

cuneiform (in Latin, word *cuneus* means 'wedge'). Cuneiform was written from right to left, like we write Urdu today.



This inscription in Sumerian cuneiform belongs to 26th century BCE. It lists the gifts given to the High Priestess on her election to the temple.

Cylinder seals: The Mesopotamians also developed cylinder seals which were five inches in height. Different types of images were engraved on these stone seals. These images were reproduced by rolling the cylinder over wet clay.



A cylinder seal depicting the battle of gods

Architecture

The architectural excellence of the Mesopotamians reflects in their monumental buildings such as temples and ziggurats. The Mesopotamians were the first to introduce arches, domes, columns and vaults in their buildings. Most of the buildings in Mesopotamia were made of baked mud bricks. An architectural wonder of Mesopotamia is the **Hanging Gardens of Babylon**.

SCIENCE

Astronomy and Mathematics

The Mesopotamians were very much interested in mathematics and astronomy. They built observatories on ziggurats. Among notable observatories was the one on ziggurat Etemenanki in Babylon. The Mesopotamians worked out a 12-month calendar based on the cycle of the moon. In their calendar, a week had seven days. They divided the year into two seasons: summer and winter. They could also foretell eclipses.

The Mesopotamians used a numeral system that is the origin of our 60-minute hour and 24-hour day. They divided the circle into 360 degrees. They even knew multiplication and division.

Know This



This is a statue of **Lamassu** which has the head of a human, the body and ears of a bull and the wings of a bird. It belongs to the period 721 BCE–705 BCE and was found at the entrance to the throne room. Lamassu was believed to protect buildings against evil.

OPPO F11 Pro

Education

The Mesopotamians made efforts to spread education. There was a big library at Tello in Sumeria that housed over 30,000 tablets. Among the stories and epics of Mesopotamia, the **Epic of Gilgamesh** is the most popular. Gilgamesh was the King of Uruk in Babylonia. He lived around 2700 BCE. In the epic, Gilgamesh is presented as superhuman.

If we look at the accomplishments of the Mesopotamian people, they contributed a lot in putting the ancient man on the path of rapid progress. Undoubtedly, we are indebted to the people of Mesopotamia.

Know This



The full version of the *Epic of Gilgamesh* was found on 12 stone tablets, in the Akkadian language, in the ruins of the library of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria at Nineveh.

DECLINE OF MESOPOTAMIAN CIVILIZATION

It is said that the Sumerian civilization ceased to exist by 2000 BCE;

There was overcrowding in the cities which led to major pollution problems.

Lack of indoor toilets and improper garbage disposal led to contaminated water and frequent epidemics;

Irrigation techniques were also a major reason. When irrigation water was allowed to evaporate in the fields, it left behind mineral salts which became highly poisonous for the plants;

The rivers were higher than the surrounding plain so water flowed into the fields, damaging soil.

Wars were also responsible for the decline. In 2000 BCE the last Sumerian ruler was defeated. There was a period of chaos till 1900 BC when the Amorites captured the region and set up their rule.

Recap

1. Agriculture was the prime occupation of the people of Mesopotamia. They simplified agriculture using plough.
2. They carried trade by boats over Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The invention of the wheel by the Sumerians revolutionized transport over land.
3. The Sumerians developed a script of wedge-shaped signs called cuneiform.
4. The Mesopotamians were the first to introduce arches, domes, columns and vaults in their buildings.
5. They worked out a 12-month calendar based on the cycle of the moon.
6. The Epic of Gilgamesh is a popular epic of Mesopotamia.

KRISHNAGAR ACADEMY
CLASS - VI, SUBJECT - HISTORY
CHAPTER - 4 THE MESOPOTAMIAN

A. 7 - 2020 CIVILIZATION

TOPIC - Science

Decline of Mesopotamian
Civilization.

SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS :

- Q 1. What was Mesopotamian concept on Astronomy?
2. Among notable observatories was the one on _____.
3. There was a big library at _____ in Sumeria that housed over _____.
4. Among the stories and epics of Mesopotamia _____ is the most popular.
5. Write any three causes behind the decline of Mesopotamian Civilization.

Now let me share the answers to the questions published on 30.06.2020 (TUESDAY) based on this same chapter.

- A 1. Agriculture
2. They grew crops like wheat, barley, sesame, flax and various fruits and vegetables.
3. Livestock
4. Ur a city state in Sumer.
5. Items of Import - Timber, Stone, Metals
Items of Export - Food grains, Cereals

6. In Mesopotamia, not everyone learned to read and write. Only boys chosen by the priests became scribes. These boys began to study at the age of 8 and finished their study when they turned 20.

7. A pen-like instrument of metal, bone etc used by Mesopotamians for writing. The Sumerian language was in the form of word-pictures that were drawn on wet clay tablets using a reed stylus.

8. The word picture symbols of the Sumerian language developed into wedge shaped signs. This type of script was called cuneiform. Cuneiform was written from right to left, like we write Urdu today.

9. The architectural excellence of the Mesopotamians reflects in their monumental buildings such as temples and ziggurats. The Mesopotamians were the first to introduce arches, domes, columns and vaults in their buildings.

10. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

In the next class we shall be discussing the questions given today and we shall start a new chapter - 5.