

**QUICK DRILL · CBSE CLASS 11**

# Writing and City Life (Mesopotamia)

History · Chapter 1 · 15 MCQs · 20 minutes · PYQ-tagged with time budgets

DATE	TOTAL MARKS	DURATION	MARKING	TARGET
_____	<b>15</b>	<b>20 min</b>	<b>+1 / 0</b>	<b>≥ 12/15</b>

**OBJECTIVES**

Reinforce the four core topics of Writing and City Life (Mesopotamia) via 15 PYQ-derived MCQs. Identify weak sub-topics via concept-node IDs (see answer key). Build per-question time budget habit.

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Attempt all 15. Time budget shown per Q (use it as pacing guide). Mark answers (A/B/C/D) in the margin. Answer key + explanations on the last page. **Don't peek — score yourself honestly.**

**SECTION · QUICK DRILL**

Q 1-15 · 20 MIN

**Q1.** The word 'Mesopotamia' is derived from Greek words meaning:

- (A) Land of two kings
- (B) Land between rivers
- (C) Land of the temple
- (D) Land of writing

PYQ 2019 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q2.** Mesopotamia lay between the Euphrates and the Tigris, mostly in the modern country of:

- (A) Egypt
- (B) Iran
- (C) Iraq
- (D) Turkey

PYQ 2021 · School Annual · 1m · 30s

**Q3.** The earliest writing in Mesopotamia developed primarily to:

- (A) Write poetry and epics
- (B) Keep records of goods and transactions
- (C) Send personal letters
- (D) Record religious hymns

PYQ 2020 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q4.** The Mesopotamian script is called 'cuneiform' because the signs were:

- (A) Round like coins
- (B) Wedge-shaped, pressed into clay
- (C) Painted with ink
- (D) Carved only on stone

PYQ 2018 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q5.** The earliest Mesopotamian writing took the form of:

- (A) An alphabet of 26 letters
- (B) Pictographs (pictures of objects)
- (C) Roman numerals
- (D) Musical notation

PYQ 2022 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q6.** Mesopotamian writing was usually done on:

- (A) Papyrus
- (B) Clay tablets
- (C) Palm leaves
- (D) Animal skins

PYQ 2019 · School Annual · 1m · 30s

**Q7.** Which of these BEST defines a 'city' as discussed in the chapter?

- (A) Any settlement with a large population
- (B) A settlement based on specialisation and the division of labour
- (C) A settlement with a wall around it
- (D) A settlement near a river

PYQ 2021 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 45s

**Q8.** In the earliest Mesopotamian cities, the main institution that organised the economy was the:

- (A) Royal palace
- (B) Army
- (C) Temple
- (D) Market guild

PYQ 2020 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q9.** One of the earliest and greatest temple-cities of southern Mesopotamia, where early writing appeared, was:

- (A) Memphis
- (B) Uruk
- (C) Athens
- (D) Harappa

PYQ 2023 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

**Q10.** Why was long-distance trade so important to southern Mesopotamia?

(A) It had too much metal to use

(C) It had no farmland

PYQ 2018 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 45s

(B) It lacked metal, stone and timber of its own

(D) It had no rivers

**Q11.** A ziggurat in Mesopotamia was a:

(A) Royal tomb

(C) Market square

PYQ 2022 · School Annual · 1m · 30s

(B) Stepped temple-tower

(D) City wall

**Q12.** The streets of the city of Ur are best described as:

(A) A planned grid like Harappa

(C) Wide paved highways

PYQ 2019 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

(B) Narrow, winding and irregular

(D) Underground tunnels

**Q13.** Our division of the hour into 60 minutes and the circle into 360 degrees is a legacy of:

(A) Ancient Egypt

(C) Ancient Greece

PYQ 2024 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

(B) Mesopotamia

(D) Ancient China

**Q14.** The Epic of Gilgamesh is significant because it is:

(A) The first law-code

(C) A trade record

PYQ 2021 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

(B) One of the world's earliest great poems

(D) A map of Mesopotamia

**Q15.** Because cuneiform had hundreds of signs and was hard to learn, writing was the specialised work of:

(A) Farmers

(C) Trained scribes

PYQ 2023 · CBSE SQP · 1m · 30s

(B) Soldiers

(D) Every citizen

## ANSWER KEY & EXPLANATIONS

Q 1-15 · MARK YOUR SCORE

**Q1. Answer: B**

'Mesopotamia' = mesos (middle) + potamos (river) — the land between the Euphrates and the Tigris.

**Q2. Answer: C**

Most of ancient Mesopotamia falls within the modern Republic of Iraq.

**Q3. Answer: B**

The earliest tablets (c.3200 BCE) are administrative lists of goods coming into the temple-city of Uruk, not literature.

**Q4. Answer: B**

'Cuneiform' comes from the Latin cuneus, 'wedge'; signs were pressed into wet clay with a wedge-tipped reed stylus.

**Q5. Answer: B**

The first tablets used pictographs — small pictures standing for the objects counted — which later became wedge-signs.

**Q6. Answer: B**

Scribes pressed signs into wet clay tablets, which were then dried or baked. Hardened clay survived for millennia.

**Q7. Answer: B**

A city is defined by specialisation and interdependence — not everyone farms — not merely by size.

**Q8. Answer: C**

The temple of the city god owned land and herds, employed people, and collected and redistributed the grain surplus.

**Q9. Answer: B**

Uruk was a great early city; the world's earliest writing is associated with its temple economy.

**Q10. Answer: B**

The fertile southern plain lacked metal, stone and good timber, so these had to be imported through trade.

**Q11. Answer: B**

A ziggurat was a massive stepped mud-brick temple-tower with a shrine at the top — not a tomb like the Egyptian pyramid.

---

**Q12. Answer: B**

Unlike planned Harappan cities, Ur had narrow, winding, irregular streets that carts could not easily enter.

---

**Q13. Answer: B**

Mesopotamia used a sexagesimal (base-60) system, giving us the 60-minute hour, 60-second minute and 360-degree circle.

---

**Q14. Answer: B**

The Epic of Gilgamesh, about the legendary king of Uruk and his search for immortality, is among the world's oldest long poems.

---

**Q15. Answer: C**

Cuneiform was difficult, so professional scribes trained for years in scribal schools and were highly valued.