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Introduction



The wonderful thing about teaching students map skills is that they really want to know how to read maps. To students maps are keys to unknown places. Maps hold the promise of an adventure.

Middle-elementary students understand that maps represent places. However, they do not have much experience reading the story behind historical maps. They assume north is straight up, and they become confused by overcrowded maps. The maps in *Ancient Civilizations* provide an excellent bridge to a much deeper understanding of map reading by eliminating extra details—but not so many that the map loses all context. This particular collection also provides students with practice in reading the “story” behind the map.

As students work with the maps in *Ancient Civilizations*, they will

- explore how various people throughout the world have developed in response to conditions in the physical environment.
- describe ways in which the spatial organization of a society changes over time.
- locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations.
- use the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine the absolute locations of places on Earth.
- read and interpret thematic maps.
- estimate distances between two places on a map, using a scale of miles or kilometers.
- use cardinal and ordinal directions when referring to relative location.

The maps in this book progress in chronological order. You do not have to use them in order, but it may assist students in retaining the concepts. Invite students to bring in maps they find, and have the class examine them. Have the class find the title, key, scale, compass rose, and lines of latitude and longitude on the map.

Invite students to compare the ancient maps to modern maps. Encourage them to discuss where they see concentrations of settlements. Invite them to place the maps side by side and observe changes in a region over time. The story of the ancient world is the story of the beginning of humanity. If students spend enough time with the maps and activity sheets, they will understand history’s story much more deeply, and, conveniently, the skills will transfer well to a standardized-testing situation.

How to Use This Book



Hitting the Map Standards

Before you have students read and complete the activity page that precedes each map, lay a firm foundation for the activity by having students complete the Evaluate the Map reproducible (page 5). This reproducible will keep students' map skills sharp for test-taking and will better prepare them to think critically as they complete the activity page that accompanies the map. The first few times that students evaluate a map, guide them through completing the reproducible. Copy the map to an overhead transparency, and display it so you can point to specific elements of the map during discussion. You may want to use the following tips as you do so.

1. Have students work in pairs the first time they complete the reproducible. More details are identified when two pairs of eyes examine the same map.
2. Have a volunteer read aloud the directions. Emphasize that students should be as complete as possible in their answers. This is especially important for questions 7, 8, and 10.
3. Students may simply copy the title for question 1. For question 2, they should not repeat the information in the title. Have them carefully examine the map and ask the following questions:
 - This map was created by a person. What was the person trying to show or teach in this map?
 - Is there a lot of general information or a little, very specific information?
 - Is there anything here that seems out of place? What is it and why do you think the mapmaker included it?
4. Students may need a thorough review of the map terms before they can complete question 3. Assign a color to each check box, and have students circle or underline the parts of the map that correspond to each check box. Invite volunteers to complete this step on the overhead map.
5. Students will benefit from handling a globe for question 4. Help students find the lines of latitude and longitude. Have them notice the direction abbreviation after each measurement. Have them find North America. Point out that North America is in the Northern and Western hemispheres. Model how to relate the map to an area on the globe using latitude and longitude. These maps were produced with a variety of projections to minimize distortion, but land closer to the poles will still show some distortion. Point out any discrepancies you see between the flat maps and the globe.
6. For question 5, help students picture the edge of the map as a number line and the intersecting lines of latitude or longitude as points on the number line. Help them estimate the approximate measurement of the points at each corner.
7. For Question 6, model how to use a ruler to understand the scale. The activity sheets will provide more practice with using the scale to find actual distances. If students struggle with the scale, have them use the ruler to add additional hatch marks to it.
8. For questions 7, 8, and 9, students may simply look at the map and copy the appropriate titles for each item. Question 9 will not always have a visibly obvious answer. Accept all reasonable estimates.
9. Question 10 is fairly self-explanatory. You may invite students to pick four symbols to describe if the key is very detailed and time is short.

Name _____

Date _____



Use the map to answer the questions.

1. What is the title of the map? _____

2. What does the map aim to convey? _____

3. Check the box. This map . . .

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> shows political boundaries. | <input type="checkbox"/> has grid lines. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> shows land and water features. | <input type="checkbox"/> has lines of latitude and longitude. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> has a key. | <input type="checkbox"/> shows individual towns or cities. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> has a scale. | <input type="checkbox"/> includes information specific to the people who live there such as the kinds of business conducted, level of education, or locations of conflict. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> includes a compass rose. | |

4. What hemisphere(s) are shown in part or full on the map? _____

5. Use what you know about latitude and longitude to estimate the following:
This map spans from _____ to _____ latitude and from _____ to _____ longitude.

6. Align the zero on a ruler with the edge of the scale. Describe the scale in terms of inches and miles or millimeters and kilometers (e.g., The scale is 500 miles for each 1.5 inches). _____

7. List some of the land features that are labeled on the map.

8. List four water features that are labeled on the map.

9. Which body of water appears to cover the greatest area? _____

10. Describe the key. What symbols are shown? How do they help you understand the information on the map? _____



Using the Activity Pages



Each activity page contains a short section with enough information about the place featured on the map for students to put what they see in context. Knowing more about the history or people of a location also provides them with mental “hooks” that help them remember what they see.

The activity pages contain either ten questions to which students will respond or six multiple-choice questions similar to those found on standardized tests. These ten questions include those that address coordinates in latitude and longitude, scale, direction relative to a location, reading the key, and relating the map to the background information provided on each page.

Latitude and Longitude

The challenge at this level is that the students’ ability to read the map is strong enough that they would rather hunt for a location than use latitude and longitude to find it. Because of this, each activity page has at least two questions that require students to use this skill. They are asked to find a location using given coordinates. Then, they are asked to estimate the coordinates of a given location. The answer key provides a possible response. You will need to determine the skill level of your students and the scale of the map to decide the margin of error. Students with a great deal of map experience may be asked to be more exact than students who are just learning. The skill of estimating map coordinates is actually fairly complex—students must be able to determine the difference between the two nearest lines (e.g., Are there five degrees between lines? Ten? Fifteen?), and then they must divide the space between those lines into equal areas to find, essentially, each degree between the lines. Finally, if the scale is fairly large, they may need to estimate the distance between each degree. In this book, most coordinates were rounded to the nearest degree. There are a few exceptions where it was rounded to the nearest half degree.

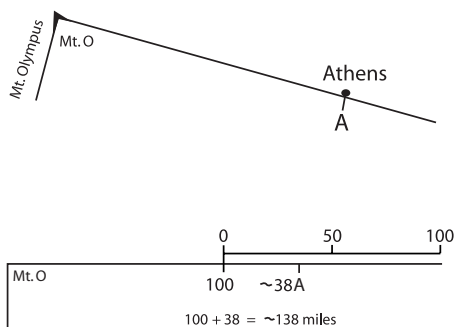
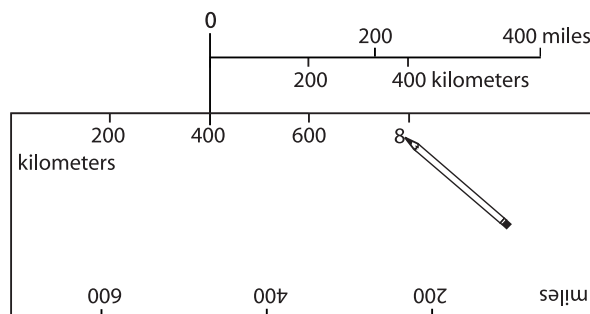
Scale

Although this is a difficult concept for students, once they grasp it they want to measure everything. As with latitude and longitude, provide students new to the skill with a greater margin of error. All of the distances on this map were estimated using one of the two following methods and are not intended to replace any figures you might see listed in a detailed reference of the ancient cities.

Method One—Give each student a blank index card. Have students align the top left corner of the card with the left edge of the scale. Have them use a pencil to copy the hatch marks of the scale and their labels onto the top edge of the card. Have them move the card so that the last hatch mark aligns with the first mark of the scale and extend the scale on their card to double its length. Students should calculate the new distances and add those to their scale. If hatch marks are more than $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart, have them use a ruler to divide the area between hatch marks into smaller equal sections. Have them calculate the value of each of the new hatch marks and add that to their scale. This will facilitate more accurate estimates of distance. Then, have them measure distance by aligning the left edge of the card with the center of the first point and then rotating the card until the edge it passes through the center of the second point. Students should then use the scale on the



edge of the card to estimate the distance. This is an easy and effective way to measure more than one location. Extend the activity by having students copy miles onto one edge of the card and kilometers onto the other.



Method Two—Give each student a blank index card. Have students align the left corner of the card with the center of the first point. Have students rotate the card until the edge of it passes through the center of the second point. Then, have them mark the location of the second place on the edge of the card. Finally, have them align the edge of the card with the scale and compare to find the distance. If the distance exceeds the length of the scale on the map, have them make a small mark to show the end of the scale, move that mark back to zero, and measure the remaining distance. Then, students add the two distances together to find the total distance. This is an easy and effective way to measure one distance.

Cardinal and Ordinal Directions

The cardinal directions are: north, south, east, and west. Ordinal directions are halfway between these points: northwest, northeast, southwest, and southeast. Help students understand these directions further by using a compass to find north in your own classroom. While students usually quickly master the names of the directions and their relationships to each other, they still struggle to apply those directions to one place on a map in relation to another. An interesting cultural note: Saying the directions in the order of north, south, east, and west is a “western” tradition. Many cultures use a different order. For example, the Navajo always start with east and continue clockwise to north. Ask your second-language learners how they learned the directions. Taking a moment to discuss them may help students connect the “old” directions to the “new” ones.

Mapping the Ancient World

The ancient world went through many different “landlords”. At one point, most of the area between the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf was Egyptian. Later it was Greek. Then it was Roman. Sometimes one language was spoken and an entirely different language was being used for writing. The result is this: there is often more than one accepted spelling for the same place. And even more confusing, there is often more than one accepted name for the same people. This book drew from a variety of resources to plot its maps. You may see slightly different boundaries in other maps. You may see slightly different spellings. We chose to use a hugely popular and well-respected encyclopedia for the final word, but if your social studies spine has some slight differences, neither may be incorrect.

The First Civilizations



Read the paragraph for background information. Then use the map to answer the questions.

It wasn't easy to be a prehistoric nomad. You wandered everywhere with your small family group looking for food. But if you were lucky enough to wander into the fertile crescent, your lives changed. What the nomads found was an especially fertile area for growing crops between the two rivers of the Tigris and Euphrates. At the same time, people were settling around the Nile River in Egypt.

The relative ease of obtaining food made for a stable population. This permitted the growth of cultural inventions such as art, music, and written languages. The Sumerians were the first known civilization to record simple transactions on wet clay tablets. After the tablets dried, they could last a long time.

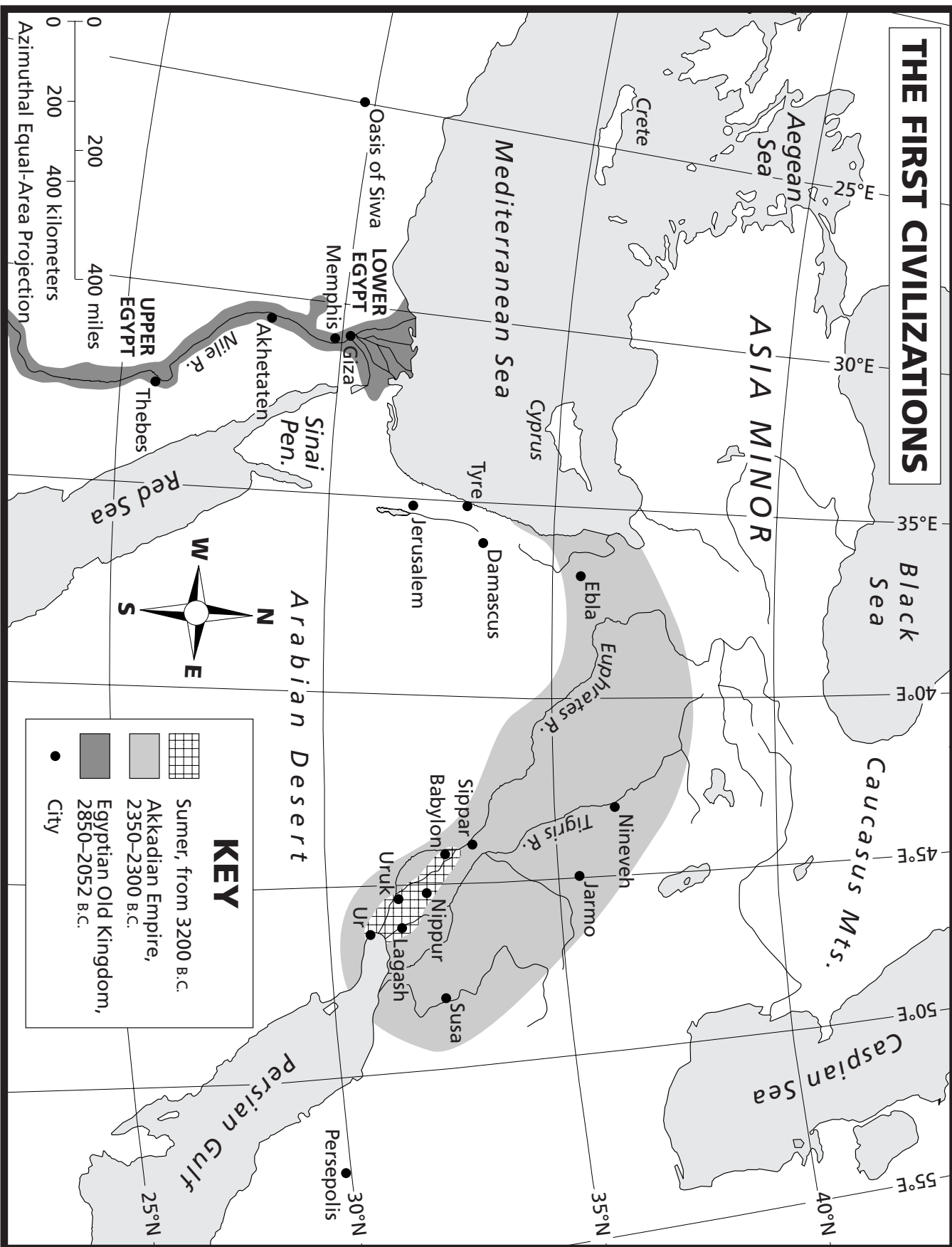
In Egypt, writing took the form of stylized pictures called hieroglyphs. These were painted on walls, carved into rock, and painted on papyrus paper. Papyrus paper was easier to transport than the clay tablets of their neighbors to the west, but the paper did not last very long.

1. Name the city north of Damascus. _____
2. Think about the shape of a crescent. On the map, which shaded area probably corresponds most closely with the area called the fertile crescent?

3. Which sea is southeast of Giza? _____
4. Which city is at about $35\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{N}$ and 45°E ? _____
5. Which city is at about $35\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}\text{N}$ and 37°E ? _____
6. Assuming the way is equally difficult, would it take longer to get from Ur to Uruk or from Ur to Lagash? _____
7. Approximately how far is it from Babylon to Nineveh? _____
8. Egypt and the Akkadian Empire both shared which sea as a border? _____
9. Persepolis is at the same latitude as which other cities on the map? _____

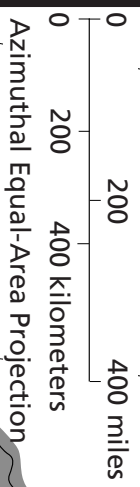
10. Name all five cities that are east or southeast of Nippur.

THE FIRST CIVILIZATIONS



KEY

- Summer, from 3200 B.C.
- Akkadian Empire, 2350-2300 B.C.
- Egyptian Old Kingdom, 2850-2052 B.C.
- City



Azimuthal Equal-Area Projection