

Complete each gap with one word.

A 300-year drought (1) _____ have caused the decline of several Mediterranean cultures, including ancient Greece, (2) _____ to new research.

A sharp drop in rainfall may have led to the collapse of several eastern Mediterranean civilizations, around 3,200 years ago. The resulting famine and conflict may help explain (3) _____ the entire Hittite culture, chariot-riding people who ruled most of the region of Anatolia, disappeared from the planet.

Even (4) _____ the peak of Classical Greek civilization, there were hints of an earlier culture that was lost. Homer's "Iliad," written in the eighth century B.C. about a legendary war (5) _____ Sparta and Troy, tells a story of advanced Greek city-states, with archaeological evidence to (6) _____ it up.

"The classical Greek people knew from the start that they were coming out of a dark age," said Brandon Lee Drake, an archaeologist at the University of New Mexico.

The ancient Hittite empire of Anatolia began a precipitous decline around 3,300 B.C. Around the same time, the Egyptian empire (7) _____ invaded by sea bandits, called the Sea People, and the ancient Mycenaean culture of Greece collapsed. Over the next 400 years, ancient cities were burned to the (8) _____.

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