

Name: _____

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THE FERTILE CRESCENT

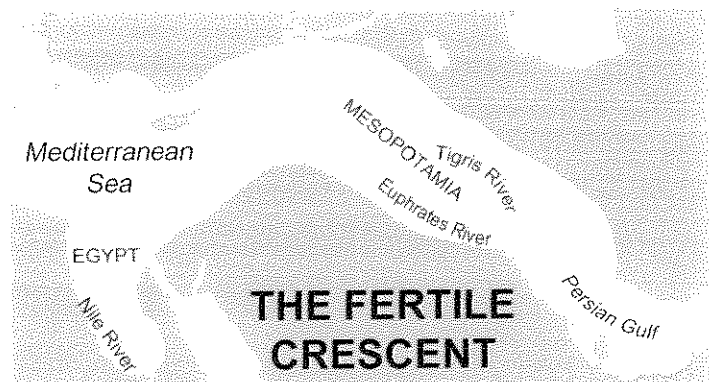
Humans lived as nomads for tens of thousands of years before slowly settling down in various parts of the world. Nomads are people who have no permanent home and travel in search of food and safety. The nomads would temporarily camp in an area for a few weeks or months. A typical nomadic group might include an extended family of about ten adults and their children. The men would hunt animals while the women would gather fruit, grains, seeds and nuts. When the nomads exhausted the land, they moved to a new area.

Civilization developed slowly in different parts of the world. People began to settle in areas with abundant natural resources. For thousands of years, people have given up their nomadic lifestyles to settle in a part of the world archaeologists later called the Fertile Crescent. The Fertile Crescent is a boomerang-shaped region that extends from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf. The Fertile Crescent is a rich food-growing area in a part of the world where most of the land is too dry for farming.

Some of the best farmland of the Fertile

before they combine to drain into the Persian Gulf. The Greeks called this area Mesopotamia, which means "between the rivers." Water from the Tigris and Euphrates soaks into the surrounding land, so although Mesopotamia has very little rainfall, the land is rich in nutrients.

Many different civilizations flourished in this small region. The Sumerians slowly developed one of the first civilizations in the



southeastern region of Mesopotamia as long as 7,500 years ago. The Sumerian civilization lasted more than three thousand years, but in time the Sumerians lost their influence. The Babylonians formed a centralized government under King Hammurabi from about 1770BC to about 1595BC. Various other cultures dominated part or all of the Fertile Crescent including Amorites, the Kassites, (c. 1531-1155BC) the Hittites (c. 1370 – 1205BC) and the Assyrians (c.890-600BC). The land known as Mesopotamia was later controlled by the Persians of modern day Iran, the Greeks under Alexander the Great, the Romans, and the Ottoman Turks. The land between the Tigris and Euphrates has been part of the modern nation of Iraq since 1932.

NATURAL BOUNDARIES

The Tigris and the Euphrates are natural boundaries. This is because the boundaries were formed by nature instead of being drawn by people. Examples of natural boundaries include rivers, mountain ranges or deserts.

Straight lines on a map generally signify borders made by people, while natural borders can follow many different paths. This is easy to

Crescent is on a narrow strip of land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The two rivers travel near one another for thousands of miles