

Stone slab describing a sale (receipt)

# Ancient Mesopotamia

Geography of the Fertile Crescent

#### Rise of Civilization

- Early peoples almost always settled near water
  - Crops would grow well
  - Animals lived along water
- Hunter-gatherers settled in Mesopotamia around 12,000 years ago
  - Mesopotamia the land between the rivers
    - Tigris River
    - Euphrates River



#### Rise of Civilization

- The rivers flooded every year and brought silt
  - Silt A mixture of fertile soil and tiny rocks; great for farming
- Eventually, with the help of agriculture, the population of Mesopotamia grew
  - Domesticated animals/plants
  - Created a surplus/trading
  - Developed government
  - Built villages/cities





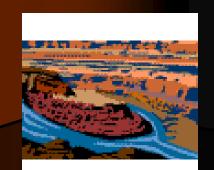
### **Farming**

- The floods that brought the silt also caused
  - major problems
    - Destroyed crops
    - Killed livestock
    - Washed away homes



- Irrigation A way of supplying water to land
- Canals Human-made waterways





### Food Surpluses

 Because they could control water, the Mesopotamians created a surplus



- Surplus
- Division of Labor
- Trade
- Government
- Cities



 Soon, Mesopotamians were building the first cities in the world

## Geography of the Fertile Crescent

- The Mesopotamians built almost all of their cities in the Fertile Crescent
  - Fertile Crescent A large crescent of fertile farmland that extends from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea

