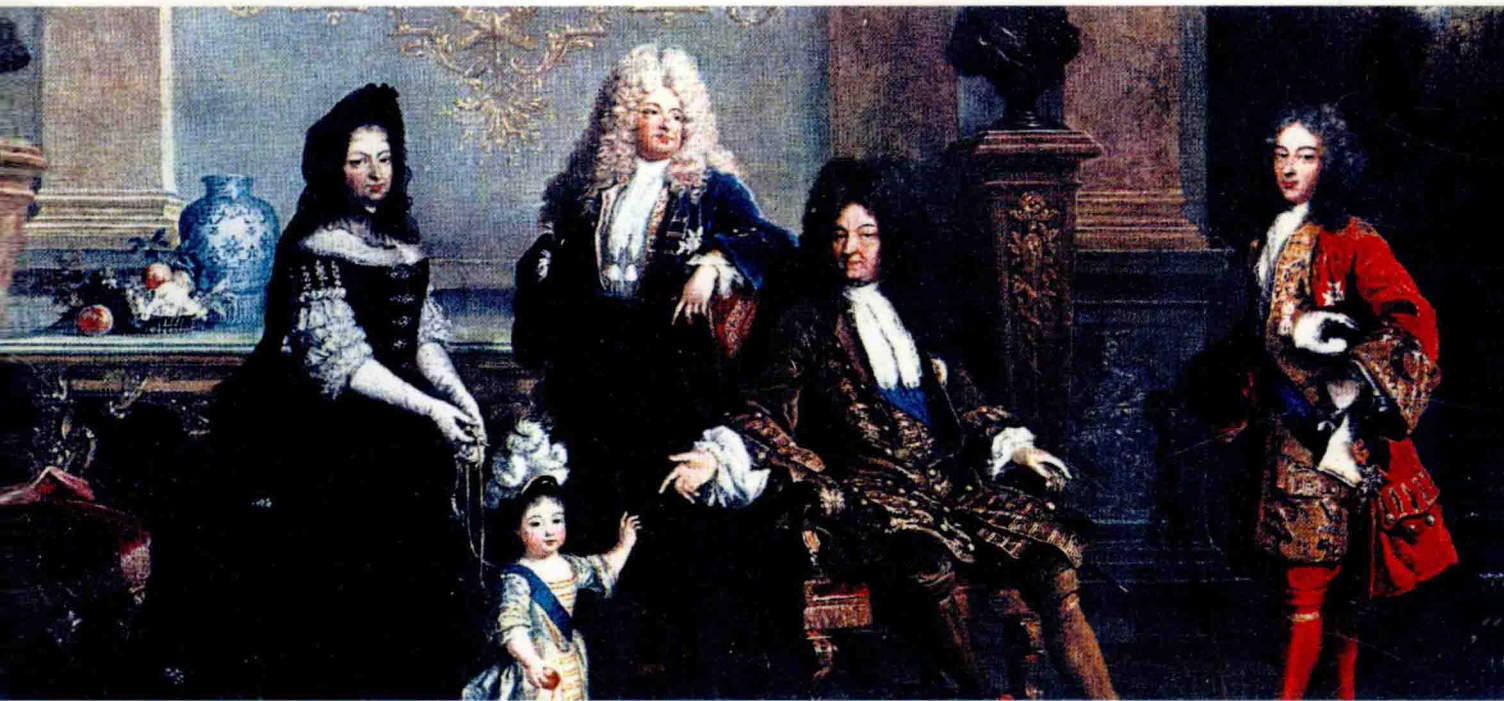


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Get Ready! for Social Studies WORLD HISTORY

Steven Otfinoski

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Francine Weinberg

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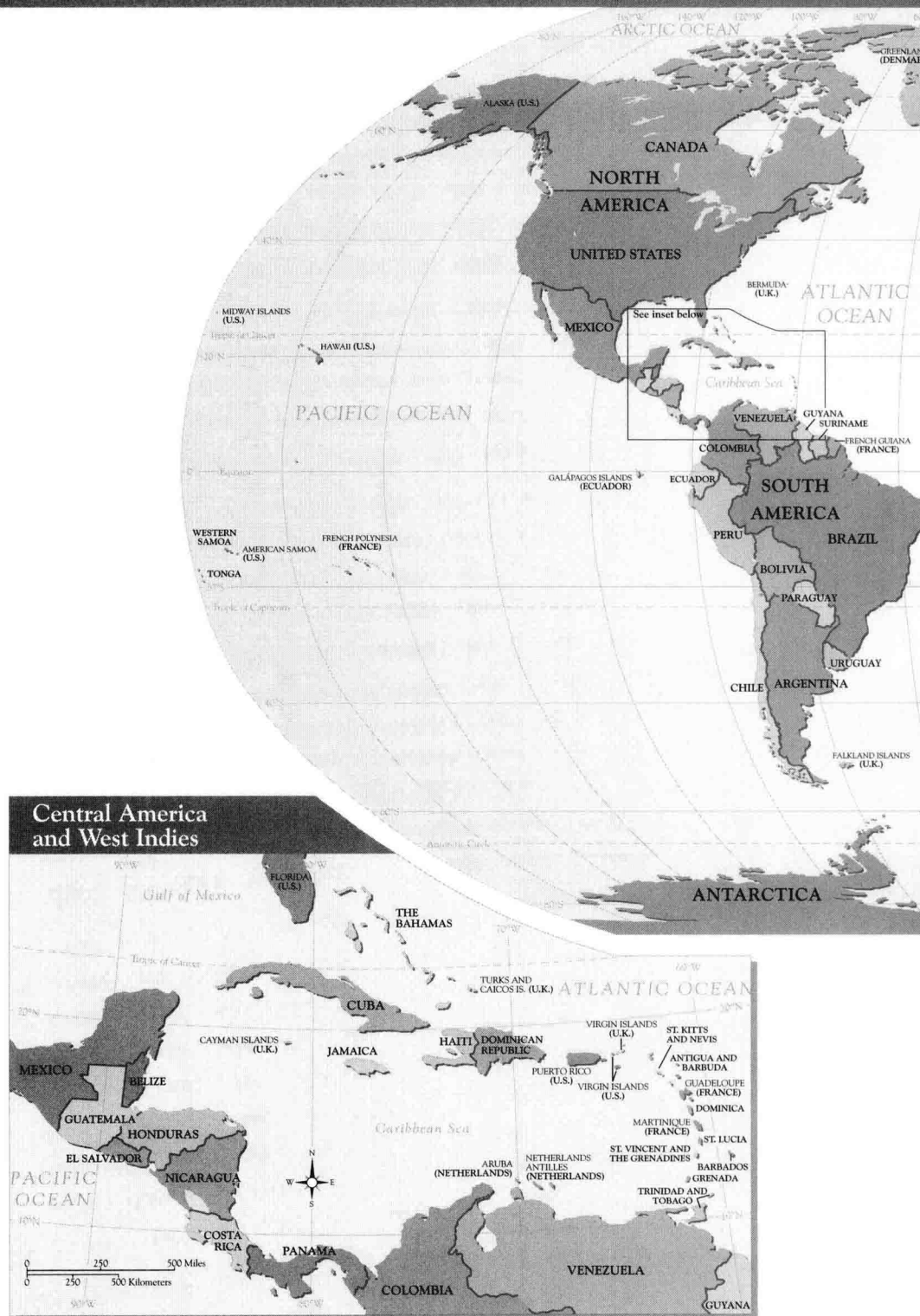
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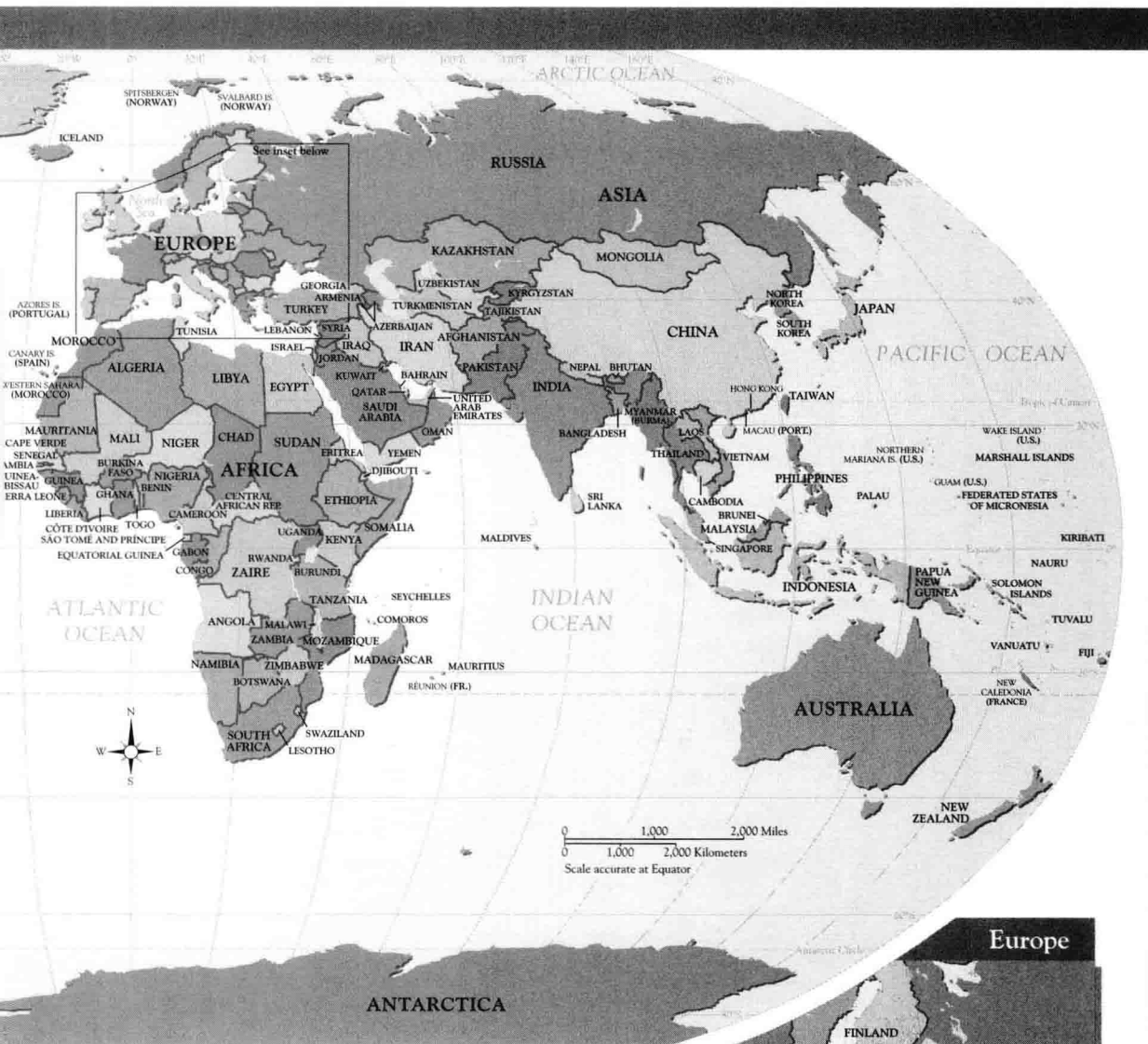
U.S. History

World History

Nancy White and Francine Weinberg, series editors, have been involved in educating elementary and secondary students for more than thirty years. They have had experience in the classroom as well as on dozens of books and electronic projects. They welcome this partnership with parents and other adults to promote knowledge, skills, and critical thinking.

THE WORLD: Political





When you look at maps with your child, please remember that, because the world is constantly in flux, international borders and even names of countries change from time to time. New facts and theories about history surface as well.



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Introduction

In recent years, the media have told us that many students need to know more about history, geography, and government and to improve their writing skills. While schools are attempting to raise standards, learning need not be limited to the classroom. Parents and other concerned adults can help students too. *Get Ready! for Social Studies* provides you with the information and resources you need to help students with homework, projects, and tests and to create a general excitement about learning.

You may choose to use this book in several different ways, depending on your child's strengths and preferences. You might read passages aloud; you might read it to yourself and then paraphrase it for your child; or you might ask your child to read the material along with you or on his or her own. To help you use this book successfully, brief boldface paragraphs, addressed to you, the adult, appear from time to time.

Here is a preview of the features you will find in each chapter.

Word Power

To help students expand their vocabulary, the "Word Power" feature in each chapter defines underlined words with which students may be unfamiliar. These are words that students may use in a variety of contexts in their writing and speaking. In addition, proper nouns and more technical terms appear in boldface type within the chapter, along with their definitions. For example, the word decade is defined as "period of ten years" on a "Word Power" list. The word **cartography** would appear in boldface type within the chapter and be defined there as "the science of mapmaking."

What Your Child Needs to Know

This section provides key facts and concepts in a conversational, informal style to make the content accessible and engaging for all readers.

Implications

This section goes beyond the facts and concepts. Here, we provide the answers to students' centuries-old questions, "Why does this matter?" and "Why is this important for me to know?"

Fact Checker

A puzzle, game, or other short-answer activity checks children's grasp of facts—people, places, things, dates, and other details.

The Big Questions

These questions encourage students to think reflectively and critically in order to form a broader understanding of the material.

Skills Practice

Activities provide the opportunity for children to learn and to apply reading, writing, and thinking skills basic to social studies and other subjects as well. These skills include learning from historical documents, map reading, identifying cause and effect, comparing and contrasting, and writing analytically and creatively.

Top of the Class

In this section, creative suggestions help students stand out in class. By taking some of these suggestions, students can show their teachers that they have been putting in the extra effort that means the difference between average and excellent performance.

The book you are now holding in your hand is a powerful tool. It will help you boost your child's performance in school, increase his or her self-confidence, and open the door to a successful future as a well-educated adult.

Nancy White and Francine Weinberg

Prologue

When we speak of world history in this book, we mean the history of *human* life on Earth. Of course, the world existed before humans, but we refer to that time as part of **prehistory**. Before looking into human history, let's take a brief look at the time that led up to the appearance of modern human beings on our planet.

Scientists have found evidence that creatures called **hominids** (humanlike creatures), appeared on Earth before modern human beings. In the grasslands of East Africa, scientists have found fossilized footprints of a humanlike creature dating back more than 3 million years. They call this creature *Australopithecus* ("southern ape"). But *Australopithecus* was not an ape. The footprints show that it walked on two legs and stood upright. For this reason, scientists consider *Australopithecus* to be the earliest ancestor of today's humans.

By about 2 million years ago, a larger hominid appeared on Earth. Scientists call this human ancestor *Homo habilis* ("handy man") because it was the first to make and use tools. *Homo habilis* made a kind of crude cutting tool by using one rock to sharpen another. For this reason, the period of prehistory that began at this time is sometimes called the **Stone Age**.

The next step toward modern humans appeared about 1.5 million years ago. *Homo erectus* ("upright man") was somewhat smaller than modern humans. This hominid, which also originated in Africa, was the first to move into what is now Europe and Asia. *Homo erectus* was also the first creature to control and use fire.

Much later—about three hundred thousand years ago—the human ancestor we call Neanderthal man (*Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*, which means "wise man found in the Neander valley") appeared. Bones of this early human have been found in Germany. Neanderthals lived in caves. The Neanderthals were the first to bury their dead and care for the sick and elderly.

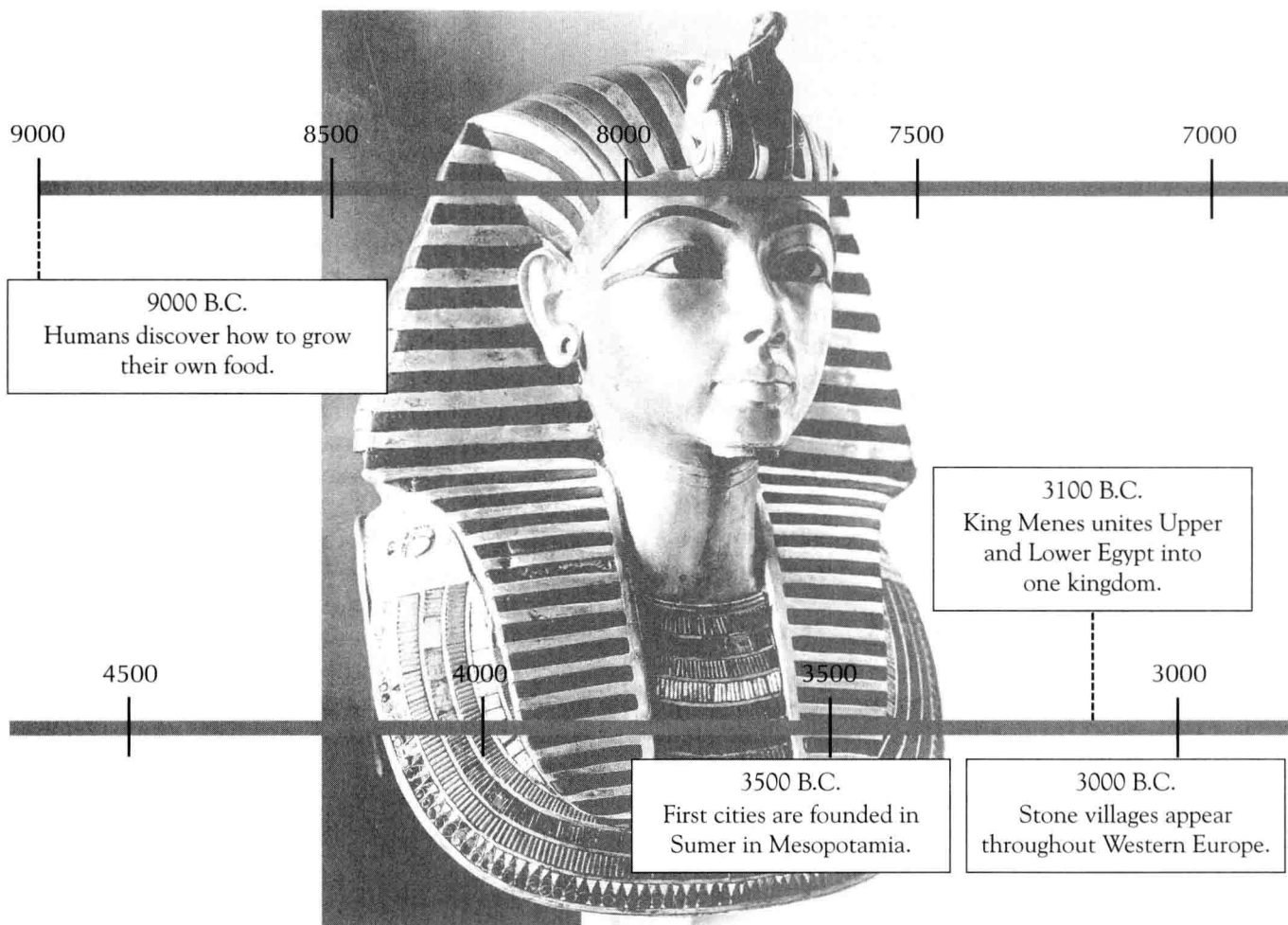
Our closest known human ancestor appeared at least forty thousand years ago. The scientific name for this creature is *Homo sapiens sapiens* ("wise, wise man"), the same name used for modern humans. It is also called Cro-Magnon man. The Cro-Magnons and Neanderthals existed at the same time, but the Neanderthals died out about twenty-eight thousand years ago. Some people once believed that the Cro-Magnons killed off the Neanderthals, but that theory has been rejected. The Cro-Magnons created more advanced tools for hunting. They also made jewelry and created art, notably their beautiful paintings on the walls of caves in France, Spain, and the Sahara.

The Cro-Magnons were the only hominids to survive the last ice age. During that time, some of them crossed a bridge of land that once connected Asia with North America. Within a few thousand years, both North and South America were populated by the first modern human beings. They learned how to use metals to make tools and other objects. They began to live in organized villages and towns. This is where Chapter 1 picks up the story, in the year 5000 B.C.

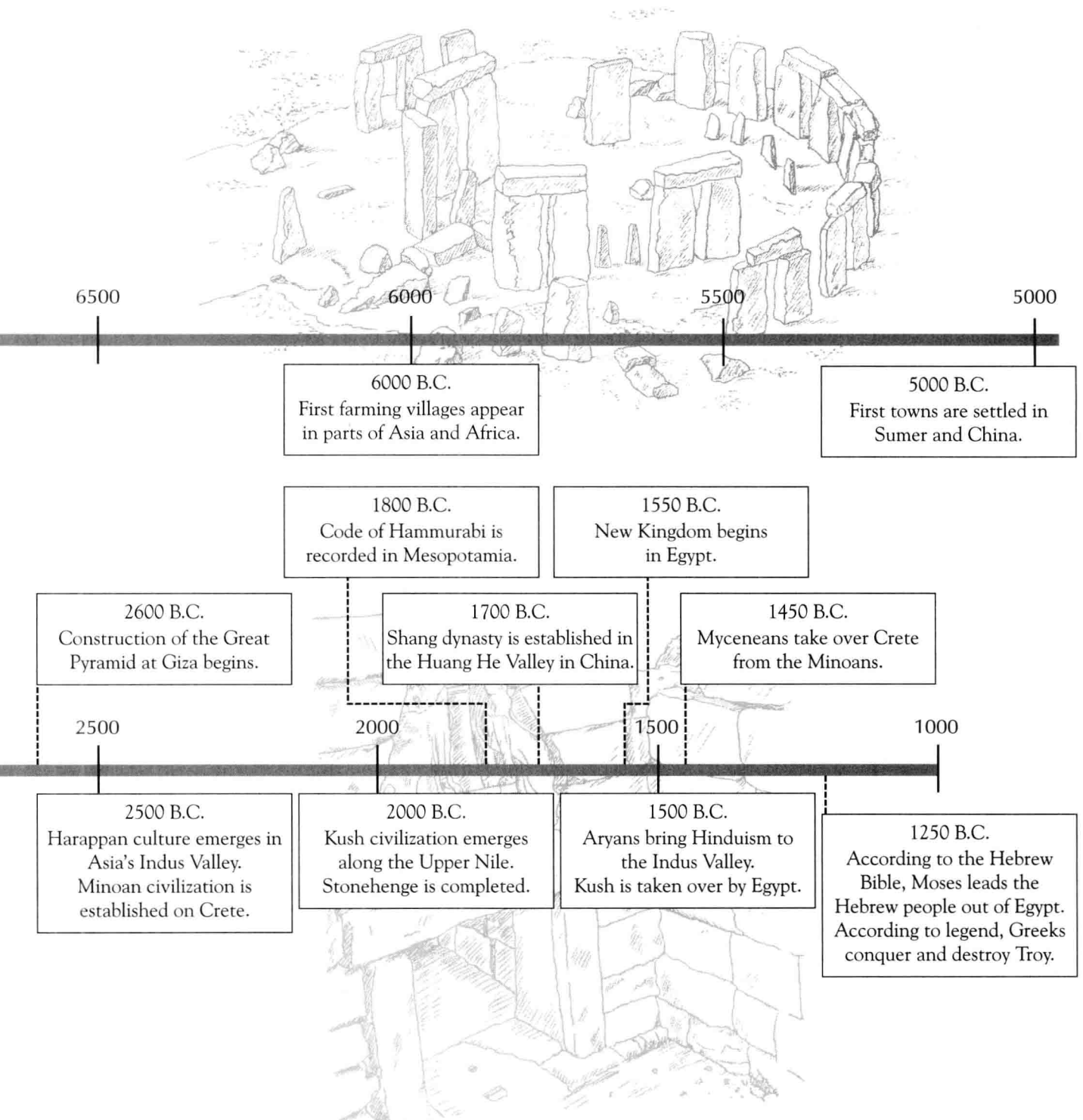
CHAPTER 1

The First Civilizations

5000 B.C.–1200 B.C.



This timeline provides an overview of the period of the first civilizations. The narrative in the following pages offers more details and discusses the significance of the events.





Word Power

The words on the following chart are underscored in the section called “What Your Child Needs to Know.” Explain their meanings to your child as needed when they come up in reading or discussion. Keep the list handy for you and your child to use.

Word	Definition
agriculture	farming
ancestor	family member from the distant past
archaeologists	persons who study the past by digging up old objects
artisans	craftspeople
delta	triangular area of land made from mud deposited by a river as it enters the sea
domesticate	tame an animal so it can live with humans or be used by them
dynasty	series of rulers from one family
empire	number of states ruled by one state or leader
epic	long
fertile	good for growing crops and plants
flourished	thrived and grew; made advances; prospered or did well
mummified	dried and preserved and wrapped in cloth so as to last a long time
nomadic	wandering from place to place
ousted	forcibly removed from position of power
reeds	tall grass plants with long, slender stems
surplus	extra amount; enough food or other goods so that some can be stored for later use
taxes	in addition to the price of an item, money or goods that must be paid to a government



What Your Child Needs to Know

You may choose to use the following text in several different ways, depending on your child's strengths and preferences. You might read the passage aloud; you might read it to yourself and then paraphrase it for your child; or you might ask your child to read the material along with you or on his or her own.

WHAT IS A CIVILIZATION?

Historians usually define *civilization* as an organized society in which people live in cities, specialize in different tasks, use a written language, and have a religion and a government. People have lived on Earth for hundreds of thousands of years, yet civilization, according to this definition, arose only within the last six thousand years. Why? For most of human history, people lived nomadic lives. They hunted animals, fished in rivers and streams, and gathered wild plants. They had no permanent homes. The term for people who live in this way is **hunter-gatherers**.

Around 9000 B.C., humans discovered how to grow their own food. This was the beginning of agriculture. Later they learned to domesticate animals such as goats, sheep, and cattle. These animals produced milk and meat, as well as wool to make clothing. The ability to provide food for themselves allowed people to stay in one place. Soon villages developed. Over time, the villages grew. Some became large cities.

Once people had a surplus of food to store away, not everyone had to farm. Some people could do other jobs. Some became traders of goods. Others were craftspeople who made pottery, wood carvings, or jewelry. Still others were free to become artists, builders, musicians, and writers.

Specialization leads to trade. For example, a person who makes pottery but does not grow food might get food from a farmer in return for clay pots in which to store grain. Because people who trade

need a way to keep track of their goods, trade leads to a system of writing. Trade also leads to contact between different peoples and therefore to the need for peace and order—a need filled by both a religion with a strong priesthood and a government with a strong leader.

MESOPOTAMIA

The world's first civilizations arose in a fertile valley between two rivers in the area that is present-day Iraq. The rivers, the **Tigris** (TYE gruhs) and the **Euphrates** (yoo FRAY teez), formed what is sometimes called the **Fertile Crescent** and sometimes called the **Cradle of Civilization**. We call the area Mesopotamia (*meh suh puh TAY mee uh*), which means “land between the rivers” in Greek. The two rivers provided fertile soil for growing crops, water for farming, and transportation routes for trade—easier and faster than land routes.

Sumer

The civilization born about 3500 B.C. in Mesopotamia is known as Sumer (SOO muhr). Much of what we know about Sumer comes from the findings of archaeologists, who unearthed the ancient Sumerian city of **Ur** in 1927. From what they found, we know that the Sumerians developed powerful city-states. A **city-state** is a city that, with its surrounding areas, is also a state unto itself. It has its own government and is not controlled by any larger state.

Some Sumerians lived outside of the cities, farming and raising pigs, oxen, and sheep. A complex network of canals led water from the rivers to the farmers' crops. Those who lived in the cities were merchants, tradespeople, or artisans. The upper class in Sumerian society was made up of nobles, wealthy landowners, government officials, priests, and kings. Merchants, farmers, artisans, tradespeople, and soldiers made up the middle class, while the lowest class was made up of slaves. Sumerian civilization gave birth to both the wheel and the earliest known written language.

The Sumerians had a system of writing that took the form of wedge-shaped characters called **cuneiform** (kyoo NEE uh *fawrm*). They scratched cuneiform characters onto clay tablets

with the sharp ends of reeds. On these tablets, the Sumerians wrote legal documents, religious texts, and literary works. We know this because thousands of cuneiform tablets have been dug up by archaeologists.

The Sumerians were also great builders. They constructed towering, pyramid-shaped temples called **ziggurats** (ZI guh rats). They believed the many gods of their religion lived on top of the ziggurats.

The Sumerians were probably the first people to make glass, brew beer, and create pottery on a potter's wheel. Our system of time based on a sixty-minute hour is derived from the Sumerian system of mathematics. So is the method of dividing a circle into 360 degrees. The Sumerians had an army and weapons, and they traded with other peoples.

The Sumerians were not united under a central government. Therefore, city-states often quarreled and fought with one another. It is probably for this reason that they were easily conquered by the **Akkads** (AH kahds), people from an area north of Sumer, led by their king, **Sargon**. From around 2330 B.C. to around 2275 B.C., Sargon united all Mesopotamia and built the world's first empire. He was a strong leader, but he was also noted for his cruelty. After only about fifty years, the city-states rebelled against the empire.

Babylon

At the time that Sargon's empire fell, people from the area that is now Syria started moving into southern Mesopotamia. Their main city was called Babylon (BAH buh luhn). In about 1800 B.C., Babylon began to seize power and soon controlled most of Mesopotamia.

Hammurabi, one of Babylon's most important kings, created one of civilization's first set of laws. We know it as **Hammurabi's Code**. Some of the laws seem cruel, but others are fair and good. For example, one law said the strong and rich could not take advantage of the weak and poor.

The Babylonians traded with neighboring peoples including the **Phoenicians** (fi NEE shuns), who occupied the area where Syria and Lebanon (LE buh nuhn) are today. The Phoenicians were the greatest seafarers of the ancient world. Their name comes from the Greek word for purple be-

cause they had discovered a process for dying fabric purple. They also invented glassblowing and were skilled craftspeople.

Around 1595 B.C., Babylon fell to the **Hittites**, a people who had settled in Turkey. The warlike Hittites were the first to use iron for tools and weapons. For the next hundred years, Babylon would be under the power of foreign rulers, and then it would be controlled by the Assyrians for another five hundred years.

EGYPT

When the Sumerian civilization was reaching its height, a new civilization was emerging in the valley of another river. The **Nile**, the world's longest river, threads its way from central Africa north to the Mediterranean Sea. The land around it is lush and fertile. Near the mouth of the Nile, where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea, the river fans out into several branches and forms a delta. Here the kingdom of Lower Egypt developed. Farther south emerged the kingdom of Upper Egypt, so called because it was farther *upstream* on the Nile. To the south, east, and west lay deserts. The Mediterranean Sea was on the north. Because of their geographical location, the Egyptians were not seriously threatened by invasion. Their civilization flourished for two thousand years.

The Old Kingdom

In 3100 B.C., King **Menes** (MEE nez) of Upper Egypt conquered Lower Egypt. He united the two kingdoms, established **Memphis** as his capital city, and founded ancient Egypt's first dynasty. Under this dynasty, Egyptian culture flourished. The Egyptians developed **hieroglyphics**, a kind of writing using pictures and symbols. They wrote on **papyrus**, a kind of paper made from the stems of reeds. **Scribes**, or people who knew how to write, were very important in Egyptian society.

The Egyptians believed that the most important god in their religion—the sun god, Ra—was the ancestor of their **pharaohs**, or rulers. They also believed in a life after death. For this reason, they often mummified dead bodies to get them ready for their lives in the “next world.”