

Indus Valley

*Introduction to Indus
Valley Civilization*



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*.





Indus Valley timeline





The Indus Valley environment





The Indus River



The **Indus River** is one of the longest rivers in the world.

The river's source is in the **Himalayan Mountains**.

The river flows **downstream** through both modern day India and Pakistan, yet it is primarily located in the latter.

Eventually, it flows through Pakistan and out into the **Arabian Sea**.



**What are the defining features of this region?
Does it look habitable?**





The Indus Valley

The Indus Valley features significant **environmental** features that have made **inhabiting** the area difficult.

The climate of the region is mainly hot and incredibly dry, with **monsoon** rains only in July to September.

The Valley is bordered on both sides by two different environments, the vast Himalayan Mountains to the west and the **Thar Desert** to the east.

The Thar Desert is one of the hottest and driest spots on Earth.



Temperatures can reach 122°F (50°C)!





Early settlers



Early settlers began establishing small farming communities along the River Indus around 4000 BC.

These settlers are the beginning of the **Indus Valley Civilization**, the earliest known urbanized culture of the Indian subcontinent.

It is considered by **archaeologists** as the largest and most developed of the earliest ancient civilizations.

How many years do you think it was between the Indus Valley Civilization and the beginning of Ancient Rome?

Indus Valley



3000 years!



Ancient Rome





With a climate and surrounding environment as difficult and **hazardous** as seen in this region, the Indus River was vital for the survival and growth of both plant and early human settler life.

Firstly, the **fresh water** of the Indus gave a constant source of safe drinking water, which is crucial in a hot climate.

The river water also helps to produce a rich **biodiversity** in its vast **floodplains**. Early settlers could plant crops as well as hunt the large quantities of fish and other wildlife that lived in or near the river.





Agriculture in the Indus River valley

The Indus Valley Civilization relied heavily on their own great river and its surrounding floodplains for agriculture and growth.

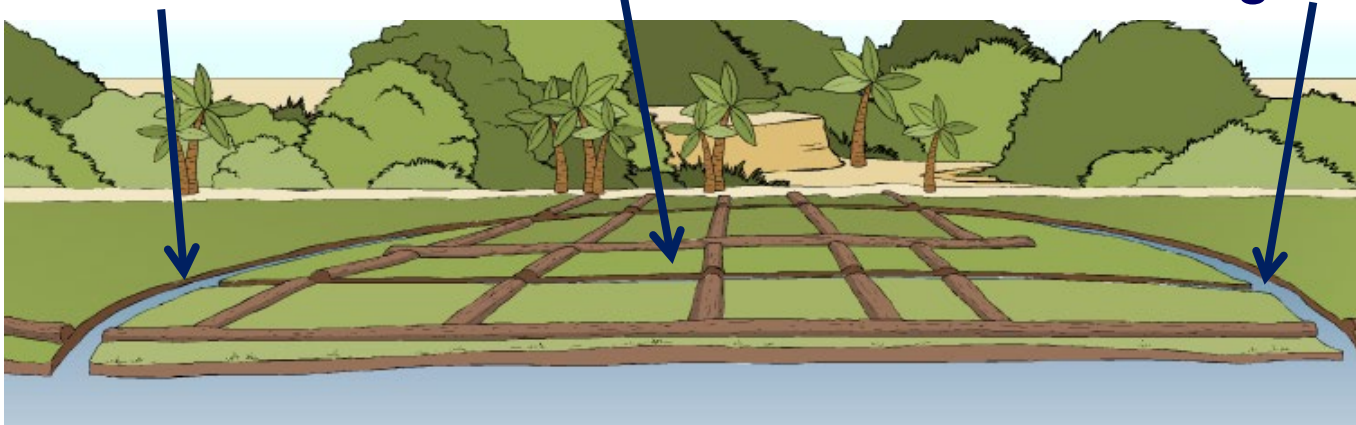
Early settlers learned to control and use the powerful annual flooding of the Indus through **basin irrigation**.

Basins would be dug in the valley and water would be allowed to flow in to soak the soil. After a month, the water would be drained to allow the planting of crops.

Feeder Canal

Basin

Discharge Canal





Through securing a reliable and abundant source of food production, the new civilization took off.

By 2700 BC, the population had significantly increased because of the secure food source. The civilization quickly expanded along the **Indus waterway** and built over 100 small towns and villages.

Most importantly, two large cities were also constructed: **Harappa** and **Mohenjo-daro**.

These cities were the most highly developed urban areas of all of the early ancient civilizations. Living conditions were **spacious**, with each house having access to clean water and an organized underground sewage system.





The twin cities

In 1920, archaeologists discovered Harappa. They found Mohenjo-daro two years later, in 1922.

It is believed that these two sites are evidence of the first ever **planned cities**.

Each site was designed from the start to be a large city and did not **naturally** grow from village to town to city.



This is unlike any of the other major cities in the early ancient civilizations and is **unique** to the Indus Valley.





Although both cities were long lost, many items have been discovered within the ruins that help us understand the people of the Indus Valley.

Various **artifacts** have been found such as:

- pictured seals
- pottery and statues
- toys and games
- jewelry.

These artefacts tell archaeologists that the Indus Valley had a **highly developed** city life with a thriving **social community**.





As well as being expert city planners and builders, the people of the Indus Valley were also skilled **crafters** and **traders**.



Artisans and workers in the city made jewelry, pots, beads, fishing nets and cloth.



Traders would take these items and using either **ox-drawn carts** or the river they would travel to other cities or even to distant lands to sell the goods.





The decline of the Indus people



From 2600 to 1900 BC, the Indus Valley Civilization was able to **flourish** and saw a peaceful **prosperity**.

However, by 1800 BC, the civilization began to decline.

Over the following 800 years, the highly developed Indus culture and trade disappeared from the region.

The grand cities of the civilization slowly became **abandoned**, ruined and forgotten. There are many theories about why this happened, including as a result of floods or foreign invasions.

What do you think happened to the people of the Indus Valley Civilization?



