**What is a Civilization?**

(After today I will be able to explain what identifies a civilization)

**Villages Grow and Prosper**

**Farming Develops in Many Places**

* Africa – The Nile River Valley developed into an important agricultural center for growing wheat, barley, and other crops.
* China – About 8,000 years ago farmers along the middle stretches of the Huang He cultivated millet.
* Mexico and Central America – Famers cultivated corn, beans, and squash
* Peru – Farmers in the Central Andes were the first to grow tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and white potatoes

**Villages Grow into Cities**

* People settled in stable communities that were based on agriculture.
* New tools like hoes, sickles, and plow sticks made farming easier.
* As technology increased harvests increased
* As the population increased social relationships became more complex.

Villages Grow into Cities - **Economic Changes**

* People built elaborate irrigation systems to water crops. This increase crop production which led to a surplus in crops.
* Because crops were plentiful villagers could perform other jobs beside farming
* Craftspeople made pottery, metal objects, and woven cloth.
* People became traders to obtain other goods.
* Two inventions helped enable traders to transport goods over long distance: the wheel and the sail.

Villages Grow into Cities - **Social Changes**

* People had to cooperate in order to complete large projects.
* Social classes developed dividing people into varying categories of wealth
* Religion began to take a larger role in society
* Old Stone Age religions centered around nature, animal spirits, and some ideas about afterlife.
* New Stone Age religions were focused on gods and goddess who controlled nature

**\*\*What Is Civilization?\*\***

Most scholars define civilization as a complex culture with the following **five** characteristics

* **Advanced cities**
* **Specialized workers**
* **Complex institutions**
* **Record keeping**
* **Advanced technology**
1. **Advanced Cities (Cities)**
* Cities were the birthplace of the first civilizations
* Cities are a center for trade for a larger area
* City dwellers made goods to trade with farmers
1. **Specialized workers (Social Structure)**
* Specialized workers such as traders, government officials, and priests.
* Specialization the development of skills in a specific kind of work
* Artisans skilled workers who make goods by hand
* Artisans develop their skill at designing jewelry, fashioning metal tools and weapons, or making pottery.
1. **Complex Institutions (Government and Religion)**
* An institution is a long-lasting pattern or organization in a community.
* Government is a type of institution.
* Leaders emerged in order to make laws and maintain order
* **Institutions include**: government, religion and the economy
* Most cities developed a religious belief
* The **temple** was not only the center of religion in the city but also of government affairs and economics.
1. **Record Keeping (Writing)**
* Government officials had to **document** tax collections, the passage of laws, and the storage of grain
* Priest kept track of important spiritual rituals by maintaining a calendar
* Around 3000 BC Sumerian scribes (or professional record keepers) invented a system of writing called **cuneiform**, which means “wedge-shape”
* Sumerians used **pictographs** – symbols of the objects or things they represented) before cuneiform.
* Scribes used stylus (a sharpened reed with a wedge-shaped point) to press symbols into moist clay. They would lay these tablets out in the sun to dry.
* People also recorded historic events in cities.
1. **Advanced Technology**
* People developed **new tools** and techniques to overcome problems
* **Ox drawn plows** to turn soil
* Elaborate **irrigation systems**
* The **potter’s wheel** was developed around 3500 BC
* **Bronze working** was discovered around 2500 BC. Artisans combined tin and copper to make **spearheads**. This ushered in the Bronze Age. The Bronze Age began around 3000 BC.