

Ancient Sumer



<https://cf.nearpod.com/neareducation/new/Slide/3287489/iconipad>

Life in Sumer

- As Sumerian society grew more complex, it divided into several social groups or classes
- The king and priests were at the top of the upper classes of Sumer.
- The upper class also included landowners, government officials and rich merchants.
- The in between classes included all free people. Most of the people of Sumer made up this class. (Working Class)
- Slaves made up the lowest class.

Sumerian Social Order

<u>Title</u>	<u>Description</u>
king	Believed the gods gave them the right to rule
priests	Gave up working & lived of the offerings of the people- given large tracts of land to rent out to farmers for financial support
Skilled craftspeople	Crafters with specific skills that are in high need
merchants	People who buy & sell goods to the public
Traders *huge <u>impact</u> on Sumer	Travel to far away places to trade gold, silver, copper, lumber, & precious stones
Farmers	Grow crops- working class
Laborers	People who do manual labor-ex. Build bricks and structures- working class
Slaves	People bought and sold to be laborers for the wealthy- lowest social class

Draw It

Draw yourself and a friend somewhere on the ziggurat.



SUMERIAN LIFE

Social classes



- Kings, priests
- Wealthy merchants
- Farmers, artisans, ordinary people
- Slaves (from conquest or debt)



Women could work as merchants, farmers, artisans or priestesses: they had more rights than women elsewhere at the time.

The Wheel and Plow

- Historians believe the Sumerians may have invented the plow (about 6000 BCE) and the wheel (about 3500 BCE).
- These inventions helped Sumerians a great deal in their daily lives.

Open Ended Question

What do you think are some ways the Sumerians used the wheel and plow?



<https://www.youtube.com/embed/rcxfoxYX33FE>


SUMERIAN SCIENCE AND TECH



Arithmetic and geometry:
60 second minute, 360 degree circle.



Architecture - Arches, columns, ramps
and ziggurats.



Cuneiform - oldest tablet is from
2300 BCE, writing used to recording
trade, astronomy, chemistry
and medicine.

Cuneiform

- At first, Sumerians used clay tokens that had an image of a product to keep track of goods.
- Such symbols became known as pictographs or "picture writing".
- They drew the pictographs on clay tablets.
- The Sumerians used a sharpened reed called a stylus to press wedge shaped markings into a clay tablet
- The wedge shaped writings called cuneiform and is one of the earliest written languages.
- The language contained up to 600 different symbols.



Draw It

Write your name in Cuneiform!

Sumerian cuneiform



A



B



C



D



E



F



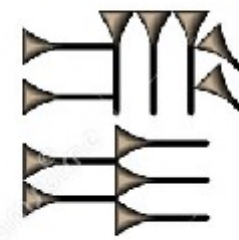
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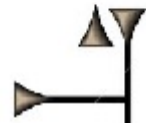
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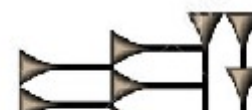
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X



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How do you think Sumerians used cuneiform?

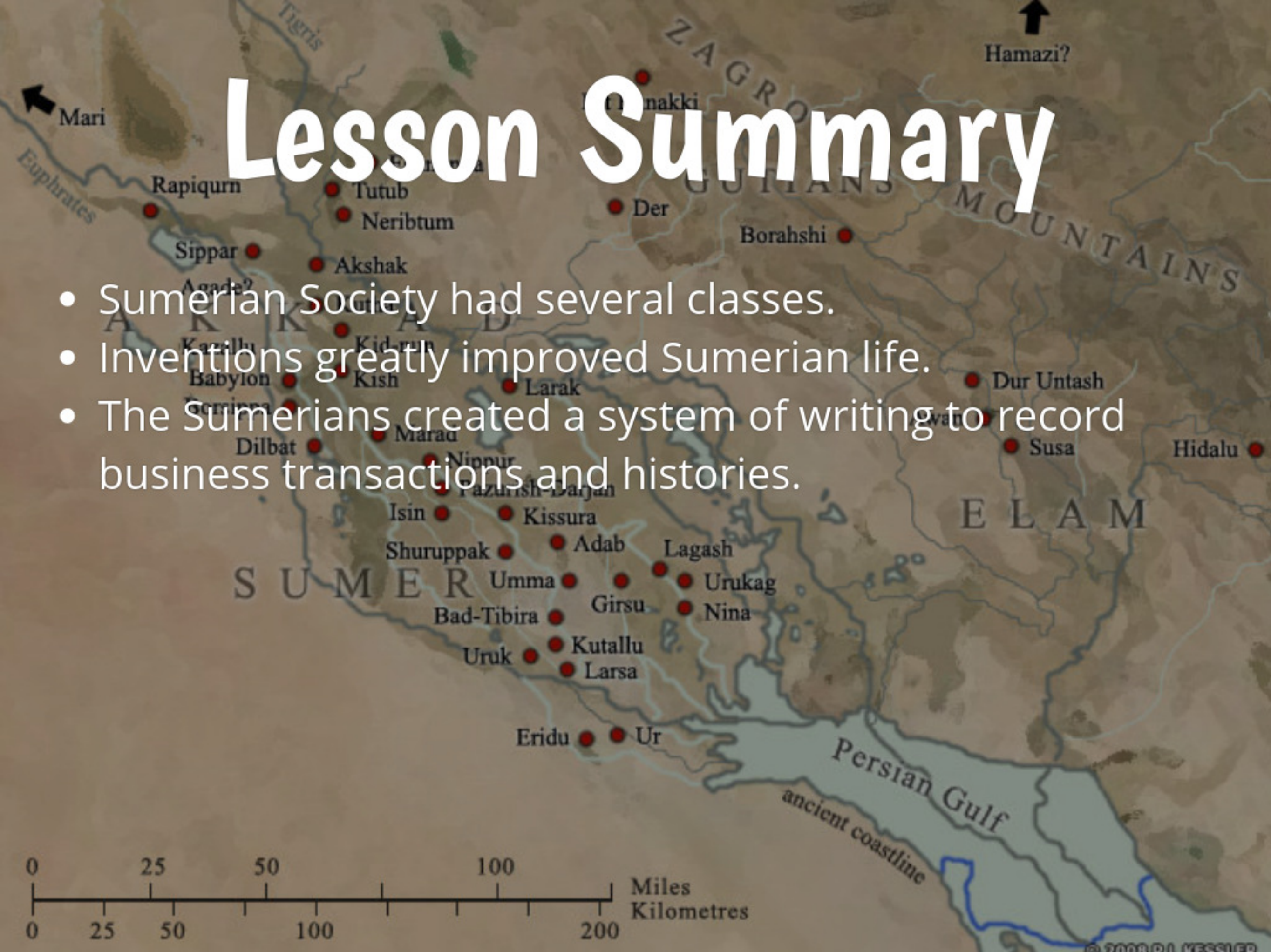
Poll

Which Sumerian technology do you think is most important? Be ready to support your answer.

- ☐ Writing
- ☐ Time: 60 second minute, etc.
- ☐ Architecture: Ziggurats
- ☐ Arithmetic

Lesson Summary

- Sumerian Society had several classes.
- Inventions greatly improved Sumerian life.
- The Sumerians created a system of writing to record business transactions and histories.



Memory Test

