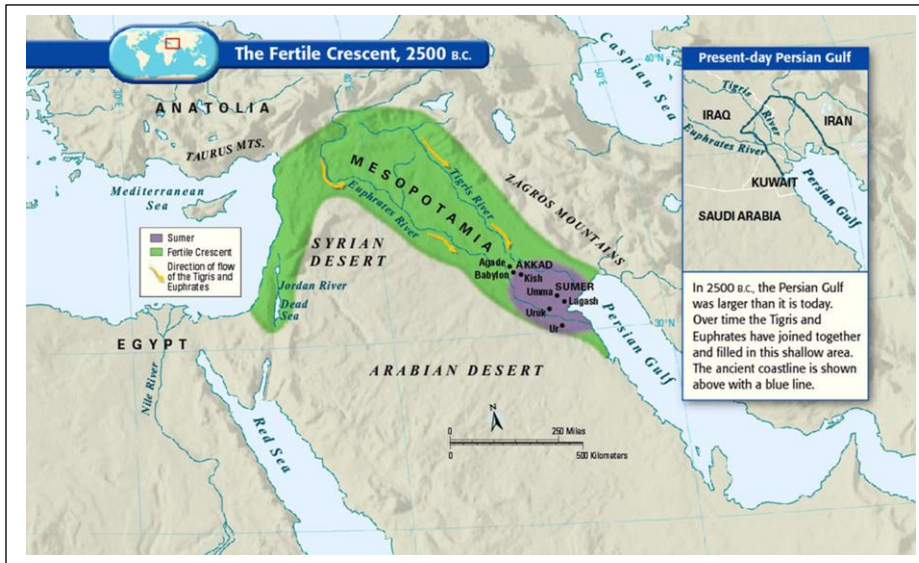


# Aim #5: How did civilizations of the Ancient Near East develop?

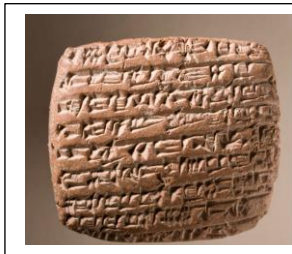
NYS SS Framework: 9.1c

## City-States of Ancient Sumer



### Mini Lecture

- Around 3300 B.C., **Sumer**, the world's first civilization, arose in Southeastern **Mesopotamia** within the **Fertile Crescent**, between the **Tigris & Euphrates** Rivers.
- The region's geography affected its people. Frequent flooding forced Sumerians to work together to protect homes & control water for irrigating farms.
- Although the region had rich soil, it lacked natural resources. Yet, Sumerians built some of the world's first great cities using bricks from readily available clay & water.
- Sumerians also became traders along the rivers. Eventually, Sumer had 12 city-states, which often battled over control of land and water. So people turned to war leaders for protection.
- Like most ancient peoples, Sumerians practiced polytheism. In **ziggurats**, stepped plat-forms topped by a temple, priests led religious ceremonies.
- Perhaps the Sumerians' greatest achievement was the invention of writing. Beginning as simple pictographs, by 3200 B.C. writing had developed into wedge-like symbols, called **cuneiform**. Cuneiform could be used to record complex information.
- Sumerians left a lasting legacy. Besides creating writing system, they developed basic astronomy & early mathematics. They created a number system based on six, setting up 60-minute hours & 360-degree circles. We still use this system today.
- Conquering Empires like the Akkadians, Babylonians, Assyrians, & later Greeks & Romans built on Sumerian knowledge. The Babylonians recorded the Sumerian oral poem, **The Epic of Gilgamesh**, in cuneiform, thus preserving it.



	MEANING	OUTLINE CHARACTER, B. C. 3500	ARCHAIC CUNEIFORM, B. C. 2500	ASSYRIAN, B. C. 700	LATE BABYLONIAN, B. C. 500
1.	The sun				
2.	God, heaven				
3.	Mountain				
4.	Man				
5.	Ox				
6.	Fish				



### Review Questions:

1. How did its geography help Sumer to develop?
2. What major contributions to learning were made by Sumerians?
3. What was the purpose of ziggurats?

**Further Reading:** Chapter 2, Section 1

**MY NOTES**

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