

Ancient Civilizations

6th grade



Standards 6.1-6.7

“A Year’s Knowledge in a Nutshell!”

6.1 PALEOLITHIC ERA TO AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION:

1. **Hunter-gatherer societies** migrated over land creating **tools** from sticks, stones, and bones. They used **fire** for light, cooking food, and warming their shelters. **Stone Age people** attributed everything to the **magic** of the spirits, such as lightening and rain.

2. Hunter-gatherers built **permanent shelters** when they realized seeds produced more plants. By settling, **making gardens**, and **raising livestock**, they created farms.



6.2 MESOPOTAMIA, EGYPT, AND KUSH (PART 1):

1. True farming began in the **Fertile Crescent**, in West Asia. **Sumerians** moved into **Mesopotamia** to build **canals** to water crops and transport crops to **trade**. With more food, the **population grew** and so did **cities**.

2. **Priests** hired poor people to work their land and claimed **gods owned land**. **Kings** were elected to rule land.



3. Hammurabi created **first known laws**, known as **Hammurabi's Code**, to protect the **welfare and justice** of his subjects, although **punishment differed** for different classes (nobles, merchants, farmers).

6.2 MESOPOTAMIA, EGYPT, AND KUSH (PART 2):

4. **Egyptian art and architecture** was like a “history book” of their **conquest** and **link to gods** (ex. Great Pyramids, geometric shapes, human & animal figures, and hieroglyphics).



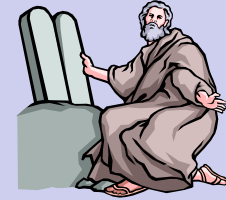
5. **Menes** was the **first king** of all **Egypt**. Peace in Egypt helped expand trade. **Queen Hatshepsut** was one of the few **female pharaohs** of Egypt, who adopted male attributes, like a fake beard and male clothing.

6. The gold, ebony, and ivory of **Nubia** contributed to the material **wealth** of Egypt.

7. **Sumerian** writing is the **oldest full-fledged writing** archaeologists have found. They wrote by pressing picture representations (**pictographs**) into wet clay, which has developed into the script now called **cuneiform**. The **Egyptians** similarly used pictures to represent ideas, called **hieroglyphics**. The **Phoenicians** developed the **first alphabet** with letters representing **sounds**.

6.3 ANCIENT HEBREWS:

1. **Judaism** was the first monotheistic religion based on the concept of **one God** who created the universe and sets down moral laws for humanity, called the **Ten Commandments**.



2. **Abraham** became known as the **father of the Jewish people** (through his son Isaac) and the **father of the Arab people** (through his son Ishmael). **Moses** led the **Israelites**, enslaved by Egyptian pharaohs, back to Canaan in what is called the **Exodus**, during which he was given the Ten Commandments by God.

3. While Romans and Jews argued over what should be the future of Judea, **Jesus of Nazareth** was born, whom Christians believed was the **Hebrew Messiah**, meaning anointed one, who would bring peace/prosperity.

6.4 ANCIENT GREECE (PART 1):

1. The development of the **first city-states** took place on a remote island, **Crete**, to the south of the **Aegean Sea**, a highly cultured yet peaceful society, built on **trade** and an **agricultural surplus**.
2. The **democratic** system of government came under the **Athenian** statesman **Pericles**. To be considered a **citizen** of Athens, a person had to be born of parents who were both Athenian.
3. In **Athenian democracy**, only a certain selected element of the population was allowed to vote, according to gender and background, which is not acceptable in today's **representative democracy** (all can vote once 18).
4. **Greek mythology** was important to everyday life as it explained the creation of the world, sun, moon, dawn, seasons, etc. Famous pieces of literature still read today are **Homer's *Illiad*** and **Aesop's *Fables***.



6.4 ANCIENT GREECE (PART 2):



- Cyrus the Great** led the Persian Conquest claiming Syria, the Middle East, and Mesopotamia, founding the **Persian Empire**. Camyses led the conquest of Egypt. Persia consistently supported **democratic** governments in the Greek city-states.
- Persians** wanted to **punish Greeks** for supporting the revolt of the Ionian Greeks, causing the **Persian Wars**. After the Greeks defeated the Persians, the **Peloponnesian War** was between **Athens & Sparta** for the **leadership of Greece**.
- Alexander the Great** became the king of Macedonia when his father died. When he reached **Egypt**, the Egyptians viewed him as their deliverer from Persian rule, and crowned him as their **Pharaoh**. **Alexandria**, located on the mouth of the **Nile River** in Egypt, was established as the center of commerce & learning.
- Socrates** and his student, **Plato**, contributed philosophical views on the nature of virtue and knowledge.

6.5 INDIA:

1. **Aryans invaded India** ca. 1500 BC destroying the **Indus** valley civilization and exterminating the Indus inhabitants.
2. **Hinduism** is the collection of religious beliefs and practices existing in India that have grown out of ancient **Brahmanism**. For example, the Hindus believe in **karma**, in which all actions produce effects in the future.
3. The **caste system** organized society into **four distinct classes** (based on color and later occupation). The four **castes** were:
 - 1) **Brahmins (priests)** performed rituals & studies,
 - 2) **Kshatriyas (warriors)** protected the people, waged wars & ruled the lands,
 - 3) **Vaishyas (traders)** engaged in trade/commerce & owned the agricultural lands
 - 4) **Shudras (the unclean)** served the other three communities by fulfilling duties.
4. The **moral teachings of Buddha** include: 1) to lead a **moral life**, 2) to be **mindful and aware of thoughts and actions**, and 3) to develop **wisdom** and understanding. Buddhism was spread by **Ashoka**, the third of the Mauryan kings, and his missionaries into Southeast Asia.
5. Much of **India's literature** is in **Sanskrit**, perhaps the **oldest language** in the world to be recorded. Our decimal system is descendent from the Hindu numeral system.

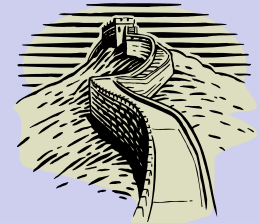


6.6 CHINA:

1. **Confucianism** was a religion in China based on the teachings of **Confucius** and his disciples, and was concerned with the principles of **good conduct, practical wisdom,** and **proper social relationships.** **Taoism** was a religion whose goal was to enhance the Tao, or “**path of life,**” within oneself.



2. **Shih Hwang-ti**, or "First Sovereign Emperor," united northern China under the **Qin Dynasty** by presiding over a centralized administrative system, setting up measures to enhance state power and control over the people, and strengthening defenses by filling gaps in the northern frontier walls, thereby creating the **Great Wall.**



3. The **Han Dynasty** established a **bureaucratic system** staffed essentially on the basis of merit, which collect taxes and directed trade. The **Han Dynasty** moved westward to Central Asia to gain control of the **Silk Road** upon which goods passed between **China** and the **Roman world.**

6.7 ROME:

1. The rise of the **Roman Republic** is told in a myth in which twin brothers, **Romulus and Remus**, kill their uncle, a ruler. Romulus then kills his brother Remus, and Romulus becomes king of the new city, **Rome**, named after him.



2. Without a king, Rome had become a **republic**. The **Senate**, or council of elders, had long been accustomed to watching developments and advising the king at his request, and was now ready to serve as the supreme organ of government. What the Senate created, including a written **constitution** and **tripartite (3-part) government**, would develop into a model in some regards for those founding the **United States of America**.

3. The **Roman Republic** died when **Julius Caesar** declared himself dictator and gained complete control of the government & armies of Rome. The **Roman Empire** began under **Augustus**, the first emperor of Rome, when Roman aristocrats at a Senate meeting murdered Julius Caesar. Under Augustus' reign, trade & business flourished and **Jesus of Nazareth** was born. Augustus began a 250-year period of **peace** & the Roman Empire continued for several centuries.

4. The **Jews** conflicts with the **Romans** included: the Roman general **Pompey** subdued **Judaea** in 63 BCE and the **destruction of the Temple** in 70 BCE.

5. **Christianity** originated with the life, death, and resurrection of **Jesus Christ**. In the Bible, by inspiration of God, the **Apostle Paul** defines Christianity: "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4).