

Who Invented That?

Mesopotamia is called the “**cradle of civilization**” because it was the first place where people came together to live in one place. First, there were small villages and towns. Some towns became large cities as the population grew. **Governments** were formed to take care of the people.

There were many things that helped Mesopotamia grow. Many of these inventions are as important today as they were back then.

The Wheel

Scientists do not know for sure who invented the first wheel. Many say the people of Mesopotamia did. Many agree that Mesopotamians were the first people to use the wheel for everyday things. They used a potter’s wheel to make pots. They used carts with wheels to move goods from place to place. Carts helped towns and cities **trade** with other places. Trade meant they could sell things they did not need and buy things they needed from other people.

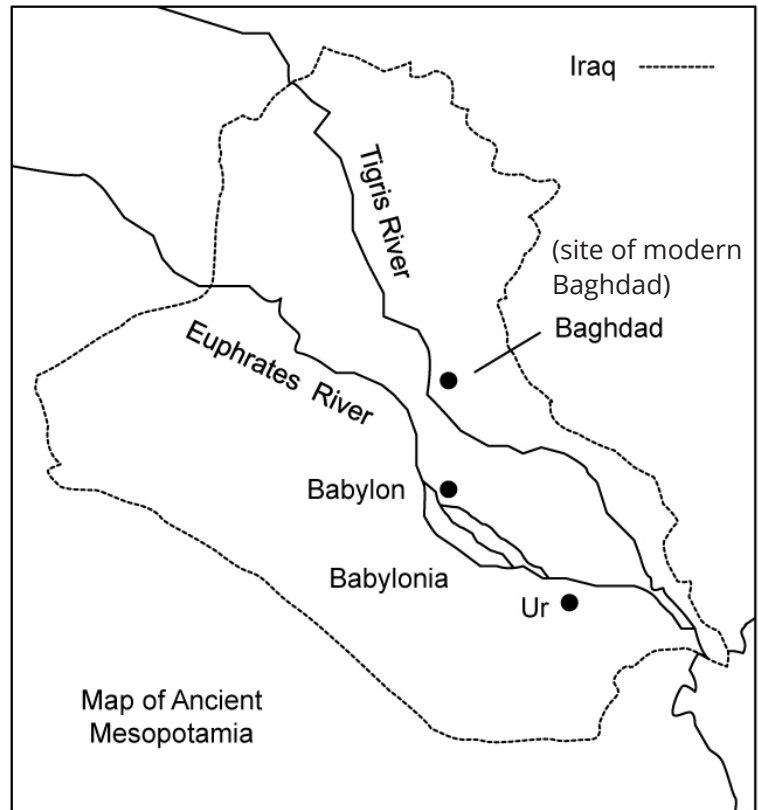
Irrigation

Farmers in Mesopotamia needed lots of water from the rivers to grow crops. Carrying water by hand or in carts was hard work. It took a lot of time. Mesopotamians invented **irrigation** so they could have bigger farms and would not have to work so hard. They dug **canals** that would bring water from the rivers to their farms.

The Seeder Plough

Farmers needed to plough the fields before they could plant seeds. Then they had to go back to put seeds in the ground. The Mesopotamians invented the **seeder plough**. In the seeder plough, there was a funnel with seeds behind the plough. As the plough dug up the soil, the seeds were dropped into the soil right away. This meant that farmers could plant more crops in a shorter time.

People from Mesopotamia also invented the first writing system, the first sailboat, and the first 12-month calendar. They were a remarkable civilization.



Mesopotamia was in present-day Iraq between two rivers—the Tigris and the Euphrates.

“Who Invented That?”–Think About It

1. Why is Mesopotamia called the “cradle of civilization”?

2. How did trade help the people of Mesopotamia?

3. What do you think the word *remarkable* means? Why?

4. What happened when the Mesopotamians invented irrigation?

5. What problem did the invention of the seeder plough solve?

6. What is the purpose of this text?

7. Pick something that was invented by the people from Mesopotamia.
Explain how you use it today.
