingdoms occupied the region. Eventually two major powers emerged: the Medes and the Persians. In time, a remarkable ruler would lead Persia to dominate the Medes and found a huge empire.

**Cyrus the Great Founds an Empire**
The rest of the world paid little attention to the Persians until 550 B.C. In that year, **Cyrus** (SY•ruhs), Persia’s king, began to conquer several neighboring kingdoms. Cyrus was a military genius, leading his army from victory to victory between 550 and 539 B.C. In time, Cyrus controlled an empire that spanned 2,000 miles, from the Indus River in the east to Anatolia in the west.

Even more than his military genius, though, Cyrus’s most enduring legacy was his method of governing. His kindness toward conquered peoples revealed a wise and tolerant view of empire. For example, when Cyrus’s army marched into a city, his generals prevented Persian soldiers from looting and burning. Unlike other conquerors, Cyrus believed in honoring local customs and religions. Instead of destroying the local temple, Cyrus would kneel there to pray.
Cyrus also allowed the Jews, who had been driven from their homeland by the Babylonians, to return to Jerusalem in 538 B.C. Under Persian rule, the Jews rebuilt their city and temple. The Jews were forever grateful to Cyrus, whom they considered one of God’s anointed ones. The Hebrew prophet Ezra tells of Cyrus’s kindness:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

This is the word of Cyrus king of Persia: The Lord the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he himself has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. To every man of his people now among you I say, God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and rebuild the house of the Lord the God of Israel, the God whose city is Jerusalem.

EZRA 1: 2–3 (Bible)

Cyrus was killed as he fought nomadic invaders on the eastern border of his empire. According to the Greek historian Arrian, his simple, house-shaped tomb bore these words: “O man, I am Cyrus the son of Cambyses. I established the Persian Empire and was king of Asia. Do not begrudge me my memorial.”

**Persian Rule**

The task of unifying conquered territories fell to rulers who followed Cyrus. They succeeded by combining Persian control with local self-government.

**Cambyses and Darius** Cyrus died in 530 B.C. His son Cambyses (kam•BY•seez), named after Cyrus’s father, expanded the Persian Empire by conquering Egypt. However, the son neglected to follow his father’s wise example. Cambyses scorned the Egyptian religion. He ordered the images of Egyptian gods to be burned. After ruling for only eight years, Cambyses died. Immediately, widespread rebellions broke out across the empire. Persian control had seemed strong a decade earlier. It now seemed surprisingly fragile.

Cambyses’s successor, Darius (duh•RY•uhs), a noble of the ruling dynasty, had begun his career as a member of the king’s bodyguard. An elite group of Persian soldiers, the Ten Thousand Immortals, helped Darius seize the throne around 522 B.C. Darius spent the first three years of his reign putting down revolts. He spent the next few years establishing a well-organized and efficient administration.

Having brought peace and stability to the empire, Darius turned his attention to conquest. He led his armies eastward into the mountains of present-day Afghanistan and then down into the river valleys of India. The immense Persian Empire now extended over 2,500 miles, embracing Egypt and Anatolia in the west, part of India in the east, and the Fertile Crescent in the center. Darius’s only failure was his inability to conquer Greece.
Provinces and Satraps Although Darius was a great warrior, his real genius lay in administration. To govern his sprawling empire, Darius divided it into 20 provinces. These provinces were roughly similar to the homelands of the different groups of people who lived within the Persian Empire. Under Persian rule, the people of each province still practiced their own religion. They also spoke their own language and followed many of their own laws. This administrative policy of many groups—sometimes called “nationalities”—living by their own laws within one empire was repeatedly practiced in Southwest Asia.

Although tolerant of the many groups within his empire, Darius still ruled with absolute power. In each province, Darius installed a governor called a satrap (SA Y•TRAP), who ruled locally. Darius also appointed a military leader and a tax collector for each province. To ensure the loyalty of these officials, Darius sent out inspectors known as the “King’s Eyes and Ears.”

Two other tools helped Darius hold together his empire. An excellent system of roads allowed Darius to communicate quickly with the most distant parts of the empire. The famous Royal Road, for example, ran from Susa in Persia to Sardis in Anatolia, a distance of 1,677 miles. Darius borrowed the second tool, manufacturing metal coins, from the Lydians of Asia Minor. For the first time, coins of a standard value circulated throughout an extended empire. People no longer had to weigh and measure odd pieces of gold or silver to pay for what they bought. The network roads and the wide use of standardized coins promoted trade. Trade, in turn, helped to hold together the empire.
The Royal Road

One of the ways in which societies build and maintain empires is by establishing systems of communication and transportation. The Royal Road, built by the rulers of the Persian Empire, connected Susa in Persia to Sardis in Anatolia.

The Road
The road was 1,677 miles in length. There were 111 post or relay stations spaced about 15 miles apart along the road. Other roads branched off the main road to distant parts of the empire.

The Ride
Relay stations were equipped with fresh horses for the king’s messengers. Royal messengers could cover the length of the Royal Road in seven days. Normal travel time along the road was longer. A caravan, for example, might take three months to travel the whole distance.

Patterns of Interaction video series
Building Empires: The Rise of the Persians and the Inca

Strong road networks like the Royal Road enabled empires to expand and maintain control over people and places. Like the Persians, the Inca of South America created a road system thousands of miles long. These roads allowed the Inca to extend their rule over as many as 16 million people. Empires throughout history have shared characteristics such as efficient communication systems, effective leaders, and powerful armies.
The Persian Legacy

By the time of Darius’s rule, about 2,500 years had passed since the first Sumerian city-states had been built. During those years, people of the Fertile Crescent had endured war, conquest, and famine. These events gave rise to a basic question: Why should so much suffering and chaos exist in the world? A Persian prophet named Zoroaster (ZAWR•oh•AS•tuhr), who lived around 600 B.C., offered an answer.

Zoroaster’s Teachings Zoroaster taught that the earth is a battleground where a great struggle is fought between the spirit of good and the spirit of evil. Each person, Zoroaster preached, is expected to take part in this struggle. The Zoroastrian religion teaches a belief in one god, Ahura Mazda (ah•HUR•uh MAZ•duh). At the end of time, Ahura Mazda will judge everyone according to how well he or she fought the battle for good. Traces of Zoroastrianism—such as the concept of Satan and a belief in angels—can be found in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

After the Muslim conquest of Persia in the A.D. 600s, the Zoroastrian religion declined. Some groups carried the faith eastward to India. Zoroastrianism also was an important influence in the development of Manichaeism (MAN•ih•KE•IHZ•uhm), a religious system that competed with early Christianity for believers. The followers of Mithra, a Zoroastrian god, spread westward to become a popular religion among the military legions in the Roman Empire. Today, modern Zoroastrians continue to observe the religion’s traditions in several countries including Iran and India, where its followers are called Parsis.

Political Order Through their tolerance and good government, the Persians brought political order to Southwest Asia. They preserved ideas from earlier civilizations and found new ways to live and rule. Their respect for other cultures helped to preserve those cultures for the future. The powerful dynasty Cyrus established in Persia lasted 200 years and grew into a huge empire. As you will learn in Section 4, great empires also arose in China and dominated that region.

## TERMS & NAMES

1. For each term or name, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Cyrus
- Cambyses
- Darius
- satrap
- Royal Road
- Zoroaster

## USING YOUR NOTES

2. Which of the differences between Cyrus and Darius do you consider most important? Why?

   - Cyrus Only
   - Both
   - Darius Only

## MAIN IDEAS

3. How did Cyrus treat the peoples he conquered?

4. What methods and tools did Darius use to hold together his empire?

5. What did Zoroaster teach?

## CRITICAL THINKING & WRITING

6. MAKING INFERENCES What do the words that appeared on Cyrus’s tomb suggest about his character?

7. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS How did the Royal Road help Darius maintain control over his people?

8. DEVELOPING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE What events led to the development of Zoroastrianism?

9. WRITING ACTIVITY [EMPIRE BUILDING] Write an expository essay explaining how Darius’s methods of administration gave stability to the Persian Empire. In your essay, consider such topics as the structure of the empire, the policy of tolerance, and the role of the satrap.

## INTERNET ACTIVITY

Use the Internet to find information on modern Zoroastrianism. Create a chart to present your findings.

INTERNET KEYWORD

Zoroastrianism
The Unification of China

**MAIN IDEA**

RELIgIOUS AND ETHICAL SYSTEMS The social disorder of the warring states contributed to the development of three Chinese ethical systems.

**WHY IT MATTERS NOW**

The people, events, and ideas that shaped China’s early history continue to influence China’s role in today’s world.

**TERMS & NAMES**

- Confucius
- filial piety
- bureaucracy
- Daoism
- Legalism
- I Ching
- yin and yang
- Qin Dynasty
- Shi Huangdi
- autocracy

**SETTING THE STAGE** The Zhou Dynasty, as you read in Chapter 2, lasted for at least eight centuries, from approximately 1027 to 256 B.C. For the first 300 years of their long reign, the Zhou kings controlled a large empire, including both eastern and western lands. Local rulers reported to the king, who had the ultimate power. By the latter years of the Zhou Dynasty, the lords of dependent territories began to think of themselves as independent kings. Their almost constant conflict, which is known as “the warring states period,” led to the decline of the Zhou Dynasty.

**Confucius and the Social Order**

Toward the end of the Zhou Dynasty, China moved away from its ancient values of social order, harmony, and respect for authority. Chinese scholars and philosophers developed different solutions to restore these values.

Confucius Urges Harmony China’s most influential scholar was Confucius (kuhn•FYOO•shuhs). Born in 551 B.C., Confucius lived in a time when the Zhou Dynasty was in decline. He led a scholarly life, studying and teaching history, music, and moral character.

Confucius was born at a time of crisis and violence in China. He had a deep desire to restore the order and moral living of earlier times to his society. Confucius believed that social order, harmony, and good government could be restored in China if society were organized around five basic relationships. These were the relationships between: (1) ruler and subject, (2) father and son, (3) husband and wife, (4) older brother and younger brother, and (5) friend and friend. A code of proper conduct regulated each of these relationships. For example, rulers should practice kindness and virtuous living. In return, subjects should be loyal and law-abiding.

Three of Confucius’s five relationships were based upon the family. Confucius stressed that children should practice filial piety, or respect for their parents and ancestors. Filial piety, according to Confucius, meant devoting oneself to one’s parents during their lifetimes. It also required honoring their memories after death through the performance of certain rituals.
In the following passage, Confucius—the “Master”—expresses his thoughts on the concept:

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

Ziyou [a disciple of Confucius] asked about filial piety. The Master said: “Nowadays people think they are dutiful sons when they feed their parents. Yet they also feed their dogs and horses. Unless there is respect, where is the difference?”

**CONFUCIUS, Analects 2.7**

Confucius wanted to reform Chinese society by showing rulers how to govern wisely. Impressed by Confucius’s wisdom, the duke of Lu appointed him minister of justice. According to legend, Confucius so overwhelmed people by his kindness and courtesy that almost overnight, crime vanished from Lu. When the duke’s ways changed, however, Confucius became disillusioned and resigned.

Confucius spent the remainder of his life teaching. His students later collected his words in a book called the Analects. A disciple named Mencius (MEHN•shee•uhs) also spread Confucius’s ideas.

**Confucian Ideas About Government** Confucius said that education could transform a humbly born person into a gentleman. In saying this, he laid the groundwork for the creation of a bureaucracy, a trained civil service, or those who run the government. According to Confucius, a gentleman had four virtues: “In his private conduct he was courteous, in serving his master he was punctilious [precise], in providing for the needs of the people he gave them even more than their due; in exacting service from the people, he was just.” Education became critically important to career advancement in the bureaucracy.

Confucianism was never a religion, but it was an ethical system, a system based on accepted principles of right and wrong. It became the foundation for Chinese government and social order. In addition, the ideas of Confucius spread beyond China and influenced civilizations throughout East Asia.

**Other Ethical Systems**

In addition to Confucius, other Chinese scholars and philosophers developed ethical systems with very different philosophies. Some stressed the importance of nature, others, the power of government.

**Daoists Seek Harmony** For a Chinese thinker named Laozi (low•dzuh), who may have lived during the sixth century B.C., only the natural order was important. The natural order involves relations among all living things. His book Dao De Jing (The Way of Virtue) expressed Laozi’s belief. He said that a universal force called the Dao (dow), meaning “the Way,” guides all things. Of all the creatures of nature,
according to Laozi, only humans fail to follow the Dao. They argue about questions of right and wrong, good manners or bad. According to Laozi, such arguments are pointless. In the following, he explains the wisdom of the Dao:

PRIMARY SOURCE
The Dao never does anything, yet through it all things are done.

If powerful men and women could center themselves in it, the whole world would be transformed by itself, in its natural rhythms. People would be content with their simple, everyday lives, in harmony, and free of desire.

When there is no desire, all things are at peace.

LAOZI, Dao De Jing, Passage 37

The philosophy of Laozi came to be known as Daoism. Its search for knowledge and understanding of nature led Daoism’s followers to pursue scientific studies. Daoists made many important contributions to the sciences of alchemy, astronomy, and medicine.

Legalists Urge Harsh Rule
In sharp contrast to the followers of Confucius and Laozi was a group of practical political thinkers called the Legalists. They believed that a highly efficient and powerful government was the key to restoring order in society. They got their name from their belief that government should use the law to end civil disorder and restore harmony. Hanfeizi and Li Si were among the founders of Legalism.

The Legalists taught that a ruler should provide rich rewards for people who carried out their duties well. Likewise, the disobedient should be harshly punished. In practice, the Legalists stressed punishment more than rewards. For example, anyone caught outside his own village without a travel permit should have his ears or nose chopped off.

The Legalists believed in controlling ideas as well as actions. They suggested that a ruler burn all writings that might encourage people to criticize government.

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SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts

1. Comparing Which of these three systems stresses the importance of government and a well-ordered society?
2. Synthesizing Which of these systems seems to be most moderate and balanced? Explain.

---

Chinese Ethical Systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Confucianism</th>
<th>Daoism</th>
<th>Legalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Social order, harmony, and good government should be based on family relationships.</td>
<td>• The natural order is more important than the social order.</td>
<td>• A highly efficient and powerful government is the key to social order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respect for parents and elders is important to a well-ordered society.</td>
<td>• A universal force guides all things.</td>
<td>• Punishments are useful to maintain social order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Education is important both to the welfare of the individual and to society.</td>
<td>• Human beings should live simply and in harmony with nature.</td>
<td>• Thinkers and their ideas should be strictly controlled by the government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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MAIN IDEA

Analyzing Primary Sources

What do you think is the Daoist attitude toward being a powerful person?

---

106 Chapter 4
After all, it was for the prince to govern and the people to obey. Eventually, Legalist ideas gained favor with a prince of a new dynasty that replaced the Zhou. That powerful ruler soon brought order to China.

I Ching and Yin and Yang

People with little interest in the philosophical debates of the Confucians, Daoists, and Legalists found answers to life’s questions elsewhere. Some consulted a book of oracles called I Ching (also spelled Yi Jing) to solve ethical or practical problems. Readers used the book by throwing a set of coins, interpreting the results, and then reading the appropriate oracle, or prediction. The I Ching (The Book of Changes) helped people to lead a happy life by offering good advice and simple common sense.

Other people turned to the ideas of ancient thinkers, such as the concept of yin and yang—two powers that together represented the natural rhythms of life. Yin represents all that is cold, dark, soft, and mysterious. Yang is the opposite—warm, bright, hard, and clear. The symbol of yin and yang is a circle divided into halves, as shown in the emblem to the upper right. The circle represents the harmony of yin and yang. Both forces represent the rhythm of the universe and complement each other. Both the I Ching and yin and yang helped Chinese people understand how they fit into the world.

The Qin Dynasty Unifies China

In the third century B.C., the Qin Dynasty (chihn) replaced the Zhou Dynasty. It emerged from the western state of Qin. The ruler who founded the Qin Dynasty employed Legalist ideas to subdue the warring states and unify his country.

A New Emperor Takes Control

In 221 B.C., after ruling for over 20 years, the Qin ruler assumed the name Shi Huangdi (shihr hwahng•dee), which means “First Emperor.” The new emperor had begun his reign by halting the internal battles that had sapped China’s strength. Next he turned his attention to defeating invaders and crushing resistance within China to his rule. Shi Huangdi’s armies attacked the invaders north of the Huang He and south as far as what is now Vietnam. His victories doubled China’s size. Shi Huangdi was determined to unify China.

Shi Huangdi acted decisively to crush political opposition at home. To destroy the power of rival warlords, he introduced a policy called “strengthening the trunk and weakening the branches.” He commanded all the noble families to live in the capital city under his suspicious gaze. This policy, according to tradition, uprooted 120,000 noble families. Seizing their land, the emperor carved China into 36 administrative districts. He sent Qin officials to control them.

To prevent criticism, Shi Huangdi and his prime minister, the Legalist philosopher Li Su, murdered hundreds of Confucian scholars. They also ordered “useless” books burned. These books were the works of Confucian thinkers and poets who disagreed with the Legalists. Practical books about medicine and farming, however, were spared. Through measures

**MAIN IDEA**

**Summarizing**

How did the Legalists think that a society could be made to run well?
The Great Wall of China

From the Yellow Sea in the east to the Gobi Desert in the west, the Great Wall twisted like a dragon’s tail for thousands of miles. Watch towers rose every 200 to 300 yards along the wall.

In the time of Shi Huangdi, hundreds of thousands of peasants collected, hauled, and dumped millions of tons of stone, dirt, and rubble to fill the core of the Great Wall.

Slabs of cut stone on the outside of the wall enclosed a heap of pebbles and rubble on the inside. Each section of the wall rose to a height of 20 to 25 feet.

Although Shi Huangdi built the earliest unified wall, the wall as it exists today dates from the later Ming Dynasty (1368–1644).

**SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Visual Sources**

1. **Making Inferences** What were the benefits of the watch towers along the wall?
2. **Drawing Conclusions** What modern structures serve the same purpose as the watch towers?
such as these, Shi Huangdi established an **autocracy**—a government that has unlimited power and uses it in an arbitrary manner.

**A Program of Centralization** Shi Huangdi’s sweeping program of centralization included the building of a highway network of more than 4,000 miles. Also, he set the same standards throughout China for writing, law, currency, and weights and measures—even down to the length of cart axles. This last standard made sure that all vehicles could fit into the ruts of China’s main roads.

Under Shi Huangdi’s rule, irrigation projects increased farm production. Trade blossomed, thanks to the new road system. Trade pushed a new class of merchants into prominence. Despite these social advances, harsh taxes and repressive government made the Qin regime unpopular. Shi Huangdi had unified China at the expense of human freedom.

**Great Wall of China** Scholars hated Shi Huangdi for his book burning. Poor people hated him because they were forced to work on the building of a huge defensive wall. Earlier, Zhou rulers had erected smaller walls to discourage attacks by northern nomads. Shi Huangdi determined to close the gaps and extend the wall almost the length of the empire’s border. Enemies would have to gallop halfway to Tibet to get around it.

The Great Wall of China arose on the backs of hundreds of thousands of peasants. The wall builders worked neither for wages nor for love of empire. They faced a terrible choice: work on the wall or die. Many of the laborers worked on the wall and died anyway, victims of the crushing labor or the harsh winter weather.

**The Fall of the Qin** The Qin Dynasty lasted only a short time. Though fully as cruel as his father, Shi Huangdi’s son proved less able. Peasants rebelled just three years after the second Qin emperor took office. One of their leaders, a peasant from the land of Han, marched his troops into the capital city. By 202 B.C., the harsh Qin Dynasty gave way to the Han Dynasty, one of the longest in Chinese history.

While the Chinese explored the best ways to govern, ancient Greece also was experimenting with different forms of government, as you will read in Chapter 5.
Chapter 4 Assessment

TERMS & NAMES
For each term or name below, briefly explain its connection to the history of the first age of empires between 1570 and 200 B.C.

1. Ramses II
2. Kush
3. Assyria
4. Ashurbanipal
5. Cyrus
6. Royal Road
7. Zoroaster
8. Confucius
9. Daoism
10. Shi Huangdi

MAIN IDEAS
The Egyptian and Nubian Empires Section 1 (pages 89–94)

1. How did the Kushites treat Egyptian culture after they conquered Egypt?
2. When did Kush experience a golden age?

The Assyrian Empire Section 2 (pages 95–98)

3. How did Assyria acquire its empire?
4. What were the positive achievements of the Assyrian Empire?

The Persian Empire Section 3 (pages 99–103)

5. What is Cyrus’s enduring legacy?
6. How far did Darius extend the Persian Empire?

The Unification of China Section 4 (pages 104–109)

7. Around what five basic relationships did Confucius believe society should be organized?
8. Why did Shi Huangdi have the Great Wall built?

CRITICAL THINKING

1. USING YOUR NOTES
   Create a table and list the successes and failures of the leaders discussed in this chapter.

2. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS
   Religious and ethical systems in Persia and China arose in response to what similar conditions?

3. DEVELOPING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE
   How have Cyrus’s and Sennacherib’s contrasting ruling styles probably affected their legacies?

4. RECOGNIZING EFFECTS
   What positive results occur when cultures interact? What negative results might there be?

5. SYNTHESIZING
   What similar purpose was served by the Persians’ Royal Road and by the Great Wall of China?

VISUAL SUMMARY
First Age of Empires

Egypt 1570–1075 B.C.
- Pharaohs set up a professional army.
- Pharaohs invaded territories in Africa and Southwest Asia.
- Egypt drew vast wealth from the lands it controlled.

Nubia 751 B.C.–A.D. 350
- Nubia and Egypt interacted and spread their culture through trade.
- The kings of Nubia conquered Egypt and maintained the Egyptian way of life.
- Nubia established trade among Africa, Arabia, and India.

Assyria 850–612 B.C.
- Assyria used a sophisticated military organization to conquer an empire.
- The empire engaged in brutal treatment of its conquered peoples.
- Kings used harsh taxes to control conquered peoples.

Persia 550–330 B.C.
- Persian kings were tolerant.
- Kings permitted a high degree of local self-government.
- The empire was divided into 20 provinces.

China 221–202 B.C.
- Ethical systems laid the groundwork for a strong central government.
- The Qin Dynasty defeated invaders, crushed internal resistance, and united China.
- China initiated a sweeping program of centralization.
Use the quotation and your knowledge of world history to answer questions 1 and 2.
Additional Test Practice, pp. S1–S33

**PRIMARY SOURCE**

Guide the people with governmental measures and control or regulate them by the threat of punishment, and the people will try to keep out of jail, but will have no sense of honor or shame. Guide the people by virtue and control or regulate them by *li* [moral rules and customs], and the people will have a sense of honor and respect.

CONFUCIUS, *Analects* 2.3

1. Which phrase best describes Confucius’s belief about human nature and lawful behavior?
   A. People are naturally moral and can control their behavior on their own.
   B. People are best controlled by fear.
   C. People learn good behavior by example.
   D. People cannot be controlled by any means.

2. Which of the following rulers might have held a similar belief?
   A. Shi Huangdi
   B. Cyrus
   C. King Ashurbanipal
   D. Ramses II

3. What characteristic of the Assyrians does this relief seem to reflect?
   A. their love of luxury
   B. their military might
   C. their administrative organization
   D. their love of learning

**ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT**

1. **Interact with History**
   Recall your discussion of the question on page 88: “How will the empire help you or harm you?” You thought about the advantages and disadvantages of empire before studying the rise of the first great empires. Now that you’ve read the chapter, rethink the advantages and disadvantages of empire. Discuss the following questions with a small group:
   • Do empires benefit conquered peoples?
   • Do empires impose penalties on those they conquer?
   • Which outweighs the other—the benefits or the penalties?

2. **Writing About History**
   Study page 108, which deals with the Great Wall of China. Imagine that you are one of the workers who built the Great Wall. Write three journal entries describing the following:
   • the work you carry out on the Great Wall
   • your experiences
   • your impressions

**INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY**

***TEST PRACTICE*** Go to classzone.com
• Diagnostic tests
• Strategies
• Tutorials
• Additional practice

**Creating a Web Site**
Create a Web site on the first empires for a museum exhibit. Choose one of these empires to research: Assyria, Kush, Persia, or Qin. Consider including:
• art, artifacts, and maps
• a description of the empire with dates, location, and rulers
• information on major events and conflicts
• the rise and fall of the empire
• a discussion of the empire’s legacy
• a list of Web sites used in your research
The Rise of Civilizations

Thousands of years ago, several societies in different parts of the world changed from hunting and gathering to farming. Some began to produce surpluses of food. Those surpluses helped bring about the world’s first civilizations.

In Unit 1, you learned that most historians define civilization as a complex culture with these five characteristics: (1) advanced cities, (2) specialized workers, (3) complex institutions, (4) record keeping and writing, and (5) advanced technology. You also learned about several early civilizations. In the next six pages, you will explore what those ancient civilizations had in common and how they differed.
Ancient Civilizations over Time
Some of these ancient civilizations lasted only a few hundred years, but others lasted more
than 3,000 years. Earlier civilizations often had influence on later ones that shared the same
area. The civilizations shown here did not all develop in isolation of each other. Trade linked
some. Some fought wars against each other.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>CIVILIZATION</th>
<th>3500 B.C.</th>
<th>3000</th>
<th>2500</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1500</th>
<th>1000 B.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mesopotamia</td>
<td>Sumerian</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Babylonian</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hittite</td>
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<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Phoenician</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Israelite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>Egyptian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indus Valley</td>
<td>Harappan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Aryan</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Shang/Zhou</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Which civilizations arose in river valleys? What advantages did such a location provide for their continued development?

2. What civilization area is the farthest away from any other civilization area? How might this distance have affected that civilization?
The civilizations you studied in Unit 1 each demonstrated the five characteristics that historians use to define a civilization.

### Advanced Cities
Cities were key features of the ancient civilizations. These cities were more than just collections of people. They were also centers of political, economic, and religious life.

### Specialized Workers
Surpluses of food allowed people to specialize in jobs outside of agriculture. Specialized workers such as artisans, traders, and soldiers strengthened and expanded civilization.

### Complex Institutions
Complex institutions such as law codes, religion, and an economy were another characteristic of ancient civilizations. They organized, united, and helped civilizations to prosper.

### Record Keeping and Writing
Each civilization developed a system of writing. Rulers could record laws. Priests could write down important religious dates and the rituals to follow. Merchants could record transactions. Eventually, people used the writing system to record their thoughts and ideas, creating literature and written history.

### Advanced Technology
The civilizations developed new ways of doing work and new materials to work with, such as metals and pottery. They also developed tools like calendars to make their world more orderly.

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**SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Charts**

1. **Synthesizing** How important was religion to these civilizations?
2. **Analyzing Motives** How did the Chinese system of writing contribute to the spread of Chinese civilization?
Development of Law

Laws are a complex institution of civilizations. They are designed to do many things—settle conflicts between individuals, provide citizens with guidance on proper behavior, and outline an individual’s relationship with the government. Thus, laws are important for building stable civilizations.

**Hammurabi’s Code**

If a son has struck his father, they shall cut off his hand.
If a [noble] has destroyed the eye of a [noble], they shall destroy his eye.
If he has broken another [noble’s] bone, they shall break his bone.
If he has destroyed the eye of a commoner or broken the bone of a commoner, he shall pay one mina of silver.
If he has destroyed the eye of a [noble’s] slave or broken the bone of a [noble’s] slave, he shall pay one-half [the slave’s] value.
If a [noble] has knocked out the tooth of a [noble], they shall knock out his tooth.
If he has knocked out a commoner’s tooth, he shall pay one-third mina of silver.

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION**

Is the Code applied equally to all people? Explain your answer.

**Old Testament**

Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. . . .

Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death. . . .

Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.

When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but keeps his bed, then if the man rises again and walks abroad with his staff, he that struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time. . . .

When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be punished. . . .

When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free for the eye’s sake. If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free for the tooth’s sake.

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION**

What principle underlies these laws? How would you describe the punishments in these laws?

**Confucius**

The Master said, “A young man’s duty is to behave well to his parents at home and to his elders abroad, to be cautious in giving promises and punctual in keeping them, to have kindly feelings towards everyone, but seek the intimacy of the Good.”

The Master said, “Govern the people by regulations, keep order among them by chastisements, and they will flee from you, and lose all self-respect. Govern them by moral force, keep order among them by ritual, and they will keep their self-respect and come to you of their own accord.”

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION**

What behavior does Confucius expect of ordinary people and of rulers?

**Comparing & Contrasting**

1. How is the treatment of slaves in Hammurabi’s Code and the Old Testament laws similar? How is it different?
2. For which of the civilizations on the chart do you think laws were most important? Why?
Record Keeping and Writing

As institutions became more complex, people realized the need for record keeping. Officials tracked taxes and laws, priests recorded important rituals, and merchants totaled accounts. Record keeping provided stability for the complex institutions.

**Primary Source**

**Indus Valley Seals**

The system of writing used in the Indus Valley has not been deciphered. Scholars have identified about 400 symbols, but they do not know if these stand for ideas or sounds. Many of the examples are found on small seals. The seals might have been used to mark objects to show ownership. In that case, the symbols might give a person’s name.

**Document-Based Question**

Based on what you see on this seal, what are some possibilities for its translation?

**Primary Source**

**Sumerian Cuneiform**

Cuneiform originated in people’s desire to keep track of goods they owned. By around 3000 B.C., Sumerians had more than 1,000 symbols. Each stood for an idea. Later, symbols stood for sounds. This system of writing was used in Mesopotamia for about 3,000 years. Different peoples adapted it for their own languages. At first, cuneiform was read from top to bottom. Later, it was read from left to right.

**Document-Based Question**

What visual clue suggests that this cuneiform sample was read from left to right and not top to bottom?

**Primary Source**

**Egyptian Hieroglyphics**

Hieroglyphics were read in the direction that the human and animal heads faced. Usually this was from right to left. Sometimes, though, the direction could be changed to make a more pleasing appearance. Some symbols stood for ideas. Some stood for consonant sounds—vowels were not included. Some gave clues to how a word was used, such as whether a name referred to a person or a place.

**Document-Based Question**

In the bottom row on the left, you can see an owl. What other symbols do you recognize?

**Primary Source**

**Phoenician Alphabet**

The alphabet used by the ancient Phoenicians had symbols for 22 consonants. This alphabet was adapted by the Greeks, and it became the basis for writing all European languages. The Phoenician alphabet also influenced how Hebrew and Arabic were written, and it was adapted to write the languages of India and Ethiopia.

**Document-Based Question**

Do any of the letters in this Phoenician sample look similar to letters we use today? If so, which ones?
Advanced Technology

New technologies gave the ancient civilizations new ways of solving problems. Some solved age-old problems—for example, the plow made it easier to till the soil. Some solved new problems. Egyptians learned how to embalm the bodies of dead rulers as part of their complex beliefs about life after death.

Phoenician Sailing

The Phoenicians traded throughout the Mediterranean Sea and beyond. They were the most skilled sailors of their time. The first ships relied on rowers and did not have sails. They also lacked rudders for steering. By about 700 B.C., though, the Phoenicians had made advances. They added long steering oars in the back and a single sail, which could catch the wind and move the ship forward. Captains came to rely on the sails, though rowers had to work when the weather was calm or when the wind was not blowing from behind the ship.

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION**

*What is the advantage of having a sail on the ship?*

Bronze from Shang China

During the Shang Dynasty, Chinese artisans grew highly skilled at making bronze. Bronze is a mixture of copper and tin. They made bronze weapons and vessels for religious ceremonies. Bronzes were made by creating pottery molds that were carved on the inside, in reverse, to leave the desired pattern on the final object. Hot liquid bronze was poured inside. When it had cooled, the pottery molds were broken.

**DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION**

*What does the intricate detail of this piece suggest about Shang society?*

Comparing & Contrasting

1. How do the ancient systems of writing differ from the way words are written today?
2. What role did trade play in the development of writing?
3. Which technological advances do you think were more important—Chinese skill in making bronzes or Phoenician skill in sailing? Why?

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

Technological changes have continued throughout history. Choose one area of life, such as land transportation, communication, medicine, or raising food. Using this textbook or an encyclopedia, find out what technology one of these ancient civilizations had in that area. Then identify technological changes in that area over the centuries. Create an illustrated time line to show how that technology has changed.