Week 1: Chapter 1: Part 1: Terms

**Hunting and gathering** - A hunter-gatherer society is one whose primary subsistence method involves the direct procurement of edible plants and animals from the wild, foraging and hunting without significant recourse to the domestication of either. The demarcation between hunter-gatherers and other societies which rely more upon domestication is not a clear cut one, as many contemporary societies use a combination of both strategies to obtain the foodstuffs required to sustain themselves. (Wikipedia)

**Paleolithic (Old Stone Age)** - Of or pertaining to an era marked by early stone implements. The era (as proposed by Lubbock) includes the earlier half of the Stone Age; the remains belonging to it are for the most part of extinct animals, with relics of human beings (Encarta)

**Homo erectus** - extinct primate classified in the subfamily Homininae and the genus *Homo*, both of which include humans. Scientists learn about extinct species, such as *Homo erectus*, by studying fossils—petrified bones buried in sedimentary rock. Based on their analysis of these fossils, scientists believe that *Homo erectus* lived from about 1.8 million years ago to as recently as 30,000 years ago. (Wikipedia)

**Homo sapiens sapiens** - A human being, also human or man, is a member of a species of bipedal primates in the family Hominidae. DNA evidence indicates that modern humans originated in east Africa about 200,000 years ago. (Wikipedia)

**Culture** - in anthropology, the patterns of behavior and thinking that people living in social groups learn, create, and share. Culture distinguishes one human group from others. It also distinguishes humans from other animals. A people’s culture includes their beliefs, rules of behavior, language, rituals, art, technology, styles of dress, ways of producing and cooking food, religion, and political and economic systems. (Wikipedia)

**Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age)** - The Mesolithic (also known as the Epipaleolithic) extends from the end of the Pleistocene Ice Age, about 10,000 years ago, until the period when farming became central to a peoples’ livelihood, which occurred at different times around the world. The term *Mesolithic* is generally applied to the period of post-Pleistocene hunting and gathering in Europe and, sometimes, parts of Africa and Asia. In the Americas, the post-glacial hunter-gatherer stage that predates the dominance of agriculture is usually called the Archaic. (Encarta)

**Neolithic** - Farming originated at different times in different places—as early as about 9,000 years ago in some parts of the world. In some regions, farming arose through indigenous developments, and in others, it spread from other areas. Most archaeologists believe that the development of farming in the Neolithic was one of the most important and revolutionary innovations in the history of the human species. It allowed more permanent settlements, much larger and denser populations, the accumulation of surpluses and wealth, the development of more profound status and rank differences within populations, and the rise of specialized crafts. (Encarta)
**Civilization** - advanced state of a society possessing historical and cultural unity. A civilization is a society or culture group normally defined as a complex society characterized by the practice of agriculture and settlement in towns and cities. Compared with other cultures, members of a civilization are organized into a diverse division of labor and an intricate social hierarchy. (Wikipedia)

**Slash and burn agriculture** - Slash and burn consists of cutting and burning of forests or woodlands to create fields for agriculture or pasture for livestock, or for a variety of other purposes. It is sometimes part of shifting cultivation agriculture, and of transhumance livestock herding. (Wikipedia)

**Catal Huyuk** - was a very large Neolithic and Chalcolithic settlement in southern Anatolia, dating from around 7500 B.C.E. for the lowest layers. It is the largest and best preserved Neolithic site found to date.

Çatalhöyük is located overlooking wheat fields in the Konya Plain, southeast of the present-day city of Konya (ancient Iconium) in Turkey, approximately 140 kilometers (87 mi) from the twin-coned volcano of Hasan Dağ. The eastern settlement forms a mound which would have risen about 20 meters (66 ft) above the plain at the time of the latest Neolithic occupation. (Wikipedia)

**Cuneiform writing** - (Latin *cuneus*, “wedge”), term applied to a mode of writing utilizing wedge-shaped strokes, inscribed mainly on clay but also on stone, metals, wax, and other materials. This technique was used by the ancient people of Western Asia. The earliest texts in cuneiform script were made in about 3000 BC, having antedated the use of alphabets by some 1500 years. The latest cuneiform inscriptions date from the 1st century AD. Cuneiform writing, which originated in southern Mesopotamia, was invented probably by the Sumerians, who used it to inscribe the Sumerian language; it was subsequently adapted for writing the Akkadian language, of which Babylonian and Assyrian are dialects. (Encarta)

**Mesopotamia** - (Greek, “between the rivers”), one of the earliest centers of urban civilization, in the area of modern Iraq and eastern Syria between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. As the Tigris and Euphrates flow south out of Turkey, they are 400 km (250 mi) apart; the Euphrates runs south and east for 1,300 km (800 mi) and the Tigris flows south for 885 km (550 mi) before they join, reaching the Persian Gulf as the Shatt al Arab. (Wikipedia)

**Sumerians** – residents of the ancient country of western Asia, corresponding approximately to Babylonia of biblical times. The history of Sumer has been reconstructed solely from fragmentary writings on clay tablets and from other evidence uncovered and interpreted by modern archaeologists. Use of the name Sumer dates probably from about the beginning of the 3rd millennium BC. During the 5th millennium BC a people known as the Ubaidians established settlements in the region known later as Sumer; these settlements gradually developed into the chief Sumerian cities, namely Adab, Eridu, Isin, Kish, Kullab, Lagash, Larsa, Nippur, and Ur. Several centuries later, as
the Ubaidian settlers prospered, Semites from Syrian and Arabian deserts began to infiltrate, both as peaceful immigrants and as raiders in quest of booty. After about 3250 BC, another people migrated from its homeland, located probably northeast of Mesopotamia, and began to intermarry with the native population. The newcomers, who became known as Sumerians, spoke an agglutinative language unrelated apparently to any other known language. (Wikipedia)

**Babylonians** - Ancient kingdom in Mesopotamia, lasting from approximately the 18th century until the 6th century. The Babylonian society was both an urban society and an agricultural one. The economy rested upon agriculture, but governance, industries and fine arts were carried out in the cities. In the entire kingdom there were no more than about 10-15 cities with 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. Apart from that, people lived in villages and hamlets. (Wikipedia)

**Harappa/(Mohenjo Daro)** - Harappā, locality in the Indus River Valley in Pakistan, which dates back to before 2000 BC. Archaeologists have found the remains of a city and evidence of a possible link between Indian and Sumerian cultures.

**Mohenjo-Daro**, archaeological site of the Indus Valley, or Harappān, civilization (2500?-1700 BC), south of Lārkāna, Pakistan. Excavated in the 1920s by the British archaeologist Sir John Marshall (1876-1958), Mohenjo-Daro covers more than 80 hectares (200 acres) and consists of two mounds separated by an unoccupied area. A major city and commercial center during the Bronze Age, it is the largest Indus Valley settlement.

The small western mound, or “citadel,” has several public buildings, which may have been surrounded by a wall. Early excavators took these buildings for a granary, assembly hall, college, and public bath, but later studies have cast doubt on that conclusion. The larger eastern mound consists of large blocks of brick buildings, separated by streets and housing the inhabitants' residences and workshops. Both mounds yielded an abundance of Harappān artifacts. (Encarta)

**Hwang He (Yellow River)** - second largest river in China after the Yangtze, with a total length of 5,464 km (3,395 mi). The Huang He rises in northern China in a series of springs and lakes in the Kunlun Mountains in Qinghai Province, south of the Gobi Desert. From its source, the river first flows east through deep gorges and then turns northeast at the city of Lanzhou in Gansu Province, from which point it flows for many hundreds of kilometers through the Ordos Desert (Mu Us Shamo), an easterly extension of the Gobi. Turning east, the river then flows due east for about 320 km (about 200 mi). It then turns due south, flowing swiftly through a young valley cut in deposits of loamy soil known as loess between Shaanxi and Shanxi provinces. In this portion of its course, the river picks up and carries in suspension yellow silt, which colors the water. The load of sediment is increased by the loess carried into the main stream by a number of tributaries, including the Fen and Wei rivers. The Wei River enters the Huang He in the central portion of Shaanxi, and the river then flows east across the northern portion of Henan Province to the plains of northern China. (Encarta)
**P’an Ku** - The primordial Chinese giant who was born as a dwarf from the cosmic egg. The upper part of the egg formed the Heaven (Yang) and the lower part formed the Earth (Yin). Pan-gu, (or P’an Ku) growing ten feet a day, pushed the eggshells further and further apart. Then, after 13,000 years (other sources state 18,000 years), he himself burst apart. His eyes became the sun and the moon, his head the four sacred mountains, his blood the seas and the rivers, his hair turned into the grasses and trees, his breath became the wind, his sweat turned into rain, and his voice into thunder. The fleas that had been living on his skin became the ancestors of the human race. Different sources describe this transformation in different ways. (http://www.pantheon.org/articles/p/pan-gu.html)

**Shang Dynasty** - (1570?-1045? BC), Chinese dynasty with the earliest-known written records. It is the most ancient of the Chinese dynasties for which documents are known to exist, marking the beginning of China’s written history. The cultural, religious, and political practices of the Shang elites strongly influenced the Zhou, who conquered the Shang in about 1045 BC and established the Zhou dynasty. A dynasty is a succession of rulers from the same family. (Encarta)

**Zhou Dynasty** - 1045?-256 BC, also known as Chou, Chinese dynasty that paved the way for the first unification of China in 221 BC. Although the Zhou dynasty was founded in about 1027 BC, the Zhou conquest of the Shang dynasty in about 1045 BC established the Zhou as the supreme political power in China. Most historians date the beginning of the Zhou dynasty to this event, and Zhou historical records show that the Zhou themselves considered this victory to be the beginning of their dynastic reign.

The Zhou dynasty is subdivided into two periods: the Western and Eastern Zhou. The Western Zhou controlled China's Central Plain area, consisting mainly of the middle and lower reaches of the Huang He (Yellow River) drainage. The authority of the Western Zhou court ended in 771 BC, but the Eastern Zhou court nominally reigned until 256 BC. During this period, the area of China expanded to include the drainage of the Yangtze River in the south as well as the farmland along the future site of the Great Wall in the north.

During the Zhou dynasty, China evolved from a feudal state with power divided among vassals to one with a strong centralized government. Paralleling this change, a more homogeneous Chinese civilization developed as contact between regions increased and Confucianism spread throughout China. (Wikipedia)

**Phoenicians** - ancient designation of a narrow strip of territory on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, now largely in modern Lebanon. The territory, about 320 km (about 200 mi) long and from 8 to 25 km (5 to 15 mi) wide, was bounded on the east by the Lebanon Mountains. The southern boundary was Mount Carmel; the northern boundary was generally accepted to be the Eleutherus River, now called the Kabīr, which forms the northern boundary of Lebanon. Although its inhabitants had a homogeneous civilization and considered themselves a single nation, Phoenicia was not a unified state but a group of city-kingdoms, one of which usually dominated the others. The most important of
these cities were Simyra, Zarephath (Sarafand), Byblos, Jubeil, Arwad (Rouad), Acco ('Akko), Sidon (Şaydā), Tripolis (Tripoli), Tyre (Sur), and Berytus (Beirut). The two most dominant were Tyre and Sidon, which alternated as sites of the ruling power. (Wikipedia)

**Judaism** - religious culture of the Jews (also known as the people of Israel); one of the world’s oldest continuing religious traditions.

Judaism originated in the land of Israel (also known as Palestine) in the Middle East. Subsequently, Jewish communities have existed at one time or another in almost all parts of the world, a result of both voluntary migrations of Jews and forced exile or expulsions. As a rich and complex religious tradition, Judaism has never been monolithic. Its various historical forms nonetheless have shared certain characteristic features. The most essential of these is a radical monotheism, that is, the belief that a single, transcendent God created the universe and continues providentially to govern it. Undergirding this monotheism is the teleological conviction that the world is both intelligible and purposive, because a single divine intelligence stands behind it. Nothing that humanity experiences is capricious; everything ultimately has meaning. (Wikipedia)

**Agrarian revolution (Neolithic Revolution)** - Early farmers were, archaeologists agree, largely of Neolithic culture. Sites occupied by such people are located in southwestern Asia in what are now Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Syria, and Turkey; in southeastern Asia, in what is now Thailand; in Africa, along the Nile River in Egypt; and in Europe, along the Danube River and in Macedonia, Thrace, and Thessaly (historic regions of southeastern Europe). Early centers of agriculture have also been identified in the Huang He (Yellow River) area of China; the Indus River valley of India and Pakistan; and the Tehuacán Valley of Mexico, northwest of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. (Wikipedia)

**Week 1: Chapter 1: Part 2: Questions**

1. Describe human migrations patterns across the globe.

The first humans developed in Central Africa, eventually reaching nearly all parts of the globe. Moving first to the Middle East, and then expanding outwards to present-day China, Australia, and Europe. However, these humans did not rapidly expand far northward until near the end of the last great ice age, about 17,000 years ago, when they first crossed the Bering Straight from Siberia to Alaska, after which expansion southward in the Americas went relatively quickly.

2. How and where did early agricultural societies first emerge?

The first agricultural societies developed in the fertile Middle East, in an area between present-day Turkey and Iraq. Rice cultivation was created independently soon after in China, and maize production in the Americas started some 3000 years after that. The climate change after the last great ice age most likely caused the need for agriculture because of an increased population and an increasing lack of game for hunting. Soon,
farming and crop planting/gathering were the staple occupations in villages, which eventually would expand to become civilizations.

3. How did sedentary agriculture lead to societal changes?

The practices of farming and domesticated agriculture caused a shift from nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyles to sedentary ones. This occurred because of an increase in food production, as well as the necessity for change as brought about by the sharply rising population. When the humans first began to come together in groups of hundreds and thousands, rather than 50-60, a more complex social hierarchy was set in motion, with an increased disparity between the classes. As these villages grew into cities, they began to develop their own cultures, based on religion and rituals, and eventually, some would grow to what we now deem civilizations, with writing, trade, and specialized work.

4. What are the characteristics of civilization (list) and where did they arise (list the main five or six)?

Formal political organizations or states
Significant cities
Development of writing
Record Keeping

Mesopotamia (Sumerians), Nile River /Egypt, Kush, Indus River Valley, China (along Huanghe & Yangtze Rivers)

5. How did geography influence the rise of civilizations?

All of the early civilizations were centered around a water source. This allowed for access to drinking water as well as irrigation for crops. Fertile farmland provided an abundance of food, requiring fewer agricultural jobs and allowing the people to take on different pursuits. With a stable food source came political and social stability allowing the cities to grow and evolve.

6. Describe the political, social, economic and religious institutions that developed in the first civilizations.

Sumerians – Hammurabi’s Code was the first written set of laws that governed the civilization. They developed cuneiform- a series of geometric shapes tat were used to represent spoken sounds. Status and frescoes were used to decorate temples in honor of the gods and each city maintained a patron god and a ziggurat dedicated to that god. Priests maintained these temples and preformed the various rituals. Sumerian gods were numerous and powerful beings upon which agriculture depended.

Nile – A powerful pharaoh ruled the people and the government controlled much of Egyptian life including direct control over the economy. Massive tombs (pyramids) were built to emphasis the power of the pharaoh who was seen as divine. They began forms of
writing that would later become hieroglyphics and art was often centered on tomb decoration (as the belief in an afterlife encouraged the idea of being surrounded by beautiful things in death.) The Egyptians excelled at mathematics – dividing the day into 24 hours among other accomplishments.

Indus River – One of the most astounding feats in the Indus river civilizations was the discovery of houses with indoor plumbing. Those in the Indus River Valley were traders who often went to Mesopotamia yet developed their own distinct culture including the development of Harappan writing. Not much is known of this civilization as it’s writing has yet to be deciphered.

Chinese Civilizations – The Huanghe civilization was organized around a godlike king whose rule (and subsequent heirs) has taken on mythic proportions. Irrigation was carefully regulated in order to control the flood-prone river. China was unique in their advanced technology and vibrant intellectual pursuits (introducing the use of iron and cola, oracle bones and further development of writing.) Art was a vital part of life, with early development sin music as well as painting and sculpture.

7. Describe the social hierarchies, gender relationships and social inequalities in the first civilizations. Can any comparisons be made (between the different civilizations)?

Social Hierarchies – centered around a king. Landed nobility held great power, stratified classes existed, powerful priesthood

Gender roles – were patriarchal, their job roles now seen as less important than in hunter-gatherer societies, Egyptian Upper class women saw greater roles and influence, but still very much a subordinate group.

Social inequalities – Egypt & Mesopotamia in particular owned vast numbers of slaves, very rigid social classes, large distinction between nobility and peasant, women seen as subordinate to men.

8. How did civilized culture survive the rise and fall of regional states?

Each survived differently. Many lost all but certain cultural elements that continued to endure such as the Indus River civilizations whose symbols in Harappan, yoga positions, public bathing ponds and agricultural techniques were adapted by conquerors and still in use today. In Mesopotamia, on the other hand, new states built upon the legacy of their predecessors, preserving language and government structures. China is perhaps the best example of this as its early founders were revered by later scholars, writing system became incorporated into modern Chinese writing and Mandate of Heaven concept was a lasting influence for centuries. Much of what was developed earlier has remained a uniting force within Chinese culture, politics and history and greatly influenced development in neighboring countries.

9. Describe the contributions of Judaism.
One of the most important contributions of Judaism is the introduction of a monotheistic religion (or belief in one god.) This belief, while serving to create a distinctive Jewish culture also was the basis of development for both Christianity and Islam. There was also a strong connection between religion and daily life. One was to follow religion in order to live ethically and morally, making religion more than just a series of rituals and ceremonies.

10. Compare and contrast the first civilizations.

All were established around a river basin, employed irrigation techniques and developed forms of writing. Culture was unique to the area and vibrant. Religion was a central component with rulers often being seen as divine or god-like. Trade spread with many of the civilizations coming into contact with one another (China however, tended to be more isolationist) See Question number 6 for more details on each.