

6th Grade Review

Stone Age or Neolithic Era - prehistoric period that lasted about 2.5 million years; many weapons and tools were made of stone; people practiced slash-and-burn agriculture

prehistoric - the period of time before written records

slash-and-burn agriculture - a method agriculture in which trees are cut down and burned to clear land for farming and to fertilize the land

irrigation - to supply water to land or crops to help them grow

permanent settlements - the first step toward civilization that occurs when people make advances in agricultural production and settle down to live in one location, instead of living as nomadic hunter-gatherers

nomads (adj. nomadic) - people who have no permanent home, and who travel from place to place to find food and shelter

hunter-gatherers - Nomadic groups whose food supply depends on hunting animals and collecting plant foods

agricultural production - the process of creating goods and services by growing crops and raising animals to provide food, wool, and other products

self-sufficient - not dependent upon others for survival

famine - a terrible shortage of food that can cause starvation

civilization - a complex society that usually has five characteristics, or features: a stable food supply, specialization of labor, a system of government, social levels, and a highly developed culture

monotheism - the belief in only one god

polytheism - the belief in more than one god

democratic government - a system of government that is run by the entire population of a state (or at least everyone who is allowed to vote)

Hammurabi - the king of Babylonia from 1792-1750 BCE; he expanded the Babylonian empire and created one of the earliest known collections of laws

Hammurabi's Code - one of the earliest known collection of laws; it consists of 282 laws and a list of punishments for breaking each law

currency - a system of money

artifacts - objects made by humans

fossils - the remains or imprints of once-living plants or animals

Mesopotamia - a region (NOT a country or a nation) called "the land between the waters," (because it's located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers); an ancient river-valley civilization in southwest Asia is the location of the earliest known permanent settlements; located in present-day Iraq, Syria, and Turkey

Babylonia - an ancient region in Mesopotamia, centered around the city-state of Babylon

Babylon - an ancient city-state that was the capital of Babylonia

Sumer - the World's first civilization; located in the southern half of Mesopotamia; the location of the world's first cities including Ur and Kish

cuneiform - a system of writing developed by the Sumerians (the people of Sumer) that consisted of wedge-shaped characters made with a reed stylus [a small rod with a pointed end] and used in writing several ancient languages

art & architecture of ancient Egypt - the goal of these creative projects in ancient Egypt was to emphasize the religious idea of eternal life

eternal life - living forever

pharaoh - a ruler of ancient Egypt; considered to be a god on Earth

tyrant - a ruler (some of the most famous were from Ancient Greece) who has total power, not limited by a constitution or by other officials

Parthenon - the main temple of the goddess Athena; built on the acropolis in Athens, Greece; an example of Doric architecture

Athena - (Greek mythology) goddess of wisdom

pyramid - huge, triangular, stone structure built by the ancient Egyptians to serve as a tomb and a symbol of the wealth and power of the pharaoh who had it built

hieroglyphics - the ancient Egyptian writing system in which pictorial symbols [pictures] stand for words or sounds

Assyria - an ancient kingdom in northern Mesopotamia, around present-day Iraq and Turkey

representative government - political system in which voters elect representatives to make laws for them

Ten Commandments - a set of laws about responsible behavior that, according to the Bible, God gave to Moses to deliver to the ancient Hebrews; these laws influenced the development of Western moral and ethical teachings

moral and ethical teachings - teachings about what is honorable, good, and lawful behavior

Moses - he is the Hebrew prophet who led the Israelites from Egypt across the Red sea on a journey known as the Exodus; according to Jewish scripture, he delivered God's laws (the Ten Commandments) to the ancient Hebrews

parliamentary democracy - government in which voters elect representatives to make laws for them, and then those lawmakers choose a prime minister to head the government

President - a leader elected by the people of a nation

Prime Minister - a leader selected by a group of lawmakers who are elected by the people of a nation

feudalism OR feudal system - an economic system in which nobles own the farmland and peasants do all the work; for example, the system in ancient China

scripture - the sacred writings of a religion

Abraham - according to Jewish scripture, he is the founder of Judaism

Judaism - the monotheistic religion of the Jewish people; their holy book is the Torah

Solomon - according to Jewish scripture, he was the son of David and king of Israel noted for his wisdom (10th century BC)

David - according to Jewish scripture, he was the 2nd king of the Israelites who united Israel; when he was young, he fought the giant, Goliath, and killed him by hitting him in the head with a stone flung from a slingshot

city-state OR polis - a self-governing unit made up of a city and its surrounding villages and farmland; the political process of these units stressed the importance of every person taking an interest and a role in the public affairs of the unit

Christianity - the monotheistic religion of the Christian people, founded on the teachings of Jesus; their holy book is the Bible

Iliad - a great epic poem written by Homer that tells the Greek myth of the Trojan War; the poem is full of heroic figures and great adventures

Homer - an ancient Greek epic poet who is believed to have written the Iliad and the Odyssey

Trojan War - (Greek mythology) a great war fought between Greece and Troy; the Greeks sailed to Troy to recover Helen of Troy, the beautiful wife of Menelaus who had been abducted by a Trojan prince named Paris; after ten years the Greeks (via the Trojan Horse) achieved final victory and destroyed the kingdom of Troy

Greek mythology - traditional stories about the origin and history of the Greek, their gods, ancestors, and heroes; used to explain events in the natural world; many words used in the English language today originated from these stories

myth - a traditional story about the origin and history of a people and their gods, ancestors, and heroes

atlas - (noun) a collection of maps; derived from the Greek myth of Atlas, a Titan (powerful, giant gods) who carried the world and the heavens on his back

herculean - (adjective) very powerful; derived from the Greek myth of Hercules, a Greek demigod with superhuman strength and courage

labyrinth - (noun) a maze; derived from the Greek myth of the large maze of King Minos of Crete, that held a Minotaur (a mythical creature that was half man and half bull)

olympian - (adjective) majestic, honored; derived from the Greek myth that Mount Olympus (actually exists and is the highest mountain in Greece), was the home of the Twelve Olympians, the twelve main gods of Greek mythology

Alexander the Great - (356-323 BCE) a Macedonian king who conquered Greece, Persia, and Egypt, ending the power of the city-states in these areas and establishing one unified nation

Macedonia - an ancient kingdom, northwest of the Aegean Sea, in the present-day European countries of Greece, Macedonia, Bulgaria, and Albania

Hellenistic - an adjective describing Greek history or culture after the death of Alexander the Great

Persian Empire - an empire in southern Asia created by Cyrus the Great in the 6th century (500s) BCE and destroyed by Alexander the Great in the 4th century (300s) BCE

Cyrus the Great - (600-529 BCE) a Persian ruler who conquered Babylon in 540 BCE

Yu - the man who founded Xia, the first great Chinese dynasty around 2000 BCE

dynasty - a series of rulers from the same family

Xia - the first great Chinese dynasty, founded by a man named Yu around 2000 BCE

Aristotle - (384-322 BCE) a Greek philosopher who was a student of Plato and a teacher of Alexander the Great; one of the most important founding figures in Western philosophy

philosophy - the study of knowledge, existence, and ethics (what is right and what is wrong)

plateau - a broad area of high, flat land

plain - a broad area of flat, open land, that is lower than a plateau

Confucius - a Chinese philosopher and teacher at the end of the Zhou dynasty; he taught that peace and order could be restored to China with education, "ren" (appropriate feelings), "li" (correct actions), and filial piety (respect for one's parents)

The Analects - a book written by the disciples of Confucius that explains all of Confucius' teachings

The Lighthouse of Alexandria, Egypt - the world's first important light house that guided ships into the city's harbor for about 1,500 years before being toppled by an earthquake

The Earliest Civilizations - Nile River Valley, Mesopotamia (Tigris-Euphrates River Valley), Indus River Valley, and Huang He River Valley; civilizations which arose in river valleys in Africa and Asia; the fertile soil of the valleys was perfect for farming villages; civilization began when these villages developed into cities

Sargon of Akkad - conquered the Sumerians and united all Mesopotamia under his rule, creating the world's first empire

Main City-States of Ancient Greece - Athens, Corinth, Sparta, and Thebes

Islam OR the Muslim religion - a universal religion (open to everyone) which promises salvation to all who believe and follow the five pillars of Islam; based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Five Pillars of Islam - the five duties that define the Muslim religion:

1. Statement of faith
2. Pray five times a day facing Mecca
3. Give alms (charity) to the poor
4. Fast during the holy month of Ramadan
5. Make a pilgrimage, or hajj, to Mecca during your lifetime if you can

Mecca - The holiest city of Islam; Muhammad's birthplace

Muhammad - he is the founder of Islam and Muslims believe him to be the God's last prophet here on Earth; he preached that everyone was equal in the eyes of Allah (God)

Quran - the sacred book of Islam which is believed to contain the actual words of God, as told to the prophet Muhammad

oligarchy - a system of government in which a few people rule

famine - a widespread shortage of food that can lead to death by starvation

deforestation - the process of clearing away trees or forests

Diaspora - the Jewish settlements scattering among the Gentiles (people who are not Jewish) after the Jews' release from exile in Babylonia

prophet - a person who expresses and explains the will of God

plague - a highly contagious, widespread disease that is often fatal

fatal - (adjective) bringing death

Hinduism - a polytheistic religion which started in India, although no one knows exactly when it began or who created it; sometimes described not just as a religion, but a way of life; centers around belief in dharma (your duty in life), karma, samsara, reincarnation, and moksha

karma - the sum result of all the good and bad deeds you have performed in your life

reincarnation - the process of being "reborn" after death

moksha - the ultimate goal for Hindus is to end the cycle of reincarnation by finally reaching this stage, which represents a "oneness with the universe"

Bramha - in the Hindu religion, he is the creator god

Siddhartha Gautama - raised as a prince near present-day Nepal, he ran away from his palace and meditated under a bodhi tree until he reached enlightenment. After this experience he was known as the Buddha (enlightened one), going on to found the Buddhist religion

nirvana - the ultimate goal for all Buddhists is to reach this level, which is a release from the cycles of reincarnation when a person makes a perfect union with the universe

Buddhism - a religion begun by Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha) that states that gods and goddesses are not necessary - everyone can seek enlightenment on his or her own

Hebrews - a nomadic people who migrated out of Mesopotamia sometime around 2000 BCE; they believed that they were protected by their own god YHWH (considered to be too holy of a word to say outloud)

Silk Roads - trade routes that connected India with China

Emperor Qin Shi Huangdi - he unified most of China under one government in in 221 B.C.E. making him the first emperor of a unified China

checks and balances - a system established the Constitution that prevents any branch of government from becoming too powerful; its origins can be traced to the Roman Republic

enlightenment - in Buddhism, a state of perfect wisdom in which one understands basic truths about the universe