



Ancient Sumer Fact Cards

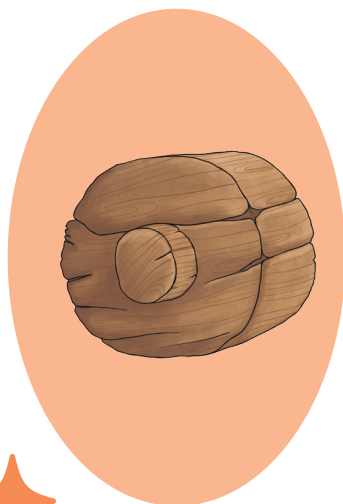
In 5000 BC, people began to move into the area of Mesopotamia, now called Sumer.

In 4000 BC, the Sumerians began building temples for their gods.



In 3500 BC, the wheel was invented. It was first used as a potter's wheel but was then used for chariots.

In 3300 BC, pottery was being mass-produced. The Sumerians began inscribing symbols into clay.



Early Sumerian writing used pictures called hieroglyphs. This developed into a wedge-shaped script called cuneiform.

Symbols were inscribed in clay tablets using a blunt reed to make marks.

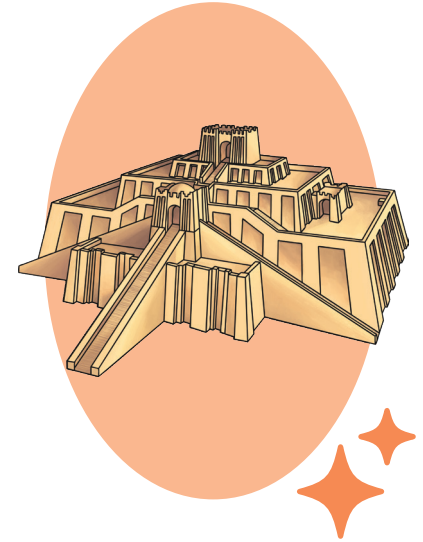


In 2500 BC, The Royal Standard of Ur was made. It is a slim wooden box, shaped like a wedge, with elaborate mosaics on each side. The mosaics are made from red limestone, shell and lapis lazuli which is a semi-precious blue stone.

Archeologists have learned a lot about life and culture in Sumerian Ur from the mosaic pictures.



The Sumerians had many different gods and goddesses. By 2100 BC, each city worshipped its own main god in a ziggurat. This had three platforms, steep steps up the front and a temple at the top.

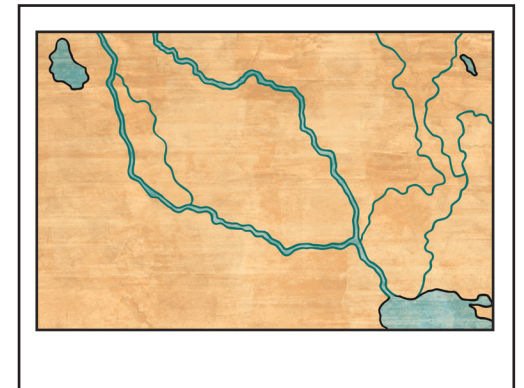


Sumerian people from the free classes were rulers, kings, priests and skilled workers, such as farmers, merchants and writers.



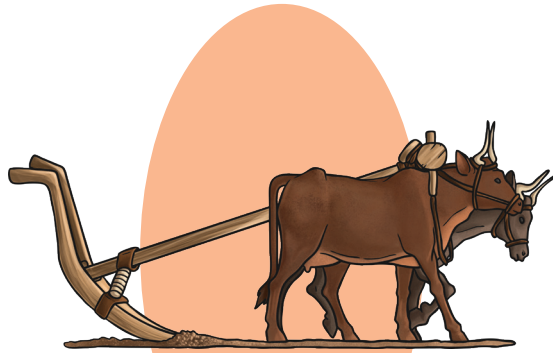
As Sumerians had settled between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers, the land would flood and fertilize the ground.

Sumerian farmers dug canals to direct the water to where it was needed.



The Sumerians invented a seed planter which would be pulled by oxen, creating a furrow in which seeds could be planted.

Ancient Sumerian farmers also invented the rake, the sickle and the shovel.



The Sumerians built their cities on isolated areas of land. Each city became its own self-governed unit of civilisation centred around a temple to the gods.

People were divided into the free classes and those who were enslaved people. The enslaved people were forced to serve the free classes.

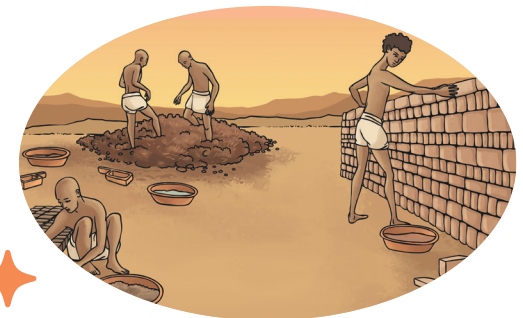


The Sumerians were among the first people to keep animals for food. Oxen were used for work in the fields and donkeys were used for transport.

Wool was used for clothing and rugs.



Buildings in Sumer were usually made from sun-baked mud bricks.



Later, wooden moulds were developed to make bricks a uniform shape and size. They used bitumen to waterproof the bricks and fill in any gaps in the buildings. Bitumen was made from tar.