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Are You Smarter Than a Babylonian? Preliminary report.

Mesopotamia is the land between two rivers, often called the Cradle of Civilization, “Old Babylon”, Chaldea, and the Fertile Crescent. It is located in what is today, modern Iraq. Situated between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Mesopotamia became the site for the remarkable birth of civilization, cities, technological sophistication, literary works, and mathematics. The “Old Babylonian” Period (1800 -1600 BC) has produced the majority of knowledge we know as “Mesopotamian mathematics”. Mesopotamia was located on a common trade route with extensive business in merchandise, money exchange, taxes, harvest commodities, and real estate. These economic necessities gave rise to a wealth of mathematical invention. Babylonians were able to produce remarkable advances in mathematics by combining the use of the Sexagesimal numbering system and insightful systematic procedures with trial and error. Resources will be explored to introduce students to the high level of mathematical development in an effort to gain an understanding and appreciation for ancient Babylonian mathematics. (Received September 22, 2015)