The Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia

Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, Hittites, Assyria
Fertile Crescent

• Region around the Tigris and Euphrates river where many early Empires arose
  – Easy access to water
New Technology: Irrigation

- Man-made canals built to transport water to farms
- Provided steady amount of water allowing for production of more food
New Technology: Bronze

- Use of tools and weapons made of Bronze
  - Copper and tin combined
- Lasted from about 6500-1000 B.C.E.
First Civilization: Sumer

- c. 3500 B.C.E. Sumerians develop writing
  - Beginning of History
- Built Ziggurats
  - Developed religion and art/architecture
- Developed City-States
  - Loose connection of autonomous cities
New Idea: Literature

- Epic of Gilgamesh widely accepted as first book ever written
- Sometime around 2000 B.C.E. by Sumerians
- Story of Gilgamesh and Enkidu’s journeys and Gilgamesh's quest for immortality
New Idea: Polytheism

• Belief in many gods
• Almost all Mesopotamian Empires had own collection of deities whom them worshiped
New Idea: Empire

- Geographically diverse group of states or people united under one Monarch or Oligarchy
Empire of Akkad

• Around 2300 B.C.E. Sargon of Akkad conquered neighboring Sumer to establish world’s first empire.
  – Appointed rulers in different regions to help him
Babylon

• Most famous ruler is Hammurabi
  – 1792-1750 B.C.E.
  – Code of Hammurabi
    • Civil and Criminal Law
New Technology: Codified Laws

- Writing down a system of Laws

Critical Thinking:
- Why would this be such a big deal to have the laws written down?
Hittites

• First Indo-European Empire
  – 1400-1200 B.C.E.
  – Came out of Turkey

• Development of Iron
  – Stronger and Cheaper than bronze

• Development of Chariot
New Technology: Chariots

- Horse-drawn carriages that allowed for a drive and passengers to quickly be moved around a battlefield
  - Mostly carried archers and spearmen
Assyrians

• Around from about the year 2000-625 B.C.E.
• Developed warrior society
  – Main god was Ashur
    • Ashur is god of Assyria...and War
  – Surrender or be destroyed
• First to collect books into libraries
Exit Card

• Which of the technologies mentioned today has been the most important and why?

Use the assertion, reasoning, evidence method to support your answer.