

# Exploring Sarazm, Tajikistan

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**Lesson Audience:** Secondary World or Ancient History students

**Overview:** This lesson plan is designed to expose students to the proto-urban city of Sarazm near Panjikent, Tajikistan and facilitate connections to contemporary sites in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China. Students will explore the 3D tour of the site created using accurate archaeological data by Dr. Bobomullo Bobomulloev and his team. Students will identify ways Sarazm showcases the features of civilization of the ancient world.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will identify the features of civilization present in ancient Sarazm.
- Students will explore changes to architecture, culture, and daily life in Sarazm between 3500 to 2700 BC.
- Students will make connections between Sarazm and other contemporary sites.

## Resources:

- World History Encyclopedia article “Civilization,” [Civilization - World History Encyclopedia](#)
- Sarazm Worldwide: Learn the History of Tajikistan website - [Sarazm \(tajikculture.org\)](#)
- Identifying Features of Civilization Chart – attached below
- Exploring Sarazm PowerPoint file - attached
- Optional – Virtual Reality glasses (Google Cardboard is a cost-effective option [Google Cardboard – Google VR](#))
- Optional – Comparing Features of Civilization Chart – attached below

The lesson sequence below could be adapted to diverse instructional contexts, but the project encourages student exploration and discovery using the 3D Tour created by the archaeological team in Sarazm. It is important that students have a background understanding of the features of civilization and the development of civilization in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and China.

1. Have students read the article “Civilization” on World History Encyclopedia to answer the questions on the top of the worksheet “Identifying Features of Civilization.” Students should already have an understanding of the features of civilization.
2. Lead discussion of questions and redirect student understanding as necessary.
3. Display a map of Central Asia (see included PowerPoint) and discuss the location of Tajikistan. Encourage students to discuss how geography influences human settlement (this should be a review of previous content learned). Use images in PowerPoint to focus students on the geography of Central Asia.
4. Direct students to the TajikCulture website and show them how to navigate the site before giving them time to explore the 3D tour. This could be done on laptops in groups or using VR glasses. It could also be done as a whole class with a more teacher-led discussion through the site.
5. Students work on completing the chart on the worksheet and then answering the wrap-up questions.

### **Possible Extensions:**

Students could compare the Burial of the Princess of Sarazm with the Egyptian Valley of the Kings using the Theban Mapping Project virtual tours. Students could compare of the bodies were prepared, placed, and preserved.

- [Theban Mapping Project](#)

Students could complete the expanded chart as a review activity. Resources listed below could be provided to students to explore and add to their charts.

- [The Ancient Mesopotamian Urban Community of Ur \(thoughtco.com\)](#)
- [Eridu: The Earliest City in Mesopotamia and the World \(thoughtco.com\)](#)
- [Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia - World History Encyclopedia](#)
- [Life in Ancient China - World History Encyclopedia](#)
- [Daily Life in Ancient China - World History Encyclopedia](#)
- [Daily Life in Ancient Egypt - World History Encyclopedia](#)

### **Critical Thinking and Creation Extension**

After students gather information about Sarazm and comparing the settlement to other civilizations at the time, students will select one of the options below to present to their classmates to further facilitate discussion about Sarazm. The goal of this extension is to encourage students to take the information they have gathered and synthesized, and create new ideas furthering exploring the connections between Sarazm and other contemporary sites.

1. Make a vlog entry talking about Sarazm and connections with Mesopotamia, Egypt, or China. The vlog entry can last about 5 minutes (or chosen by teacher). The entry could read about what you want to see in person for yourself at Sarazm and one other site. Do you have any hypotheses about commonalities between Sarazm and one of the other locations? Here is one website to check for information on how to vlog: <https://www.hooksounds.com/blog/how-to-vlog-guide-start-vlogging/> Googling vlog on YouTube will also return many results and assist in the creation of what you want your vlog to say.
2. Write a slice of life story of 500 -750 words about an inhabitant of Sarazm. Please make sure to verbally illustrate this individual's encounters with the different features of life including government, religion, etc. based on research conducted in section 1 of the assignment. Be sure to clarify the individual's place within Sarazm social and economic systems.
3. Draw a scene of Sarazm's daily life in comic form with as many panels as needed to illustrate interactions with at least three aspects of life with an accurate representation of the geography of the region.

## Identifying Features of Civilization

1. What is a civilization?
2. What can a civilization not be?
3. What are examples of civilizations we have already studied so far in class?
4. What does scholar Paul Kriwaczek say came along with the development of civilization and cities?

Using the [3D tour](#) and the questions answered by Dr. Bobomullo Bobomulloev, identify pieces of evidence that support that Sarazm, Tajikistan was a developed civilization and city. Be sure to click on the “information” buttons when they show up on the 3D Tour and change the years on the right side of the screen.

	Evidence in Sarazm, Tajikistan
Government/Religion	
Surplus Food	

Division of Labor	
Urbanization	
Writing/Record Keeping System	

Wrap-Up Questions: What allowed Sarazm to develop the features of civilization? (hint: check out the questions on the homepage of the website)

What did you find interesting about the 3D Tour? What surprised you about the site?

Comparing Civilization

	Sarazm, Tajikistan	Mesopotamia	Egypt	China
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Government/Religion				
Surplus Food				
Division of Labor				
Urbanization				
Writing/Record Keeping System				