Introduction: This unit begins with an overview of peoples “Before Civilization”. This focuses on food gathering and stone technology, The Agricultural Revolutions, and Life in Neolithic Communities. Once these topics are covered we move into the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Indus Valley.

Vocabulary: Sumerians, Semitic, city-state, Babylon, Hammurabi, scribes, ziggurat, amulet, cuneiform, bronze.

Resources:


The Royal Standard of Ur: The British Museum

Uruk Vase: http://wwwnews.uchicago.edu/releases/04/040408.looting.shtml

Common Core Standards:

2 – Development, Movement, and Interaction of Cultures

3 – Time, Continuity, and Change

4 – Geography, Humans, and the Environment

5 – Development and Transformation of Social Structures
Content Standards:

Standard 2 – World History
Standard 3 – Geography

Student Objectives:

Students will be able to:

● Identify how the people of Mesopotamia settled and cultivated their land.
● Explain the emergence of the city-state and political systems related to them.
● Understand the stratification of Mesopotamian society.
● Discuss the impact of religion on the society.
● Identify the technological and scientific contributions of Mesopotamia.

Essential Questions:

● Why did the earliest civilizations arise in river valleys?
● How did Mesopotamian civilization emerge and how did the organization of labor shape political and social structure?
● What role did metallurgy, writing, and monumental construction contribute to the power and wealth of elite groups?
● How did religious beliefs reflect the interaction with the environment?

Performance Task(s):

● Students will have read the chapter in their text and added notes to a prepared outline.
● Students will complete vocabulary cards for the terms in the section of the chapter.
● Students will examine The Royal Standard of Ur and the Uruk vase.
● Students will complete a social pyramid of ancient Mesopotamia based on evidence from the art works.
Students will complete a reflective writing on social structure in Mesopotamia based on the evidence from their reading of the chapter and the works of art.

**Learning Activities:**
- Students will read chapter 1: From the Origins of Agriculture to the First River-Valley Civilizations
- Students will be given copies of The Royal Standard of Ur to examine, they will be asked to look for evidence of social structure and society, as well as technology.
- Students will be given copies of the Uruk Vase to examine and also look for evidence of social structure and society, as well as technology.
- Students will then be asked to compare and contrast the art from these two city-states.

**Student Directions:**
- Read and supplement printed outline for chapter 1: From the Origins of Agriculture to the First River Valley Civilizations, 8000-1500 B.C.E.
- Complete vocabulary cards
- Handouts for museum artifacts
- Working in pairs identify characteristics of Mesopotamian society based on the artifacts.
- Complete social pyramid and discuss findings as a group
- Write paragraph describing the social structure of ancient Mesopotamia, individual assessment.
What do you see? Identify as many different characters/items and list below
What do you see? Identify as many different characters/items and list below.
Looking back at both panels of The Royal Standard of Ur, can you identify/describe the social hierarchy? Make a social pyramid, using the characters/items of the standard.
What do you see? Identify as many different characters/items and list below.
Add any of your items from the Uruk Vase to your social pyramid.

Using evidence from both your chapter reading/outline and the artifacts, write a paragraph describing the social structure of ancient Mesopotamia.