**Mesopotamia**

**Chapter 2-Section #2: The first Civilizations**

* ***Sumerian City-States:***
* Most historians believe that the 1st civilization began in Sumer in southern Mesopotamia.
* Cities in Sumer had narrow, winding streets lined with buildings made of reed, mud, and brick. The Ziggurat (temple) was at the center of city life.
* Priests were in charge of important aspects of life in Sumer, such as irrigation, storage of grain, and advising people how to please the gods who would prevent bad things from occurring.
* Eventually, kings would replace priests as leaders of the city.
* ***Sumerian Society:***
* Social Classes consisted of the upper class which included kings, priests, and rich merchants; the middle class included farmers and artisans; the lower class consisted of slaves.
* In general, women had rights and could own land and work at many jobs, but their main role was to raise the children.
* ***Sumerian Scientific Developments:***
* Sumerians improved technology when they invented the wheel and plow
* Sumerians developed mathematics to keep records of crops and trade. The math system they used was based on the number 60 which influenced how we measure time today.
* Sumerians developed the 1st system of writing that involved pictographs which developed into a system called **cuneiform** that used wedge-shaped symbols.