**Lesson #3**

**Guided Reading**

**The Fertile Crescent**

**The Fertile Crescent/Mesopotamia-** Land in between the rivers

* Between the Tigris and Euphrates River

**Sumer or Sumerians**

* Settled @ 4500BCE
* Stopped focusing on Hunter-Gatherer way of life and switched to agriculture
  + **Plow**- used to efficiently plant crops
  + **Calendar**- used to keep track of seasons
  + **Writing**- used to keep records, communicate and keep documents
    - **Cuneiform**- wedge shaped letters and is the oldest form of writing.
    - **Stylus**- made out of a reed or a stick-like utensil used to push in marks on a tablet of wet clay
  + **Canals**- built to transport water from the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (think of a mini river)
  + **Levees-** used to hold water at different elevations (water can’t flow uphill)
  + **Ziggurats-** Pyramid-like temple used for worship and burials
    - made out of clay and brick
    - has many steps leading to the entrance at top
    - looked like mountains
* **The Epic of Gilgamesh**- ancient story that is still read today
  + **Epic-** a long poem that is told orally or by word of mouth for a long time until it was written down or recorded.
  + One of the earliest known epics or story that was written by using cuneiform on clay tablets
  + Held in one of the first libraries of the Assyrian King Ashurbanipal

**Civilizations of Mesopotamia:**

**Babylonian Civilization-** led by King Hammurabi @ 1800BCE

* The code of Hammurabi- Created laws or a legal system to follow
* Stele- much like a totem pole, or pillar. Has list of laws to follow and punishments if you disobey
  + **Eye for an Eye-** whatever harm was done to you, the convict will get the same punishment. Example: a thief would get his hand cut off so he can’t steel.
* Civilization came to an end when Hammurabi died in 1750BCE and left the land to be fought over to hundreds of years.

**Assyrian Civilization-** came into power @ 900BCE

* One of the largest civilizations of its time
* Created stone reliefs that covered the walls in their palace(s).

**Neo-Babylonian Period-** meaning “New” Babylonian Period

* @ 600BEC or 7th Century
* King Nebuchadnezzar led this period
* **Ishtar Gate-** named after the goddess of love and war
  + One of 8 gateways into the city
  + Decorated with glazed bricks to form patterns, most commonly dragons
* Collapsed 30 years after the King went insane and died in 562BCE

**Persian Empire-** @ 539BCE until 331BCE (defeated by Alexander the Great)

* Led by King Darius
* Known for the palaces
  + **Audience Hall-** had hundreds of columns around 65 feet high and were topped with bulls
  + **Persepolis**- where the palace of King Darius was located