

## Unit 1: Beginnings of Civilization: Early River Valley Civilizations Terms and Names

### City-States in Mesopotamia

#### Terms and Names

**Fertile Crescent** Arc of rich farmland in southwest Asia between the Persian Gulf and the Mediterranean Sea

**Mesopotamia** The land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers

**city-state** Political unit much like an independent country

**dynasty** Series of rulers from a single family

**cultural diffusion** New ideas spreading from one culture to another

**polytheism** Belief in many gods

**empire** Peoples, nations, or independent states under control of one ruler

**Hammurabi** Babylonian ruler famous for his code of laws

### Pyramids on the Nile

#### Terms and Names

**delta** Marshy area at the mouth of a river

**Narmer** King of Upper Egypt who united Upper and Lower Egypt

**pharaoh** Egyptian ruler thought of as a god

**theocracy** Government in which the ruler is considered to be a divine figure

**pyramid** Resting place for Egyptian kings after death

**mummification** Process by which a body is preserved after death

**hieroglyphics** Egyptian writing system

**papyrus** Plant used to make a paper-like material

### Planned Cities on the Indus

#### Terms and Names

**subcontinent** Land mass that is a distinct part of a continent

**monsoon** Seasonal wind

**Harappan civilization** Ancient settlements in the Indus River Valley

# River Dynasties in China

## Terms and Names

**loess** Fertile soil

**oracle bone** Animal bone used by ancient Chinese priests to communicate with the gods

**Mandate of Heaven** Divine approval of the ruler

**dynastic cycle** Pattern of rise, fall, and replacement of dynasties

**feudalism** Political system in which nobles or lords are granted the use of lands that belong to the king