

# Indus Valley

*Indus Valley Cities*



**Introduction to Indus Valley Civilization**

**Indus Valley Culture**

**Indus Valley Technology and Trade**

**Indus Valley Cities**

## Thematic Icons



**Economics**



**Geography**



**Historical concepts**



**Government**

## Icons



**Flash activity** (these activities are not editable)



**Teacher notes** included in the Notes page

For more instructions, see the *User Guide*.





# The twin cities of the Indus Valley

The Indus Valley Civilization lay undiscovered and unknown to the world for an incredible 4000 years.

In south Asia in the 1920s, archaeologists discovered the ruins of two ancient Indus cities: **Harappa** and **Mohenjo-daro**.

Careful excavation of these sites has been valuable in allowing us to find out about the ancient Indus Civilization.



**Why do you think the civilization was lost for so long?**





The ruined city of Harappa was discovered by British archaeologist **Sir John Marshall** and his Indian archaeological team in 1921.

Within the city's ruins, archaeologists found strong evidence to suggest that the Indus Civilization had a highly developed **urban** life.

In Harappa, there were:

- houses
- public **granaries** and baths
- roads wide enough to fit large carts
- a sophisticated water supply and sewage system.





# Mohenjo-daro

Downstream of Harappa, Marshall and his team discovered the city of Mohenjo-daro in 1924.

Mohenjo-daro is located roughly 710 kilometers from Harappa and is another example of the grand **cityscapes** built by the Indus people.



The ruins of Mohenjo-daro include buildings similar to those in Harappa, proving that the two cities shared a culture.

**What do you think these similar buildings would be?**



# An Indus city: Mohenjo-daro



# The structure of an Indus city

For archaeologists, the twin cities of the Indus Civilization are **unique** among early ancient civilizations.

Harappa and Mohenjo-daro were **planned settlements**. Instead of growing in size from a village to a large city, they were built from the ground up.



What do you think this tells us about the Indus Valley society and population?





The Indus people were highly skilled builders and engineers. They used advanced techniques to create and maintain their cities.



Indus builders used **mud bricks**. These bricks were formed by first mixing water, clay and soil into a thick mud.



The mud was then placed into molds and heated in a **kiln**. The mud would quickly dry and create a strong, durable brick.

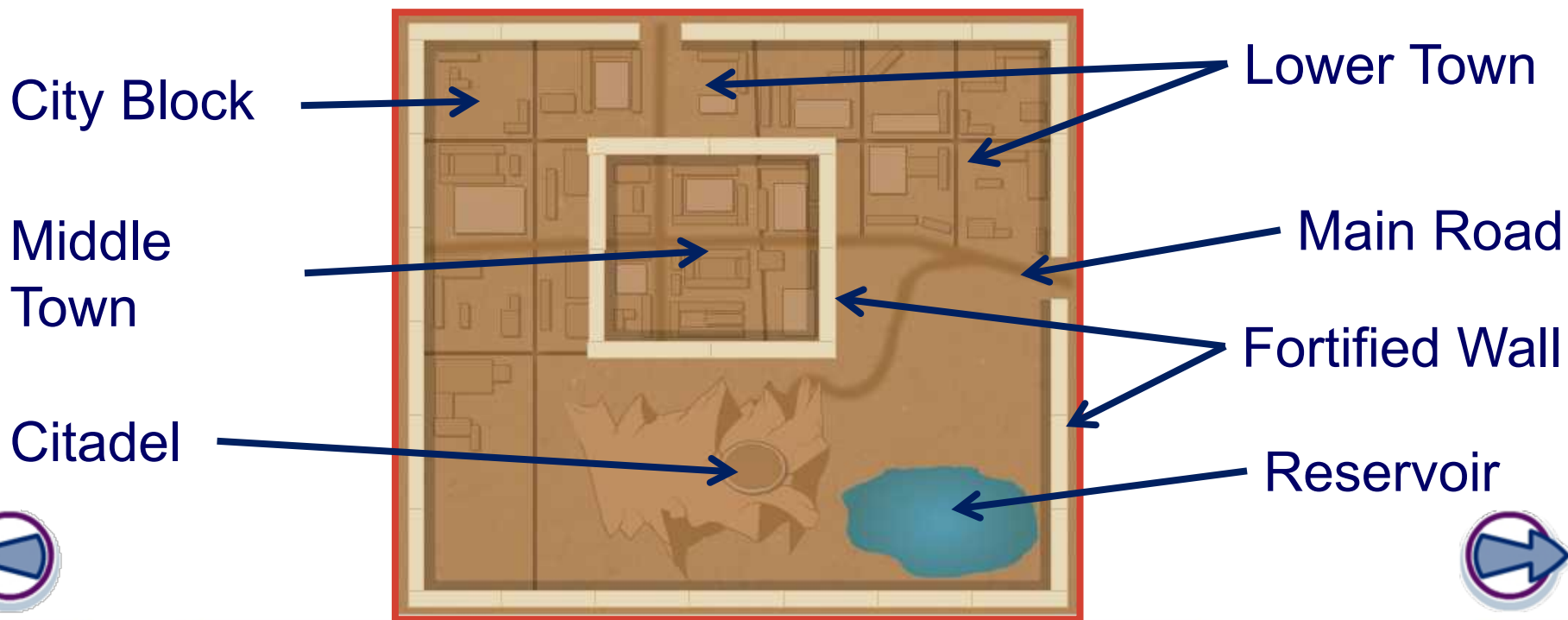




# Streets and neighborhoods

Indus cities were well organized and neatly planned. Each city was built using a **grid pattern**, where straight roads criss-crossed each other to form city blocks.

City blocks were sectioned into distinct **neighborhoods**. This allowed craftspeople and traders with similar occupations to live close to each other.



Indus city ruins show that the people of the Indus Valley Civilization placed significant importance on **hygiene**.

Cities across the region contained the world's very first urban sanitation system.



Each home had access to clean water from wells, and could direct waste water into **covered drains**. These drains lined the major roads and took sewage out of the city.







The majority of people who lived in Indus cities were traders and craftspeople.

Trade was crucial for Indus cities. Merchants would bring **raw materials** into the city, where workers would use them to produce various **goods**. Merchants would take finished goods out of the city to be sold.

**Cotton** was woven into clothes and precious stones were carved into jewelry. Clay could be used in a variety of goods, from **pottery** to weights in fishing nets.



City dwellers in the Indus Valley enjoyed various **social activities** aside from their work.

Archaeologists have discovered toys, models, game pieces and dice among the city ruins. These may have been used by both children and adults.



Animals such as pigs and lambs were kept as **livestock** within Indus homes. Dogs were often kept as pets.

**A stranger animal was often also kept as a pet.  
What do you think it was?**





Very little is known about who ruled the Indus Valley Civilization, how it was governed or what **religion** the people practiced.

However, archaeologists have uncovered some clues.

- There were no **elite** buildings such as palaces or mansions.
- Each city had a **citadel**: a **fortified** space inside the city where rulers may have lived.
- There were no religious monuments or temples, although each city did have a Great Bath, which may have been used for ritual washing similar to **Hinduism** today.





# A peaceful society?

The ruins of the twin cities also provide evidence for the kind of society that developed in the Indus Valley.

Unlike other early ancient civilizations, such as **Mesopotamia** and **Egypt**, the excavation of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro has unearthed very few weapons and there is no evidence of an Indus army.

This indicates to us that the Indus Valley Civilization was mostly **peaceful** and fought few wars.

There is no evidence to suggest the people of the Indus Valley ever **invaded** any other regions in the world.





# Decline and disappearance



The civilization and cities in the Indus Valley enjoyed a peaceful **prosperity** from 2600–1900 BC. By 1500 BC, their civilization had completely disappeared.

The Indus Civilization **declined** after 1800 BC. Their unique **script** began to disappear, trade slowed down and cities were abandoned.



**What do you think caused the decline and fall of the Indus Valley Civilization?**







# Reasons for decline



As with other aspects of the Indus Valley Civilization, historians know little about the reasons for its decline.

Archaeologists have suggested three possible reasons for this decline, although there is no definitive answer.

- The drying up of various important rivers. This would have made the irrigation-based agriculture of the Indus Civilization useless.
- A great flood that irreparably damaged the towns, cities and farms.
- A migration or invasion by a nomadic people from Central Asia called the **Aryans**.



# Keywords

