

Social Studies Study Guide

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| What is prehistory? | The time before people invented writing. Prehistoric people did not have cities, countries, governments, or complex tools. |
| What is technology? | The skills and tools people use to meet their needs. |
| What is the Paleolithic Age? | The Paleolithic, or Old Stone Age, began around 10,000 B.C., with the first stone toolmakers. The people of this time lived in small, nomadic, hunter-gatherer groups. They lived in caves. They had some religion- a belief in an afterlife- as well as art, which has been preserved in the form of cave paintings. |
| What is the Neolithic Age? | The Neolithic, or New Stone Age, began with farming about 11,000 years ago. The people of this time began farming, raising domestic animals, and living in permanent villages. They accumulated possessions, technology, and depended on responsible leaders. |
| Features of a Civilization: Why are they important? 1. Cities | Cities where people were gathered. They formed a foundation for the other elements of civilization to form, and for groups and ideas to grow and expand. They let people grow, organize, and accumulate surplus food. |
| 2. Organized Government | An organized government kept a growing city in working order, so time could be spent developing and expanding. Governments collected taxes to fund public projects and enforced a common set of laws in the city. The government ensured the food supply and defense. |
| 3. Religion | Religion became a way for people to explain the world and to solve problems, as well as giving them a code of ethics. |
| 4. Job Specialization | People split into different professions, and, because of that, became co-dependent. No one person could take care of all their needs in the city- pottery making, defense, the priesthood, government... |
| 5. Social Classes | Members of different social classes were ranked by importance- first the rulers, then priests...People knew how they should act |

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| | based on their ranking. |
| 6. Art/Architecture | Art and architecture were a way for people to express their ideas and beliefs. It allowed people to show strength of ruler and religion. |
| 7. Public Works | Huge projects made life much easier for people- irrigation systems, transportation, defensive walls, and temples that were meeting places as well as places of worship. |
| 8. Writing | With writing, records could be kept for later reference and societies workings could grow more complex. In time, this created the job of a scribe. |
| What is polytheism? | The belief in more than one god. Polytheistic people attribute different powers- control of the sun, moon, rain, war, disease, etc. to different gods. |
| What is cultural diffusion? | Cultural diffusion is the spreading of ideas, technology, and customs between peoples. As people migrated, traded, or fought, they brought their cultures along with them and pick up on others'. |
| Nile Floods | The Nile flooded every year. This water fertilized the land, but it had to be controlled. The people had to organize in order to build dikes, reservoirs, and irrigation systems to control the flooding. |
| How was Egypt naturally defended? | The desert surrounded Egypt on three sides, and the Nile's cataract blocked the fourth. Egypt was completely isolated. |
| Where did people settle in Egypt? | In the Nile Valley, the fertile land along the Nile river. They lived in farming villages known as nomes. Early kings unified them into kingdoms. |
| What was Upper Egypt? | Upper Egypt was the southern kingdom, but it was farther "up" the Nile, which ran south to north. It started around the Nile's first cataract (waterfall). |
| What was Lower Egypt? | Lower Egypt was the northern kingdom. It was in the Nile delta region- the triangular area of land formed by silt deposits at the river's delta. |

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| <p>What did Menes do?</p> | <p>Menes, the king of Upper Egypt, united the two kingdoms. He used the Nile for transportation between the two regions. Also, he moved his capital to Memphis, which was between the two kingdoms, so he could govern them equally.</p> |
| <p>What was the Old Kingdom?</p> | <p>The Old Kingdom was the age of the pyramids. These were built for pharaohs, who were viewed as god-kings. They were believed to have a ka, or eternal spirit, that survived in the afterlife.</p> |
| <p>How did Old Kingdom pharaohs rule?</p> | <p>The depended on vizers, or chief ministers, to take care of matters such as tax collection and the irrigation system. Scribes carried out the vizer's instructions.</p> |
| <p>What was the First Illness?</p> | <p>Famine and war. The Old Kingdom fell apart.</p> |
| <p>What was the Middle Kingdom?</p> | <p>Strong kings re-united Egypt. At this time, the importance of the common man increased. Public works projects grew- irrigation systems, swamps were drained. It was believed that every person had a ka, so everyone was mummified. This way, the believed, they could survive in the afterlife.</p> |
| <p>What was the Second Illness?</p> | <p>The Hykos- warlike nomads- invaded. They had bronze tools that were stronger than copper ones, a new bow, a new way of weaving, and chariots. The Egyptians learned these things from them and used the new technology to drive them out.</p> |
| <p>What was the New Kingdom?</p> | <p>The New Kingdom, or Ancient Empire, was an age of conquest for Egypt.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Hatshepsut was a woman who was regent, then took the throne. She expanded trade in Egypt. • Thutmose III was a warlike ruler. He conquered Palestine, Syria, and the land south of Egypt up until the fourth cataract. He brought Nubian slaves to Egypt. He also conquered Asia Minor, and was at war with the Hittites, but they formed a treaty because neither side could defeat the other. • Ramses II ruled for 67 years. He |

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| | <p>celebrated his many military victories by building temples at Karnat and Abu Simbal, which he decorated with statues of himself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egypt slowly fell, was destroyed by the invading "Peoples of the Sea", and was conquered by Assyria and then Persia. |
| What was Egyptian society like? | There was social mobility. One could change his rank through service to the Pharaoh, mainly through the army. However, only the literate could achieve the highest positions. |
| What was Egyptian religion like? | The Egyptians were polytheistic. They had many gods and goddesses as well as a belief in an afterlife. They had a code of ethics- maat- to live by. |
| What did the Egyptians contribute? | Math- geometry, surveying, art (painting and sculpture), literature, medicine, a calender, and hieroglyphics. |
| What was the geography of Mesopotamia like? | The Fertile Crescent, the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, was a good area to grow crops. The rivers flooded, which brought water to the land, but the flooding had to be controlled to protect villages and bring the water to the fields. |
| What was civilization like in Sumer? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They were the first civilization. • The people were polytheistic. Some of their gods belonged to a place, and some to the world. • They had social classes, and women could have most jobs. Men and women were equal. • They wrote with cunieform- with reeds on clay tablets that dried in the sun. • City-states each had their own governments. • They built ziggurat-temples. The bottoms were grain storehouses. • They used the barter system and depended on trade to get what they needed. |
| What were the three problems in Sumer, and how were they solved? | 1. The river's inconsistent flooding, which caused destruction as well as drought, was resolved by building dikes to protect from flood |

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| | <p>and an irrigation system to control it.</p> <p>2. The complete lack of natural defense was solved when walls were built.</p> <p>3. The lack of natural resources besides reeds and clay was solved with extensive trade.</p> |
| What were the contributions of Sumer? | Cunieform, the first wheeled vehicles, the plow, and sailboats. |
| What was Babylon? | The first empire. They conquered Sumer, adapted their ways, and spread their culture. |
| What was Hammurabi's Code of Laws? | Hammurabi, the ruler of Babylon, has over 300 laws chiseled on a black slab of stone. These were balanced laws- the punishment fit the crimes, although they were different for the varied social classes. They covered both civil and criminal offenses. By making these laws public, Hammurabi made the justice system more just. |
| Who were the Phoenicians? | The Phoenicians were the most powerful traders and merchants of their time. They were sailors, who gained their wealth by selling the dye found in snails off of Tyre. This dye was an in-demand "royal purple" color. The Phoenicians were a small group, but they established colonies. Of these, Carthage was the greatest. |
| What was the greatest contribution of the Phoenicians? | The Phoenicians create a 22 letter alphabet whose letters stood for sounds rather than words. |
| What did the Ancient Hebrews contribute? | The Ancient Hebrews created the idea of monotheism, or the belief in one universal god. |
| What did the Hittites contribute? | The Hittites learned how to extract iron ore and smelt it. It was harder and cheaper than bronze. This ushered in the age of empires. |
| Who were the Assyrians? | The Assyrians were known for their cruel but well-disciplined army. They conquered Syria, Palestine, Babylon, and Egypt. Assurbanipal was the last great Assyrian king. |
| What did the Assyrians contribute? | The Assyrians had a huge library in Libia. It contained around 25,000 clay cunierform tablets. |

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| Who were the people of Babylon II? | The Babylonians conquered Assyria under Chaldeans and Judea under Nebuchadnezzar. They were stargazers who created astrology (stars play a role in human fate) and the zodiac as well as modern astronomy. |
| What was the period known as Babylonian Captivity? | After Nebuchadnezzar captured Judea, he sent 15,000 Jews to be slaves in Babylon. (Babylon fell shortly after his death.) |
| Who were the Persians? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Persia was an empire known for good governing and generosity. Cyrus conquered Babylon and reigned for 11 years. He let the people he conquered keep their religion and customs, and allowed the Jews to return to Judea.• Cambyses conquered Egypt.• Darius (the Great) ruled over a vast empire. He divided it into provinces (satrapies) and assigned them governors (satraps). He was known for his good government- he built roads, created standard weights and measures, and coined currency. |