

ART OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

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**Multiple Choice**

1. The Sumerians invented the first system of writing called

- A. pictographs.
- B. hieroglyphics.
- C. cuneiform.
- D. inlay.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

2. Ziggurats functioned symbolically as

- A. entrances to the underworld.
- B. bridges between the earth and the heavens.
- C. fortresses of the rulers.
- D. the home of the gods.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.e Interpret ancient Near Eastern art using appropriate art historical methods, such as observation, comparison, and inductive reasoning.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

3. The *Epic of Gilgamesh* was attributed to the

- A. Sumerians.
- B. Akkadians.
- C. Babylonians.
- D. Persians.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

4. What technique did the Sumerians use to create cylinder seals that ensured the identification of documents and established property ownership?

- A. illusionism
- B. registers
- C. vertical perspective
- D. sunken relief

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

5. Which culture controlled most of Mesopotamia by the end of the ninth century BCE?

- A. Assyrian
- B. Persian
- C. Hittite
- D. Babylonian

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

6. What was at the top of the Anu ziggurat White Temple?

- A. scenes of military victories
- B. a living quarters for priests
- C. giant columns
- D. a simple rectangle with an off-center doorway

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

7. The *Stele of Hammurabi* is significant as both a work of ancient Mesopotamian art and as
- A. an example of Babylonian literature.
  - B. a religious artifact recording Hebrew tradition.
  - C. a key to deciphering cuneiform texts.
  - D. a historical document recording a written code of law.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.f Select visual and textual evidence in various media to support an argument or interpretation of ancient Near Eastern art.

Topic: Babylon

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

8. What did the low relief scenes on the walls at Kalhu portray?
- A. war campaigns and lion hunts
  - B. abstract, geometric motifs
  - C. bulls and the god Marduk
  - D. judgments and punishments

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

9. What does the uppermost scene of the *Carved Vessel* (Fig. 2-4) from Uruk represent?
- A. the birth of a goddess
  - B. a ritual burial
  - C. a re-enactment of a ritual marriage
  - D. the signing of a peace treaty

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

10. What original element of the *Head of a Woman* (Fig. 2-3) symbolizes the purity of the figure?

- A. the wooden body
- B. a gold wig
- C. inlaid eyes
- D. the marble face

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

11. Stepped structures known as ziggurats may have developed from the practice of

- A. using prisoners as a workforce.
- B. repeated rebuilding at sacred sites.
- C. establishing settlements on high land for safety.
- D. burying the dead in pyramids.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

12. The incised design on a cylinder seal found in the tomb of Queen Puabi (Fig. 2-8) demonstrates the Sumerians' use of

- A. narrative images.
- B. geometric patterns.
- C. personal monograms.
- D. cuneiform.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

13. The lion hunting scene of Assurnasirpal II (Fig. 2-14) marks a shift in Mesopotamian art from a sense of timeless solemnity toward greater

- A. political content.
- B. emotional drama.
- C. historical accuracy.
- D. interest in individuals.

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

14. Which city was Nebuchadnezzar II responsible for transforming into one of the most splendid of its day?

- A. Ur
- B. Persepolis
- C. Babylon
- D. Nineveh

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.e Interpret ancient Near Eastern art using appropriate art historical methods, such as observation, comparison, and inductive reasoning.

Topic: Neo-Babylonia

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

15. The relief of *Darius and Xerxes Receiving Tribute* (Fig. 2-23) exemplifies Persian art's emphasis on

- A. the divinity of the king.
- B. military power.
- C. allegiance and economic prosperity.
- D. multicultural tolerance.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Persia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

16. The first domestication of grains occurred in the area known as the

- A. Fertile Crescent.
- B. Kalhu.
- C. Zagros Mountains.
- D. Persia.

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

17. What did the Sumerians use to produce cuneiform writing?

- A. stylus
- B. seal
- C. picture stamp
- D. chisel

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

18. A beautiful copper alloy head, which is the earliest major work of hollow-cast sculpture known in the ancient Near East, dates from the time of

- A. Darius.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar.
- C. Ashurbanipal.
- D. Sargon.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Akkad

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

19. In the *Stele of Hammurabi*, Hammurabi stands before the seated god Shamash in an attitude of

- A. submission.
- B. defeat.
- C. prayer.
- D. solidarity.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

20. What were most of the buildings in Kalhu built from?

- A. cut marble
- B. alabaster
- C. bitumen
- D. mud bricks

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Assurnasirpal II

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

21. Which ruler conquered the Persian Empire in 334 BCE?

- A. Alexander the Great
- B. Xerxes
- C. Sargon II
- D. Gudea

Answer: A

Learning Objective: 2.e Interpret ancient Near Eastern art using appropriate art historical methods, such as observation, comparison, and inductive reasoning.

Topic: Persia

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

22. The Persians won the loyalty of their subjects by tolerating

- A. relaxed punishment toward slaves.
- B. trade with the Greeks.
- C. local chieftains and advisors.
- D. native customs and religions.

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Persia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

23. Which object, taken by an Elamite king, demonstrated the importance of art objects as military booty?

- A. *Disk of Enheduanna* (Fig. 2-9)
- B. *Stele of Naram-Sin* (Fig. 2-1)
- C. *Votive Statue of Gudea* (Fig. 2-12)
- D. *Stele of Hammurabi* (Fig. 2-13)

Answer: B

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Akkad

Difficulty Level: Easy

Skill Level: Remember the Facts

24. Cylinder seals, which were often buried with the dead, were signs of

- A. favor of the gods.
- B. belief in the afterlife.
- C. status or high office.
- D. penance.

Answer: C

Learning Objective: 2.b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts



25. In the image of *Enemies Crossing the Euphrates to Escape Assyrian Archers* (Fig. 2-15), what device is used to convey spatial depth?

- A. closed outlines
- B. different viewpoints
- C. large-scale animals
- D. overlapping swimmers

Answer: D

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

### Short Answer

1. In the ancient Near East, why was there a need to control the water supply of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers?

Answer: Mesopotamia developed between two rivers that flooded periodically, fertilizing the crops but destroying other structures. Drought was also frequent, leaving people, crops, and livestock without access to water.

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

2. Why was Mesopotamia vulnerable to political upheaval?

Answer: Mesopotamia was vulnerable to attack from outsiders because of its geography. The land is very flat with no natural defenses, and it is positioned at the crossroads of three different continents.

Learning Objective: 2.f Select visual and textual evidence in various media to support an argument or interpretation of ancient Near Eastern art.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

3. How did agriculture change the face of culture in the Fertile Crescent?

Answer: The area began to be developed into city-states to protect resources, such as grain. Writing was invented to keep track of economic exchanges and a hierarchy of rulers was established to control the resources. People developed specialized skills.

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

4. How is trade exemplified in *the Great Lyre with Bull's Head* (Figs. 2-6A and B)?

Answer: Many of the media had to be imported from outside the city-state, such as lapis lazuli from Afghanistan.

Learning Objective: 2. b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Sumer

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

5. What did the mutilations of the *Head of a Man* (Fig. 2-1o) mean?

Answer: The damage to one side of the face suggests a ritual destruction of the image. It was thought to hold power, and by mutilating the object, the power of the figure was also destroyed.

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Akkad

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

6. What story does the *Stele of Naram-Sin* tell?

Answer: The ruler has been successful in battle and stands in front of a mountain with the blessings of the sun god raining down.

Learning Objective: 2. b Interpret the meaning of works of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art based on their themes, subjects, and symbols.

Topic: Akkad

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

7. What were some of the significant features of the palace complex of Sargon II?

Answer: The palace complex included two towers, one entrance, a large wall, a citadel, and several squares and courtyards.

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Sargon II

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

8. What types of Persian art show the Persians' high level of technical and artistic sophistication?

Answer: The capital Persepolis and the relief carvings show a wide variety of media, scale, and narratives.

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Persia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

## Essay

1. Trace the development of the various cultures that inhabited Mesopotamia from the Assyrians to the Persians.

Answer:

1. The Assyrians rose to dominance in the region under Assurnasirpal II.
2. Sargon II built a new Assyrian capital, and he was followed by Assurbanipal.
3. The Neo-Babylonian ruler Nebuchadnezzar II was a great builder in Babylon.
4. Under Darius and others, the Persian Empire stretched from Africa to India.

Learning Objective: 2.c Relate early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian artists and art to their cultural, economic, and political contexts.

Topic: Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians; Persia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

2. Discuss the religious beliefs and funerary practices of the Mesopotamians, and describe how Mesopotamian art reflects the region's history and beliefs. Provide at least one example of architecture and one example of sculpture.

Answer:

1. Early Mesopotamian cultures began building large temples to connect the leaders and the gods, such as the Nanna Ziggurat (Fig. 2-11).
2. Elaborate burial sites have been excavated revealing works of art in precious media, such as the *Great Lyre with Bull's Head* (Fig. 2-6A).
3. The front panel of the *Great Lyre with Bull's Head* (Fig. 2-6B) expresses the ideas of power, literature, and myth.
4. Votive sculptures reflect the belief in gods and a social hierarchy.

Learning Objective: 2.f Select visual and textual evidence in various media to support an argument or interpretation of ancient Near Eastern art.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

3. Discuss the development of Mesopotamian architecture and city development from Sumer to Persia.

Answer:

1. Ziggurats were the first monumental architecture to imply a relationship between humans and gods.
2. Large temples and palace complexes throughout Mesopotamian cultures emphasize physical height and the symbolic significance of walking up stairs or ramps.
3. Relief carvings and large sculptures increasingly decorated temples and palace complexes to valid rulers.
4. Walls and elaborate gates were a feature of later Mesopotamian culture.

Learning Objective: 2.d Apply the vocabulary and concepts used to discuss ancient Near Eastern art, artists, and art history.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia; Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians; Persia

Difficulty Level: Moderate

Skill Level: Understand the Concepts

4. Discuss the form, iconography, and style of the figure of Gudea as seen in Figure 2-12.

Answer:

1. Gudea is shown as a strong, youthful leader with an upright stance.
2. Little motion or expression is shown, but his eyes look open and upward.
3. He holds a vessel from which water flows, symbolizing life and abundance.
4. He is idealized because clothing, stance, and figure remain constant in many versions of representation, yet always recognizable.

Learning Objective: 2.a Identify the visual hallmarks of early Mesopotamian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian art for formal, technical, and expressive qualities.

Topic: Ur and Lagash

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It

5. Consider the style and purpose of the female figures portrayed in *Head of a Woman* (Fig. 2-3), *Carved Vessel* (Fig. 2-4), and *Assurbanipal and His Queen in the Garden* (Fig. 2-18). What do these images suggest about the role of women in Mesopotamia?

Answer:

1. Women were not held in as high regard as men but were an integral part of society, as seen in Figure 2-18.
2. Women held positions of power but were often associated with female goddesses related to fertility, as seen in Figure 2-4.
3. Women were represented in a similar manner as men were, but women were shown with longer dresses and headdresses.
4. Female figures represented in works of art were elaborately decorated with rich materials.

Learning Objective: 2.e Interpret ancient Near Eastern art using appropriate art historical methods, such as observation, comparison, and inductive reasoning.

Topic: Early Mesopotamia

Difficulty Level: Difficult

Skill Level: Apply What You Know and Analyze It