1. Why was fertile soil so important to the development of the early river valley civilizations?

Fertile soil was important to the development of river valley civilizations because it allowed for the cultivation of crops and the domestication of animals. This knowledge of agriculture or farming led civilizations to accrue a surplus of food, allowing citizens to focus on other things like government, religion, writing and the arts.

2. What is culture? Culture is learning why people live as they do. It includes history, language, religion, social groups, government, arts, daily life and economy.

3. Explain agricultural surplus. An agricultural surplus is when a civilization has more than enough food. This allows the citizens the ability to specialize or divide up the labor, focusing less on where the next meal is coming from and more on other things like government, economy, religion, language, etc.

4. Define monotheistic. Monotheistic is the belief in one God.

5. Define polytheistic. Polytheistic is the belief in many gods.

6. Why did early civilizations such Egypt, China and Mesopotamia develop along rivers?

Civilizations developed along rivers because after the rivers’ banks flooded, fertile soil was left behind. This fertile soil was the perfect environment for farming/agriculture. The rivers were also used for transportation and trade. This helped to encourage cultural diffusion, the spread of ideas, language and culture.
7. What is irrigation? Irrigation is using artificial/manmade means such as canals, ditches and levees to bring water from the source (river) to the crops.

8. What Mesopotamian civilization invented irrigation by using levees and canals to water crops? The Sumerians were very successful in inventing an irrigation system incorporating levees and canals to transport water.

9. Label the Egyptian hierarchy. Use the hierarchy in your folder to check your answers.
10. Using the above hierarchy, who held the 2 highest positions in the civilization? Pharaoh and his high priests held the highest positions in Ancient Egyptian society.

11. What was Hammurabi’s Code? Hammurabi’s Code was a system of 282 laws based on the principle of “an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth.” The Code was engraved on a stone obelisk and displayed in the middle of the city of Babylon to serve a reminder to the inhabitants and visitors.

12. The term used to describe farming and the domestication of plants and animals for human use is agriculture.

13. Learning why different people live as they do is culture.

14. Why did ancient civilizations write and publish laws? Ancient civilizations wrote and published laws to ensure the citizens of the civilization would read and understand the laws.

15. Before towns and cities can develop into a society, they first need an agricultural surplus.

16. Mild Climate, fertile soil and natural waterways are three common characteristics of all river valley civilizations (i.e. Nile, Tigris-Euphrates and Hung He). True or False

17. What does Mesopotamia mean? Mesopotamia means the land between the rivers.

18. Explain Cradle of Civilization. Mesopotamia, the area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (in modern day Iraq), is often referred to as the cradle of civilization because it is where civilization began.

20. Illustrate irrigation.