

# Ancient Mesopotamia vs. Modern Iraq

## Summary

The students will investigate the impacts and contributions the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia had upon the modern world, particularly Iraq. To do this, students will create travel logs about an imaginary visit to an ancient Mesopotamian civilization of their choosing, and of modern Iraq. The students will choose from the civilizations of the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, or Hebrews about which they will complete their first travel log. The students will then share their findings in group and class discussions. Finally, the students will reflect in personal journal entries about what they found and learned and why it is significant, etc. While the students will use the internet as their primary source of information for their research, they may also use other materials: textbooks, journals, newspapers, etc.

## Time Frame

2 class periods of 60 minutes each

## Group Size

Small Groups

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication

## Materials

Social Studies textbook

Access to computer lab, each student will need a computer with Internet access.

Miscellaneous research material.

Student journals.

## Student Prior Knowledge

Students will come into this lesson with functional knowledge of: the geography of ancient Mesopotamia, the economic, social, political characteristics of the civilizations of Sumerians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Phoenicians, or Hebrews, and how to research using the Internet.

## Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will describe the impacts and contributions of the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia (Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, or Hebrews) had upon the modern world, particularly Iraq.

Students will write travel logs (two pages each) of imaginary visits to Iraq and an ancient Mesopotamian civilization of their choosing.

The students' travel logs will use the internet to research information to include in their travel logs.

The students will find a minimum of two different internet sources for each travel log.

The students will share their travel logs in group discussions.

The students will reflect and analyze their findings and discussion in personal journal entries. Each journal entry should be at least one-half to one page.

## Instructional Procedures

To begin this lesson, the teacher will briefly review the main aspects of the Mesopotamian

civilizations of the Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Phoenicians, and Hebrews by asking the students questions. The teacher then conducts a class discussion about the students' perceptions of modern day Iraq to introduce the students to the lesson. The teacher may also compare and contrast ancient Mesopotamia with Iraq and allow students to brainstorm differences or similarities.

After the discussion, the teacher gives the students directions concerning the travel log assignment: each student will complete a travel log about an imaginary visit to modern Iraq, and a civilization which has been discussed in previous lessons. The travel logs are to be two pages each, and contain descriptions of the culture, religion, or sights, smells, sounds of daily life, etc. that the students experience on their visit.

The teacher may also briefly review basic knowledge of researching on the internet. The teacher then shows and provides the students with a list of possible sources on the internet that they may use to conduct their research.

Following the instructions, the teacher explains his or her expectations for the travel logs, i.e. rubric. The students are allowed the remainder of the class time to conduct research on the computers using the internet. The teacher may wander among the students to offer suggestions and help to keep the students on task. Once the students have found sufficient resources to complete their travel logs, they may begin organizing their information into the assigned papers.

The students' travel logs should be completed for the next class period. Throughout the last 10- 15 minutes of class, the teacher organizes the students and answers any questions about the assignment. The teacher may once more review the directions for the assignment. During the next class period, the students' travel logs will be due, and the students will work in groups to discuss their work. The students may also participate in a class discussion about any new similarities or differences they found in their research. The students may also discuss what they felt was surprising, important. After this the students will write personal journal entries about their reactions concerning the assignment and activity.

### Assessment Plan

Student performance will be assessed according to a rubric created for this particular assignment.

### Rubrics

[Travel log assignment rubric](#)

### Bibliography

Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. World History: People and Nations, Modern World. 2000.  
National Geographic Xpeditions. Lesson Plan Ideas. [Online] Available  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/01/g912/iraqdaily.html>, April 13 2004.  
University of Wisconsin. Rubric for research assignment. [Online] Available  
<http://mciu.org/~spjvweb/resrub.html>. April 14, 2004

### Authors

[Emily Bates](#)