

Rubric: Ancient Civilizations and Ways of Life

Task

Students present a labelled model or report. It examines ancient civilizations.

Curriculum alignment

Students examine ancient civilizations ([Outcome](#)). Students look at geography and environment changes. These changes led to settlement and trade of ancient civilizations ([Outcome](#)). Students compare where multiple ancient civilizations were located. They explain why ancient civilizations settled along river valleys and coastlines. They show how environmental change affected human behaviour ([Skills](#)). Students explain why civilizations rose and fell. They examine how innovations from ancient civilizations changed over time. They tell the difference between primary and secondary sources. ([Skills](#)).

Rubric

Criterion	Beginning	Developing	Proficient	Exemplary
Geographical features and settlement	Identifies one or two geographical features but does not connect them to settlement patterns.	Describes how some geographical features like water or soil supported settlement but explanations lack detail.	Explains how multiple geographical features such as rivers, fertile soil, and coastlines contributed to where ancient civilizations settled.	Analyzes how specific geographical features and environmental conditions determined settlement locations and enabled trade routes.
Knowledge of ancient civilizations	Names one or two ancient civilizations with minimal detail about their ways of life.	Describes basic features of two or three civilizations, such as location or one aspect of daily life.	Identifies three or more ancient civilizations, describes their locations, and explains key features of their ways of life and innovations.	Compares multiple civilizations, explains their rise and fall, and connects their innovations to modern life.
Use of sources and evidence	Uses one source or type of source with little connection to claims made.	Uses two sources or types of sources but does not clearly distinguish between primary and secondary sources.	Cites multiple sources, distinguishes between primary and secondary sources, and uses evidence to support descriptions.	Integrates primary and secondary sources, evaluates their reliability, and uses evidence to build a coherent explanation.
Organization and labelling	Model or report is unclear; labels are missing or do not match content.	Model or report has basic organization; most labels are present but some lack clarity or accuracy.	Model or report is well organized with clear, accurate labels that identify key features, locations, or aspects of ways of life.	Model or report is logically structured with detailed, precise labels that enhance understanding and show connections between ideas.

Scoring

Add the number of criteria at each level. The level with the most criteria is the student's overall result. If two levels tie, the student gets the lower level.

Notes for the teacher

- **Geographical features:** Look for specific references to rivers, coastlines, fertile soil, or climate. Students need not name every feature, but should explain why location mattered for settlement or trade.
- **Civilizations and ways of life:** Accept any ancient civilization from the curriculum (Egypt, Greece, Rome, China, India, or civilizations from the Arab world). Ways of life include daily activities, beliefs, government, agriculture, and innovations. Do not expect encyclopedic coverage.
- **Sources:** Primary sources include artifacts, documents, or images from the time period. Secondary sources are books, articles, or videos created later. Students at the Developing level may confuse the two; guide them to identify who created the source and when.
- **Labelling and clarity:** In a model, labels should identify geographical features, civilizations, or structures. In a report, headings and subheadings serve the same purpose. Clarity matters more than artistic skill or length.