Lesson Plan: Early River Valley Civilizations

Subject: World History

Grade: 9

CBC Connection:

IB1: Give examples of the types of governments, societies, economies, and religions that developed among the river valley civilizations.

IB2: Discuss the role of geography in the development of classical Indian and Chinese Civilizations

IIC6: Trace the developments of the dynastic cycles in Chinese Civilizations

IIC18: Identify causes and effects of various changes in historical development

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards:

SS.912.G.4.2: Use geographic terms and tools to analyze the push/pull factors contributing to human migration within and among places.

SS.912.H.3.1: Analyze the effects of transportation, trade, communication, science, and technology on the preservation and diffusion of culture.

SS.912.W.1.1: Use timelines to establish cause and effect relationships of historical events.

Overview:

With the continuing emergence of western civilization and the advent of permanent settlements, characteristics of early civilizations became evident in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and India. Social stratification and specialization of labor soon became the new social and cultural norms. Agriculture blossomed as continued technological advancements and irrigation systems were implemented, creating surplus foods that could now be utilized to trade with other societies. In the midst of the Four Great Floodplain civilizations appearing, first in Mesopotamia, then shortly thereafter, in the Nile Valley, and around 2500 BCE in the Indus Valley. These three civilizations mutually influenced one another and came to constitute a single region of intercommunication and trade. Finally a 4th civilization arose in the Yellow River Valley of Northwestern China in the 2nd Millennium BCE.

This Unit of study will therefore seek to examine and understand these issues, so students are able to understand further the notion of “civilization” and how across Eurasia they emerged independently, yet, there was an inevitability that their worlds
would cross as they became increasingly more sophisticated. Students will also acquire important information on the development of a multitude of issues, such as the stratification of society, development of government and military, cultural characteristics, significance of surplus goods and trade as well as the role of religion and practices specific to individual regions and cultures.

**Essential Questions**

1. What were the various types of governments, societies, economies, and religions that developed among the river valley civilizations?

2. Why did these river valley civilizations emerge where they did? What similarities and differences arise from each of them?

3. What were the major cultural achievements of early civilizations?

4. What accounted for the different types of products created in each of the early river valley civilizations?

5. How and why did ancient civilizations rise and fall?

6. What was the role of religion in ancient civilizations?

7. How did the early river valley civilizations differ from the earliest villages previously discussed?

8. What role did females play in each of these civilizations? Does this differ from the roles that females play in today’s society?

9. What were the main powers and responsibilities of the leaders in each of the civilizations.

**Key Vocabulary**

Lesson Objectives:

Students will:

- Give examples of the types of governments, societies, economies, and religions that developed among river valley civilizations
- Cite examples that illustrate how geography influenced civilizations; e.g., climate, topography, ecology and water.
- Locate on a world map the sites of the first four river valley civilizations discussed.
- List characteristics of life in each of the four major river valley civilizations
- Identify the importance of early inventions in each of the civilizations

Evidence of Student Understanding (Assessment) in this Lesson:

Formative Assessments
1. Ancient Civilization poster board project
2. Ancient Civilization Newspaper
3. Students will also be formally assessed based upon classroom discussions and activities. (See Activities Below)
4. One-Minute Papers
5. Concept Mapping (Sticky Notes)

Summative Assessments
1. The primary summative assessment is the end of unit exam consisting of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions (to be developed by the instructor separately/not included in this lesson plan).
2. The project will also serve as a secondary summative assessment.

Materials Needed:

- Internet Resources
- Books, Magazines and other resources made available by the school site
- Internet Access
- LCD Projector
- Overhead Projector
• Poster-Board
• Transparencies for Map Making
• Color Pencils, Markers, Crayons
• Sticky Notes
• Maps of Areas listed in the lesson plans and activities (India, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, & Egypt)

**Duration:** 4 Class Periods or Two Blocks (210 Minutes)

**Steps to Deliver the Lesson and Activities**

1. **10 Minutes Bell Ringer:** Have students write a brief journal entry that addresses how the advancements shown in the Video, contributed to the rise of more sophisticated civilizations. Also have students address, why the four civilizations emerged on rivers, and how significant geographic location was to their overall development.

2. Students should conduct research using the web-sites listed below in addition to using text and reference books from the library to complete the following questions. Have students choose one of the four major civilizations (Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, China)

3. **30 Minutes** Give the students activity sheets and schedule computer time—they can work alone or in groups. Students can go to the sites to find the answers to the questions. If computer time is not available, students can use information from the attached excerpts from the textbook, Spielvogel, World History, Florida Edition. Chapter 2 Pages 34-53 and Chapter 3 Pages 68-87.
   a. Find research material about the geography of the earliest civilizations.
   b. Find material about the actual sites on which each civilization was founded.
   c. Create a map of your civilization on a transparency.
   d. Where was ___________________ Civilization located?
   e. How long did ___________________ Civilization flourish?
   f. How was ________________Civilization discovered?
g. What do the streets and buildings of ________________ civilization tell us about life?

h. Name the river that supported _____________ civilization.

i. Describe one positive and one negative effect the river had on the civilizations.

j. Describe what life was like in _______________ Civilization.

4. **10 Minutes** To accentuate student excitement about this unit, the teacher can gather books from the library or even artifacts (reproductions) from various sources to bring the “real world” into your classroom. Show students the various objects and briefly discuss their significance.

5. **15 Minutes** Give students maps of India, Pakistan, China, Iran, Iraq and Egypt and have them label information on their civilization. How does this compare to the information that they already listed on their own maps.

6. **20 Minutes** Once students’ complete and gather class activities and review the history of the earliest river valley civilizations. Students can present their information, or the teacher can create a cumulative display of all the student work.

7. **5 Minutes** Upon exiting the class, have students create a one-minute paper to a question you have developed that ultimately reviews what you have accomplished in the classroom that day.

8. **45 Minutes** The next class period, students should be placed in groups, and using poster boards and colored pencils, design one of the cities from the major river valley civilizations. Items that should be included in the map: title, compass rose, scale of miles, legend, farmland, irrigation systems, street structures, government buildings, courtyards and homes of various social classes, religious sites, fortified walls if applicable and anything else you deem important for your students. This will reinforce map skills as well as review the major elements of river valley civilizations that were discussed the previous day.

9. **25 Minutes** In the next part of the Project students should choose one ancient civilization in depth where they can recognize and recall key features from seven other civilizations. This can be done in groups or individually. Students can create a fact sheet or they can create a chart.

   a. Geography    b. time period   c. Government    d. Economy
   e. beliefs       f. Contributions   g. Writing      h. Slavery
i. Arts  j. Rise and Fall  k. Technology

10. You may also use some of the listed activities rather than the projects or part of the projects if it fits within your classroom more effectively.

11. If you decide not to complete the poster board project you may have students create a Newspaper on Ancient Civilizations. Have students name their newspaper, include pictures from the time period, highlight at least one major leader from their civilization, write two articles and identify the time frame which will be covered, and create a map with details about the location.

Activities:

1. **10 Minutes (possible Bell ringer for 2nd Day)** Vocabulary Exercises- Word Associations (Same & Different)- Of the listed words, students must label with an S if the words have the same meaning and a D if the words have a different meaning. (This could be used as a bell ringer).

   a. For Example

      i. Temple-Ziggurat
      ii. Sargon I- Code of Law
      iii. Edduba-Palace
      iv. Cuneiform-Stylus
      v. Giglamesh-Priest-King
      vi. Scribe-Writer
      vii. Empire-Uruk
      viii. Mesopotamia-Nile River
      ix. Hammurabi-Babylon
      x. City-State-Uruk
2. Chart on Early River Valley Civilizations. This chart can be used as you have students present their information and as they listen complete the chart. This can be done independently or in their assigned groups.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mesopotamia</th>
<th>Egypt</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>China</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architectural &amp; Technological Achievements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Writing &amp; Education</td>
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<td>Significant Leaders</td>
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<td>Laws and Codes</td>
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<td>Cultural Practices</td>
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<td>e.g., the role of women</td>
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</tbody>
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3. Summarizing Activity: Discuss the information that has been placed in the charts. What similarities exist between each of the civilizations? Is there a civilization that you would have chosen to be a part of, over another- why? What impact do these civilizations have on our own culture?

**Differentiated Instruction Strategies:**

Students who are identified with learning disabilities can be provided with information before the implementation of the lesson. If ESOL students are present in your classroom, provide students with annotated copies of the material. For those students who are more advanced allot them opportunities to assist with other students.
Furthermore, activities outlined in this lesson plan, serve multiple learning styles and thus various student interests, ranging from linguistic, visual/spatial to logical

**Technology Integration:**

This site provides a map of the ancient cities of Mesopotamia

http://www.mesopotamia.co.uk/geography/explore/exp_set.html

This site explains the culture of the people who lived in Mesopotamia

http://www.penncharter.com/Student/meso/culture/index.html

This site provides information on the rivers, climate, trade and various other characteristics of Mesopotamia.

http://saturn.sron.nl/~jheise/akkadian/mesopotamia.html

This site describes what the Sumerians of Mesopotamia traded with their neighbors.

http://www.penncharter.com/Student/meso/ind/index.html

This site provides a political map of what was once ancient Egypt.

http://www.ancientegypt.co.uk/geography/explore/pol.html

This site describes trade between the Egyptians and the Assyrians.

http://emuseum.mnsu.edu/prehistory/egypt/othercultures/assyrians.html

This site describes the culture and unique characteristics of the Indus Valley.

http://ragz-international.com/indus_valley.htm

This site provides information on the role of the Indus River on the life of people in the Indus Valley.


This site describes the technology and trade of the Indus Valley.

http://www.anthro.mankato.msus.edu/prehistory/india/indus/arts.html

This site provides information on the culture and geography of the Huang He or Yellow River Valley.

http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/ANCCHINA/YELLOW.HTM

This site describes the agricultural technology used by Chinese farmers

http://www.central.k12.ca.us/akers/dailylife.html)
Lesson Closure:

In order to engage students in summarizing their learning, students will synthesize learned information, skills and processes by writing an exit slip. An exit slip can be a one sentence summary of what students learned. Other uses may include but are not limited to answering a review question, pose a question related to topic studied, make a short list of facts learned, set a goal for the next day of class, etc. Prior to providing students with exit sip be sure to decide what its purpose will be (and whether or not this will be a type of formative assessment). During the last 5 minutes of class inform students about the purpose of the task associated with the exit slip. As students exit your classroom, collect their exit slips. This will serve a dual purpose, as they will assess your own teaching and will often indicate whether or not students understood the material presented.