



Teaching the Middle East: A Resource for High School Educators

The Origins of Civilization

Gil Stein, Director of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

Lesson Plan 1:

Rise of Urban Civilization

General Description of Lesson Plan: After having reviewed the factors that produced and the elements that emerged from the Neolithic Revolution, students will explore the rise of the earliest cities.

Created By: Howard Wright, Hinsdale South High School, Hinsdale, IL

Subject Area(s): World History, World Geography

For Grade Level(s): Grades 9 – 10

Time Needed: 3 class days

Outcomes/Objectives:

- To become familiar with the evolution of humankind from hunters and gatherers to farmers, herders and city dwellers;
- To compare and contrast the nature of early cities in the Near East;
- To examine the discovery and excavation of such early cities.

Materials:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic> Revolution

Visual 6.—Epipaleolithic Pit Houses at Abu Hureya

Visual 7.—Jarmo House Model

Visual 14.—Jericho

Visual 15.—Map of Neolithic Sites

<http://www.catalhoyuk.com>

Early Cities: Tell Hamoukar

Mysteries of Catalhoyuk: Interactive Dig

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Suggested Procedure(s):

Day 1-Background:

Students will read the main essay of this module as an introduction and to get a sense of the tremendous impact that domestication of plants and animals had on human development. As a follow-up, students will also consult the Wikipedia entry on the Neolithic Revolution. In whole class discussion, students will review the factors that caused the Neolithic Revolution and the steps that humankind took to move from nomadic to sedentary life.

Day 2-Visual and Web site examination:

In small groups, students will explore these early cities by examining the images of Abu Hureya, Jarmo, Jericho, and then visit the Catal Hoyuk website.

Students will also examine the map of Neolithic Sites.

Students will consider the nature of these cities (kinds of structures, dimensions of the cities, the activities that went on in the cities, etc.), and compare and contrast to their own cities.

Students will also examine the records kept by the archaeologists of Catal Hoyuk, noting the painstaking ways in which these professionals work, the speculative work that precedes discoveries and the incremental additions to knowledge that come from that work.

Small groups will compose a summary of their observations.

Day 3-Writing Exercise:

As a culminating activity, students will compose their own version of an archaeologist's diary.

Prompt: As if you were a member of the archaeological team exploring Catal Hoyuk, write five entries in your excavation diary. Include the kind of work you are doing, the way in which you chronicle your excavations, the hypotheses you have drawn and the evidence you discover to support your speculations. Be sure to draw at least two sketches of your findings, to illustrate your diary entries.

Evaluation/Assessment Strategies:

Students' reading comprehension and understanding of the elements of the Neolithic Revolution will be determined by class discussion on Day 1.

From their small group summaries on Day 2, students will demonstrate their analytical understandings of the visuals and website, and their comparative skills.

Through an imaginative diary, students will draw the unit to a conclusion.

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Evaluation Rubric:

Archaeological Diary: Rise of Early Cities				
Teacher Name: _____				
Student Name: _____				
CATEGORY	20	18	15	12
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Analysis	Provides an effective analysis that answers all aspects of the question; thoroughly addresses counter-arguments; includes significance and impact, change over time	Provides analysis but may not devote equal weight to all parts of the question; somewhat addresses significance and impact	Some analysis present but superficial; does not sufficiently address all parts of the question	Little or no analysis present; describes rather than analyzes
Sources	All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented in the desired format.	All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented, but a few are not in the desired format.	All sources (information and graphics) are accurately documented, but many are not in the desired format.	Some sources are not accurately documented.
Organization	Information is very organized with well-constructed paragraphs and subheadings.	Information is organized with well-constructed paragraphs.	Information is organized, but paragraphs are not well-constructed.	The information appears to be disorganized.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	A few grammatical spelling or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.

Use these guiding questions to spur discussion in your classroom:

1. Imagine yourself as a member of an early nomadic group. What would daily life have been like?
2. What factors contributed to the rise of the Neolithic Revolution?
3. What were the steps that humankind took to move from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle?