

Harappan Civilization

Background

Around the same time that Mesopotamia and Egypt developed civilizations, another civilization emerged in the Indus River valley region. Archaeologists have discovered that they had a written language consisting of at least 400 symbols. Unfortunately, no one has been able to decode this language. Therefore, we must speculate about what the culture may have been like based on material evidence. The following are some of the pieces of evidence that historians have to go on.

Directions

In your groups, discuss the evidence and record what you can infer about Harappan civilization from each one. Then complete the tasks on the next page.

EVIDENCE	INFERENCE
Bricks found at three of the major sites of cities are all uniform in their size and shape	
They created thousands of seals with animals and writing many of these seals have been found in Mesopotamia	
At Mohenjo-Daro, an artificial mound was discovered 50 feet high, surrounded by a brick wall. Some of the rooms were used for ammunition. A large bath was connected, as well as storage space for grain.	
Cities reflect urban planning. They are all laid out with major roads running north and south.	
No palaces for royalty have been discovered.	
Houses are often 30 feet square and may have been more than one storey. They had indoor toilets and showers with underground sewer systems.	
Many toys and games have been found	
Some pots, weapons and a few sacrificed animals have been	

found in graves.	
At one of the major cities, Lothal, docks were constructed that could adjust with the tides	
A bead factory was discovered over 5,000 square feet of building space	
Later excavation shows that cities started to allow garbage to build up in the streets	
Some skeletons were found in dead end streets in Mohenjo-Daro, in positions that suggest that they were running or hiding.	
Some city walls were 40 feet thick and 35 feet tall	
Some later houses were not built as sturdily as the original houses they appeared to be built up on platforms	
Lots of silt has been deposited on the sites of some of the cities.	
Mesopotamian literature refers to a land to the east, where they traded wool, leather, and olive oil.	
Some fire alters have been discovered.	

Concluding Activity

1) After analyzing the above evidence, describe what we can speculate about Harappan civilization. Organize your answers according to the 5 AP World History Themes.

Theme 1: Interactions Between Humans and the Environment
Theme 2: Development and Interaction of Cultures
Theme 3: State-Building, Expansion and Conflict
Theme 4: Creation, Expansion and Interaction of Economic Systems
Theme 5: Development and Transformation of Social Structures

2) Then, write a plausible narrative about what happened to this civilization.