

Rulers Who Changed Mesopotamia

Trace how leaders shaped empires, laws, and daily life.

SS.6.W.2.8 "Determine the impact of key figures from ancient Mesopotamian civilizations."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB For each ruler, underline one action and circle the impact of that action, then number the three ruler-and-impact pairs 1 through 3.

Three Mesopotamian Rulers

- ① Ancient Mesopotamia grew between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, where Sumerian city-states competed for land and water. Around 2334 BCE, Sargon of Akkad conquered several Sumerian cities and united them with Akkad. He placed loyal officials in conquered areas and built an empire that reached beyond southern Mesopotamia. Sargon's rule showed later leaders that one ruler could govern many cities and peoples. Although his empire later broke apart, its model of imperial rule influenced rulers who followed.
- ② Centuries later, King Hammurabi ruled Babylon. He ordered a large collection of laws to be carved on stone steles and displayed publicly. The laws covered trade, property, family matters, injuries, and punishments. They did not treat all people equally, since penalties could depend on a person's social rank. Still, the written collection made the king's rules visible and helped officials use common standards. Hammurabi strengthened Babylon by linking royal authority to laws that people could see and by presenting himself as a protector of order.
- ③ More than a thousand years after Hammurabi, Nebuchadnezzar II led the Neo-Babylonian Empire. He expanded Babylonian control through military campaigns, including the capture of Jerusalem. Many people from Judah were forced to move to Babylon, an event called the Babylonian Exile. Nebuchadnezzar also rebuilt Babylon's walls, temples, and public buildings. His projects made Babylon a powerful and impressive capital, while his conquests changed the lives of the people his army defeated. His reign left a lasting example of how kings used both building and war to strengthen an empire.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What idea about government did Sargon's empire show later rulers? Use one detail from the passage.

2 How did Hammurabi's written laws affect the way Babylon was governed?

3 Explain one way Nebuchadnezzar II strengthened Babylon and one way his conquests affected other people.

4 Which ruler had the most direct impact on creating common rules for officials? Explain your choice with passage evidence.

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Choose Sargon, Hammurabi, or Nebuchadnezzar II. Write exactly four sentences that name the ruler and an action, explain an immediate impact, explain a lasting effect or consequence, and tell why the ruler's impact mattered.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

For each ruler, underline one action and circle the impact of that action, then number the three ruler-and-impact pairs 1 through 3. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What idea about government did Sargon's empire show later rulers? Use one detail from the passage.	Sargon's empire showed that one ruler could govern many cities and peoples. He united several Sumerian cities and placed loyal officials in conquered areas.
2	How did Hammurabi's written laws affect the way Babylon was governed?	The laws made the king's rules visible and helped officials use common standards.
3	Explain one way Nebuchadnezzar II strengthened Babylon and one way his conquests affected other people.	He rebuilt Babylon's walls, temples, and public buildings, making it a powerful capital. His conquests forced many people from Judah to move to Babylon.
4	Which ruler had the most direct impact on creating common rules for officials? Explain your choice with passage evidence.	Hammurabi. His written collection of laws helped officials use common standards.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Sargon of Akkad united several Sumerian cities with Akkad. His officials helped him govern conquered areas. His empire showed later leaders that one ruler could govern many cities and peoples. This mattered because it gave later rulers a model for building empires.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect each ruler's action to a specific result in the passage. For the open response, check that all four required parts are present and historically supported.