



# Ancient History

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A Literature Approach *for* Senior High

BY REBECCA MANOR

# ANCIENT HISTORY

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A LITERATURE APPROACH TO THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION

SAMPLE

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# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

## GET THE MOST OUT OF THE STUDY BY FOLLOWING THESE POINTERS AND TIPS!

**Welcome to the fascinating ancient world.** This curriculum is your guide through a study that will encompass the rise of civilization; the intriguing worlds of ancient Sumer, Egypt, Greece, China, India, and Rome; and the fascinating people who shaped these time periods. We will be covering nearly 4,500 years of history—the period from 4000 BC to around 476 AD. This is a lot of history to cover in one school year, so this guide is here to help! The following is designed to make your study easier and more enjoyable.

**Grade Level and Overview:** First, this is a one-year study geared for high school students. This curriculum is designed for independent student use but it is highly recommended that the parent follow along as much as possible. I also recommend that you note the content warnings throughout the guide. Doing this creates a learning environment that encourages and develops a child's natural curiosity and allows an atmosphere of inquiry to develop. Second, this is a study guide and is meant to be just that—a guide. Do not feel unduly bound to complete each step, do every activity, and check out every recommended title from the library. Everything in this guide is meant to be a help to you, not a burden. Every homeschool family is unique, and what works for one may not work for another. While the steps included in each lesson are designed to make teaching history using literature as easy as possible, you may find that you would rather do oral narrations and skip the notebook steps. You may want to skip the internet links and search for more books at the library. Do what works for you. And don't be afraid to try activities you may not expect your students to enjoy.

**Mature Content:** Please note that as this is a high school level study, I am presuming that students know about sex and are aware that history is often violent and brutal. Content notes have been provided for material that may be offensive, but nothing in this guide or the recommended literature, documentaries, and resources is gratuitously sexual or violent. The existence of prostitution, sexual violence, and horrific human exploitation are historical realities that cannot be ignored. To present a sanitized version of history not only does harm to those victimized by history, but it also diminishes our appreciation of the comfort that we enjoy, which is often the result of the sacrifices of others. As a Christian, I believe that ignoring the clear brokenness of the human condition also diminishes my desire for the justice and mercy made available by Jesus. We will be learning about brutal times in this study. We will also be learning about the faith systems that call us to more than brute survival and exploitation of others. Augustine, an early Christian church father, observed that all truth is God's truth, and it is in this tradition that we will be approaching ancient religious beliefs, separating the good from what is harmful. We will also study the rise of Christianity, gaining an appreciation for its unique place in history, the rich traditions of Judaism that it is based on, and its quick spread throughout the world.

**Pace:** If you would like to complete this study in one academic year, work through three lessons per week. If there are a few weeks when you do not accomplish this goal, don't worry; we've built in some flexibility by spreading the study over 108 lessons, so you can incorporate a few weeks where you only need to complete two lessons. Save these for busy holiday seasons or weeks when you'll be traveling. Additionally, do not be bound by a pre-set schedule. One of the greatest gifts of homeschooling is the flexibility and freedom you have to follow your student's interest down various rabbit trails. This teacher guide is designed to be a tool, not a taskmaster. Use it to fit your schedule and homeschool style. Each lesson has reading assignments, discussion or comprehension questions, activities, and more.

**Hands-On Activities:** At the beginning of each section, we've provided suggestions for hands-on activities. Spread these throughout the appropriate section as desired. If your family loves crafts, you may end up doing them all. If your family would rather spend more time reading, there are also lists of additional suggested books to check out at your library. Make the study work for you.

**Notebooks:** Each student should have a notebook that he or she is comfortable working in. All of the student's written work, vocabulary lists, maps, and so on will be stored there. Reserve 10 pages at the end for a glossary of vocabulary terms. Maps can be pasted into the notebook or stored in page shields if you use binders.

**Vocabulary Lists:** Although we all have dictionaries at our fingertips (or phones!), it is very important that students expand their knowledge of the written and spoken word. Not only is a broad and varied vocabulary a tool and asset in communicating, but it also opens worlds that would otherwise be closed to the less verbally proficient. Additionally, it is excellent preparatory work for the SAT and ACT and other various academic evaluations. Many of the books used in this study contain arcane or old-fashioned words. In order to ensure that the student understands the material he or she is reading, vocabulary lists have been provided. It is strongly suggested that the student look up each word in a physical (not virtual) dictionary and write out the definition. Due to the fact that some words have multiple uses, a brief definition of each vocabulary word is provided at the back of this guide. This should be used for the teacher's reference and not the student's. When I was younger, I spent many hours writing out vocabulary lists, wondering when I would ever use words like pulchritude, but as an adult, I am grateful to continually reap the benefits of those long hours many years later.

**Maps and Geography:** You will notice that there are a lot of map assignments, and it is highly suggested that each student have a large blank world map. These can easily be purchased online, at school supply stores, or at [bfbooks.com](http://bfbooks.com). Also, check out campus bookstores, as they often have inexpensive maps. For those of you who want to make your own, purchase a large (at least 2' x 3') piece of cardstock. As this will be used throughout the course, the thicker the cardstock the better!

**Comprehension and Discussion Questions:** As the student reads through the literature, he or she should work on answering the comprehension and discussion questions. Answers are provided in the answer key for the comprehension questions, but it will be helpful to use the answers merely as a guide. Different perspectives provide interest and color to the study, and relying too heavily on the provided answers may cause frustration. History is open to interpretations, and it is important to learn this fact. The discussion questions do not have answers, as these are designed to develop the reasoning abilities of the student. The ability to converse on topics of history, religion, and geopolitical and social events is a skill that students are developing at this point in their education as they formulate their own viewpoint. Encourage this growth by affirming their observations and asking probing questions. This is one of the most enjoyable aspects of studying history, and it takes the subject from its dusty and dry reputation and makes it come alive. Encourage your students to think of historical figures as real people with unique beliefs and perspectives, and suddenly, history is no longer a collection of dates and facts. Rather, it is a fascinating story of the people who came before us. For those teachers who find themselves relying heavily on the answer key, do not be afraid to tear it out and throw it away! You do not want to squelch your child's learning process by relying too heavily on the prescribed answers.

**Websites:** Throughout the study, you will find websites provided for further information and activities. These websites have all been viewed and deemed appropriate and accurate at the time of printing. If there is potentially objectionable material, a note has been added to the assignment. With the ever-changing nature of the internet, we cannot guarantee that the websites will still be available. If you visit a link that is no longer working, it is often worth digging a bit deeper to see if the site has moved. Simply search for key points in the original address, and more often than not, you'll find the information. Always use the internet with care and under adult supervision. Also, encourage students to view information on the internet with a critical eye! While it is a fantastic resource, the web is not always accurate, and it is a great life skill to know how to determine if the information viewed is verifiable. For the purposes of simplification, some links have been shortened. Throughout this guide, you will notice article titles for specific websites. While it may seem that the capitalization is in error, the article titles are duplicated as they appear on the websites. Simply type in the article title as it appears to find the correct information.

**Additional Recommended Titles:** At the beginning of each section, you will find a list of additional recommended books to check out from your local library. None of these titles are required, but they are provided in order to help you sift through the hundreds of books available on the many topics covered in this study. Feel no obligation to include any of the library books; you'll have plenty of information from the required reading. However, if you have a voracious reader, it is our hope that the suggested titles will prove helpful.

**Do I Have to Do Everything in Every Lesson?** No! Again, this is a tool, not a taskmaster. I've included additional recommended titles, lists of hands-on activities, comprehension questions, report topics, websites to visit, and much more. These are all provided to make your job easier and save you time. But they are not required. They're here to help you expand the literature, pull out historical content, and provide structure and guidance, but you can skip steps that just do not work for your family.

Lastly, share your work on social media and tag us at [#beautifulfeetbooks](https://twitter.com/beautifulfeetbooks). *We love seeing your creativity!*

# THOUGHTS ON TEACHING MYTHOLOGY

BY REBECCA BERG MANOR

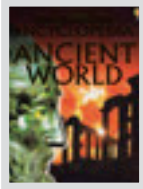
## CHRISTIANITY AND THE VALUE OF MYTHOLOGY

In my two-plus decades of working with homeschooling families, I am often asked about the value of teaching children mythology. Some are asking because they wonder about the practical value. Others ask because, as Christians, they do not want to expose their children to contradictory belief systems. I admire these parents and educators for thinking critically about how and what they teach their students and children. Having considered their questions, I believe that especially as Christians, we can gain immense perspective and value from studying the mythologies of the ancient world. Throughout history, people have asked the fundamental questions of life: Why are we here? How did we get here? Today, we seek to answer those questions with scientific discoveries, patterns, and explanations. Despite the fact that studies are released every day and often contradict one another, we as a culture have put so much faith in science that it has affected what we eat, how we raise our children, and how we interact with our family and friends. In the ancient world, people created religious systems to answer the very questions we still ask today. History shows us that human nature is pretty much the same as it has always been. No matter what is in vogue at a particular moment, we are still very broken creations who make wise and foolish decisions, are often driven by fear, and have brief moments of great love and nobility. One essential element of any historical study is religion. As I have been reading through the mythology and religions of Egypt, Sumer, Mesopotamia, India, China, Greece, Rome, and other ancient and modern cultures, I am struck by the timeless lessons each culture has to teach me, a modern Christian living in the Information Age. Mythology has value in increasing wonder and humility as well as growing a deep appreciation for the uniqueness of Christianity and its forgiving, loving, and self-sacrificing savior.

Children today, maybe now more than ever, need their natural sense of wonder to be nurtured and cultivated. In the face of a scientific assault on mystery, we can battle back with stories of hilariously corrupt gods and goddesses interfering in the affairs of earthbound humans and creating chaos. We can wonder at the fantastical worlds of the Greek pantheon of gods and goddesses and guess at what inspired such intricate tales and stories. We can question the Egyptian obsession with death. And most importantly, we can look at these demanding, selfish, and amusing mythic creatures and see where the truth of Christianity brought unique freedom and grace to the ancient world. One's appreciation for the sacrifice of Jesus cannot be fully colored without an understanding of the way he stood in contrast to the gods of Egypt, Greece, Rome, India, and Sumer. These were gods who demanded constant sacrifices, the blood of children, and gifts of wealth—gods whose capriciousness was always threatening. Throughout this study, we will encounter stories steeped in the beliefs of ancient mythology. In them, we will see people making faithful sacrifices to carved images that occupy places of honor in their homes. We will see people pleading before deaf gods, fearing their judgment and anger. We will also encounter the fickle gods in stories from Homer and Greek mythology. These provide colorful portraits of "divine" beings who are decidedly earthly in their conniving, competitive, and cantankerous ways. Even more important, they show the ways people long ago tried to answer the questions we're still asking! And in the midst of this ancient world of myth and suspicion, war and conquest, a little babe was born to a poverty-stricken couple in an occupied land where no one had the rights of citizenship. The contrast between the birth of Jesus and the birth of the Greek and Egyptian gods could not be greater. In the ancient world, there were specific qualities of leadership that were admired: having wisdom, age, strength, wealth, and good fortune, as well as being male, a master, and handsome. We know from scripture that Jesus had none of these qualities except that he was a man—a reputedly unattractive one at that—and a man whose wisdom was viewed as foolishness. And so into the world where gods were strong, handsome, wealthy, and powerful, Jesus enters as a poor Jew without even the right to vote. He teaches of a God who does not demand the blood of children but sacrifices his own son. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection changed the world, and one cannot comprehend how shocking his life and ministry were without understanding the belief systems of the world into which he was born. His life is captivating in its own right, but within a complex understanding of the ancient world, it becomes downright incredible.

When compared to our modern age obsession with scientific formulas and discoveries, it's easy to think of ourselves as more evolved, more sophisticated, or simply smarter than the ancients. But as one scientific study contradicts another and we're thrown about on the waves of "discovery," it's humbling to remember how, just like our ancient ancestors all over the world, we are prone to put our faith in anything but the one true God. Throughout history, we see that he is unchangeable, faithful, and firm. Mythology and history remind us of this truth, and I can think of no greater value of any study than to be led back to the one who loves our souls despite our constant foolishness and wandering ways.

## REQUIRED LITERATURE



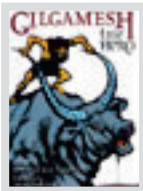
***The Usborne Internet-Linked Encyclopedia of the Ancient World***  
 edited by Bingham, Chandler, Chisholm, Harvey, Miles, Reid, and Taplin

This lavishly illustrated encyclopedia follows the dramatic history of the world's early civilizations, from the first farmers of the Middle East to the rise of mighty empires in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. Stunning photographs and detailed reconstructions create a vivid picture of life in the ancient world, while the comprehensive fact finders include a time chart, who's who notes, and lots more about gods and goddesses, mythology, and details of recent archaeological finds.



***Ancient History Timeline***  
 published by Beautiful Feet Books

Ranging from the invention of written language to the fall of Rome in 476 AD, this timeline features 28 dated illustrations to help your student learn the colorful events of ancient times. Well-known figures such as Abraham, Hammurabi, King Tut, Homer, Pythagoras, Cleopatra, Julius Caesar, and many others take their place in relation to great historical events like the building of the Great Wall of China, the birth of Christ, the eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and the calculation of the circumference of the earth! Designed to aid students in understanding the chronology of historical events, the timeline will be a useful teaching tool as well as a fun project.



***Gilgamesh the Hero***  
 by Geraldine McCaughrean

This is one of the oldest stories in the world, and it's about things that still matter to us today: friendship, fame, courage, and happiness. Gilgamesh and Enkidu are friends—best friends. Together, they can work wonders, fight monsters, brave earthquakes, and travel the world! But waiting in the dark is the one enemy they can never overcome. *Gilgamesh the Hero* is a story that will linger in the imagination long after the book has been put down.



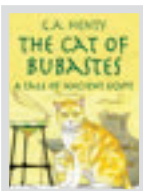
***Tales of Ancient Egypt***  
 by Roger Lancelyn Green

These stories include the great myths of Amun-Ra, who created all the creatures in the world; of Isis, searching the waters for her dead husband, Osiris; of the Bennu Bird and the Book of Thoth. But there are also tales told for pleasure about magic, treasure, and adventure—even the first-ever Cinderella story.



***Mara, Daughter of the Nile***  
 by Eloise Jarvis McGraw

This compelling story of adventure, romance, and intrigue, set in ancient Egypt, was written by the three-time Newbery Honor and Edgar Award-winning author Eloise Jarvis McGraw. Mara is a proud and beautiful slave girl who yearns for freedom in ancient Egypt, under the rule of Queen Hatshepsut. Mara is not like other slaves; she can read and write, as well as speak the language of Babylonian. To barter for her freedom, she finds herself playing the dangerous role of spy for two arch enemies—each of whom supports a contender for the throne of Egypt.



***The Cat of Bubastes: A Tale of Ancient Egypt***  
 by G. A. Henty

Chebron, the young son of an Egyptian high priest, and Amuba, a young slave in the boy's household, are close friends, but their lives are greatly altered when Chebron accidentally kills a cat, an animal held sacred by the ancient Egyptians. Forced to flee for their safety, the boys and their companions begin a long and dangerous journey. A thrilling adventure story, this is also a tale packed with historical facts.

## REQUIRED LITERATURE



### *Hittite Warrior*

by Joanne Williamson

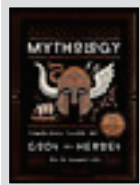
When Uriah Tarhund's Hittite home is destroyed by invading Greeks, his dying father tells him to go seek a Canaanite named Sisera: "He will help you. For my sake." When Uriah reaches Judea and saves a young boy from being sacrificed to Molech, he is given succor for a time by the Hebrews. Later, he finds Sisera and joins him in the war against these same people. When the Canaanites are defeated, the young Hittite has the opportunity to come to peace with himself, the Hebrew people, and their God.



### *The Days of Elijah*

by John Noble

Elijah is a young prophet studying the Torah when the soldiers of Queen Jezebel burn his school and massacre his teachers. He barely escapes but finds himself on the run, hunted by Queen Jezebel, who is attempting to stamp out the worship of the Hebrew God in Israel and replace it with the worship of Baal. As the queen's soldiers close in on him, Elijah discovers a little-known promise in the Scroll of Deuteronomy and prays for something impossible—that God would turn the skies to bronze and stop the rain on the kingdom that has abandoned him. And God says yes. As drought and famine grip the cloudless land of Israel, God tells Elijah to hide and sends him to the land of Tyre to a widow and her son who are on the edge of starvation. In Tyre, Elijah finds darkness at the heart of the city, a darkness that threatens to consume Israel next. But even if he survives, will Israel listen to his warning?



### *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*

by Edith Hamilton

Edith Hamilton's *Mythology* succeeds like no other book in bringing to life for the modern reader the Greek, Roman, and Norse myths that are the keystone of Western culture. These stories of gods and heroes have inspired human creativity from antiquity to the present. We follow the drama of the Trojan War and the wanderings of Odysseus. We hear the tales of Jason and the Golden Fleece, Cupid and Psyche, and mighty King Midas. We discover the origins of the names of the constellations. And we recognize reference points for countless works for art, literature, and cultural inquiry.



### *Black Ships Before Troy*

by Rosemary Sutcliff

As the gods and goddesses of Olympus scheme, the ancient world is thrown into turmoil when Helen, the most beautiful woman in all of Greece, is stolen away by her Trojan love. Inflamed by jealousy, the Greek king seeks lethal vengeance and sends his black warships to descend on the city of Troy. In the siege that follows, history's greatest heroes, from Ajax to Achilles to Odysseus, are forged in combat, and the brutal costs of passion, pride, and revenge must be paid. In the end, the whims of the gods, the cunning of the warriors, and a great wooden horse will decide who emerges victorious.



### *The Art of War*

by Sun Tzu

Preserved in China for more than 2,000 years before it was brought to the West by the French, this compact little book is widely regarded as the oldest military treatise in the world. Rumored to have been used by Napoleon in his campaigns to conquer Europe, it today retains much of its original merit. American officers read it closely during World War II. The Japanese army studied the work for decades, and many 20th-century Chinese officers are said to have known the book by heart.

## REQUIRED LITERATURE



***The Ramayana: A Shortened Modern Prose Version of the Indian Epic***  
by R. K. Narayan

A sweeping tale of abduction, battle, and courtship played out in a universe of deities and demons, the Ramayana is familiar to virtually every Indian. Although the Sanskrit original was composed by Valmiki around the fourth century BC, poets have produced countless versions in different languages. Here, drawing on the work of an 11th-century poet called Kamban, Narayan employs the skills of a master novelist to recreate the excitement he found in the original. A luminous saga made accessible to new generations of readers, the Ramayana can be enjoyed for its thrilling tale of an ancient conflict.



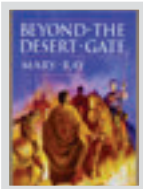
***Caesar's Gallic War***  
by Olivia Coolidge

This is an excellent retelling of Caesar's Commentaries on the Gallic War, written as historical fiction. Reading this book will give you an accurate account of the Roman conquest of Gaul. Get to know Caesar, his generals, his allies, and his courageous opponent Vercingetorix, as well as the battles, defeats, and victories.



***Julius Caesar (Folger Shakespeare Library)***  
by William Shakespeare

Shakespeare may have written Julius Caesar as the first of his plays to be performed at the Globe, in 1599. For it, he turned to a key event in Roman history: Caesar's death at the hands of friends and fellow politicians. Renaissance writers disagreed over the assassination, seeing Brutus, a leading conspirator, as either hero or villain. Shakespeare's play keeps this debate alive. This authoritative edition includes extensive notes and other helpful tools.



***Beyond the Desert Gate***  
by Mary Ray

Palestine, first century AD—the Jews have revolted against Roman occupation. The 10 Greek cities of Palestine—the Decapolis—want only to continue their peaceful trading existence, but they find themselves caught in the middle of the uprisings. Apollodorus, a merchant of Philadelphia, takes a risk and rescues a man whom a Roman patrol has left to die in the desert. When Apollodorus is killed by robbers, his three sons are left almost penniless and must each find a way for themselves. Philo, the youngest, is befriended by Xenos, the man saved from the desert, who has lost his memory. From him, the boy learns the art of the scribe, and together, they try to find their identity—one from the past, the other for the future. This is a serious story of an important time in history.



***The Eagle of the Ninth***  
by Rosemary Sutcliff

The Ninth Legion marched into the mists of northern Britain—and it was never seen again. Four thousand men disappeared, and their eagle standard was lost. It's a mystery that's never been solved—until now! Marcus has to find out what happened to his father, who led the legion. He sets out into the unknown on a quest so dangerous that nobody expects him to return.

PART ONE

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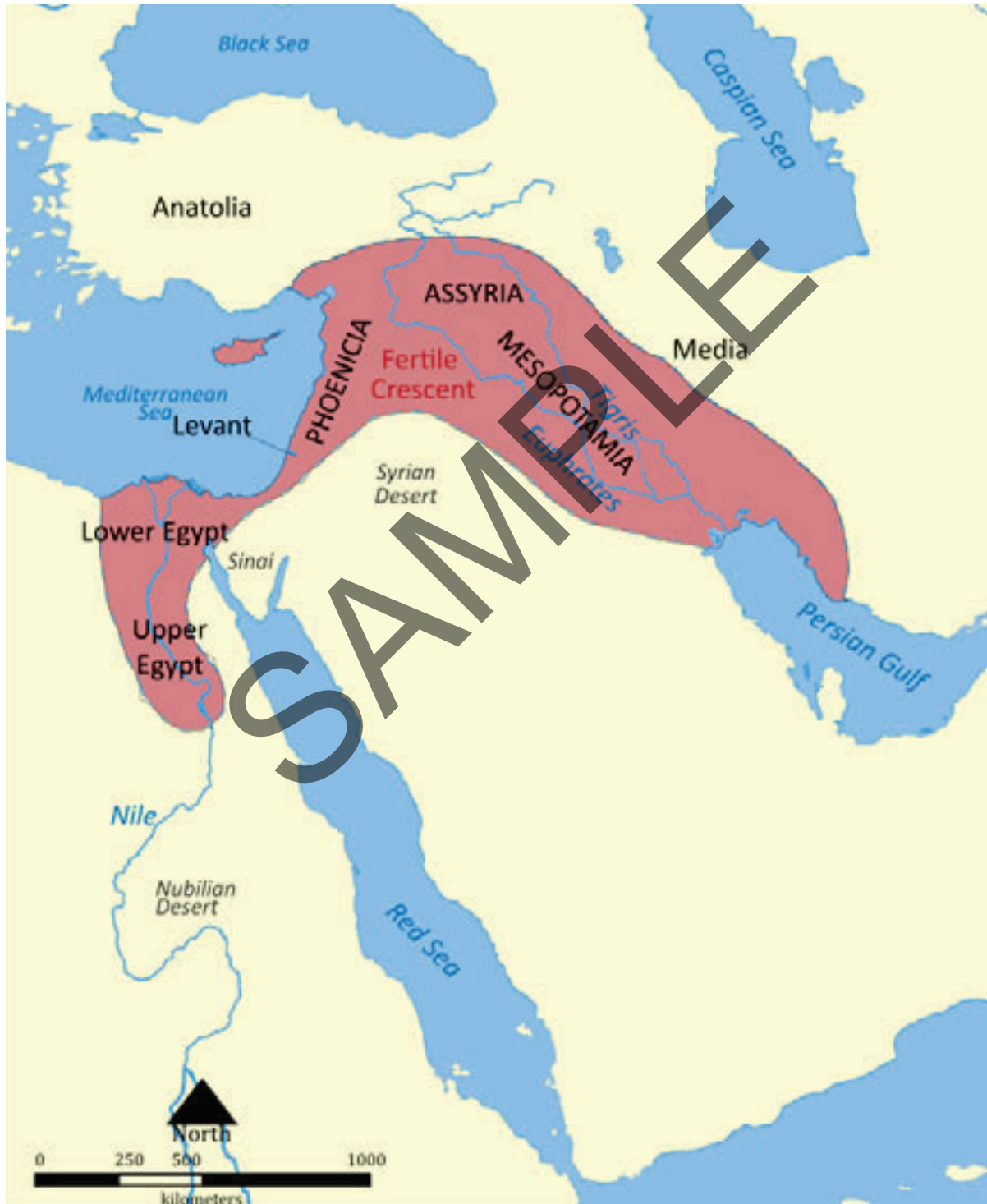
THE RISE OF CIVILIZATION  
THE NEAR EAST

4000 - 1500 BC

**T** HE EARLIEST CIVILIZATIONS EMERGED IN MESOPOTAMIA, A FERTILE STRIP OF LAND BETWEEN THE STORIED EUPHRATES AND TIGRIS RIVERS.

Archaeological evidence has helped fill in pieces of these early city builders, but much remains elusive. As ruins are slowly and painstakingly excavated, scholars also look to the literature of ancient Sumer and Mesopotamia. The world's earliest known epic, the Sumerian king list, and cuneiform tablets recording business transactions all work together with city ruins, archaeological treasures, and more to shape a picture of city-states morphing into empires, of intricate and widespread trade networks, and of fearsome religions and justice-seeking kings. The transition from hunter-gatherer to city dweller seems to have taken a long time, but once cities were built, the need for resources propelled conquest and warfare. War led to the need for strong leaders, and empires were soon rather commonplace. In this section, we will learn about some of those leaders, who come to us in mythological proportions. We will read about the most famous, Gilgamesh, who was said to be two-thirds divine and one-third human. We will study ziggurats, the oppressive gods who demanded the dearest of sacrifices, and societies that developed into cultures impressive even in our modern technological era, showing us that human nature remains steady while empires rise and fall.

# THE FERTILE CRESCENT



## LESSON 1

1. Set up a study folder for this course. You may use a notebook, binder, website, or other preferred media. A high-quality notebook will last the entire year and can be used as a portfolio of your best work, so it may be worth investing in something that will hold up to daily wear and tear. You will keep all your writing assignments, vocabulary lists, mapping activities, reports, and other work here. Create a cover page titled "Ancient History and the Rise of Civilization, 4000–1500 BC." If you are using a notebook or binder, set aside a section to be used as a glossary. Record new terms and words in this glossary as they occur in the course. Add and define the following terms to this glossary. You will encounter these terms in the readings assigned in this lesson:

history	agriculture	civilization
nomadic	epic	barbaric
anthropology		

2. History is a combination of archaeology and story. While archaeology provides content and fills in some everyday details, stories and myths provide a narrative that colors these details. Historian John Keay describes myth as "the smoke of history." Discuss the challenges of piecing together ancient history into a coherent narrative. What are the limits of relying strictly on archaeology and the challenges of gleaning historical fact from ancient stories and myths? In this study, we will be looking at the archaeological evidence and reading through myths, epics, legends, and historical fiction to re-create the fascinating ancient world.

3. Begin reading *The Usborne Internet-Linked Encyclopedia of the Ancient World*, hereafter referred to as *EAW*. This book will serve as our background text, providing historical content and context to the literature we will be reading. Review pages 6–7 for information on the internet links found throughout this resource and how to safely navigate the various websites. Read pages 8–14 of *EAW*, and visit the related internet links. These pages cover very early history and set up the background for our study of the ancient world.

a. Discuss the development of writing. It is not overstating things to say that this discovery changed the world. Why?

4. Refer to "Archaeology for the Future" in the Activities section on page 13 to create your own archaeological challenge.

5. Read "Introduction to the Ancient Near East" on the Khan Academy website.

6. Throughout the section, refer to the following website, which has wonderful information on many aspects of life in ancient Sumer: [ancientsumeriansvnp.weebly.com](http://ancientsumeriansvnp.weebly.com).

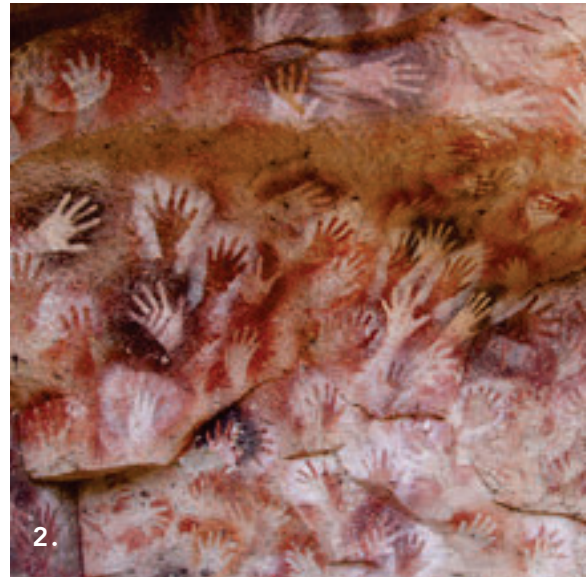
Notes:



1.



3.



2.

1. Paleolithic cave painting of bison from the Altamira cave, Cantabria, Spain 2. Cueva de las Manos located Perito Moreno, Argentina 3. Sumerian cuneiform text

## LESSON 2

1. Begin working on the *Ancient History Timeline*. Cut out, color, and paste on your timeline: “Sumerians Develop Writing and Invent the Wheel.”
2. As we progress along the course of human history, we will also follow the biblical narrative found in the first books of the Old Testament covering the history of Israel and Judah. This will be studied in more depth at a later point, but for now, we’ll start at the very beginning as we read about the rise of civilization in our other resources. Read Genesis 1–5. Copy Genesis 1:1-2 into your notebook.
3. One of the first steps toward civilization is the creation of art. Discuss the human impulse to create. How do you express your creativity? It can be through drawing, music, speech, cooking, dance, or coding—the possibilities are limitless. Every human has a creative impulse. It can be seen in a toddler drawing on walls! Some of the earliest evidence of this desire to beautify, to leave a mark, and to create is found in ancient cave art (see images on opposite page). Research these works and be sure to visit France’s official website for the Lascaux caves, which contain some of the best examples of these ancient works: <http://archeologie.culture.fr/lascaux/en>
4. Refer to the Cave Art projects in the Activities section on page 13 to create your own cave art.

## LESSON 3

1. The first literary work we will be reading is Geraldine McCaughrean’s adaptation of the world’s oldest epic, *Gilgamesh*. We will be reading *Gilgamesh the Hero* and seeing how this classic addresses themes of the heroic quest and the conflict between civilization and nature and provides an intimate understanding of the ancient Sumerians’ views of the gods and life. Read the background information on page 2 of *Gilgamesh*. As you will see, the chapters in this book are based on tablets discovered in the 19th century. The story of how this epic was discovered is absolutely fascinating. Search “Gilgamesh, the Worlds’ First Action Hero” to find a great article from National Geographic on the history behind this ancient, lost, and rediscovered literary classic. Read Chapters 1 and 2, and see page 18 for a brief introduction to the main characters. **Instructor Note:** You may want to preview Chapter 2, “Tamed by a Kiss,” as there is a reference to nudity, and it contains a picture of the rearview of a nude woman on page 14. It is an integral part of the story, as it relays the ancient belief in the civilizing force of love and the male/female sexual union, and it is not explicit.

- a. How does the author set up the conflict between the civilized and the wild in the first two chapters? Which characters represent civilized society, and which represent the untamed wild?
- b. How does the exit from the wild coupled with a loss of innocence echo the biblical narrative found in Genesis?
- c. How does Gilgamesh’s mother, Ninsun, interpret her son’s dream? What does this tell us about the values of the ancient Sumerians?
- d. How do the people of Uruk view their king?

*Lesson 3 continued on page 19*