

Rivers to Cities

Trace how early civilizations grew in several world regions.

SS.6.W.2 "Describe the emergence of early civilizations (e.g., Nile, Tigris-Euphrates, Indus, and Yellow Rivers, Mesoamerican, and South American)."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each place where an early civilization emerged. Number details that explain how food, water, work, trade, or leadership helped settlements grow, so you can compare regions.

How Civilizations Began

- ① Early civilizations often emerged where rivers or seasonal waters could support farming. In northeastern Africa, the Nile flooded on a regular pattern, leaving rich soil for Egyptian farmers. Villages grew as people raised grain, stored food, and organized irrigation and flood control. In Southwest Asia, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers fed Mesopotamia. Their floods were less predictable, so communities built canals and levees. Extra food helped some people become craftworkers, traders, priests, and rulers in growing cities.
- ② Farther east, cities developed along the Indus River in South Asia. Farmers used river water and fertile soil to produce crops, while trade linked settlements. Harappa and Mohenjo-daro had carefully planned streets, brick buildings, wells, and drainage systems. Along the Yellow River in China, farmers grew crops such as millet. The river's flooding could be destructive, yet its water and soil supported larger communities. Leaders organized workers for projects, and towns became centers of government, craftwork, and trade.
- ③ Early civilizations also emerged in the Americas, where people adapted to different environments. In Mesoamerica, including parts of present-day Mexico and Central America, farmers grew maize, beans, and squash. Food surpluses supported larger settlements, trade networks, and powerful religious and political leaders. In South America, communities in Andean highlands and coastal valleys farmed crops such as potatoes and maize. Some used irrigation where rainfall was limited. Across these regions, reliable food supplies, organized labor, trade, and leadership helped villages develop into complex societies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did the Nile's regular flooding help Egyptian villages grow?

2 Why did people in Mesopotamia build canals and levees?

3 Describe two features of the Indus cities Harappa and Mohenjo-daro that show organized city life.

4 Name two conditions that helped villages become complex societies across the regions in the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose two regions from the passage. Write three sentences that describe how each region's environment supported early civilization and explain one shared factor that helped both societies grow.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each place where an early civilization emerged. Number details that explain how food, water, work, trade, or leadership helped settlements grow, so you can compare regions. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Nile's regular flooding help Egyptian villages grow?	It left rich soil for farming, helping people raise and store grain.
2	Why did people in Mesopotamia build canals and levees?	The Tigris and Euphrates had less predictable floods, so canals and levees helped communities manage water and flooding.
3	Describe two features of the Indus cities Harappa and Mohenjo-daro that show organized city life.	Answers may include planned streets, brick buildings, wells, and drainage systems.
4	Name two conditions that helped villages become complex societies across the regions in the passage.	Any two: reliable food supplies, organized labor, trade, and leadership.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Nile's regular floods left rich soil, helping Egyptian farmers grow grain. In South America, farmers in some coastal valleys used irrigation because rainfall was limited. Both regions used dependable water to produce food that could support larger communities.

Accept accurate comparisons using any two regions named in the passage. The response should include a specific environmental detail for each region and one valid shared factor, such as farming, water management, trade, organized labor, or leadership.