

The Incredible Inventions of Ancient Sumer - Answers

Read the text carefully and then answer the following questions in as much detail as you can.

1. Why are the ancient Sumerians credited as being one of the most advanced early civilisations? **The ancient Sumerians are credited as being one of the most advanced early civilisations as they had a complex knowledge and understanding of the world around them that was superior to many other civilisations in existence at the time.**
2. How did the ancient Sumerian writing script change over time? **To start with, their writing consisted of hieroglyphs (pictures) but over time it developed into a script known as cuneiform.**
3. Why is 'cuneiform' so called? **Cuneiform means 'wedge shaped'. The script the ancient Sumerians created was made up of wedge-shaped marks.**
4. How did the ancient Sumerian farmers ensure they were able to use their land all year round? **They were able to use their land all year round as they employed men to maintain the canals, the channels and to control the water in the area.**
5. Explain how a 'seeder plough' works and draw a picture of what you think it looked like. **A 'seeder plough' was pulled by oxen and created a channel along the ground into which seeds could be dropped. Accept any drawing which looks like a plough.**
6. How was the wheel first used? **The wheel was first used to improve the process of making pots. It was used as a potter's wheel.**
7. In what ways do you think the loom benefited the weaving industry? **I think the loom benefited the weaving industry as it would have meant items were made quicker, allowing more items to be made.**
8. In what ways do you think the ancient Sumerian counting system was based on multiples of 6 and 10? **Accept any answer which gives a plausible reason why the system was based on multiples of six and ten, such as they had ten fingers.**

1. How did the ancient Sumerians track the passing of time? **They tracked the passing of time by observing the sky. They tracked the movements of the sun, moon and five planets.**
2. How does the ancient Sumerian system of government compare to our system of government today? **The Sumerian system of government is similar to our system of government today. Our government also decide on the laws, punishments and whether to go to war or not, just like the ancient Sumerian system. The difference is they don't decide how the gods should be honoured.**
3. Why do you think it was important for the king and nobles to listen to the views of the people? **Accept any answer which explains that it was important for a king or noble to listen to the people as the people would feel they were getting to have their say and that it was a fair decision. The people would feel a part of their city and be happy with decisions that had been made as they had been listened to.**
4. What ancient Sumerian invention do you think was the most important? Explain why. **Accept any invention with a reasonable explanation as to why it was the most important.**

Challenge:

Design an advertisement for an ancient Sumerian invention. Describe its function and features and explain how it will benefit the user.