

Mesopotamia Sumerian City-States

Activity

Reading Comprehension

One of the skills you are working on this year is "active reading." Use your highlighted, underlined, and annotated classroom copy of the Mesopotamia Sumerian City-States lesson to answer the following questions. If your classroom copy of the lesson already has the answers underlined or highlighted, you are off to a GREAT start building strong reading and research skills.

Please use complete sentences and do your best with spelling, grammar, and punctuation to answer the following questions:

1. What city was the capital of the Sumerian civilization?

The capital of ancient Sumer was the city-state of Ur..

2. What is a city-state?

City-states are communities that include a city and its nearby farmland. The nearby land might include several smaller villages.

3. Why did towns eventually band together under the leadership of a king?

As cities grew more and more wealthy, they were subject to more frequent raids. In such dangerous times, the people of a city-state turned to a powerful man to lead them in war. Over time, these men led the city-states full time and took over many of the priests' jobs. Ultimately, they came to be known as kings and the land they ruled was known as a kingdom.

4. Who was Leonard Wooley?

Leonard Wooley was a British archaeologist.

5. What was Wooley's discovery?

While digging in the Sumerian capital city of Ur Wooley discovered a mass grave containing over 1400 bodies. He named his discovery the Royal Tombs of Ur.

6. Why is Wooley's discovery important?

Wooley's discovery of the Royal Tombs of Ur is important because the items contained inside the tomb tell us a lot about daily life in ancient Ur.

7. What is a cylinder seal?

A cylinder seal is a small, round cylinder that is engraved with written characters or scenes or both. When rolled in wet clay, cylinder seals leave an impression of the words or scenes engraved on the cylinder. For the Mesopotamians, cylinder seals served the same purpose as a personal stamp and could substitute for a signature.