

• **Chart/Comparison - EARLY RIVER VALLEY CIVILIZATIONS –**

	CULTURE	POLITICAL ORGANIZATION	SOCIAL STRUCTURE
MESOPOTAMIA (developed by 3500 BCE) Babylonia, Sumeria, Akkadia,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cuneiform writing with wedge shaped characters; 2000 symbols reduced to 300 -Extensive trade with Egypt and the Indus Valley -Epic of Gilgamesh -Early use of bronze tools, chariots -Advanced astronomy; math based on 60 -Pessimistic view of world, perhaps due to irregular, unpredictable flooding of the rivers -Polytheism - gods powerful and often cruel -Kings powerful, but not divine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - kings rule by divine right -City-states and warrior kings in almost constant conflict with one another -Large empires in later times -Hammurabi's Code and lex talionis (law of retaliation) -Competition among city states as well as frequent invasions led to less political stability than in Egypt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Job specialization - farmers, metallurgist, merchants, craftsmen, political administrators, priests -Social classes: 1) free land-owning class; 2) dependent farmers and; artisans 3) slaves for domestic service (could purchase freedom) merchant class important -Marriage contracts, veils for women; women of upper classes less equal than lower class counterparts
EGYPT (developed by 3000 BCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concerned with decorative arts, shipbuilding, some medical knowledge -Less advanced in math and astronomy than Mesopotamians -Less extensive trade, especially in earlier eras -Polytheism, with pharaoh as a god -Optimistic view of life (regular, controllable flooding of the river) -Strong belief in the afterlife; -Book of the Dead -Hieroglyphics - complex, pictorial language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the pharaoh is a god - highly centralized, authoritarian government -Generally stable government throughout the 3 kingdoms -Extensive bureaucracy; pharaoh's power channeled through regional governors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Smaller nobility than Mesopotamia; fewer merchants -Some social mobility through the bureaucracy -Priests have high status (only ones who understand the complex hieroglyphic written language) -Women - probably higher status than in Mesopotamia; -love poetry indicates some importance placed on male/female relationships -One female pharaoh – Hatshepsut; Influential wife of pharaoh - Nefertiti
INDUS VALLEY (developed by 2500 BCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Writing system only recently decipherable -Soapstone seals that indicate trade with both Mesopotamians and China -pottery making with bulls and long-horned cattle a frequent motif -Small figurines of women -Cruder weapons than Mesopotamians - stone arrowheads, no swords -Polytheism - naked man with horns the primary god; fertility goddesses -Two cities: Harappa and Mohenjo-Dara 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Assumed to be complex and thought to be centralized -Limited information, but large granaries near the cities indicate centralized control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Priests have highest status, based on position as intermediaries between gods and people -Differences in house sizes indicate strong class distinctions -Statues reflects reverence for female reproductive function
	CULTURE	POLITICAL ORGANIZATION	SOCIAL STRUCTURE
SHANG CHINA (developed by 1700 BCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Oracles bones used to communicate with ancestors -Pattern on bones formed basis for writing system; writing highly valued, complex pictorial language with 3000 characters by end of dynasty -Uniform written language became bond among people who spoke many different languages -Bronze weapons and tools, horse-drawn chariots -Geographical separation from other civilizations, though probably traded with the Indus Valley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Centralized government, power in the hands of the emperor -Government preoccupied with flood control of the rivers Job specialization - bureaucrats, farmers, slaves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social classes - warrior aristocrats, bureaucrats, farmers, slaves -Patriarchal society; women as wives and concubines; women were sometimes shamans
MESO AND SOUTH AMERICA (developed by 1200 BCE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Olmecs in Mesoamerica: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Highly developed astronomy; used to predict agricultural cycles and please the gods --Polytheism; religious rituals important, shamans as healers --Ritual ballgames --Irrigation and drainage canals --Giant carved stone heads; probably with religious significance --Jaguar symbol important -Chavin in Andean region: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Polytheism; statues of jaguar men --Square stone architecture, no mortar --Well-developed agriculture based on maize --Unique geography: lived on coast, in mountains, and in jungle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Olmecs: apparently not united politically; unusual for ancient civilizations -Chavin: probably political unification; public works operated by reciprocal labor obligations; had a capital city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Olmec: craft specializations; priests have highest status; most people were farmers -Chavin: Priests have highest status; capital city dominated the hinterlands; most people were farmers