



# Civilization in Ancient Mesopotamia

## ► Gathering the Facts

1. Turn to pages 10–11 of the Atlas. Read the introduction. Also look at chart B, “Sumerians Develop Writing,” and picture A and read its caption to complete the following paragraph.

The earliest know civilization was \_\_\_\_\_. It developed in an area called \_\_\_\_\_. The Sumerians were known for trading with places as far as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. The Sumerians also created the first written \_\_\_\_\_. The language was made up of wedge shapes known as \_\_\_\_\_, which became the basis of written languages in Mesopotamia. Sumerians lived in independent \_\_\_\_\_, each with its own ruler, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. The neighboring region of \_\_\_\_\_, led by the ruler \_\_\_\_\_, later conquered Sumer. Akkad also conquered the rest of the region surrounding the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ Rivers.

## ► Places, Regions, and Landscapes

2. Look at map C, “Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia.” Write **T** next to each of the following statements if it is true or **F** if the statement is false.
- a. Mesopotamia means “good farmland.” \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Mesopotamia included all of the land between the Tigris River and the Sinai Desert. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. The Fertile Crescent included Mesopotamia. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. The Fertile Crescent included present-day Egypt. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. The Fertile Crescent was bordered by the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf. \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. The dry desert made farming in the Fertile Crescent difficult. \_\_\_\_\_
  - g. Mesopotamia included parts of the present-day countries of Syria, Iraq, and Turkey. \_\_\_\_\_
  - h. The Fertile Crescent was located between deserts and mountains. \_\_\_\_\_

### ★ Thinking About History

3. Use the history question, "Is it a city or is it a state?," map D, "Sumer," and map E, "Akkadian Empire," to answer the following questions.

a. What is the difference between a city-state and an empire?

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b. Explain why a city-state or an empire would be easier to rule.

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### ➤ People and Cultures

4. Use map D, "Sumer," to identify the culture of the following city-states. Write **SU** for Sumerian, **SE** for Semitic, or **EL** for Elamite.

#### City-State

#### Culture

a. Ebla

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b. Ur

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c. Mari

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d. Ashur

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e. Susa

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f. Akshak

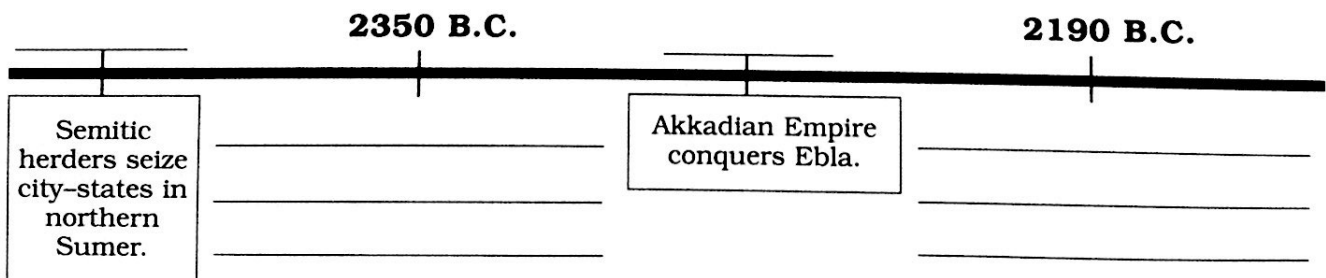
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g. Uruk

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### ★ Time and Change

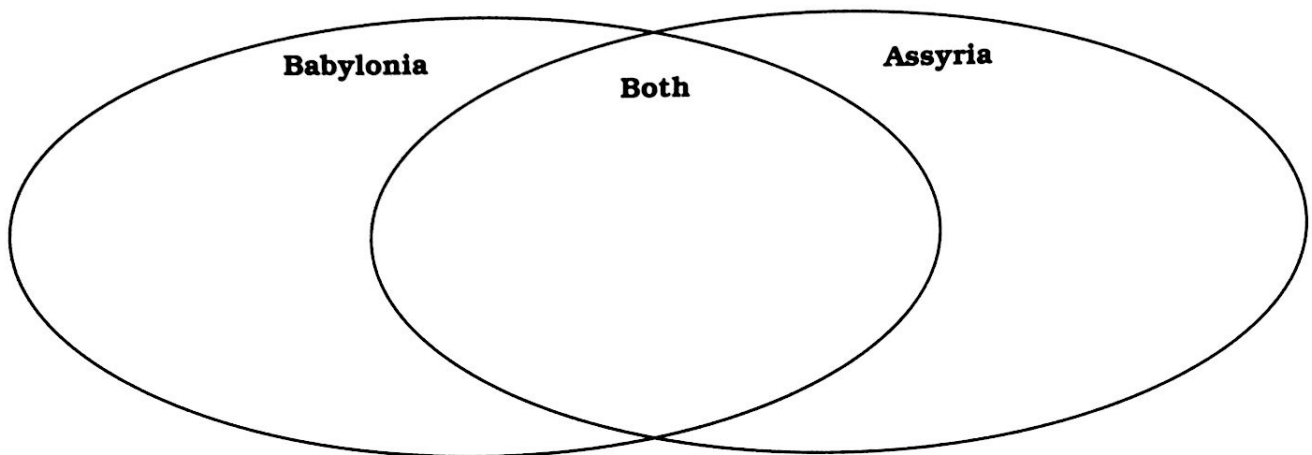
5. Use information from map D, "Sumer," and map E, "Akkadian Empire," to complete the following timeline.



# Babylonia and Assyria

## ► People and Cultures

1. Turn to pages 12–13 in the Atlas. Read the introduction. Also look at picture B and read its caption. Then put each word or phrase from the Word Bank under the empire it describes in the diagram below.



### Word Bank

Known for fierce army  
Built monuments to show wealth

From Babylon  
From Ashur

Built an empire in Fertile Crescent  
Center of learning

## ► History Through Maps

2. Look at map A, "Assyria and Babylonia." Write **T** next to each of the following statements if it is true or **F** if the statement is false.
- a. Babylonia was larger than Assyria in 1800 B.C. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Copper and tin were used to make weapons. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. By 1750 B.C. Assyria had conquered most of Babylonia. \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Hammurabi was responsible for conquering most of Assyria. \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Hammurabi's death had little effect on the Babylonian Empire. \_\_\_\_\_

## ★ Thinking About History

3. Read the history question, "Why do empires fail?" Why are empires hard to govern?

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**► Gathering the Facts**

4. Look at map C, "New Assyrian Empire." Use the map to complete the following paragraph.

In 934 B.C the \_\_\_\_\_ regained power and began expanding from their capital at \_\_\_\_\_. By 824 B.C. the Assyrian Empire reached the \_\_\_\_\_ River to the south and west. During the next 160 years, the Assyrians built the largest empire in the Fertile Crescent, conquering lands all the way to the \_\_\_\_\_ Sea. In 671 B.C. they conquered \_\_\_\_\_. The Assyrians continued to move south until they reached and conquered the city of \_\_\_\_\_ in 663 B.C. The Assyrians ruled many different groups of people until 612 B.C., when they were conquered by the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

**★ Time and Change**

5. Use map D, "New Babylonian Empire," to sequence the following events in chronological order. Write a 1 next to the event that occurred first and 5 next to the event that occurred last.

**Event****Rank**

- a. Babylonians fail to conquer Egypt. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Babylonians conquer Nineveh. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Babylonians conquer Jerusalem. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Persians attack Babylon. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Babylonians conquer Carchemish. \_\_\_\_\_

**► People and Cultures**

6. Use chart E, "Babylonian Contributions to Science," to answer the following questions.

- a. Into how many months did the Babylonians divide a year? \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Into how many hours did they divide a day? \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Into how many minutes did they divide an hour? \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Is this the same way we divide time today? \_\_\_\_\_



# Civilization in Ancient Mesopotamia

The earliest known civilization, Sumer, and the world's first empire, the Akkadian Empire, both developed in Mesopotamia.

- The Sumerians developed the first written language and the first laws. They also traded with places as far away as Egypt and India.
- Each Sumerian city-state was independent. Each had its own ruler, own special god, and own army.
- People from the neighboring region of Akkad later conquered Sumer and the rest of the area around the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Once conquered, city-states were simply cities.



**A** Sargon was the first ruler of the Akkadian Empire. He conquered all of Mesopotamia and beyond.

## Sumerians Develop Writing 7000–3000 B.C.

Word	Token 7000 B.C.	Pictograph 3500 B.C.	Cuneiform 3000 B.C.
Sheep			
Metal			

**B** People in Mesopotamia first used objects, or tokens, to record trades. Sumerians then drew the same shapes on clay tablets. Later they used triangular reeds to draw these shapes. These wedge shapes, or cuneiform, became the basis of written languages in Mesopotamia.

## Is it a city or is it a state?

Early civilizations weren't part of a large country. Instead, people were governed by their own **city-state**. A city-state included a city and the surrounding countryside. There are a few city-states today, such as Monaco in Europe and Singapore in Asia.

**Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia**

Fertile Crescent  
 Mesopotamia

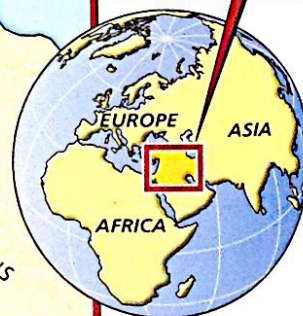
Map shows present-day boundaries and names in gray.

0 100 200 miles  
0 100 200 kilometers

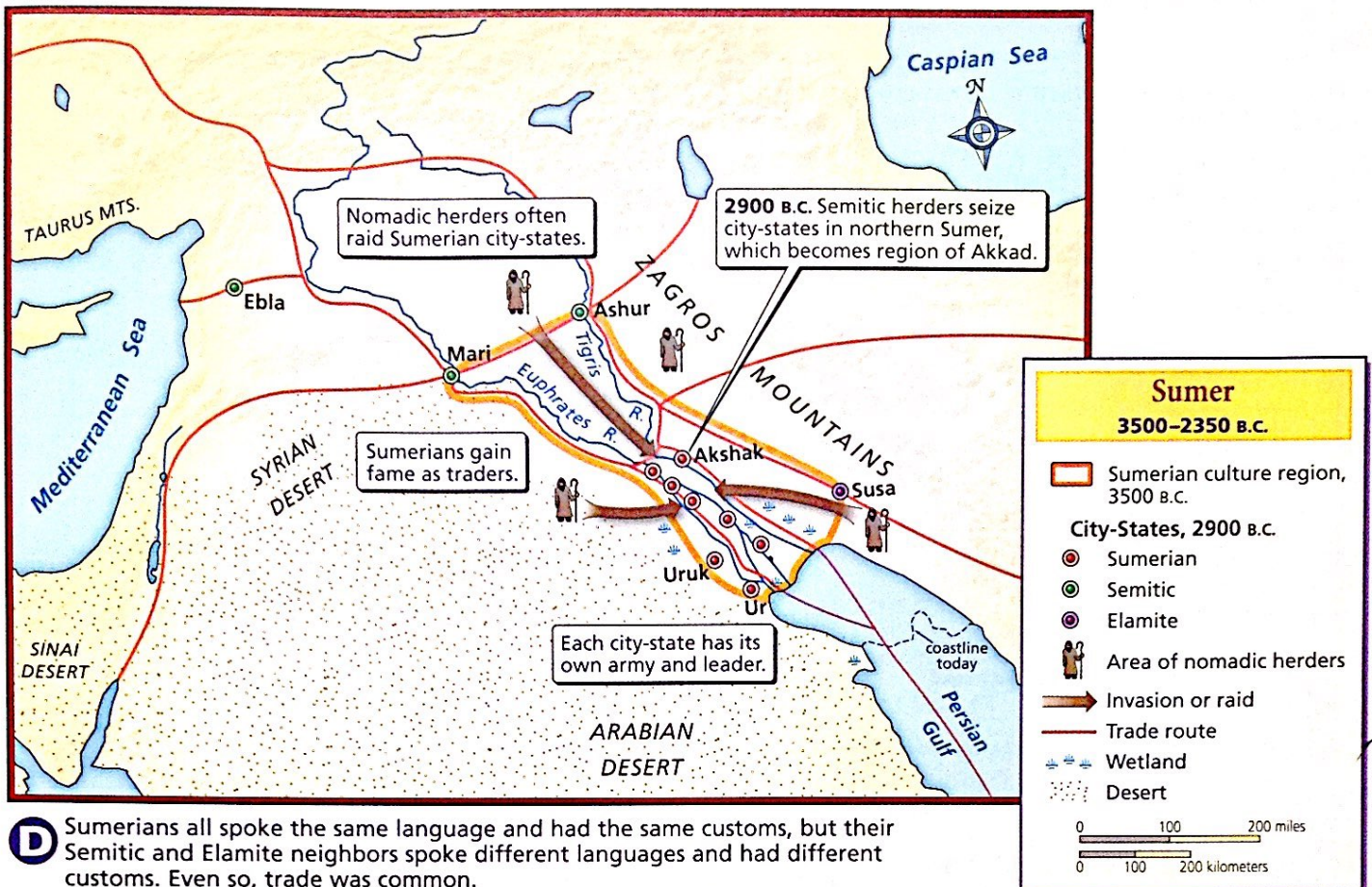
**C** Mesopotamia, the area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, means "between the rivers." Mesopotamia was part of an area of good farmland, called the Fertile Crescent.



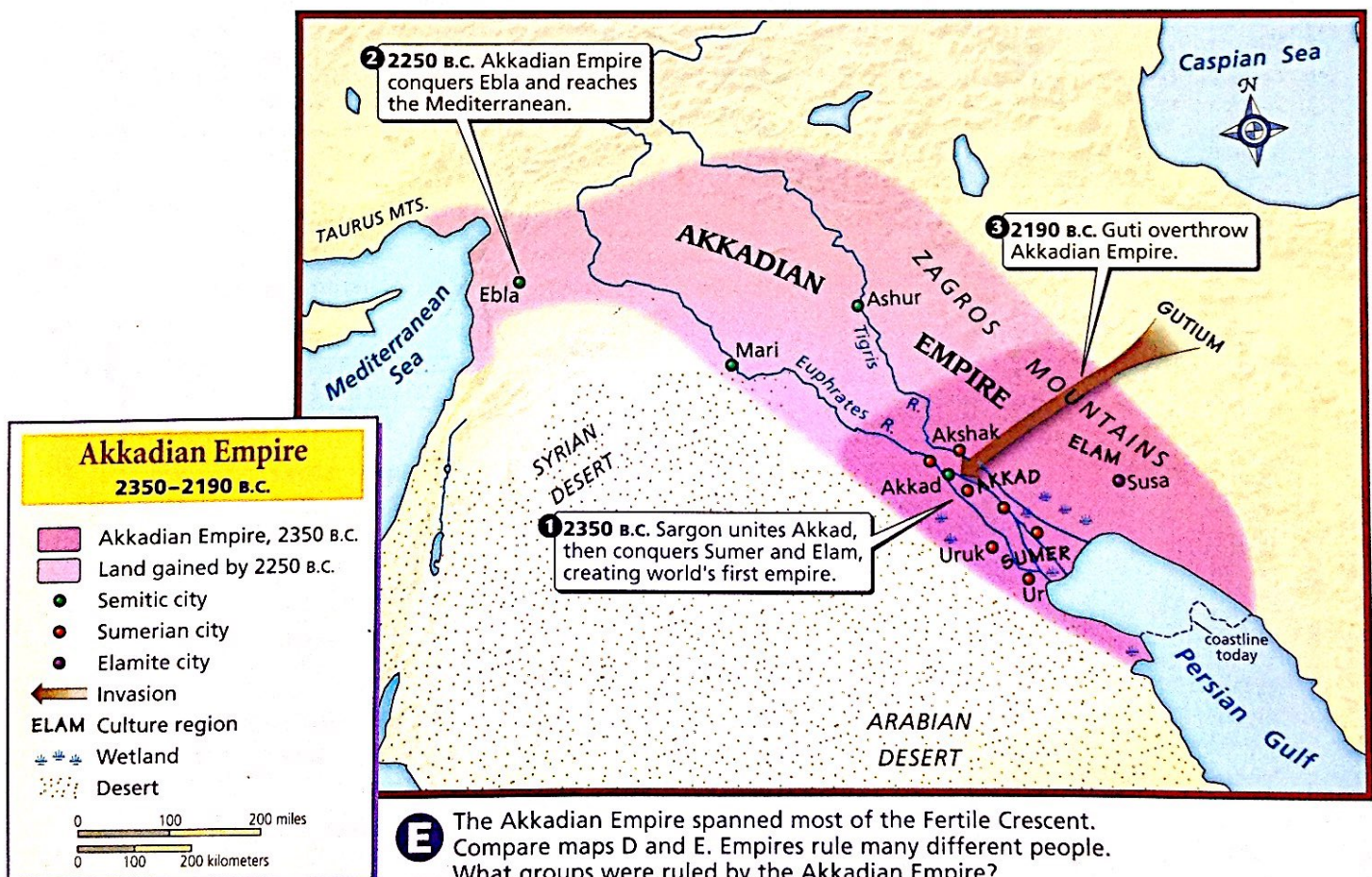
Area shown in maps C, D, and E







**D** Sumerians all spoke the same language and had the same customs, but their Semitic and Elamite neighbors spoke different languages and had different customs. Even so, trade was common.



**E** The Akkadian Empire spanned most of the Fertile Crescent. Compare maps D and E. Empires rule many different people. What groups were ruled by the Akkadian Empire?



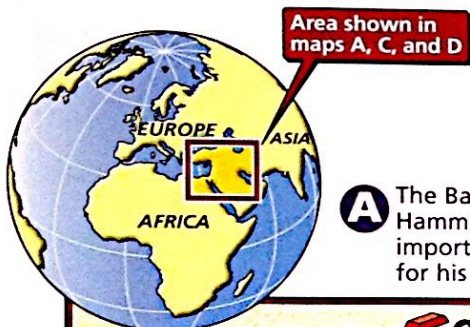
# Babylonia and Assyria

After the Akkadian Empire fell, two groups struggled for control of the Fertile Crescent. Babylonians from Babylon and Assyrians from Ashur became the major powers in the region.

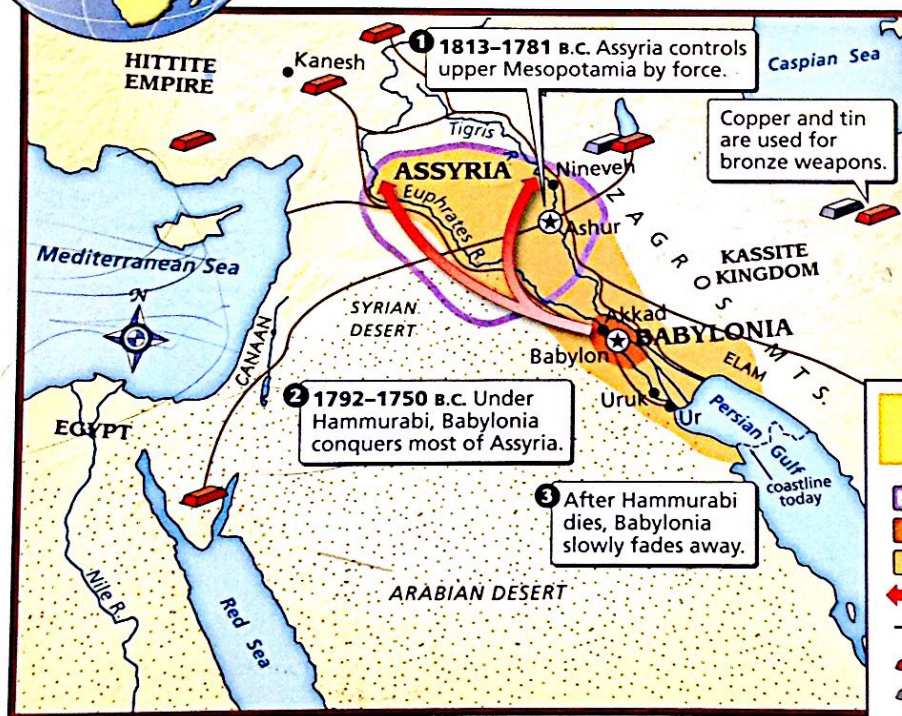
- Babylon was long known as a center of learning. Babylonian science and literature were admired and imitated throughout the Fertile Crescent.
- In contrast, Assyria was known for its fierce army.
- Babylonia and Assyria fought each other often over the course of a thousand years. Each conquered the other more than once.



**B** The Babylonians and Assyrians built monuments to show their wealth and power. Above is a replica of Babylon's Ishtar Gate. The wealth came from conquests and taxes.



**A** The Babylonian Empire expanded under Hammurabi, one of Babylonia's most important kings. He is also remembered for his extensive law code.



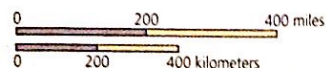
## Why do empires fail?

Akkad, Babylon, and Ashur all produced empires, ruling distant lands with languages and customs unlike their own. Such differences, along with the common preference for familiar rulers, make empires hard to govern.

## Assyria and Babylonia 1800–1600 B.C.

- Assyria, 1800 B.C.
- Babylonia, 1800 B.C.
- Babylonian gains by 1750 B.C.
- ➔ Babylonian conquest
- Trade route
- Copper
- Tin
- ★ Capital

EGYPT Independent empire or state  
ELAM Culture region  
Desert





**New Assyrian Empire**

934–612 B.C.

- Assyria, 911 B.C.
- Assyrian gains by 824 B.C.
- Assyrian gains by 664 B.C.
- Babylonian conquest
- Assyrian conquest
- Babylonian conquest
- Capital
- Assyrians Culture group

**C** Centuries later, Assyrian armies again terrified the entire Fertile Crescent. They conquered the Babylonians, Phoenicians, Hebrews, Egyptians, and others.

**New Babylonian Empire**

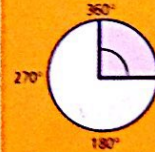
612–539 B.C.

- Babylonian Empire, 600 B.C.
- Babylonian conquest
- Persian conquest
- Babylonian conquest
- Persian conquest
- Capital
- Assyrians Culture group

**D** Chaldeans from Babylonia conquered Assyria. The New Babylonian Empire was the last of the Mesopotamian empires. Compare its size with that of Babylonia's original empire, shown on map A.

**Babylonian Contributions to Science****TIME**

Year has 12 months.  
Day has 24 hours.  
Hour has 60 minutes.

**MATHEMATICS**

Circle has 360 degrees.

**ASTRONOMY**

Dates of eclipses can be calculated.

**E** Babylonians liked numbers that could be evenly divided by many other numbers. Notice how such numbers are used in Babylonian contributions to time and mathematics.