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Children's Atlas of World History

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CHILDREN'S ATLAS OF WORLD HISTORY



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ANCIENT WORLD



Illustrated by Katherine Baxter



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The ancient world

Humans have walked the earth for about 200,000 years, at first hunting and gathering their food wherever they could in order to survive. About 10,000 years ago, people learned how to cultivate crops, which meant they could live in settled communities near their fields. From these small villages grew the towns and cities that gave birth to the great civilizations of the ancient world. At first, workers in these civilizations used stone tools, but by 6000BCE copper was in use in the Middle East, followed by bronze and then iron. Each material gave its name to an age or period of history. Not every civilization passed through these four ages: for example in Africa the Bantus went straight from the Stone Age to the Iron Age.

KEY TO MAPS IN THIS CHAPTER

■ NIMRUD	Capital city
● Catal Hüyük	Other city, town or village
▲ Giza	Pyramid
✦ Uluru	Other ancient site
- - - -	Empire boundary

NORTH AMERICA

Greenland
Inuit people
pp44–45

Mesa Verde
Anasazi people
pp44–45

North-east America
Iroquois people
pp44–45

Teotihuacan
Central Americans
pp46–47

CENTRAL AMERICA

Chichén Itzá
Mayan people
pp46–47

Moche
South American peoples
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Tiahuanaco
Andes people
pp46–47

Atlantic Ocean

EUROPE

Stonehenge
Ancient Britons
pp20–21

see inset

AFRICA

Bantus
African ironworkers
pp38–39

Meroë
Nubians
pp38–39

Axum
Ancient Africa
pp38–39

ASIA

Mohenjo-Daro
Indus Valley people
pp22–23

Persepolis
Persians
pp28–29

Xianyang
Chinese
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Sarnath
Mauryans
pp40–41

Indian Ocean

AUSTRALIA

Uluru
Aboriginals
pp48–49

Pacific islands
Polynesians
pp48–49



ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS
Each picture symbol on this world map relates to an ancient civilization you will find later on in the chapter. The page numbers next to each symbol tell you where you should look to find out about each civilization and its people.

DATING
In this book, we use the dating system BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era). We have used this system because the common system that you may find in other books – BC and AD – is a Christian dating system and so is misleading when dealing with non-Christian cultures and civilizations. The date 100BCE is the same as 100BC, while 100CE is the same as AD100.

10000BCE–1000CE

10000BCE
10000 Hunter-gatherers roam many parts of the earth

9000BCE
9000 Farmers keep herds of sheep in mountains near the Fertile Crescent

8000BCE
8000 First settled farming communities in the Levant

7000BCE
7000 Settled farming communities throughout Fertile Crescent
6700 Catal Hüyük is largest town
6500 Pottery in general use throughout Fertile Crescent
6200 Copper smelting begins in Anatolia

6000BCE
6000 Cattle first domesticated

5000BCE
5000 First towns and temples built in Mesopotamia
4500 Copper Age begins in Balkans (south-east Europe)
4300 Uruk in Mesopotamia is world's first city

4000BCE
3400 Pictogram writing begins in Mesopotamia
3300 First towns built in Egypt
3200 First wheeled vehicles used in Sumer

3000BCE
3000 Megaliths built in Europe
2900 Cuneiform writing in Sumer
2630 First pyramid in Egypt
2600 Indus Valley civilization
2500 Bronze Age starts in Europe
2350 World's first law code written in Mesopotamia

2000BCE
2000 Minoan civilization in Crete
1800 Sumerian empire
1700 Babylonian empire
1450 Mycenean civilization in Greece

1000BCE
1000 Iron Age begins in Europe
1000 Bantus in southern Africa
900 First Greek city-states founded
510 Roman republic founded
500 Persian empire
350 Maya city-states emerge

0
100 Axum flourishes in Ethiopia
200 Hopewells build mounds in North America

by **1000** Polynesians reach New Zealand

1000CE

The ancient world:

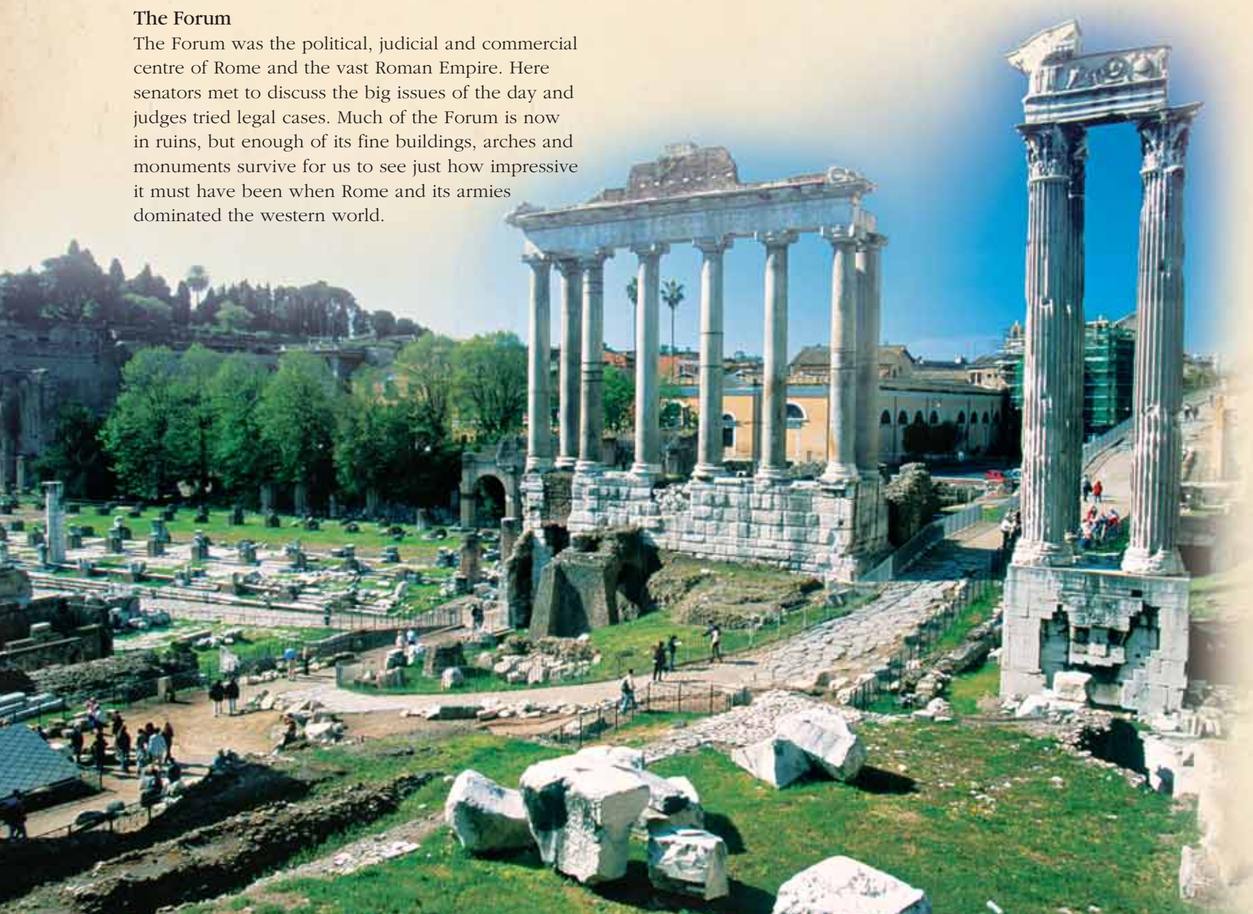
How we know about the past

Although we cannot travel back in time to speak to people who lived in the ancient world, we can discover much about them from the objects they left behind. Buildings, aqueducts and roads, everyday objects such as pots, tools, coins and writing implements, and luxury items such as jewellery and gold ornaments, have all survived to tell their tale. Some buildings, like the Forum in Rome, are still partly standing, while other buildings and smaller objects were buried for centuries and have only recently been uncovered by archaeologists. All these remains tell us a great deal about the peoples of the ancient world and the lives they led. From them we can piece together a picture of what it was like to live in ancient Rome or China, to march with Alexander's army or sail the Pacific colonizing new islands.



Royal music
This silver lyre – a stringed musical instrument – was made in Ur, southern Iraq, about 4,500 years ago. It was found in the Royal Cemetery, a lavish burial site where the kings of Ur were buried with their servants. Its fabulous craftsmanship and its place of discovery suggest that it was played at the royal court, and was buried with the king so that he could continue to enjoy it in the afterlife.

The Forum
The Forum was the political, judicial and commercial centre of Rome and the vast Roman Empire. Here senators met to discuss the big issues of the day and judges tried legal cases. Much of the Forum is now in ruins, but enough of its fine buildings, arches and monuments survive for us to see just how impressive it must have been when Rome and its armies dominated the western world.





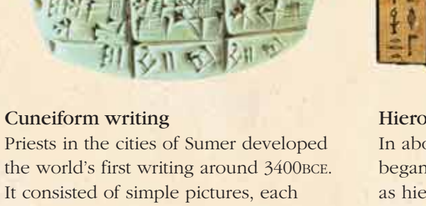
Cuneiform writing
Priests in the cities of Sumer developed the world's first writing around 3400BCE. It consisted of simple pictures, each representing a word or idea. By 2900BCE, this had developed into cuneiform, a writing system using wedge-shaped marks (*cuneus* is Latin for wedge) made by pressing a reed stylus into wet clay.



Hieroglyphics
In about 3300BCE the ancient Egyptians began to use a form of writing known as hieroglyphics. These were more complex than Sumerian picture writing, using about 700 different signs to represent different ideas, words and even individual letters. The hieroglyphs above date from the 1st century BCE.



Mayan writing
Zapotec scribes in the Americas developed their own, unique form of hieroglyphic picture writing in about 800BCE. Later, the Maya used these to develop their own advanced literary language with a glyph for every syllable. Many glyphs have only recently been translated.



Chinese coins
We use coins every day, but each coin is a piece of history with a story of its own to tell. They show rulers and important symbols, and we can tell a lot about trade from where they are found. The Chinese have been using coins since the 5th century BCE. These were made with a hole in the middle so that they could be kept on a string.



Hands-on history
Archaeologists study the evidence left behind by previous generations. They examine a site or object, looking for clues that might tell them how old it is, who made it, and why it was found where it was. Even the tiniest scrap of evidence can provide a vital clue, and archaeology can be a lengthy process. Here, an archaeologist is examining a Roman mosaic uncovered during road construction in Israel.

The first towns

In about 8000BCE, people in the Levant made one of the most important discoveries in history. They learned how to cultivate wild cereals such as wheat and barley. This was the beginning of farming, and it meant that people could live in one place near their crops. As a result, permanent settlements grew up here and throughout the Fertile Crescent, the arc of fertile land that stretches from southern Levant to Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf. The first farmers built villages and, later, walled towns such as Jericho and Catal Hüyük. In towns, not everyone was a farmer. Townspeople learned new skills such as making pottery and smelting copper, and began to trade. This helped their towns to prosper and expand.

Catal Hüyük
The mud-brick buildings of Catal Hüyük housed 6,000 people between 6700 and 5700BCE. Many of the houses were decorated with wall paintings and sculptures.

Jericho
The first permanent settlement at Jericho was built in 8500BCE. By 8000BCE, it was walled, housing at least 1,500 people.

Crops
Cereals were first cultivated in the Levant in about 8000BCE.

Fishing
Fishermen on the rivers Tigris and Euphrates built boats of reeds and rushes to catch the plentiful fish.

Temples
The people of southern Mesopotamia built large temples and grain storehouses in Uruk and other towns after 5000BCE.

Eridu
Eridu, the oldest town in southern Mesopotamia, had a population of about 5,000 in 4000BCE. It traded pottery and other goods with Arabia.

Pottery
The potters of Hassuna learned how to fire pottery in a kiln around 6000BCE.

Smelting copper
Copper smelting to make weapons and tools reached southern Mesopotamia before 4000BCE.

Irrigating the land
Farmers began building canals and irrigation ditches in Mesopotamia in about 5500BCE.

Local industry
A pottery industry using local clay grew up in Susa and nearby towns in the 4000s BCE.



The development of farming

The first peoples were hunter-gatherers who found food by killing wild animals and collecting wild fruits, nuts and cereals. In the Levant, wild crops were so plentiful that by about 10000BCE people did not need to move around to find food. Slowly they learned how to plant and grow wild cereals, so the crops would produce more food and be easier to harvest. Early farmers domesticated sheep, goats, pigs and cattle, so that by 6000BCE, they could feed a large, settled urban population.

10000BCE–4000BCE

10000BCE
10000 Farmers in the Levant first build wooden huts with stone foundations

9500BCE

9000BCE
9000 Wild sheep herds are first kept by farmers in Taurus and Zagros Mountains

8500BCE

8000BCE
8000 Barley and wheat are cultivated in the Levant, allowing settled farming communities to develop
8000 Walled city of Jericho has 1,500 inhabitants

7500BCE
7500 Flax is first used for textiles

7000BCE
7000 Settled farming communities flourish throughout Fertile Crescent
7000 Goats, sheep and later pigs are domesticated in Taurus Mountains
6700 Catal Hüyük, with 6,000 inhabitants, is the largest town

6500BCE
6500 Pottery comes into general use

6200 Copper smelting begins in Catal Hüyük

6000BCE
6000 Cattle are first domesticated
6000 Kiln-fired pottery develops at Hassuna

5500BCE
5500 Irrigation allows farming communities to flourish in the arid soil of Mesopotamia

5000BCE
5000 The first towns and temples are built in Mesopotamia

4500BCE
4500 The plough, sail and potter's wheel are in common use in Mesopotamia
4300 Copper working for tools and weapons begins in Mesopotamia
4000 Sheep are bred for wool

4000BCE