



## DIGITALLY WRITING NEW HISTORIES

**As Museums Collect Artifacts From Ancient Cultures, Which Items Are Collected And Why? How Do These Artifacts Shape What We Perceive About These Cultures?**



**1. What is a primary source? Why should we analyze them as we study ancient cultures?**

**2. What do the artifacts displayed tell you about life in ancient Mesopotamia?**

**3. After your analysis, how does life in ancient Mesopotamia relate to our lives here in the 21st Century?**

## Examining Primary Sources from Mesopotamia

<b>Designed by:</b>	Alyssa Nathan
<b>Unit Overview:</b>	Students will examine primary sources from Mesopotamia. During their examination they will think about why these items would be displayed in museums or why they would have been saved? After their examination, they will create a list of items someone in the future would use to create an exhibit on our life in the 21st Century.
<b>Grade Level(s):</b>	7th Grade
<b>Connection to Primary Source Materials</b>	Students will analyze primary source artifacts from museums as well as analyzing Hammurabi's Code.
<b>Michigan Social Studies Standards Addressed:</b>	<p>7 – H1.2.1 Explain how historians use a variety of sources to explore the past.</p> <p>7 – H1.4.1 Describe and use cultural institutions to study an era and a region.</p> <p>7 – W2.1.4 Examine early civilizations to describe their common features, including environment, economies, and social institutions.</p>
<b>C3 Indicators</b>	<p>D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.</p> <p>D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources</p>
<b>Disciplinary Literacy Essential Practices:</b>	Social Studies #7- Intentional efforts to build vocabulary and conceptual knowledge.
<b>Other Relevant Standards, Connections to the CCSS, or the Context for the Unit</b>	<p>6. Students communicate clearly and express themselves creatively for a variety of purposes using the platforms, tools, styles, formats and digital media appropriate to their goals</p> <p>6c. Students communicate complex ideas clearly and effectively by creating or using a variety of digital objects such as visualizations, models, or simulations.</p> <p>6d. Students publish or present content that customizes the message and medium for their intended audiences.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1</p> <p>Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7</p> <p>Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.</p>

Compelling Question:		
As museums collect artifacts from ancient cultures, which items are collected and why? How do these artifacts shape what we perceive about these cultures?		
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What is a primary source? Why should we analyze them as we study ancient cultures?	What do the artifacts displayed tell you about life in ancient Mesopotamia?	After your analysis, how does life in ancient Mesopotamia relate to our lives here in the 21st Century?

Lesson 1: The importance of primary sources while studying ancient cultures.	
Supporting Question 1:	What is a primary source? Why should we analyze them as we study ancient cultures?
Step 1	Students will complete a word splash. A word splash is where a student is presented with a term they are unfamiliar with and attempt to define it. The students will be presented with the terms primary source and secondary source. Give the students a minute for each term, they should make their thinking visible by writing their thoughts down. After the time is up for both terms, have students share their thoughts through peer to peer conversations. Give them about 2 minutes to discuss with their peers. Once time is up, have a few students share their answers with the entire class.
Step 2	Have students watch the video from this link: <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-6632/">https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-6632/</a>  While watching the students will complete the questions being asked throughout the video. You will need to pause the video at various intervals in order for them to complete the questions. Once you have completed the questions, have the students take the quiz. It may be beneficial to pause the video and discuss the students' thoughts before the answer is revealed.
Step 3	The following activity can be found at this link: <a href="https://georgewbushlibrary.smu.edu/en/Teachers/Analyzing-Historical-Objects/Primary-Sources">https://georgewbushlibrary.smu.edu/en/Teachers/Analyzing-Historical-Objects/Primary-Sources</a>  The resource is available in the Recognizing Primary & Secondary Sources section and can be downloaded in the Lesson Plan: Teaching Primary & Secondary Sources, Secondary link. The activity is on P. 7-8.  This activity will require your students to read six scenarios. After reading the scenario, they will decide whether the scenario is describing a primary or a secondary source. You can give them the sheet with the scenarios on it or you can cut out the squares and place them in an envelope (I have found that my students prefer the envelope method). Place students in small groups or pairs in order to facilitate discussion. Once time has elapsed, I have multiple groups share out their answers to check for understanding.

Formative Assessment Task	For homework or independent practice, have the students complete the <a href="#">Primary and Secondary Sources Practice Assignment</a> . The assignment will require the students to read five examples of sources and determine whether it is a primary or secondary source. The final part of the assignment requires the students to read a long source and determine if it is a primary or secondary source. The students should give specific text-based evidence to support their claim.
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## Lesson 2: Life in Mesopotamia based on Primary Sources

Supporting Question 2:	What do the artifacts displayed tell you about life in ancient Mesopotamia?
Step 1	<p>To start this lesson, I recommend having students watch the National Geographic video at the following link: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVf5kZA0HtQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVf5kZA0HtQ</a></p> <p>While watching the video, have students jot down important innovations and inventions created by the Mesopotamians which affect our everyday lives.</p> <p>After viewing, have students share their thoughts about the inventions and think about how our lives may be different without them.</p>
Step 2	The students will complete an activity where they will analyze the pictures of four primary source artifacts. This should be completed in pairs or small groups to help with discussion. Students will write out what they “see, think, and wonder” about each of the artifacts. After completion, the teacher can ask students to share their answers about each piece.
Step 3	<p>The students will return to their pairs or small groups. This time they will be given the website links to each of the artifacts. If you do not have students' laptops, you can provide them with the paper copies. In their groups, they will discuss the items and based on their thoughts they will discuss how these items relate to the same items today. Are they similar or different? Are they what they expected them to be?</p> <p><a href="#">Mesopotamia Assignment</a></p>
Formative Assessment Task	<p>The students will visit the following website: <a href="https://artsandculture.google.com/usergallery/mesopotamia/VgliWTFXZScLA">https://artsandculture.google.com/usergallery/mesopotamia/VgliWTFXZScLA</a></p> <p>Once at the website, the students will pick one of the items and explain how the item is related to our life today. Students should also think about and answer the following questions:</p> <p>Where is the artifact currently? Is it where you think it should be? Explain.</p> <p>Why was this artifact “saved”? Is it something you feel should be in a museum?</p> <p>Reflecting on the location of the artifact currently, do you think it should be somewhere else? If so, explain your reasoning.</p>

### Lesson 3: How did Life in Mesopotamia relate to Our Lives

Supporting Question 3:	After your analysis, how does life in ancient Mesopotamia relate to our lives here in the 21st Century?
Step 1	Have students reflect and write down what our world would be like without laws. In their reflection, have them think about if laws are really an essential part of our world. Once they have finished their reflection, students can share their thoughts with a partner and then the whole class.
Step 2	Have students watch the video at this link: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEko2CMykuk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEko2CMykuk</a>  As they watch, have students write down the purpose of Hammurabi's Code. Students can share their answers with the whole class.
Step 3	In small groups students will analyze parts of Hammurabi's Code. They will be given situations and be asked to give their thoughts on what a fair punishment would be. Their goal is to determine what the law and punishments are, express their feelings on the punishments, and determine what a more suitable punishment should be.  Link to a copy of Hammurabi's Code: <a href="https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp">https://avalon.law.yale.edu/ancient/hamframe.asp</a>  Image of Hammurabi's Code: <a href="https://www.loc.gov/item/2020681913/Hammurabi's Code Assignment">https://www.loc.gov/item/2020681913/Hammurabi's Code Assignment</a>
Formative Assessment Task	In a short essay, students will answer the following questions:  In what ways do you see evidence of the punishments from Hammurabi's Code in our own legal system? Discuss at least two of the four situations and make a connection from Hammurabi's Code to the present. Support your answer with evidence from the Code as well as a current event/story

## Summative Assessment

Students will take the knowledge they have gained and create a video project. For the project they will answer the following questions. If someone in the future was creating a museum exhibit on our life in the 21st Century, which items do you think they would include and why? Looking at our laws, which law(s) do you think they feel are similar to Hammurabi's Code? The students need to include 3-5 items that they feel would be included and at least one example of a law.

This project could be completed in Flipgrid, Zoom, or another platform. The student will need to create a script of what will be presented in the video. The suggested length of the video is between 5-10 minutes.

The student should include visual aids in order to help the viewer understand the items being discussed. The visual aid could be in the form of a Google Slides presentation or holding and displaying the actual object.

Creativity is encouraged.

Rubric				
Summative Assessment Criteria	Expert 25	Proficient 20	Developing 15	Novice 10
Time requirement and required items.	The student meets the expected time requirement and presents the necessary material in the allotted time.	The student meets the expected time requirement and presents some of the necessary material in the allotted time.	The student may or may not meet the expected time requirement or may or may not present some of the necessary material in the allotted time.	The student does not meet the time requirement or present the necessary material in the allotted time.
Needed items and an example of a code of law.	The student creates a strong argument with the required amount of items and an example code of law.	The student's argument may not be strong or have the required amount of items and an example code of law.	The student's argument may be weak and may be missing some of the required items and an example code of law.	The student's argument is weak and may be missing some of the required items and an example code of law.



# About the Inquiry Author



Alyssa Nathan teaches students in 7th grade at Washington-Parks Academy and Cornerstone Charter Schools in Redford Charter Township, MI. She has taught social studies for 6 years. Her favorite aspect of teaching social studies is introducing students to new topics. She can be contacted at [alyssa.nathan@cornerstonecharters.org](mailto:alyssa.nathan@cornerstonecharters.org).

## Learn More About the Inquiry Here:

