

1 **Chapter 10**

2 **Grade Six – World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations**

3 **Global Overview: Early Beginnings to 300 CE**

- 4 • How did the environment influence human migration, ancient ways of life,
5 and the development of societies?
- 6 • What were the early human ways of life and how did they change over
7 time? (hunting and gathering, agriculture, civilizations, urban societies,
8 states, and empires)
- 9 • How did the major religious and philosophical systems (Judaism, Greek
10 thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) support individuals, rulers,
11 and societies?
- 12 • How did societies interact with each other? How did connections between
13 societies increase over time?

14 Students in sixth-grade world history and geography classrooms learn about
15 the lives of the earliest humans, the development of tools, the foraging way of
16 life, agriculture, and the emergence of civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the
17 Indus River valley, China, Mesoamerica, and the Mediterranean basin. Although
18 teachers should keep the focus on ancient events and problems, this course
19 gives students the opportunity to grapple with geography, environmental issues,
20 political systems and power structures, and civic engagement with fundamental
21 ideas about citizenship, freedom, morality, and law, which also exist in the

22 modern world. Students practice history as an interpretative discipline. They read
23 written primary sources, investigate visual primary sources, and learn how to
24 analyze multiple points of view, cite evidence from sources, and make claims
25 based on that evidence in writing and speaking.

26 Although most of the sixth-grade standards are organized regionally, there
27 are patterns which the teacher uses to connect the regional studies into a world
28 history. These are:

- 29 • The movement of early humans across continents and their adaptations to
30 the geography and climate of new regions.
- 31 • The rise of diverse civilizations, characterized by economies of surplus,
32 centralized states, social hierarchies, cities, networks of trade, art and
33 architecture, and systems of writing.
- 34 • The growth of urban societies and changes in societies (social class
35 divisions, slavery, divisions of labor between men and women).
- 36 • The development of new political institutions (monarchy, empire,
37 democracy) and new ideas (citizenship, freedom, morality, law).
- 38 • The birth and spread of religious and philosophical systems (Judaism,
39 Greek thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) which responded to
40 human needs and supported social norms and power structures.
- 41 • The development and growth of links between societies through trade,
42 diplomacy, migration, conquest, and the diffusion of goods and ideas.

43 The first section below outlines the development of these themes throughout the
44 world over time. It is divided into three chronological periods: Beginnings to 4000

45 BCE; 4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations; and 1000 BCE-300 CE: An
46 Age of Empires and Interactions. The second section outlines the development
47 of these themes following the regional structure of the existing 6th-grade
48 standards.

49 *Beginnings to 4000 BCE*

50 Modern humans, *Homo Sapiens*, are members of the Great Ape family. About
51 25 million years ago a medium-sized primate group split into apes and monkeys;
52 both groups found an ecological niche in trees. Apes didn't have tails, relied
53 primarily on their arms for locomotion by swinging in trees (as opposed to
54 monkeys who primarily used four legs for travel). Apes developed a keener
55 sense of vision; monkeys developed a better sense of smell. Subsequently, the
56 ape family branched into two major lines—hominins and what we now usually
57 call apes. The ape strand led to the present day chimpanzees, bonobos, and
58 gorillas.

59 Our early ancestors, the hominins, and chimpanzees, our closest non-
60 hominin relative, appeared about 6 million years ago. Both were partially bi-
61 pedal. By 2.5 million years ago, these early hominins had evolved to walking up-
62 right. After passing through the australopithecine (southern ape) stage, the
63 hominins eventually gave rise to our genus *Homo* (our first human-like
64 ancestors), which initially appeared about 2.5 million years ago in Africa. The
65 brains of this new genus were about the same size as chimpanzees but grew
66 steadily through the next million years. There were several species of these early
67 homo lines whose population began to grow, though very gradually, after they

68 began to make use of tools more extensively. Our early human ancestors
69 evolved larger brains in response to the survival needs of hunting and gathering
70 in small bands, employed rudimentary stone tools for skinning animals and
71 weapons (such as spear heads and knives), developed simple clothing and
72 shelter, and used fire opportunistically. Pair-bonding, which allowed for more
73 extensive for child rearing, contributed to survival success.

74 There are various theories of how these hominins evolved. Most scholars
75 suggest that the continued growth of brain size necessitated larger food intake.
76 About 2 million years ago, a few of our early human ancestors migrated out of
77 their east African homeland to the rest of that continent and subsequently spread
78 throughout the world --to Europe, and as far east as Indonesia and China. The
79 various species of the homo line continued to evolve and eventually became the
80 more modern *Homo erectus*, *Neanderthals*, and *Denisovans*. Using archeological
81 evidence, such as the carbon dating of bones, stone tools and weapons, DNA
82 evidence of matrilineal and patrilineal descent, the examination of food remains
83 and campsites, students can consider, **How do we know about these early**
84 **proto-humans? Why did they succeed in replacing other Hominin lines?**

85 Around 200,000 years ago our direct human ancestors appeared, modern
86 *Homo sapiens* (the wise man), who were anatomically the same as modern
87 humans. At that time there was nothing particularly special about our species
88 compared to the other homo species. We co-existed with several other homo
89 lines who also possessed similar brain sizes, walked upright, used fire, ate a
90 variety of foods, were skilled gatherers, progressed from scavengers to hunters

91 of large animals, and used comparable tools. However, *Homo sapiens* were
92 lighter, less muscled, more adaptable, and kept developing larger brains.

93 About 70,000 years ago *Homo sapiens* began a major transformation. The
94 species underwent a cognitive revolution which allowed us to acquire
95 sophisticated language, the ability to abstract, imagine, and plan, and to develop
96 the social skills and myth-making capacity required for group cohesion. These
97 talents permitted *homo sapiens* to develop more sophisticated tools and
98 inventions, learn from one another and pass technical, cultural, and
99 organizational knowledge from one generation to the next. *Homo sapiens* also
100 began to act collectively in large groups for foraging, hunting, and defense.
101 These talents allowed our species to learn from experience and adapt more
102 easily to a changing conditions. Consequently, modern humans were able to
103 survive the varied and extreme climates found on this planet.

104 Under one highly regarded explanation, the climate worsened around
105 160,000 years ago, leaving much of African uninhabitable. The numbers of our
106 immediate ancestors declined precipitously and some sought refuge on the
107 southern coast where they learned to exploit the rich shell food beds for food.
108 Unlike territory with scattered resources, territory that featured dense collections
109 of resources required a stationary home base and defense against others. These
110 ancestors evolved a genetically encoded prosocial proclivity, the ability to use
111 sophisticated language and symbols, more advanced conceptual and cognitive
112 capacities, and social lifestyle shifts to encourage sophisticated innovation and
113 cooperation with unrelated individuals. These traits allowed them to better exploit

114 and defend their resource-rich territories against invaders. With their increased
115 brains and ability to cooperate they became even more inventive. Their
116 development of projectile weaponry, especially when coated with poison, was a
117 revolutionary innovation that allowed for safer hunting. (Neanderthals never
118 discovered bows and arrows and many were killed getting too close large
119 animals in the hunt).

120 The story of how our now fully human ancestors populated the earth starting
121 around 70,000 years ago is fascinating. Although the general narrative is
122 generally understood, some details are known, some controversial, and some yet
123 to be discovered. Students can consider the impact of population pressure, the
124 availability of untapped hunting grounds, warfare, or even a sense of adventure
125 as they consider the evidence for the migration and various routes taken. **Why**
126 **did modern humans leave Africa? What happened to all the other Hominids**
127 **in Africa, or the Neanderthals who had evolved from earlier humans in**
128 **Europe? How did modern humans travel across the hemispheres? How**
129 **violent or aggressive were these early humans?** In their investigations,
130 students can consider the fact that as the modern humans peopled the world, the
131 other lines became extinct. They can consider how modern humans from
132 Indonesia crossed land bridges and developed the sea-faring technology to settle
133 the continent of Australia more than 40,000 years ago. And students can develop
134 their own explanations for how 14,000 years our species had populated both
135 North and South America and had peopled every continent except Antarctica

136 (although some islands such as New Zealand and Hawaii were not inhabited until
137 much later).

138 In all these places people survived by foraging, hunting, and fishing, and they
139 lived in bands, that is, communities typically numbering no more than a few
140 dozen men, women, and children. World population of our species began to rise
141 but very gradually. Often, these bands were loosely associated with larger
142 groups, such as tribes who had a common language and belief systems. For
143 example, when the British conquered Australia in the eighteenth century, they
144 found 300,000 to 700,000 hunter-gatherers organized into between 200-600
145 tribes (further divided into multiple bands) each with its own language, customs,
146 norms, and belief systems.

147 Around 10,000 years ago, some humans began to domesticate plants and
148 animals and experiment with farming. Others learned to mine for desired metals
149 and precious stones after smelting was discovered. Their activities led to the
150 development of new ways of life: agriculture in settled villages, trade, and
151 pastoral nomadism. Students investigate why these radical changes began to
152 occur after humans had lived exclusively as gatherers and hunters and still
153 managed to adapt successfully to many climates and climatic changes over
154 hundreds of thousands of years. **Why did some humans start to plant and**
155 **harvest crops, live in crowded villages, and later build cities, accept the**
156 **rule of monarchs, and pay taxes? Why did the pace of historical change in**
157 **certain parts of the world begin to speed up?**

158 During this period many technological and social discoveries or inventions
159 occurred building on the previous breakthroughs, such as use of fire, cooking,
160 boats, use of tools for hunting, defense, and daily life, and tools to make tools,
161 language, expressions of emotions, the ability to understand what another
162 person was thinking, planning, pair-bonding, cooperation, bands and tribes,
163 clothing, sewing, containers, and art, including pigmentation, music and dance.
164 The new innovations included domestication of animals and farming, smelting of
165 copper, then bronze, then iron, the plough, twisted rope, musical instruments,
166 beer and wine, religion and ancestor worship, more complex boats, and trade
167 allowed for an increasing population and standard of living. Working in small
168 groups, students can explore the impact of these discoveries and innovations by
169 examining one discovery or invention in-depth to develop and present a short
170 oral presentation that both explains the innovation and speculates as to its
171 overall significance.

172 *4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations*

173 At the beginning of the period between 4000 and 1000 BCE, the earliest
174 complex urban societies, or civilizations, rose. By the end of this period, there
175 were many urban societies, and their interaction had accelerated. During those
176 three millennia, numerous technical and intellectual innovations appeared,
177 especially in the dense agricultural societies that arose in the Middle East
178 (notably Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Persia), the Nile Valley of Africa,
179 northern India, China, and the lands around the Aegean Sea. By about 2000
180 BCE, urban societies also began to emerge in the Americas, starting with the

181 Olmec civilization in Mesoamerica and Chavín in South America. Many
182 inventions and ideas fundamental to modern life appeared, including the wheel,
183 writing, more complex metallurgy, codes of law, mathematics, and astronomy.
184 While cities grew in some areas, hunter-gatherers and village farmers remained
185 in other areas. Increased trade occurred. Global population rose at a faster rate
186 than it had before 4000 BCE.

187 Powerful people (warlords) took control of the tribes in larger areas and
188 eventually the strongest warlords formed states or city-states with governments
189 headed by kings or, very occasionally, queens, often claiming authority from
190 gods and passing on power to their own descendants. Supported by political
191 elites (nobles, officials, warriors) and priests, these monarchs imposed taxes on
192 ordinary city dwellers and rural people to pay for bureaucracies, armies, irrigation
193 works, and monumental architecture. Writing systems were first invented to serve
194 governments, religions, and merchants, and later became means of transmitting
195 religious, scientific, and literary ideas. Some of the religions of this era, such as
196 early Hinduism and Judaism, set the stage for later world belief systems.

197 Migrations continued as farming peoples slowly expanded into tropical Africa
198 and Southeast Asia, North and South America, and the temperate woodlands of
199 Europe. In the steppes of Central Asia, a new way of life and type of society
200 emerged after 4000 BCE. There, communities lived by herding domesticated
201 animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. Their economy, called pastoral
202 nomadism, permitted humans to adapt in larger numbers to climates which were
203 too dry for farming. Pastoral nomads lived mainly on the products of their

204 livestock. They grazed herds over vast areas and came regularly in contact with
205 urban societies, often to trade, sometimes to make war. By the end of this period,
206 urban societies ruled by monarchies had greatly expanded their control over
207 agricultural regions, but many people still lived in small village, pastoral nomad,
208 and hunter-gatherer societies.

209 *1000 BCE-300 CE: An Age of Empires and Interchange*

210 During these 1,300 years, many patterns of change established in the
211 previous era continued, but at a faster pace. The number of cities multiplied, and
212 states appeared in new forms that were bigger, more complex, and more efficient
213 at coercing people and extracting taxes from them. A new form of state
214 developed – the empire. Among the largest states of that era were the Assyrian
215 and Babylonian Empires centered in Mesopotamia, the Achaemenid, Parthian,
216 and Sasanian Empires in Persia, the Kushan Empire in Central Asia, the Maurya
217 Empire in India, and the kingdom of Kush in the upper Nile River valley. The
218 largest of all were the Roman Empire, which came to embrace the entire
219 Mediterranean Sea region and much of Europe, and the Han Empire in China. At
220 the dawn of the first millennium CE, these two states together ruled a small part
221 of the earth’s land area, but roughly one-half of the world’s population.

222 A second key development of that era was the establishment of a thicker web
223 of interregional communication and transport, which allowed goods,
224 technologies, and ideas to move long distances. Interlocking networks of roads,
225 such as the Silk Road, and sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean
226 Sea, connected empires, kingdoms, and regions of the Eastern Hemisphere with

227 one another. Merchants and other travelers created similar interconnections in
228 Mesoamerica and along South America’s Andean mountain spine. Merchants
229 traveled long distances in caravans and ships to connect farming and urban
230 societies that lay along the rims of seas, deserts, and steppes. In this period, the
231 religions of Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Christianity and the philosophies
232 of Confucianism and Greek thought emerged and spread within empires and
233 along trade routes. These religious and philosophical systems changed as they
234 developed, in order to address human needs, support social order, and adapt to
235 different societies.

236 The following section discusses the development of the above themes
237 following the existing sixth-grade standards. Teachers use the guiding questions
238 to focus on course themes and draw comparisons with other regional units.

239

240 **Early Humankind and the Development of Human Societies**

- 241 • How did the environment influence the migrations of early humans? How
242 did early humans adapt to new environments and climate changes?
- 243 • How did people live by the gathering and hunting way of life?
- 244 • Why did some people develop agriculture and pastoral nomadism? What
245 were the effects of these new ways of life?

246 In the first unit, students learn about the emergence and migrations of early
247 humans, the gathering and hunting way of life, and the emergence of village
248 agriculture and pastoral nomadism. To frame the topic of the emergence and
249 migrations of early humans, the teacher uses these questions: **How did the**

250 **environment influence the migrations of early humans? How did early**
251 **humans adapt to new environments and climate changes?** For millions of
252 years, the genetic ancestors of humans, known as hominins (or hominids), used
253 stone tools and lived on foods found by gathering and hunting. Archeological
254 evidence shows students that our earliest forebears evolved in eastern Africa
255 and that small bands of those ancestors migrated into Eurasia about 1.9 million
256 years ago, driven by population gains and increased competition for food. Around
257 800,000 years ago, early humans discovered how to control fire, allowing them to
258 cook food, keep away predators, and burn areas of land in order to flush out
259 game.

260 *Homo sapiens*, that is, anatomically modern humans, evolved in Africa
261 around 200,000 years ago. Modern humans adapted well to new environments,
262 developing increasingly diverse stone and bone tools for collecting and
263 processing food. About 100,000 years ago, our species developed the capacity
264 for language, which accelerated technological change. Spoken language and the
265 evolution of pro-social mental and social structures enabled humans to teach
266 complex skills to each other, cooperate with others, pass down ideas to the next
267 generation, and talk about their world and the cosmos.

268 After leaving Africa 90,000 to 100,000 years ago, humans may have reached
269 Australia 60,000 or more years ago and Europe 40,000 years ago. In the Middle
270 East and Europe, humans encountered Neanderthals, a related hominid species,
271 who became extinct about 28,000 years ago. Early humans reached the
272 Americas from Eurasia at least 12,000 years ago, possibly earlier. Students use

273 maps to identify the patterns of early human migration and settlement which
274 populated the major regions of the world. Reading climate zone maps and
275 studying climate change during the Pleistocene (glacial and interglacial periods)
276 helps students develop an understanding of the effects of climate on the Earth
277 and on the expansion of human settlements. In California EEI Curriculum Unit
278 6.1.1, “Paleolithic People: Tools, Tasks and Fire,” students analyze why humans
279 chose certain migration routes, settled in particular locations, developed
280 lifestyles, cultures, and methods to extract, harvest, and consume natural
281 resources to understand how early humans adapted to the natural systems and
282 environmental cycles in different regions, and how these factors influence the
283 settlement of human communities. Students analyze how human migrants might
284 adapt to a colder or hotter climate, growth of human population, competition with
285 another hominid species, floods, or droughts.

286 Although humans made many adaptations to the conditions of their
287 environments, until about 10,000 years ago, they all lived by the same way of life,
288 hunting and gathering. The teacher introduces the first of the ways of life
289 students will study in this course with this framing question: **How did people live**
290 **by the gathering and hunting way of life?** There was a division of labor
291 between women and men, but they contributed equally to supporting the band.
292 Adult men were more likely to travel away from the camp to forage or hunt, while
293 women, who were likely to be pregnant or have small children to care for,
294 collected edible plants and trapped small animals close to home. Because
295 gatherers and hunters need a large area to support themselves, bands were

296 small. Social cooperation was very important, but there were few social
297 differences between people.

298 To understand the gathering and hunting way of life and appreciate the
299 linguistic and cognitive advantages of *Homo sapiens*, students analyze primary
300 sources from this long time period before written language. Our knowledge of this
301 era depends on evidence from material remains, especially from bones and
302 stone tools, and, more recently, from research on human DNA and long-term
303 climatic and geological change. Students can analyze cave paintings from
304 Chauvet, Lascaux, and Altamira, with pairs of students first answering a
305 descriptive question, such as: **What colors did the artist use? What kinds of**
306 **animals are shown in the painting?** and then making an interpretation about:
307 **What was important to hunter-gatherer people? Why do you think the artist**
308 **painted this?** Student pairs can then share their interpretations, claims, and
309 evidence with the whole class. Students use academic language to articulate
310 their observations and interpretations to another student and the whole class,
311 supporting the development of oral discourse ability. Students investigate the
312 dramatic changes that took place when some humans began to domesticate
313 plants and animals and settle in one place year round, with these questions: **Why**
314 **did some people develop agriculture and pastoral nomadism? What were**
315 **the effects of these new ways of life?** Teachers begin by asking students why
316 a gatherer might start planting seeds. **How might a hunter start to tame an**
317 **animal?** Archaeological evidence indicates that in the Middle East, and probably
318 Egypt, foraging bands settled near stands of edible grasses, the genetic

319 ancestors of wheat and other grains. People began deliberately to sow plants
320 that had favorable qualities, for example, varieties that were large, tasty, and
321 easy to cook. In this way, they gradually domesticated those plants.
322 Domesticated plants and animals became increasingly important to human diets
323 regionally and turned people into farmers, that is, *producers* of food rather than
324 simply *collectors* of it.

325 This huge change introduced a new way of life for humans – village
326 agriculture. They could therefore live in larger settlements and accumulate more
327 material goods than when they foraged for a living. Teachers emphasize that
328 agriculture involved not only the act of farming but also a whole new way of life
329 based on food production. Improved production meant that not everyone in a
330 village had to spend all of their time securing the food supply. Food surplus also
331 invited conflict with neighboring tribes eager to expand their own reserves.
332 Another result of village agriculture is the development of tools. Early farmers
333 gradually developed more varied stone tools, such as sickles to cut grain and
334 grinding stones to make flour. They used fire to transform clay into durable
335 pottery. They wove wool, cotton, and linen into textiles. Because the early
336 millennia of agriculture involved more sophisticated stone tools, it is known as the
337 Neolithic, or New Stone Age.

338 One of the major effects of the village agricultural way of life was an increase
339 in social differences. In early villages adult men and women probably worked
340 together to perform many necessary tasks and treated each other with near
341 equality. Because villages likely included several extended families living closely

342 together, however, leaders inevitably emerged to guide group decisions and
343 settle personal conflicts. Also, as soon as some families accumulated more
344 stored food than did others and appointed guards to protect their wealth, the
345 conditions for social inequality appeared. Teachers may ask students to examine
346 differences in the contents of graves that archaeologists have excavated—some
347 graves having jewelry, shells, or other fine materials and some having none of
348 these things—for evidence about social ranking and inequality in early
349 agricultural communities.

350 Agriculture developed independently in different areas of the world between
351 12,000 and 5,000 years ago and gradually spread outward from those areas.
352 Students should compare physical and environmental maps with maps of the first
353 sites of food production to make interpretations.

354 In some areas of the world, such as the steppes of Central Asia, the climate
355 was unfavorable for farming, but ideal for supporting herds of domesticated
356 animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. In these areas, some people created a
357 new way of life based on the products of their livestock. They were nomadic and
358 did not settle in villages. In fact, they were highly mobile, and often came into
359 contact with settled societies, often to trade and sometimes to attack and
360 conquer. By 4000 BCE there were three ways of life followed by humans –
361 gathering and hunting, village agriculture, and pastoral nomadism.

362

363 **The Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush**

364 • How did civilizations, complex urban societies, develop in Mesopotamia,

365 Egypt, and Kush?

- 366 • What environmental factors helped civilizations grow? What impact did
367 civilizations and complex urban societies have on the surrounding
368 environment?
- 369 • How did people’s lives change as states and empires took over these
370 areas (increase in social differences, rule by monarchs, laws)?
- 371 • From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade, and other links grow
372 among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, India, and the
373 eastern Mediterranean?

374 Between 10,000 and 4,000 BCE, farming spread widely across Africa and
375 Eurasia. In the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates (Fertile Crescent) and Nile
376 rivers, people adapted to the rivers’ flood cycles and the related seasonal cycles
377 of plants and animals. Their adaptations allowed them to produce a surplus of
378 food, which led to other changes in their cultures. Students learn that people who
379 lived near the banks of those rivers began to use irrigation techniques to control
380 water and extend farming, despite an increasingly arid climate. A similar process
381 got under way in the Indus River valley in India and in the Huang He (Yellow)
382 River valley in northern China some centuries later. To frame the study of the
383 emergence of civilizations, the teacher uses the question: **How did civilizations,**
384 **complex urban societies, develop in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush?** When
385 communities began to intensify farming with new techniques, they were able to
386 produce surplus food. Early farmers increased the size of their farms and used
387 more resources in order to increase their yield. Focusing on the relationships

388 between resource requirements, agricultural production, and population growth,
389 students learn that the population growth near agricultural areas was a first step
390 in the development of larger settlements and cities. The surpluses they produced
391 led to the rise of more complex social, economic, and political systems in those
392 valleys.

393 The civilization of Mesopotamia, located in the valley of the Euphrates and
394 Tigris Rivers (modern Iraq and part of Syria), and Egypt, which stretched along
395 the Nile River, both arose in the fourth millennium BCE. Kush, a civilization in the
396 upper Nile River region south of Egypt emerged in the second millennium BCE.
397 Teachers introduce students to the environmental roots of civilization with this
398 question: **What environmental factors helped civilizations grow? What**
399 **impact did civilizations and complex urban societies have on the**
400 **surrounding environment?** All these societies depended on their river locations
401 to build dense agricultural societies. First students examine maps to identify the
402 environmental factors, such as climate, topography, and flood patterns, that
403 caused these civilizations to rise up along rivers. The teacher might use either of
404 the California EEI Curriculum Units 6.2.1.River Systems and Ancient Peoples, or
405 6.2.2 Advances in Ancient Civilizations. These lessons emphasize environmental
406 causes and effects and the influence that the rise of civilization along these rivers
407 had on the organization, economies, and belief systems of Mesopotamia and
408 Egypt.

409 Teachers guide students through the development of each of these three
410 civilizations separately, while frequently pointing out connections, similarities, and

411 differences among the civilizations (and also the Harappa civilization along the
412 Indus River and Chinese civilization along the Huang He [Yellow] River). The
413 following section discusses Mesopotamia first, followed by Egypt, and then by
414 Kush.

415 In the third millennium BCE, Mesopotamia was divided into a number of
416 kingdoms. Beginning in Sumer, the region of southern Mesopotamia, those early
417 kingdoms were dominated by large walled cities, each enclosing a royal palace
418 and a temple dedicated to the local god, along with densely packed housing for
419 the population. Walls were built around many of these cities in response to
420 aggression by neighboring kingdoms and competing warlords seeking to expand
421 their territory through conquest. By around 3,000 BCE, a second cluster of cities
422 arose in northern Mesopotamia and the area of modern-day Syria. Rulers of
423 these cities claimed to possess authority divinely bestowed by their city's god or
424 goddess. The city-states of Mesopotamia frequently fought one another over
425 resources, but they also formed alliances. At the end of the third millennium,
426 Sargon of Akkad (2270-2215 BCE) managed briefly to forge a unified empire
427 through conquest.

428 Students also examine the connections between Mesopotamia and other
429 areas with this question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade,**
430 **and other links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt,**
431 **Kush, India, and the eastern Mediterranean?** Trade was extensive, not only
432 among the Mesopotamian kingdoms, but also between Mesopotamia and
433 surrounding regions. The land had rich soil that produced abundant crops, but it

434 had no minerals. Merchants imported a red stone called carnelian from the Indus
435 Valley, a blue stone called lapis lazuli from what is now Afghanistan, and silver
436 from Anatolia (modern Turkey), which were used for jewelry and decorations in
437 temples and palaces. From the Elamites on the Iranian plateau, merchants
438 imported wood, copper, lead, silver, and tin. In some periods, trade and
439 diplomatic exchanges took place between Mesopotamia and Egypt. Teachers
440 introduce students to Mesopotamia’s numerous technological and social
441 innovations, including the wheel, the wooden plow, the seed drill, and improved
442 bronze metallurgy, as well as advances in mathematics, astronomical
443 measurement, and law. Essential for the functioning of the legal system and of
444 the administrative structure of Mesopotamian kingdoms was the cuneiform
445 writing system. The signs were written on clay tablets and could be used to
446 represent phonetically many ancient languages, including Sumerian and
447 Akkadian, the languages of Mesopotamia. Mesopotamians had a complex legal
448 system and written laws, of which Hammurabi’s are the best preserved, though
449 not the earliest.

450 Next students explore the development of Mesopotamia society with this
451 question: **How did people’s lives change as states and empires took over**
452 **this area?** In the Mesopotamian cities and states, a small elite group of political
453 leaders (officials, warriors, “nobles”) and priests held the most wealth and power,
454 while the majority of people remained poor farmers, artisans, or slaves.
455 Supported by the elites, kings established dynasties, and built large palaces.
456 Social groups were increasingly divided into a true social hierarchy.

457 Mesopotamia was a patriarchy and men had more power than women. However,
458 priestesses and noblewomen did have some access to power. For example,
459 Sargon placed his daughter in the powerful position of high priestess of the moon
460 god, starting a tradition that continued in the reigns of subsequent kings.
461 Monarchs' wives sometimes controlled their own estates. In the Mesopotamian
462 cities (and in all civilizations) the increase in social differences was a dramatic
463 change for humans.

Grade Six Classroom Example: Hammurabi's Code

To build student understanding of how human life changed in these early civilizations, Mrs. Stanton organizes a close reading of excerpts from Hammurabi's laws. Knowing that the text will be challenging for English Learners, she identifies the key passages in the text, the unfamiliar names, the academic vocabulary, and the literacy challenges that students will face. After putting students in groups of four, Mrs. Stanton distributes excerpted texts containing the first sentence of Hammurabi's prologue and the first six phrases of the second sentence (for all groups) and sets of six laws (different selections for each group which all show differentiated punishments for different classes of people.) Mrs. Stanton then explains that students will be analyzing this primary source to gather evidence to answer the question: **How did people's lives change under the rule of Hammurabi and the civilization in Mesopotamia?** She reminds students of the egalitarian life of the hunter-gatherers and limited hierarchy of villages. The students read their texts silently first and then discuss in their

groups: **What is this text about? What crimes do the laws punish?** For the second reading, Mrs. Stanton guides students through a sentence deconstruction chart of the first sentence, followed by a whole class discussion of Hammurabi's claims to divine authority as a protector of the people. For the third reading, the students mark up the text and write annotations in the margins. The teacher then models the structure of a social hierarchy pyramid on the board. For the fourth reading, each group analyzes their selection of laws, identifies the social groups, draws a social hierarchy diagram of those groups, and reports to the class orally and in writing. After class discussion, students answer text-dependent questions in a fifth reading. The students then write a summary paragraph about Hammurabi's Laws, using the words: monarch, prince, rule, Babylon, Marduk, conquered, righteousness, and social hierarchy.

CA HSS Standards: 6.2.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence, and Point of View 3, Historical Interpretation 1

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.6.3, RI.6.10, SL.6.1, SL.6.4, L.6.4, RH.6–8.1, RH.6–8.2, RH.6–8.4, WHST.6–8.2, WHST.6–8.9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 2, 6, 11; ELD.PII.6.1

464

465 Next students look at how the states and empires in Mesopotamia changed

466 over time, focused on this question: **How did civilizations, complex urban**

467 **societies, develop in Mesopotamia?** Over the centuries, the cities of

468 Mesopotamia were divided into multiple states, conquered by invaders, and

469 combined into new states. While it is not possible or desirable to teach all the
470 states and groups that ruled over Mesopotamia, it is critical that students
471 understand the importance of the Persian Empire. The names of the empire
472 changed often with changes in the ruling groups (Achaemenids, Seleucids,
473 Parthians, Sasanians), but the Persian Empire maintained its continuity and its
474 domination over Mesopotamia, Persia, and often wide areas of southwestern
475 Asia and Egypt, from c. 500 BCE to c. 630 CE. It was the primary political and
476 cultural presence in western Asia during that period. Because the Persians
477 fought wars with the ancient Greeks, Greek writers often criticized the Persians.
478 However, the Persian ruled over a very large empire, from the Aegean Sea to the
479 Indus River, with policies of multicultural tolerance. After conquest by Alexander
480 the Great, Persia became a Hellenistic state under the Seleucids until the
481 Parthians conquered the area. The Parthians nevertheless maintained some
482 Hellenistic features and trade and diplomatic connections with other Hellenistic
483 states from Carthage to Bactria. Parthian Persia was the main rival of the Roman
484 Empire in the eastern Mediterranean. The Sasanians, who took over in 224 CE,
485 actively promoted Persian nationalism and Zoroastrianism as a state religion. As
486 the main heir of Mesopotamian civilization, the Persian Empire played as large a
487 role in world history as the Greeks or Romans.

488 Teachers point out that Mesopotamia and Egypt (as well as many other early
489 states) were dominated by a combination of religion and kingship. As they study
490 Egypt, students focus on the question: **How did civilizations, complex urban**
491 **societies, develop in Egypt?** They learn that from 3000 to 1500, unlike

492 Mesopotamia, Egypt was usually united under a single king. Egyptian kings
493 claimed not only to have divine approval but to be deities themselves. The
494 Egyptians built immense pyramid tombs and grand temples for their rulers.
495 Teachers focus students' attention on the social and political power structures
496 with this question: **How did people's lives change as states and empires took**
497 **over this area?** The Egyptians prized order (*ma'at*) in all aspects of life,
498 including social rules and even careful preparations for the afterlife. Their social
499 hierarchy was an elaborate structure dominated by small elite groups of political
500 leaders (regional lords, officials, and warriors) and priests. The teacher points
501 out the similarity to Mesopotamia. Students analyze the Egyptian writing system
502 in comparison with Mesopotamian cuneiform. Both used a combination of signs
503 that represented sounds (phonemes) and ones that signified word or phrase
504 meanings (logograms). The Egyptians, however, used hieroglyphs and papyrus
505 and stone as writing surfaces rather than clay tablets.

506 Around 1500 BCE, Egypt entered the era known as the New Kingdom. Kings
507 such as Thutmose III expanded the Egyptian empire far up the Nile River into
508 what is now Sudan, and into the Levant, that is, the coastal region at the eastern
509 end of the Mediterranean. Teachers highlight Queen Hatshepsut (ca. 1479-1458
510 BCE) and King Ramses II, also known as Ramses the Great (1279-1212 BCE).
511 During Hatshepsut's reign, as throughout the whole New Kingdom, Egyptian art
512 and architecture flourished, and trade with distant lands brought enormous
513 wealth into Egypt. Ramses II's long reign was a time of great prosperity. He
514 fought battles to maintain the Egyptian Empire and built innumerable temples

515 and monuments throughout Egypt. Students can analyze artistic representations
516 of Hatshepsut, Ramses, and other pharaohs to make interpretations about the
517 divine authority of the pharaoh (how artists represented their power, what
518 qualities a pharaoh should have, and how Egyptian pharaohs were similar to and
519 different from Hammurabi.) After the New Kingdom period, different empires,
520 such as Kush, Persia, and Rome, took over Egypt.

521 Egypt held long trade connections in Eurasia and Africa. Teachers return to
522 question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade, and other**
523 **links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, India,**
524 **and the eastern Mediterranean?** Representatives of the king sailed up the Nile
525 to Kush and penetrated the Red Sea coasts to obtain incense, ivory, and ebony
526 wood. To the northeast, they acquired timber from the forests of Lebanon. New
527 Kingdom pharaohs also nurtured ties through treaties and marriage with Middle
528 Eastern states, notably Babylonia (in Mesopotamia), Mittani (in Syria), and the
529 kingdom of the Hittites in Anatolia. Diplomatic envoys and luxury goods circulated
530 among these royal courts, so that they formed the world's first international
531 community of states. Students may create maps showing the trade routes and
532 products that circulated among Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, Persia, and
533 South Asia, as well as in the eastern Mediterranean. Students recognize that the
534 number of states and the intensity of trade connections increased steadily from
535 1500 BCE to 300 CE.

536 The teacher transitions to the study of African civilization of Kush with this
537 question: **What environmental factors helped the Kush civilization grow?**

538 **What impact did civilizations and complex urban societies have on the**
539 **surrounding environment?** Kush lay in the upper Nile Valley, where rainfall
540 was higher and where farm and cattle land stretched far beyond the banks of the
541 river. Kush had complex relations with Egypt. In some periods, Egyptian
542 pharaohs dominated Kush, taxing the population and extracting goods,
543 particularly gold. After the New Kingdom faded, Kush reasserted its
544 independence, though maintaining close contacts with Egypt. Next students
545 explore the question: **From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade,**
546 **and other links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt,**
547 **Kush, India, and the eastern Mediterranean?** Teachers may introduce
548 comparisons between the societies of Kush and Egypt through pictorial
549 representations of the two architectural traditions. For example, kings of Kush
550 built pyramids, although they were smaller than Egypt’s structures. In the first
551 millennium BCE, however, Kush developed a distinctive cultural style that
552 included painted pottery, the elephant as an artistic motif, an alphabetic writing
553 system, and a flourishing iron industry. The similarities between Egypt and Kush,
554 and the distinct features of each civilization, offer an opportunity for students to
555 analyze how one culture adopts products, styles, and ideas from another culture,
556 but adapts those borrowings to fit its own needs and preferences. Another way to
557 compare these civilizations is to have students trace how popular goods traded in
558 the Egyptian world were related to the natural resources available in Egypt and
559 Kush. They learn that Egyptian trade influenced the development of laws,
560 policies, and incentives on the use and management of ecosystem goods and

561 services in the eastern Mediterranean and Nile Valley, which had the long-term
562 effects on the functioning and health of those ecosystems, through California EEI
563 Curriculum Units 6.2.6/8, “Egypt and Kush: A Tale of Two Kingdoms.”

564 In the eighth century BCE, Kush’s ruler took advantage of political weakness
565 in Egypt to conquer it, uniting a huge stretch of the Nile Valley under the twenty-
566 fifth dynasty for nearly a century. Mapping the trade of Kush merchants with the
567 Arabian Peninsula, India, and equatorial Africa shows students how networks of
568 trade expanded to more and more areas. The Kush state did not seriously
569 decline until the fourth century CE.

570

571 **The Ancient Israelites (Hebrews)**

572 • What were the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient Israelites?

573 How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop over
574 time?

575 • How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their
576 interactions with other societies shape their religion?

577 • How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and societies?

578 The ancient Israelites, also known as the Hebrew people, emerged in the
579 eastern Mediterranean coastal region about the twelfth century BCE. To begin
580 the unit, the teacher introduces this question: **How did the environment, the
581 history of the Israelites, and their interactions with other societies shape
582 their religion?** Originally a semi-nomadic pastoral people living on the
583 Mesopotamian periphery, by the eleventh century BCE they organized the

584 kingdom of Israel. Founding a capital in the city of Jerusalem, they terraced the
585 hillsides in their land and built up an agricultural economy. While their state did
586 not long survive, their religion, which became known as Judaism, made an
587 enduring contribution of morality and ethics to Western civilization.

588 In their study of Judaism as a monotheistic religion, students also have the
589 opportunity to analyze how the religion changed over time. Students focus on the
590 questions: **What were the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient**
591 **Israelites? How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop**
592 **over time?** While many of main teachings of Judaism, such as a weekly day of
593 rest, observance of law, practice of righteousness and compassion, and belief in
594 one God, originated in the early traditions of the Jews, other early traditions
595 disappeared over time to be replaced by increased emphasis on morality and
596 commitment to study. The teacher poses this historical investigation question to
597 students: **How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop**
598 **over time?** as they read selected excerpts from the Torah, the first five books of
599 the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), which Christians refer to as the Old Testament.

600 Judaism was heavily influenced by the environment, the history of the
601 Israelites, and their interactions with other societies. The students return to the
602 question: **How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their**
603 **interactions with other societies shape their religion?** The many farming
604 metaphors in the Torah show the pastoral/agricultural environment. The fragile
605 position of Canaan in the Fertile Crescent between more powerful neighboring
606 states dramatically affected the history of the Israelites. The Exodus from Egypt

607 was an event of great significance to Jewish law and belief, especially the
608 concept of a special relationship or covenant between the Israelites and God.
609 After the Exodus, Saul, David, and Solomon—three successive kings who
610 probably lived in the eleventh and tenth centuries BCE—united the land of Israel
611 into a state. However, after Solomon’s reign, the unified kingdom split into two:
612 Israel in the north and Judah (from which we get the words Judaism and Jews) in
613 the south.

614 In addition to paying attention to change over time, the teacher asks students
615 to consider: **How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and**
616 **societies?** Between the tenth and six centuries BCE, Assyria and then
617 Babylonia absorbed all of Mesopotamia, some of Anatolia, and the Levant,
618 including the two Jewish states, into their huge empires. The Babylonians
619 deported many Jews to Mesopotamia, but in 539 BCE, Cyrus the Great, emperor
620 of the new empire of Persia, allowed the exiled Jews to return home. Later their
621 homeland was taken over by both Greek and Roman rulers. In 70 CE, the
622 Roman army destroyed the Jews’ temple in Jerusalem. As Jews lost their states
623 and spread out into many other lands, their religious practice and community life
624 had to adapt. During the Babylonian period, exiled Jews wrote down the sacred
625 texts that had previously been orally transmitted. When the temple was
626 destroyed, those texts were carried to new communities and preserved and
627 studied by religious teachers or sages, such as Yohanan ben Zaccai in the first
628 century CE, and passed on to younger generations. Many Jews left Canaan,
629 dispersing to lands throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. They

630 carried with them the beliefs, traditions, and laws that served them in constituting
631 new social and economic communities in many lands.

632

633 **Ancient Greece**

- 634 • How did the environment of the Greek peninsula and islands, the
635 Anatolian coast, and the surrounding seas affect the development of
636 Greek societies?
- 637 • What were the differences in point of view and perspective between the
638 Persians and the Greeks, and between Athenians and Spartans?
- 639 • What were the political forms adopted by Greek urban societies? What
640 were the achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?
- 641 • How did Greek thought (a cultural package of mythology, humanistic art,
642 emphasis on reason and intellectual development, and historical, scientific
643 and literary forms) support individuals, states, and societies?
- 644 • How did Greek trade, travel, and colonies, followed by the conquests of
645 Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture, affect increasing
646 connections among regions in Afroeurasia?

647 In this unit students learn about the ancient Greek world, which was centered
648 on the Aegean Sea, including both the Greek peninsula and the west coast of
649 Anatolia (modern Turkey). They begin with the question: **How did the**
650 **environment of the Greek peninsula and islands, the Anatolian coast, and**
651 **the surrounding seas affect the development of Greek societies?** An
652 elongated coastline and numerous islands stimulated seaborne trade, as well as

653 easy communication between one community and another. The peninsula's
654 interior of mountains and deep valleys, by contrast, encouraged the
655 independence of small communities and city-states, rather than a unified empire.
656 Several waves of migration through the area brought significant changes to the
657 population and culture. Greeks were oriented toward the sea, dependent on
658 trade to feed themselves, and willing to move and settle colonies.

659 The ancient Greek world developed on the periphery of the Egyptian and
660 Mesopotamian civilizations. Greek foundations were laid by the Minoan
661 civilization on Crete and the Mycenaeans on the Greek peninsula. In the eighth
662 century BCE, Greek-speaking people began a major expansion. They developed
663 more productive agriculture, traded olive oil and wine to distant ports, and
664 founded colonies around the Black Sea, on the northern African coast, and in
665 Sicily and southern Italy. These developments contributed to an increasing sense
666 of shared Greek identity, as well as interchange of ideas and goods with
667 Egyptians, Phoenicians, and other neighboring peoples. Around 800 BCE, the
668 Greek language was written down, and shortly afterwards, Homer wrote the *Iliad*
669 and the *Odyssey*, two foundational epic poems, which shed light on the
670 Mycenaean world of fearless warriors who valued public competition and
671 individual glory.

672 Next teachers introduce the focus question: **What were the differences in**
673 **point of view and perspective between the Persians and the Greeks?** The
674 Greek city-states engaged in a pivotal conflict with the Persian (Achaemenid)
675 Empire in the fifth century BCE, and Greek identification of the Persians as their

676 enemies has heavily influenced later European and American perceptions. The
677 Persian Achaemenid Empire was centered in present-day Iran and had
678 conquered Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and Anatolia. Its rulers represented
679 themselves as agents of Ahuramazda, the supreme god in the regionally
680 important religion of Zoroastrianism. The Persians subjugated the Greek city-
681 states of western Anatolia, but they failed in three attempts to invade the Greek
682 peninsula and defeat the Greeks, including those in the cities of Athens and
683 Sparta, the most powerful city-states. Herodotus (ca 484-425 BCE) was a Greek
684 scholar who wrote a vivid narrative of these events in *The Persian Wars*, the first
685 history book. The clear distinction between the Greeks and Persians and the
686 continuing influence of Greek sources (rather than a balance between Greek and
687 Persian sources) gives the teacher a good opportunity to teach students about
688 point of view or perspective. Students can use images of the palace art at
689 Persepolis, particularly the tribute bearers staircase, to see the differences
690 between the ways the Greeks represented the Persians and the Persians
691 represented themselves.

692 Because the Greeks experimented with so many different forms of
693 government and wrote so much about politics, this is the ideal point for teachers
694 to focus on government types and citizenship, with the questions: **What were the**
695 **political forms adopted by Greek urban societies? What were the**
696 **achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?** In contrast to large
697 empires such as the Persian Achaemenids, the Greeks organized the city-state,
698 or *polis*, with central government authority, control of surrounding farmland, and

699 the concept of citizenship. In most city-states, the earliest rulers were wealthy
700 aristocrats, but they were eventually replaced by tyrants, or personal dictators,
701 and later by oligarchies, that is, small groups of privileged males. A major
702 exception to this pattern was Athens, where a series of reforms in the sixth
703 century broadened the base of civic participation and paved the way for a limited
704 democratic system in the following century. In political and cultural terms, Athens
705 in the fifth century BCE was a highly innovative city. Students may compare its
706 system of direct democracy with modern representative democracy. In Athens,
707 every adult male citizen could vote on legislation, and citizens were chosen for
708 key offices by lot. These principles ensured that decision-making lay mostly in
709 the hands of average citizens. Students may analyze the advantages and limits
710 of this system. For example, women, foreigners, and slaves were excluded from
711 all political participation. In contrast to democratic Athens, Sparta was nearly the
712 equivalent of a permanent army base, its male citizens obligated to full-time
713 military training and rigorous discipline. To investigate the question: **What were**
714 **the differences in point of view and perspective between Athenians and**
715 **Spartans?** students use short quotations from Xenophon’s writing about the
716 Spartans (about the training of boys and girls) to contrast with short quotations
717 from *Pericles’s Funeral Oration*, recorded by Thucydides (from the first four
718 sentences of the third paragraph which address Athenian democracy and self-
719 image, and the fifth paragraph, which contrasts Athenian and Spartan military
720 training.) Since the sentences in these sources are long and complex, the
721 teacher has students underline the subjects, circle the verbs, and draw boxes

722 around the complements or objects of the sentence, points out parallel phrases
723 and clauses, and guides students through identifying references. After this
724 literacy activity, the teacher guides students through identifying the perspectives
725 of Xenophon and Pericles. While Xenophon was an Athenian who greatly
726 admired the Spartans, Pericles was the leader of Athens in the Peloponnesian
727 War against Sparta (431-404 BCE). His funeral oration was propaganda
728 designed to build Athenian morale and support for the war. The teacher then
729 divides the students into groups, and assigns them text-dependent questions.
730 For each of primary sources, students write out a statement of the author’s
731 perspective and one piece of evidence in the text (such as a loaded word or a
732 statement that favors one side). Fighting between Greek city-states was chronic
733 and destructive. Athens at that time ruled large areas of the Aegean basin, but
734 Sparta’s victory in the Peloponnesian War brought the Athenian empire to an
735 end. It also ended the classical age of Greece. Conflicts among the city-states
736 contributed to the military conquest of Greece by Philip II of Macedonia.

737 The cultural achievements of the classical Greeks were numerous. Teachers
738 have students consider the question: **How did Greek thought (a cultural**
739 **package of mythology, humanistic art, emphasis on reason and intellectual**
740 **development, and historical, scientific and literary forms) support**
741 **individuals, states, and societies?** Athens produced several philosophers
742 (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle), historians (Herodotus, Thucydides), and orators
743 (Demosthenes, Pericles). It also nurtured drama, both tragedy (Sophocles,
744 Euripides) and comedy (Aristophanes). The Greek art and architecture of the era

745 emphasized naturalistic representations of human forms and buildings of
746 beautiful proportions. The rich tales of Greek mythology influenced all forms of
747 literature and art. Students may consider examples of ways in which Greek
748 culture has had an enduring influence on modern society.

749 Next students investigate how Greek culture spread in the Hellenistic era,
750 with the question: **How did Greek trade, travel, and colonies, followed by the**
751 **conquests of Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture,**
752 **affect increasing connections among regions in Afroeurasia?** Philip II's son
753 Alexander of Macedonia (ruled 336-323) led a military campaign of
754 unprecedented scope, conquering the Persian Empire, Egypt, Central Asia, and
755 even to the Indus River valley. Following his death, his generals and their sons
756 carved his short-lived empire into separate states. The following two centuries
757 are known as the Hellenistic period. "Hellenistic" refers to the influence of Greek
758 cultural forms in regions far beyond the Aegean, though in fact a lively
759 interchange of products and ideas took place in the broad region from the
760 Mediterranean to India. Athenian democracy did not survive, but Greek ideas,
761 such as language, sculpture, and city planning, mingled creatively with the
762 cultural styles of Egypt, Persia, and India. For example, the Egyptian goddess
763 Isis took on a Greek-like identity and came to be venerated widely in the
764 Hellenistic lands. The era also brought innovations in science and mathematics,
765 for example, the principles of geometry came from Euclid, who lived in the
766 Hellenistic Egyptian city of Alexandria. During the Hellenistic period, exchanges
767 of products, ideas, and technologies across Afroeurasia increased greatly and

768 penetrated into many more regions, culminating with connections to China via
769 the Silk Road. Cosmopolitan Hellenistic cities became sites of encounter for
770 people of different cultures, religions, and regions. Eventually, the Hellenistic
771 kingdoms west of Persia succumbed to the greater military power of Rome,
772 which in turn absorbed many aspects of Greek culture.

773

774 **The Early Civilizations of India**

- 775 • How did the environment influence the emergence and decline of the
776 Harappa civilization?
- 777 • How did the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?
- 778 • How did the religion of Buddhism support individuals, rulers, and
779 societies?
- 780 • During the Harappa civilization, the Vedic period, and the Maurya Empire,
781 how did the connections between India and other regions of Afroeurasia
782 increase?

783 In this unit students learn about ancient societies in India. They begin with the
784 environment: **How did the environment influence the emergence and decline**
785 **of the Harappa civilization?** The earliest civilization, known as Harappan
786 civilization after one of its cities, was centered in the Indus River valley, though
787 its cultural style spread widely from present-day Afghanistan to the upper Ganga
788 plain (Ganges River). The Indus River and its tributaries, along with Saraswati (or
789 Sarasvati) River, flow from the Himalaya mountains southward across the plain
790 now called the Punjab, fan out into a delta, and pour into the Arabian Sea. The

791 river valley was much larger than either Mesopotamia or Egypt, and its soil was
792 very rich. Lessons two and four of the California EEI Curriculum Unit 6.5.1, “The
793 Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India,” have students locate and
794 describe the physical features of the Indus and Ganges river systems in India.
795 Investigating regional seasonal cycles, especially the summer monsoons,
796 students provide examples of how these cycles benefitted the permanent
797 settlement of early Indian civilization, helping them to recognize that humans
798 depend on, benefit from, and can alter the cycles that occur in the natural
799 systems where they live.

800 Arising in the third millennium BCE, the Harappan civilization attained its
801 zenith between about 2600 and 1900 BCE. It was discovered by archaeologists
802 in the 1920s. Digs have revealed that many Harappan cities, including Harappa
803 and Mohenjo-daro, were well planned with streets laid out in grids and well-
804 engineered sewers. Artifacts include pottery, seals, statues, jewelry, tools, and
805 toys. The seals contain writing that has not yet been deciphered. Some of the
806 statues and figurines, as well as images on the seals, show features that are all
807 present in modern Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the Hindu
808 God Shiva in a meditating posture, as well as small clay figures in the posture of
809 the traditional Hindu greeting “namaste.” Evidence reveals active commerce
810 between the cities of the Harappan civilization as well as foreign trade with
811 Mesopotamia by sea. A flourishing urban civilization developed in India from as
812 early as 3300 BCE along the Indus River. Archaeologists believe this civilization
813 had its greatest stage of expansion from 2600 - 1700 BCE. The economic basis

814 of the civilization was surplus agriculture, though the cities of Mohenjo-daro and
815 Harappa carried on extensive trade. The Harappan civilization steadily declined
816 after 1900 BCE, perhaps owing to ecological factors such as seismic events,
817 deforestation, salt buildup in the soil, and persistent drought, including the drying
818 up of the Sarasvati River around 2000 BCE.

819 Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 1500-500 BCE), an era
820 named for the *Vedas*, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through
821 a complex oral tradition. In that period, according to many scholars, people
822 speaking Indic languages, which are part of the larger Indo-European family of
823 languages, entered South Asia, probably by way of Iran. Gradually, Indic
824 languages, including Sanskrit, spread across northern India. They included the
825 ancestors of such modern languages as Hindi, Urdu, and Bengali. The early Indic
826 speakers were most likely animal herders. They may have arrived in India in
827 scattered bands, later intermarrying with populations perhaps ancestral to those
828 who speak Dravidian languages, such as Tamil and Telugu in southern India and
829 Sri Lanka today. In the same era, nomads who spoke Indo-Iranian languages
830 moved into Persia. Indic, Iranian, and most European languages are related.
831 There is another point of view that suggests that the language was indigenous to
832 India and spread northward, but it is a minority position.

833 Later in the Vedic period, new royal and commercial towns arose along the
834 Ganges (aka Ganga), India's second great river system. In this era, Vedic culture
835 emerged as a belief system that combined the beliefs of Indic speakers with
836 those of older populations. Teachers focus students on the question: **How did**

837 **the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?**

838 Brahmins, that is, priestly families, assumed authority over complex devotional
839 rituals, but many important sages, such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not
840 brahmins. Ancient Hindu sages (brahmins and others) expounded the idea of the
841 oneness of all living things and of Brahman as the divine principle of being. The
842 Hindu tradition is thus monistic, the idea of reality being a unitary whole.
843 Brahman, an all-pervading divine supreme reality, may be manifested in many
844 ways, including incarnation in the form of Deities. These Deities are worshipped
845 as distinct personal Gods or Goddesses, such as Vishnu who preserves the
846 world, Shiva who transforms it, and Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning. Vedic
847 teachings gradually built up a rich body of spiritual and moral teachings that
848 formed the foundation of Hinduism as it is practiced today. These teachings were
849 transmitted orally at first, and then later in written texts, the *Upanishads* and,
850 later, the *Bhagavad Gita*. Performance of duties and ceremonies, along with
851 devotion and meditation, became dimensions of the supreme quest to achieve
852 oneness with God. That fulfillment, however, demands obedience to the moral
853 law of the universe, called dharma, which also refers to performance of social
854 duties. Dharma consists of natural, universal laws that underlie every person's
855 duty towards themselves, their family, their community and nation. Success or
856 failure at existing in harmony with dharma determines how many times an
857 individual might be subject to reincarnation, or repeated death and rebirth at
858 either lower or higher positions of moral and ritual purity. Progress toward
859 spiritual realization is governed by karma, the principle of cause and effect by

860 which human actions, good and bad, affect this and future lives. Many of the
861 central practices of Hinduism today, including home and temple worship, yoga
862 and meditation, rites of passage (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for
863 saints and gurus, and, above all, a profound acceptance of religious diversity,
864 developed over this period.

865 As in all early civilizations, Indian society witnessed the development of a
866 system of social classes. Ancient Indian society formed into self-governing
867 groups, jatis, that emphasized birth as the defining criteria. Jatis initially shared
868 the same occupation and married only within the group. This system, often
869 termed caste, provided social stability and gave an identity to each community.
870 The *Vedas* also describe four main social categories, known as varnas, namely:
871 Brahmins (priests); Kshatriyas (kings and warriors); Vaishyas (merchants,
872 artisans, and farmers) and Sudras (peasants and laborers). A person belonged
873 to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by
874 birth itself. In addition, by 500 CE or earlier, there existed certain communities
875 outside the jati system, the “Untouchables,” who did the most unclean work, such
876 as cremation, disposal of dead animals, and sanitation.

877 Relations between classes came to be expressed in terms of ritual purity or
878 impurity, higher classes being purer than lower ones. This class system became
879 distinctive over the centuries for being especially complex and formal, involving
880 numerous customs and prohibitions on eating together and intermarrying that
881 kept social and occupational groups distinct from one another in daily life. Over
882 the centuries, the Indian social structure became more rigid, though perhaps not

883 more inflexible than the class divisions in other ancient civilizations. When
884 Europeans began to visit India in modern times, they used the word “caste” to
885 characterize the social system because of the sharp separation they perceived
886 between groups who did not intermarry and thus did not mix with each other.
887 Caste, however, is a term that social scientists use to describe any particularly
888 unbending social structure, for example, slave-holding society in the American
889 south before the Civil War, which can make the “caste” label offensive. Today
890 many Hindus, in India and in the United States, do not identify themselves as
891 belonging to a caste. Teachers should make clear to students that this was a
892 social and cultural structure rather than a religious belief. As in Mesopotamia and
893 Egypt, priests, rulers, and other elites used religion to justify the social hierarchy.
894 Although ancient India was a patriarchy, women had a right to their personal
895 wealth, especially jewelry, gold, and silver, but fewer property rights than men.
896 They participated equally with their husbands in religious ceremonies and festival
897 celebrations. Hinduism is the only major religion in which God is worshipped in
898 female as well as male form.

899 One text Hindus rely on for solutions to moral dilemmas is the *Ramayana*, the
900 story of Rama, an incarnation or avatar of Vishnu, who goes through many
901 struggles and adventures as he is exiled from his father’s kingdom and has to
902 fight a demonic enemy, Ravana. Rama, his wife Sita, and some other characters
903 are challenged by critical moral decisions in this epic work. The teacher might
904 select the scene in which Rama accepts his exile, or the crisis over the broken
905 promise of Sugriva, the monkey king, and then ask students: **What is the moral**

906 **dilemma here? What is the character’s dharma?** In this way, students can
907 deepen their understanding of Hinduism as they are immersed in one of ancient
908 India’s most important literary and religious texts.

909 Students now turn to the question: **How did the religion of Buddhism**
910 **support individuals, rulers, and societies?** Buddhism emerged in the sixth
911 century BCE in the moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the "Buddha".
912 Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for
913 enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering,
914 compassion, and mindfulness. Buddhism waned in India in the late first
915 millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition. Buddhist monks,
916 nuns, and merchants, however, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon),
917 Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia, where many people continue to follow it
918 today. In India, through the teachings of Mahavira, Jainism, a religion that
919 embraced the dharmic idea of ahimsa, or nonviolence, paralleled the rise of
920 Buddhism. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas
921 Gandhi’s ideas of nonviolent disobedience.

922 In the late fourth century BCE Chandragupta Maurya unified most of India
923 through conquest and diplomacy and established the Maurya Empire. Teachers
924 pose the question: **During the the Maurya Empire, how did the connections**
925 **between India and other regions of Afroeurasia increase?** Governing a
926 powerful empire with a million-man army, the Maurya dynasty maintained strong
927 diplomatic and trade connections to the Hellenistic states to the west. The
928 Maurya Empire reached its peak under the rule of Chandragupta’s grandson

929 Ashoka (268-232). Beginning his reign with military campaigns, he had a strong
930 change of heart, converted to Buddhism, and devoted the rest of his rule to
931 promoting nonviolence, family harmony, and tolerance among his subjects. The
932 Maurya Empire broke up into small states in the early second century BCE.

933

934 **The Early Civilizations of China**

- 935 • How did the environment influence the development of civilization in
936 China?
- 937 • What factors helped China unify into a single state under the Han
938 Dynasty? What social customs and government policies made the
939 centralized state so powerful?
- 940 • How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals,
941 rulers, and societies?
- 942 • How did the establishment of the Silk Road increase trade, the spread of
943 Buddhism, and the connections between China and other regions of
944 Afroeurasia?

945 In this unit students study early Chinese civilization, that emerged first in the
946 Huang He (Yellow) River valley with the Shang dynasty (ca.1750-1040 BCE) and
947 later spread south to the Yangzi River area. Students begin their study with the
948 question: **How did the environment influence the development of civilization**
949 **in China?** The Huang He could be a capricious river, exposing populations to
950 catastrophic floods. On the other hand, farmers supported dense populations and
951 early cities by cultivating the valley's loess, that is, the light, fertile soil that

952 yielded bountiful grain crops. Through lesson five of California EEI Curriculum
953 Unit, “The Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India,” students learn about
954 the importance of ecosystem goods and services to the early Chinese. Humans
955 and human communities benefit from the dynamic nature of rivers and streams in
956 ways that are essential to human life and to the functioning of our economies and
957 cultures. Building on its agriculture and natural resources, the Shang society
958 made key advances in bronze-working and written language. Some of the
959 evidence about the Shang comes from “oracle bones,” that is, records of
960 divination inscribed on animal bones. The script on the oracle bones is the direct
961 ancestor of modern Chinese characters, a logographic script that differs from the
962 alphabetic systems that developed in other parts of the world.

963 The Zhou dynasty (1122-256 BCE), the longest lasting in China’s history,
964 grew much larger than the Shang by subjecting local princes and chiefs of
965 outlying territories to imperial authority. By the eighth century BCE, however,
966 many of these subordinate officers built up their own power bases and pulled
967 away from the center, partly by perfecting iron technology to make armaments.
968 The Zhou gradually weakened, plunging China into a long period of political
969 instability and dislocation, especially during the Warring States Period, which
970 lasted nearly two centuries.

971 In those times of trouble, the scholar Confucius (551-479 BCE) lived and
972 wrote. His teachings were the basis of the philosophical system of Confucianism
973 which had a major influence on the development of Chinese government and
974 society. Students focus on the question: **How did the philosophical system of**

975 **Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?** He tried to make
976 sense of the disrupted world he saw, and he proposed ways for individuals and
977 society to achieve order and goodness. By examining selections from the
978 *Analects*, or “sayings” of Confucius, students learn that, as with Socrates and
979 Jesus, his ideas were written down by others at a later time. In Confucian
980 teachings, which were elaborated by other scholars in later centuries, good
981 people practice moderation in conduct and emotion, keep their promises, honor
982 traditional ways, respect elders, and improve themselves through education.
983 Confucius emphasized ritual, filial piety and respect for social hierarchy, and
984 promoted the dignity and authenticity of humanity. He encouraged the most
985 educated, talented, and moral men to serve the state by becoming scholar-
986 officials, which later made the government of China stronger. He also, however,
987 instructed women to play entirely subordinate roles to husbands, fathers, and
988 brothers, though some educated Chinese women produced Confucian literary
989 works.

Grade Six Classroom Example: The Impact of Confucianism
In order to help her students understand the social impact of Confucianism, Ms. Aquino asks them to read “Selections from the Confucian Analects,” available on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University in short excerpts with DBQ questions by topic. Specifically, she has students read and analyze Analects 1.2, 4.16, and 12.2, on filial piety and humaneness, excerpts from the <i>Classic of Filiality</i> , and Ban Zhao’s <i>Admonitions for Women</i> (the first

three paragraphs) written by a woman during the Han dynasty, all on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University.

Ms. Aquino first introduces the sources and explains the purpose of the reading is to help answer the question: **How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?** Students undertake close readings of each document one at a time. They attempt the first reading alone.

In the second reading, Ms. Aquino provides sentence deconstruction charts to show students the cause-and-effect structure of the compound sentences of these texts. As her students are reading, Ms. Aquino clarifies that “humaneness” refers both to good individual behavior and social order. Ms. Aquino then asks student pairs to discuss: **What is the relationship between individual good behavior and social order (or the greater good of society)?** Each pair writes down their answer and cites one piece of evidence from the reading to support their answer. Ms. Aquino then has pairs of students share out their answers and evidence, and points out that to Confucius nothing was more important to social order than the good behavior of all individuals.

In the third reading, students mark up the text, underline the positive things that a person should do or be, circle the negative things that a person should not do or be, and draw a box around any words they don’t understand. After students have gone through the first two texts, Ms. Aquino asks students to share out the words that they have underlined while the teacher records those words on the

board under the title “Men.” Then she explains that the final text, Ban Zhao’s *Admonitions*, was written by a woman for an audience of women, unlike the first two texts, which were written by men mostly for an audience of men. Students do the above close readings with the Ban Zhao text, and the teacher records the positive attributes they have underlined on the board under the title “Women.” Next student groups fill out a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the positive features for men and those for women. As a group, they decide which are the most important similarities and differences, and write a group claim to answer the question: How was the Confucian ideal behavior different for men and women?

To help English learners with academic vocabulary, Ms. Aquino gives them sentence starters as a model, such as “While under Confucianism men were supposed to _____ and women were supposed to _____, both had the responsibility to _____.” and “To maintain order in society, Confucians believed that both men and women should _____, but only men had the responsibility to _____, while women _____.” Finally, each group cites and analyzes three pieces of evidence (one from each source) on an evidence analysis chart.

CA HSS Standards: 6.6.3, 6.6.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence and Point of View 5

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: SL.6.1, L.6.5, L.6.6, RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, WHST.6-8.1, WHST.6-8.7, WHST.6-8.9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 3, 6a, 6b, 10b, 11a; ELD.PII.6.1, 6

991 Daoism was a second important philosophical tradition begun in this early
992 period. According to Chinese tradition, Laozi (Lao-tzu) was another sage who,
993 lived around the same time as Confucius and developed an alternative set of
994 teachings. Daoism emphasized simple living, shunning of ambition, harmony with
995 nature, and the possibility of a blissful afterlife. Teachers should note that the
996 Pinyin Romanization system (Laozi and Daoism) is now more widely used than
997 the Wade-Giles system (Lao-tzu and Taoism) used in the standards.

998 Next students turn to Chinese imperial government, with the questions: **What**
999 **factors helped China unify into a single state under the Han Dynasty? What**
1000 **social customs and government policies made the centralized state so**
1001 **powerful?** China's long era of division ended when Shi Huangdi (221-210 BCE),
1002 a state-builder of great energy, unified China from the Yellow River to the Yangzi
1003 River and created the Qin dynasty. In less than a dozen years, he laid the
1004 foundations of China's powerful imperial bureaucracy. He imposed peace and
1005 regularized laws. He also severely punished anyone who defied him, including
1006 Confucian scholars, and he uprooted tens of thousands of peasant men and
1007 women to build roads, dykes, palaces, the first major phase of the Great Wall,
1008 and an enormous tomb for himself. Teachers may introduce students to the
1009 excavations of this immense mausoleum, which have yielded a veritable army of
1010 life-sized terra cotta soldiers and horses. Shi Huangdi is also well known for
1011 employing scholars to standardize and simplify the Chinese writing system,
1012 which provided the empire with a more uniform system of communication.

1013 Shi Huangdi's Qin Dynasty soon fell to the longer-lasting Han dynasty (206

1014 BCE-220 CE), which unified even more territory and placed central government
1015 in the hands of highly educated bureaucrats. Immersed in Confucian teachings,
1016 these scholar-officials promoted the idea that peace in society requires people to
1017 think and do the right thing as mapped out by tradition. Harmony in the family
1018 was seen by Confucians as the key to harmony in the world. Ethical principles
1019 should uplift the state. Rulers should govern righteously because when they do
1020 they enjoy the trust of their subjects. The benevolent ruler demonstrates that he
1021 possesses divine approval, or the “mandate of heaven,” an idea that first
1022 emerged in Zhou dynasty times. But if the monarch is despotic, he risks losing
1023 that mandate, bringing misfortune on his people and justifiable rebellion.
1024 Promotion of Confucianism helped create a strong, stable government and social
1025 order in China. All educated men (from the emperor on down) were trained to
1026 serve the state and act morally for the good of the people, rather than to seek
1027 profit. The highest social rank (under the imperial family) was to be a scholar-
1028 official, rather than a warrior, priest, or merchant.

1029 In the first century CE, Han officials governed about 60 million people, the
1030 great majority of them productive farmers. Major technological advances of the
1031 era include new iron farm tools, the collar harness, the wheelbarrow, silk
1032 manufacturing, and the cast-iron plow, which cultivators used to open extensive
1033 new rice-growing lands in southern China. Han power declined in the second
1034 century CE, as regional warlords increasingly broke away from centralized
1035 authority, leading to some 400 years of Chinese disunity. However, the ideal that
1036 China should be unified was never lost, and later dynasties modeled themselves

1037 after the Han, as they united the whole territory under one centralized state,
1038 governed by Confucian principles using scholar-officials, and tried to keep the
1039 Mandate of Heaven.

1040 The Han Dynasty also established important connections with other cultures,
1041 as students investigate with the question: **How did the establishment of the**
1042 **Silk Road increase trade, the spread of Buddhism, and the connections**
1043 **between China and other regions of Afroeurasia?** The spread of the Han
1044 empire to the north and west, concern about nomadic raiders from the north led
1045 to seek contact with societies to the west. At the end of the second century BCE,
1046 the Han Chinese empire and the Parthian Persian empire exchanged
1047 ambassadors. Chinese ambassadors (and merchants) gave gifts of silk cloth to
1048 the Parthians, Kushans, and other Central Asian states. Quickly realizing the
1049 value of silk, merchants from Persia, the Kushan and Maurya empires, and other
1050 Central Asian states began to trade regularly with Chinese merchants. Caravans
1051 of luxury goods regularly traveled the overland trade route, “the Silk Road” (really
1052 a number of routes, trails and roads) that crossed the steppes north of the
1053 Himalayas. Maritime commerce along the chain of seas that ran from the East
1054 China Sea to the Red Sea also developed rapidly in that era. Students outline the
1055 land and sea trade routes on a map, preferably a map of Afroeurasia, so that
1056 they can see that connections now spread all the way across the middle of
1057 Afroeurasia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Ideas also spread along the trade
1058 routes. In the climate of insecurity after the fall of the Han empire, missionaries
1059 began spreading Buddhism along the Silk Road to China. Students analyze the

1060 style of carvings of Buddhas and paintings from Dunhuang and Yungang which
1061 combine Indian, central Asian, and Chinese artistic influences.

1062

1063 **The Development of Rome**

1064 • What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Republic? Why
1065 did the Roman Republic fall?

1066 • How did the Romans advance the concept of citizenship?

1067 • How did the environment influence the expansion of Rome and its
1068 integrated trade networks?

1069 • How did other societies (the Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China,
1070 Parthian Persia) influence and affect the Romans?

1071 The final unit on Rome presents a challenge to teachers because it is also
1072 taught in seventh grade. The sixth-grade teacher emphasizes the development of
1073 the Roman Republic and the transition to the Roman Empire, focusing on the
1074 themes of environment, political systems and citizenship, and increasing trade
1075 and connections between societies. The teacher also uses this unit to draw
1076 together major themes from the course by comparing Rome to earlier and
1077 contemporaneous societies and provide closure to the course. The teacher
1078 begins with the influences of the Greeks and Hellenistic culture on Rome, with
1079 this question: **How did other societies (the Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han**
1080 **China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect the Romans?** Originally a small
1081 farming community on the central west coast of the Italian peninsula, Rome was
1082 on the edge of the prosperous eastern Mediterranean sphere dominated by

1083 Greeks, Egyptians, and peoples of the Levant. The Roman Republic grew in the
1084 Hellenistic environment and drew on the trade, technology, and culture of the
1085 Greeks. Through military action, diplomacy, and the practice of granting
1086 citizenship to conquered peoples, the Romans were able to unite the entire
1087 coastal area around the Mediterranean into a single empire and to extend that
1088 empire into Europe. Roman culture absorbed much of the Greek and Hellenistic
1089 traditions. Rome’s own innovations included the arch, concrete, technologically
1090 sophisticated road building, and a body of laws that has had immense influence
1091 on legal systems in Europe, the United States, and other parts of the world.

1092 Students probe more deeply into Roman politics with this question: **How did**
1093 **the Romans advance the concept of citizenship?** Citizenship, republican
1094 institutions, and the rule of law are major Roman contributions to civics.
1095 According to Roman tradition, Vergil’s *Aeneid*, and the works of the historian
1096 Livy, Romulus, a descendant of the Trojan Aeneas, founded the city in 753 BCE.
1097 Kings first ruled Rome, but a republic replaced the monarchy in 509 BCE. The
1098 Romans adopted a distinct form of democracy, based on the Athenian model,
1099 with legislative power resting not with the entire mass of citizens, but with their
1100 representatives. Even though the political system experienced many problems as
1101 Rome grew in size, Roman culture provided very stable idea of citizenship.
1102 Whereas the ancient Greeks valued competition and individual achievement, the
1103 highest virtue to the Romans was duty to their families, to the state, and to the
1104 gods. They idealized the virtue of public service, as depicted in the story of
1105 Cincinnatus, who according to Roman sources was living on a farm when he was

1106 chosen to serve as dictator during a hostile invasion in 458 BCE. Cincinnatus
1107 gave up his power after the defeat of the enemy to return to his simple life on the
1108 farm. His selfless devotion to public service inspired later leaders such as
1109 George Washington. Just as Confucian teachings on the ideal of government
1110 service strengthened Chinese government and society, the Roman ideal of the
1111 duty of a citizen to the state gave considerable stability to the state and social
1112 order.

1113 The legend of Cincinnatus also emphasizes that the duty of a Roman to the
1114 state was often to fight. The Roman military was large, tough, and powerful.
1115 Environmental factors also influenced Rome’s expansion, which students
1116 analyze with this focus question: **How did the environment influence the**
1117 **expansion of Rome and its integrated trade networks?** During the Early
1118 Republic (509-264 BCE), the Romans took over the entire Italian peninsula,
1119 whose fertile valleys and coastal plains produced bountiful harvests of wheat,
1120 wine, olive oil, and wool. Rome defeated its nearby neighbors in a series of wars
1121 and partially incorporated them into the young state, which ensured a steady
1122 supply of soldiers for the growing army. Expansion around the Mediterranean rim
1123 began in the third century BCE, when Rome defeated the maritime state of
1124 Carthage in the Punic Wars. By devastating Carthage, Rome gained thousands
1125 of square miles of wheat land in Sicily and North Africa, as well as a windfall of
1126 Spanish silver. In the decades before and after the turn of the millennium, Rome
1127 also conquered the Hellenistic kingdoms of Greece and Egypt.

1128 As Rome grew in size, the republican government that had worked for it as a
1129 small city-state became more and more overwhelmed. The teacher introduces
1130 the focus question: **What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman**
1131 **Republic? Why did the Roman Republic fall?** Rome’s constitution distributed
1132 power among elected officials, the citizen body, and the oligarchic senate, but in
1133 practice decision-making lay with the senate, especially with its most influential
1134 members. One problem was that only certain elite citizens, called the patricians,
1135 had access to the senate and thus to political power. Other citizens, called the
1136 plebeians, challenged the elite patricians in violent conflicts. Plebeians finally
1137 won legal protections against patrician power and access to high political offices.
1138 However, as the Roman army conquered the entire Mediterranean basin,
1139 massive wealth from trade and spoils, as well as large numbers of slaves, poured
1140 into Italy. This increased the divide between wealthy (senators, patricians, and
1141 some plebeians) and poor (most plebeians, conquered foreigners, and slaves)
1142 and put great strain on the Roman political system.

1143 By the Late Republic (133-31 BCE), political competition between senators
1144 became intense and increasingly violent. A succession of ambitious generals
1145 used the loyal armies to challenge each other and, increasingly, the authority of
1146 the entire senate, which the statesman and author Cicero symbolized. This
1147 discord culminated in the dictatorship of Julius Caesar and, under his successor
1148 Augustus (31 BCE-14 CE), in the establishment of what was in essence a
1149 monarchy and a new ruling dynasty. Augustus refused the title of king and
1150 pretended to defer to the senate, but his control over Rome was complete.

1151 Rulers afterwards took the title emperor. For much of the first two centuries CE,
1152 the Roman Empire enjoyed political and territorial stability, and the provinces
1153 benefited from new roads, a standardized currency, economic growth, and
1154 peaceful conditions.

1155 Returning to the question: **How did the Romans advance the concept of**
1156 **citizenship?** students evaluate the Roman Republic. The Roman republic
1157 provided a model for future democratic institutions and the development of civic
1158 culture and citizenship, in the early U.S. and other modern nations. Students
1159 consider ways in which modern writers, artists, and political leaders have
1160 appropriated Greek and Roman ideals, values, and cultural forms as worthy
1161 models for civil society. Besides the borrowed words (senate and capitol, for
1162 example), architectural styles, and rhetorical models, later democratic states
1163 were inspired by the heroic civic models of Cincinnatus, the Horatius brothers,
1164 and Cicero, who defended the state and its republican institutions even when it
1165 was not in their self-interest. The struggle of Roman groups to widen political
1166 participation to the plebeians, to control the growing empire without allowing
1167 individuals to grow too wealthy or too powerful, and to harness the power of the
1168 military leaders to the service of the state, also offered sobering examples of how
1169 republicanism could be undermined by social conflict, individual self-interest, and
1170 military power. The teacher asks students why Romans allowed Julius and then
1171 Augustus Caesar to take over the republic. Both were successful military leaders
1172 who delivered peace after a long period of civil war. **Did the Romans give up**
1173 **freedom for order and peace?**

1174 However, even after Rome became an empire, the idea of citizenship
1175 remained strong. Wealthy Romans regularly contributed their personal funds to
1176 build civic structures, fund entertainments for the general public, and improve city
1177 life. The teacher has students analyze visuals from Pompeii of dedication
1178 plaques and inscriptions that are evidence of Roman civic contributions. **Why did**
1179 **wealthy Romans pay for these public structures and events? What did**
1180 **citizenship mean to them? How did the Romans advance the concept of**
1181 **citizenship?** The teacher connects the Roman example to the responsibilities of
1182 students as citizens of the U.S. and to opportunities for service learning projects.

1183 Students make a social hierarchy pyramid of Roman society and recognize
1184 that by the Late Republic, Rome had a huge population of slaves. The teacher
1185 has them compare and contrast the social hierarchy of Rome and other earlier
1186 societies. Roman fathers had power over their families and dependents. Women
1187 who were not enslaved could achieve citizenship, though with several
1188 restrictions. They could neither attend the popular assemblies that had certain
1189 legislative powers nor serve as elected magistrates. They could, however, make
1190 wills, sue for divorce, circulate openly in public, and hold certain religious offices.
1191 Also, wives and mothers in wealthy families sometimes exerted great influence
1192 on public decisions. The teacher emphasizes that all the urban societies studied
1193 in the course, like most premodern societies, were patriarchies, with small
1194 wealthy and powerful elite groups and very large poor populations who worked at
1195 farming. Unlike Han China, however, much of the farming in Rome was done by
1196 slaves.

1197 Finally students investigate the question: **How did other societies (the**
1198 **Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect**
1199 **the Romans?** Rome at its height was at the center of a web of trade routes by
1200 land and sea. Huge plantations worked by slave labor produced grain to feed the
1201 Roman cities. Uniting the diverse environments of Egypt, North Africa, Syria,
1202 Anatolia, Greece and Europe gave Romans access to vast resources. Roman
1203 roads united the empire, and trade routes by land and sea connected it with
1204 eastern Asia. Wealthy Romans dressed in silk imported from China and jewels
1205 imported from India. Students create maps of the trade routes across Afroeurasia
1206 that connected the Roman and Han empires with the Persians and Central
1207 Asians as middlemen. The teacher has student pairs examine a physical map of
1208 Afroeurasia and a map of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent. He or she
1209 asks the students to predict where the Romans would expand next. Student pairs
1210 write down a prediction and give geographical evidence to support it. This
1211 analysis shows that the Romans had actually conquered all the desirable land
1212 around them, with the exception of Persia. To the north was a cold land of forests
1213 and barbarians, to the south and southeast were deserts, to the west, the ocean.
1214 The teacher points out that this presented huge problems to Rome, which they
1215 will study in seventh grade.

1216 The Romans could not expand to the east because they could not defeat the
1217 Persian empire, first under the Parthians and then under the Sasanians. In the
1218 first century BCE, Roman attacked the Parthians from their base in Syria. This
1219 resulted in a catastrophic military defeat for Rome and confirmed the Parthian

1220 empire as Rome’s chief rival for control over Mesopotamia. The Parthian and
1221 Sasanian Persian emperors promoted the religion of Zoroastrianism to
1222 strengthen the power of their state and build up a national identity. Fighting
1223 continued between the two empires along the border in a bitter conflict. However,
1224 religious ideas and trade products spread back and forth between the two
1225 enemies. Many Romans began to follow Mithraism, a religion from Persia and
1226 the east. Christianity spread back and forth across the Roman-Persian border.