

Social Studies Chapter 4 Notes

1. Some characteristics of Mesopotamia are: hilly and received rain (northern part), low plains with little rain (southern part), rivers sometimes flood, soil was hard and dry most of the year, few trees, few stones, few natural barriers.
2. Some advantages of living in the foothills of the Zagros Mountains included: mild weather, plentiful rains, wood for shelters, and stones for tool-making.
3. One problem that occurred in the foothills was a food shortage due to an increase in population. To solve it, farmers moved from the foothills to the plains of Sumer, near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.
4. The Sumerians were an ancient people who lived in Sumer, the plains region of southern Mesopotamia.
5. During the spring in Sumer, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers flooded the plains. For the rest of the year, Sumer was hot, dry, and windy.
6. It was difficult to raise crops in Sumer because farmers had either too much water or not enough. They had no way to control the water supply. To solve it, the Sumerians controlled the water supply by building an irrigation system. The Sumerians also controlled the water supply by digging canals and constructing dams and reservoirs.
7. Sumerian farmers had to maintain the irrigation system across village boundaries because they became clogged with silt. To solve this problem, Sumerian farmers had to work together for the common good to maintain the irrigation system. Because of this, the Sumerians began to live in larger towns and cities.
8. Sumerian cities fought with each other over the right to use water.
9. The physical geography of Sumer left the city unprotected because there were no natural geographic barriers (such as mountains and rivers) in the plains of Sumer. Therefore, to protect themselves, the Sumerians built walls and moats around their cities.
10. The cities of Sumer are called city-states because they were like independent countries.