



## SUMER CLUE CARDS

<b>Clue 1A</b> Persons	<b>Clue 1B</b> Began to work together
<b>Clue 2A</b> Persons	<b>Clue 2B</b> Built dikes, reservoirs, and irrigation systems
<b>Clue 3A</b> Things	<b>Clue 3B</b> The independent city-states of Sumer disagreed over their use
<b>Clue 4A</b> Persons	<b>Clue 4B</b> Eventually became the rulers of the Sumerian city- states



<p><b>Clue 5A</b> Place</p>	<p><b>Clue 5B</b> Location of Sumer</p>
<p><b>Clue 6A</b> Things</p>	<p><b>Clue 6B</b> Formed the boundary of a Sumerian city</p>
<p><b>Clue 7A</b> Things</p>	<p><b>Clue 7B</b> People living in the cities of Sumer began to work like this for the first time</p>
<p><b>Clue 8A</b> Place</p>	<p><b>Clue 8B</b> To feed the people in the cities, rulers controlled and taxed this area</p>

<b>Clue 9A</b> Place	<b>Clue 9B</b> Where food for the city was kept
<b>Clue 10A</b> Thing	<b>Clue 10B</b> Developed by Sumerian priests to help them keep records
<b>Clue 11A</b> Places	<b>Clue 11B</b> Rectangular in shape
<b>Clue 12A</b> Things	<b>Clue 12B</b> Most people lived in these

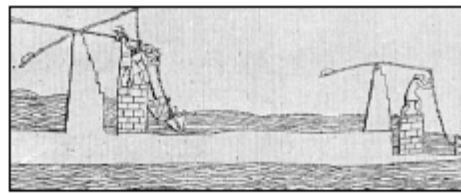
<b>Clue 13A</b> Things	<b>Clue 13B</b> The Sumerians were the first to use this method of transportation
<b>Clue 14A</b> Persons	<b>Clue 14B</b> Became wealthy because of trade
<b>Clue 15A</b> Thing	<b>Clue 15B</b> Belief in many gods or goddesses
<b>Clue 16A</b> Things	<b>Clue 16B</b> Sumerians started the first of these to train scribes to read and write

<b>Clue 17A</b> Things	<b>Clue 17B</b> The Sumerians developed these for help with measurement and calculation
<b>Clue 18A</b> Persons	<b>Clue 18B</b> Developed calendars by studying the stars
<b>Clue 19A</b> People	<b>Clue 19B</b> Conquerors of the city-states of Sumer
<b>Clue 20A</b> People	<b>Clue 20B</b> First creators of civilization



## SUMER (PAGE 1)

The first civilization in the Fertile Crescent was known as Sumer. In very ancient times farmers lived in villages along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. These farmers began to work together to control the rivers. Controlling the rivers required careful planning and cooperation among many people. The Sumerians developed the first centralized governments to manage these projects. They built dikes, reservoirs, and irrigation systems. The farmers were then able to grow more food than they needed. This surplus food led to an increase in population. The villages grew into cities, which became independent city-states.



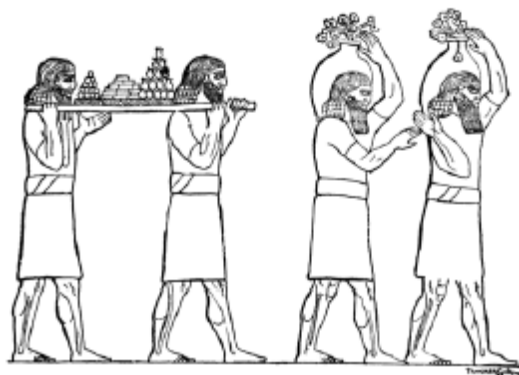
Sometimes the city-states disagreed over the use of land and water. The city-states went to war with each other. The Sumerians turned to war leaders to protect them from their enemies. These war leaders eventually became the rulers of the city-states. Kish, Babylon, Erech, and Ur were city-states of Sumer, in the southeast corner of Mesopotamia.



The land in Mesopotamia was flat. There were no natural barriers to invasion. For protection, the Sumerians built walls around their cities. The walls protected the people inside from attacking armies. Many people who lived in Sumerian cities were not farmers. For the first time in human history people could make a living without being hunters, gatherers, or farmers. People began to specialize in other types of jobs. They became priests, scribes, artisans, soldiers, merchants, construction workers, and entertainers. Cities made it possible for people to develop specialized jobs.

The city-states grew. Cities had thousands of people living within the city walls. These people needed a steady source of food. The ruler of each city-state was responsible for the people in and around the city walls. He organized an army to protect and control the farmland outside the city walls. He organized systems to provide services for the people. He collected taxes from the people to pay for their protections. The people inside the city walls paid taxes in the form of goods or services. The farmers paid taxes in the form of giving some of their crops to the government.

The government collected and stored these crops in warehouses inside the city walls. The priests kept detailed records of food supplies. They recorded who gave the food and how much food there was in storage. The priests needed a system to account for the supplies in the warehouses. Sumerian priests developed the first written language in history, called cuneiform. The word cuneiform comes from the Greek word for "wedged-shaped." The priests trained scribes to read and write in cuneiform. Scribes were important in the Sumerian city-states.





## SUMER (PAGE 2)



Sumerian cities were rectangular in shape. At the heart of each city stood a ziggurat. A ziggurat was the chief religious temple of the city. It was dedicated to the chief god of the city. Ziggurats were magnificent structures many stories high. They were a source of pride to the citizens of the city. They symbolized the power and greatness of the city. The kings lived in luxurious palaces near the ziggurats. Palaces rivaled the ziggurats in splendor. Wide streets ringed the ziggurats and palaces. The Sumerians used these wide streets for religious processions. Most people in Sumerian cities lived in small houses of dried mud. Their homes, and the shops of artisans and merchants, were packed tightly together along narrow streets.

The people of Sumer could not grow or make everything they needed. As a result, the Sumerians became expert traders. Their traders traveled throughout Mesopotamia and the Fertile Crescent. They even traveled into Egypt and India. The Sumerians developed the wheel. Their carts could carry more trade goods than could a person or an animal. Traders brought back raw materials which artisans would fashion into finished products. The traders, artisans, and merchants became wealthy.

Religion dominated the lives of the Sumerians. These ancient people were *polytheistic*, which means that they believed in many gods and goddesses. They believed that these gods controlled everything in their lives. They tried very hard to keep their gods happy. Each city-state of Sumer had its own chief god. The people worshiped that god or goddess above all other lesser gods and goddesses. The Sumerians hoped that they would remain secure and prosperous if they pleased their chief god. Specially trained priests led the religious rituals in the cities. Some rituals included sacrifice of small animals. Sometimes the Sumerians practiced human sacrifice.



Life in the Sumerian city-states became more complex. The ruler and the priests relied on scribes to keep accurate records. These records depended on accurate measurements and calculations. Sumerian scribes developed basic forms of algebra and geometry. They based their number system on six, not 10. We still use the 60-minute hour and the 360-degree circle developed by the Sumerians. Sumerian scribes also made advances in astronomy. They studied the stars and created calendars. Farmers used the calendars to plan for the rainy season. They knew when to plant their crops. The ability to read and write became extremely important. The Sumerians established the first formal schools to train scribes.

Sumer never developed beyond the level of city-states. Eventually, the Sumerians were overwhelmed and conquered by foreign invaders. These invaders included the Akkadians, Babylonians, Hittites, and Persians. Over many years these empires took control of the land once known as Sumer. Babylon, like a few other Sumerian cities, rose and fell and rose again to power. In later times the Babylonians were the dominant force, rather than just being a city-state loosely connected with other Sumerian city-states. These later peoples were all influenced by the Sumerians. They built on the knowledge and innovations of the Sumerians, the first creators of civilization.