

Mesopotamia - Sumer

Aim:	<u><i>What are Sumerian Advances and Characteristics?</i></u>
Artistic Advances:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Works of marble, diorite, hammered gold, and lapis lazuliahve were left behind by the Ancient Sumerians.- Materials like stone, wood, and metal that were used for art were imported. Clay was their most abundant material.- Sumerians mainly painted and made impressive sculptures. <p>Their art was complex with intricate designs and details; mainly for religious purposes. Sumerians often incorporated their artistic skills in their architecture when building temples and buildings.</p>
Technological Advances:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The organization of land and the maintenance of irrigation canals led to the rise of law and government.- The Mesopotamians were the first to use the potter's wheel to make better pottery, they used irrigation to get water to their crops, and they used bronze metal to make strong tools and weapons, and used looms to weave cloth from wool.- The Walls of Babylon were two massive walls that surrounded the entire city.- Walls were over 50 miles long with each wall being around 23 feet wide and 35 feet tall.-Archimedes Screw helped to raise water to the heights needed for the plants in the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

	<p>- "The Assyrians developed glasswork as well as glazes for pottery and art to help it last longer."</p>
Intellectual:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- People signed items with personal seals made of stone, metal, or wood.- Later Mesopotamian and a couple of other civilizations like the Babylonians used Sumerian writing.- As far as archeologists can tell, the Sumerian language is not related to any other language on Earth.- The Sumerians developed the first form of writing. --As Sumerian towns grew into cities, the people needed a way to keep track of rights, records, etc.- Sumerians began to use picture symbols marked into clay tablets to keep their records.- The Mesopotamians used a number system with the base 60.- They knew a lot of mathematics including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, quadratic and cubic equations, fractions and developed formulas.- Math was important for them when it came to building and any records. With math, the Mesopotamian astronomers follow the movements of the stars, planets, and the Moon.- They were able to predict the movements of some planets. This

	<p>took logic, mathematics, and a scientific process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By studying the Moon phases, the Mesopotamians created a calendar. It had 12 lunar months and was the predecessor for both the Jewish and Greek calendars
Political:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sumerians dominated Kish, Ur, Uruk, Adab, Eridu, Akkad, Nippur and eventually Babylon, all larger cities of Mesopotamia. - Kings ruled “city-states”. Various cities in Mesopotamia ruled otherwise independently. - Law and government rose from organization of land and creation of irrigation canals.
Economy:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs included pottery making, stone cutting, brick layering, metal smiths, farming, fishing, shepherds, weaving, leather-workers, and sailors. - Food surpluses supported a complex division of labor and engendered a leisure that inspired the arts. - Agriculture was the basic for Sumerian economy. It was perfect; their community had fertile soil and plentiful water.
Religious:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No organized set of gods. - They believed the universe was a flat disk that was enclosed by a tin dome. - Afterlife was a gloomy netherworld, and you’d spend eternity in a horrible existence as a Gidim. (ghost)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ziggurats were Sumerian temples that had a forecourt with a central pond or purification. - Can see hints of the Sumerians religion in modern Judeo, Christian, and Islamic tradition. - Each city had a temple which had a seat of a major god in the Sumerian Pantheon. - Believed gods controlled human fate - Priests, priestesses, musicians, singers, castrates and hierodules staffed the temples.
<p>Social:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sumerians were the very first people to settle in Mesopotamia. (about 4800 B.C) - Barley was a staple in the Sumerian diet, and was a part of all major meals. Vegetables that were grown to eat were chickpeas, lentils, beans, onion, garlic, leeks, cucumbers, cress, mustard and fresh green lettuce. Goat's milk, meat, eggs, pigs, wild fowl, deer and venison were also a part of their diet. - Upper class were nobles, priests, government officials, & warriors. - The Middle class or “freeman” class were merchants, traders, and artisans. - Slaves and farmers were lower class. - Began using money, making individual wealth easily

	<p>measured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Priests had the most amount of land among the Sumerians- Hired the poor to work their land and claimed the land was actually owned by gods.- Women didn't have protection or recourse under the law.- Kings were elected into the monarchy by the people.- Rulers were called "Lords"; each city had a governor and their responsibility was to build.- Taxes were in the form of crops.- Schools took place in temples.- School was only for the children with wealthy families who paid for their education. They learned only how to read and write; no studies of the human kind.
Summary:	<p>The Sumerians were intelligent people that made use of technology and made sense of science & measurements. These people were able to make laws and government, and carry out agriculture and domestication as other intelligent societies at the time did. These early people would be a basis for later improvement in later civilizations and were a stepping stone in man's journey in evolving from life.</p>