

## LESSON 2 The Cradle of Civilization



"If you lie and then tell the truth, the truth will be considered a lie."

- Sumerian Proverb

Fill in the blanks with the correct words as you read.

civilization    crescent    fertile    riverbanks    supply

Today, in history class, we looked at a map and tried to guess why the first civilization started along the \_\_\_\_\_ of Mesopotamia. From the map, I saw that Mesopotamia was in southwest Asia. My teacher told me that Mesopotamia meant "Between the Rivers." He highlighted the area of Mesopotamia and Egypt with a pen and asked me, "What shape is it?" I told him it looked like a \_\_\_\_\_ moon. He told me that the area he highlighted was called the "Fertile Crescent." Because of the water from the rivers, people living there had \_\_\_\_\_ farmland.

It makes sense why the Sumerians started living there. It was a perfect place to grow food with a large \_\_\_\_\_ of water. They started living in villages near the riverbanks. The villages got bigger and became cities. Cities in Mesopotamia became large and successful. Each city had its own king and type of government with many laws. These cities weren't just ordinary cities. They were city-states. They all wanted to have more farmland along the rivers. No wonder they had so many wars against each other.

It was interesting to find out different things about the Sumerians who lived 5,000 years ago. One thing I learned is that rivers are important to us. My family comes from China, and my uncle still lives there. He is a farmer, and he always talks about the nearby river. All farmers in his town use its water, and they feel very lucky to have it. I can see how important the two rivers of Mesopotamia were. Because of them, the first \_\_\_\_\_ was able to begin.

