

# Ancient Hebrews

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# Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments are designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about the Hebrews. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical world history class.

## ★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

## ★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- **A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of world history**

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards—Assessment 1 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 1, Assessment 2 addresses Common Core Reading Standard 2, and so on. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- **Based on primary or secondary sources**

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone. Links to online versions of print media are available in the Bibliography. Please note that these links were valid at the time of production, but the websites may have since been discontinued.

- **Brief tasks promoting historical literacy**

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the students' mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- **Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments**

A *basic* and an *advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *basic* assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *advanced* assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *basic* version.

- **Easy to use as both learning and assessment tools**

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess students' historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- **Evaluating student responses**

Brief but specific suggestions are provided, defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly, they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

## Assessment 1 *Basic Level*

# “I Will Give You the Rains”

### ★ Key Ideas and Details

1. (6–8) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

### ★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 1* is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that a lack of rain was the crucial problem. The passage makes numerous references to the need for rain as a way to maintain agricultural productivity. In it, God speaks of giving the Hebrews “rains for your land in its due season.” He makes it clear the rains will come at the right times to provide “your corn, and your wine, and your olive oil,” as well as grass for the cattle. The promise is entirely about the link between rain and agriculture. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should note that Document 2 explains the biblical emphasis on rainfall by referring to the “absence of reliable sources of water” in Canaan, the region God supposedly set aside for the Hebrews. No major river supplied that region, whereas the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates solved the problem of water supply naturally for people in the other fertile regions of the Middle East. Those other people did not share the same fears as people living in the land of Canaan.

## “I Will Give You the Rains”

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

And it shall come to pass, if you shall [diligently obey] my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rains for your land in [its] due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your corn, and your wine, and your olive oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your cattle, that you may eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, [so] that your heart be not deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them. And then the LORD’S wrath [will] be kindled against you, and he [will] shut up the heavens, [so] that there will be no rain, and that the land [will] yield not her fruit, and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD has given you.

**Source Information:** This document is from Deuteronomy 11:13–17 in the Hebrew Bible. In it, God tells the Israelites what will happen if they obey his commandments and if they disobey them. This version of the passage is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible. The text is available on the website Bible Hub.

### Document 2: A Secondary Source

Yet the covenant with Yahweh did not prevent the Israelites from frequently worshipping other local deities, notably Ba’al, the Canaanite god of rain. This was not surprising given the absence of a reliable source of water in this region. Unlike the Egyptians and the peoples of Hebrews, for whom the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers overflowed annually and provided a more than adequate source of water, the peoples who lived in the Land of Canaan depended heavily on rainfall. The chronic concern for water is an underlying theme in the covenantal relationship between God and Israel, particularly in the obligatory covenant in Deuteronomy. At the heart of the litany of blessings and curses enumerated in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, an abundance of seasonal rain to assure good crops is the ultimate reward; drought and the ensuing crop failure is the ultimate punishment for violating the terms of the covenant.

**Source Information:** This passage is a secondary source document about the conditions facing the Hebrew people in the land of Canaan, which they believed God had granted to them. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This passage is from *Jews and Judaism in World History* by Howard N. Lupovitch (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 7.

## Assessment Questions

1. Based on Document 1, what major problem do you think the Hebrews were likely to face in Canaan? Cite details from this passage to support your answer.
2. How does Document 2 help you better understand why this problem was especially worrisome for people in Canaan as compared with other major regions of the Middle East? Cite details from Document 2 to support your answer.

## Assessment 1 *Advanced Level*

# “I Will Give You the Rains”

### ★ *Key Ideas and Details*

1. (9–10) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
1. (11–12) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 1* is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past. As called for by the Common Core standard for grades 11–12, it also prompts students to relate the textual details to “an understanding of the text as a whole.”

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should see that a lack of rain was the crucial problem referred to in Document 1. The passage makes numerous references to the need for rain as a way to maintain agricultural productivity. In it, God promises that if the Hebrews obey his laws, the rains will come at the right times to provide “your corn, and your wine, and your olive oil,” as well as grass for the cattle. The promise is entirely about the link between rain and agriculture. Document 2 explains the Hebrews’ concerns about this as due to an “absence of reliable sources of water” in Canaan. No major river supplied that region, whereas the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates solved the problem of water supply naturally for people in the other fertile regions of the Middle East. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question will be correct if they say that Document 2 does not explain this pattern in any specific or explicit way. However, the document does stress one key factor: the large river systems that allowed the growth of the highly centralized and stable societies near Canaan. Those rivers ensured a regular supply of water as long as the societies along them remained tightly organized and able to manage the waters effectively. This gave a boost to powerful central governments that could coordinate the construction and use of levees, canals, and other water-control systems.

## “I Will Give You the Rains”

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 1: (9–10)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information. **(11–12)** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

And it shall come to pass, if you shall [diligently obey] my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul, that I will give you the rains for your land in [its] due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your corn, and your wine, and your olive oil. And I will send grass in your fields for your cattle, that you may eat and be full. Take heed to yourselves, [so] that your heart be not deceived, and you turn aside, and serve other gods, and worship them. And then the LORD’S wrath [will] be kindled against you, and he [will] shut up the heavens, [so] that there will be no rain, and that the land [will] yield not her fruit, and you will perish quickly from the good land which the LORD has given you.

**Source Information:** This document is from Deuteronomy 11:13–17 in the Hebrew Bible. In it, God tells the Israelites what will happen if they obey his commandments and if they disobey them. This version of the passage is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible. The text is available on the website Bible Hub.

### Document 2: A Secondary Source

Yet the covenant with Yahweh did not prevent the Israelites from frequently worshipping other local deities, notably Ba’al, the Canaanite god of rain. This was not surprising given the absence of a reliable source of water in this region. Unlike the Egyptians and the peoples of Hebrews, for whom the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates rivers overflowed annually and provided a more than adequate source of water, the peoples who lived in the Land of Canaan depended heavily on rainfall. The chronic concern for water is an underlying theme in the covenantal relationship between God and Israel, particularly in the obligatory covenant in Deuteronomy. At the heart of the litany of blessings and curses enumerated in Leviticus and Deuteronomy, an abundance of seasonal rain to assure good crops is the ultimate reward; drought and the ensuing crop failure is the ultimate punishment for violating the terms of the covenant.

**Source Information:** This passage is a secondary source document about the conditions facing the Hebrew people in the land of Canaan, which they believed God had granted to them. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. This passage is from *Jews and Judaism in World History* by Howard N. Lupovitch (New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 7.

## Assessment Questions

1. How does Document 2 help you better understand why the Hebrews would be especially concerned about the problem to which Document 1 refers? Cite details from both documents to support your answer.
2. Along with the Hebrews, many other groups occupied parts of Canaan. Yet, for the three millennia before the Common Era, no powerful empire developed there as others had to Canaan's immediate west and east. How does Document 2 help explain that fact?

Assessment 2 *Basic Level*

# The Covenant

## ★ *Key Ideas and Details*

- 2. (6–8)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 2* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 6–8. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should be able to define a “covenant” as a very strict and binding formal agreement between two parties. In this case, the covenant is between God and the Hebrew people. In it, God promises to treat the Hebrews as a special people and protect them, as he has been doing, so long as the Hebrew people agree in return to do all that God commands them to do. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should note that God tells Moses to tell all “children of Israel” what he has done and what promise he is making to them. The passage makes it clear that “all the people answered together” that they would do what God commanded. God speaks of his covenant as one with “a holy nation,” not just its leaders.

## The Covenant

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 2:** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

### A Primary Source Document

And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel. You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a [special] treasure to me above all people: For all the earth is mine: And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel."

And Moses came and called [together] the elders of the people, and [he] laid before [them] all these words which the LORD [had] commanded him [to say]. And all the people answered together, and said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." And Moses returned the words of the people to the LORD. And the LORD said to Moses, "Lo, I will come to you in a thick cloud, [so] that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever." And Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

**Source Information:** This passage is from Exodus 19:3–9 in the Hebrew Bible. The events described here are part of the biblical account of how God helped Moses lead his people ("the children of Israel") out of bondage in Egypt. The passage tells of God's "covenant" with the entire Hebrew people. The passages are adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

### Assessment Questions

1. The central idea in this passage has to do with the "covenant" it mentions. Explain what this covenant was.
2. In the passage, how does God make it clear his covenant is not with Moses alone?

## Assessment 2 *Advanced Level*

# The Covenant

### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 2. (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- 2. (11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### ★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 2 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 2 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to summarize the central ideas in a source from the text itself without imposing ideas or attitudes external to the text. This is not easy to do. Moreover, when it comes to the unique demands of thinking historically, we do also want students to use knowledge of historical context to help them interpret sources. But that sort of contextualizing also demands that students suspend their own present-day ideas while studying a source. This activity assesses the ability to read closely in order to build an overall understanding of the source out of the text itself.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should be able to define a “covenant” as a very strict and binding formal agreement between two parties. In this case, the covenant is between God and the Hebrew people. In it, God promises to treat the Hebrews as a special people and protect them, as he has been doing, so long as the Hebrew people agree in return to do all that God commands them to do. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question should note that although God speaks directly to Moses in most places in the passage, Moses then shares God’s message with the elders. He says that “all the people answered together” that they would do what God commanded. God describes his covenant as one with “a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” He says he will come in a thick cloud, hidden, but near enough “so that the people may hear when I speak with you.” In all these ways, the passage stresses that God is working his will through the conscious participation of all the people, not just a single ruler.

## The Covenant

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study one primary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 2: (9–10)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. **(11–12)** Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### A Primary Source Document

And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, “Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel. You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a [special] treasure to me above all people: For all the earth is mine: And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel.”

And Moses came and called [together] the elders of the people, and [he] laid before [them] all these words which the LORD [had] commanded him [to say]. And all the people answered together, and said, “All that the LORD has spoken we will do.” And Moses returned the words of the people to the LORD. And the LORD said to Moses, “Lo, I will come to you in a thick cloud, [so] that the people may hear when I speak with you, and believe you forever.” And Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

**Source Information:** This passage is from Exodus 19:3–9 in the Hebrew Bible. The events described here are part of the biblical account of how God helped Moses lead his people (“the children of Israel”) out of bondage in Egypt. The passage tells of God’s “covenant” with the entire Hebrew people. The passage is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

### Assessment Questions

1. The central idea in this passage has to do with the “covenant” it mentions. Explain what this covenant was.
2. In many societies in the ancient Middle East, the central deity was seen as working entirely through that society’s king or ruler. How did the Hebrew Bible differ on that point in the way it describes God’s covenant in this passage?

Assessment 3 *Basic Level*

# The Meaning of Monotheism

## ★ *Key Ideas and Details*

- 3. (6–8)** Identify key steps in a text’s description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 3 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 6–8. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. This activity assesses the students’ ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a text.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should state that monotheism is the belief that only one god exists. The passage’s central point is that monotheism developed slowly over a long period of time during which the Hebrew Bible was supposedly written down in stages. The two quotes are key to developing that point. The first seems to imply that “other gods” than the Hebrew God existed. The second quote is more purely monotheistic in that God tells the Hebrews that “apart from me there is no God.” If the Bible was written down in stages over a long time period, the two quotes from different parts of the Bible could be evidence of a shift over time with regard to monotheism. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. It depends in part on how we interpret the biblical quotes provided. For example, when God speaks of “all the gods of Egypt,” is he saying those gods actually exist or only that the Egyptians believe they exist? When God says have “no other gods before me,” is he implying there actually are such gods or only that the Hebrew people might believe in such gods? In other words, there is room for debate about the passage’s central claim.

## The Meaning of Monotheism

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 3:** Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

### A Secondary Source Document

A belief in one god only is called “monotheism.” The Hebrews’ religion is often seen as the first fully monotheistic religion. However, some scholars say this may not have been the case at first. They suggest that earlier parts of the Bible’s story do not depict the Hebrews’ God as the only god. In Exodus 12:12, for example, God tells Moses and Aaron of steps he will take to “bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt.” Later, as part of the Ten Commandments, God says:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. (Exod. 20:2–3)

Many historians say the full monotheism of the Hebrew Bible only developed over several centuries. Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Bible, includes the statement, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” (Deut. 6:4) However, some scholars think parts of Deuteronomy were written long after the first parts of the Bible. The Bible’s prophetic books were also probably written at a later time. They record the words of several prophets from around 750 to 450 BCE. Here is the prophet Isaiah:

This is what the Lord says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come—yes, let them foretell what will come. Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one. (Isa. 44:6–8)

The prophets warned the Hebrew people of the danger that would result from their failure to follow God’s law. And they urged the people to reform, forgive one another, and renew their lives together. They all express a deep sense of monotheism, of God as a single, awesome moral authority, not only for the Hebrew people but also for all humanity.

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source about the development of monotheism as the central belief of the ancient Hebrews. The quotations in the passage are from the New International Version of the Hebrew Bible, and their original text is available from the website Bible Hub. The passage itself was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

**Assessment Questions**

1. This passage's central point is about monotheism. Summarize that point and explain how the two quotes help to develop that point fully.

2. Do you think the document proves its claim about monotheism and the Hebrew Bible? Why or why not?

## Assessment 3 *Advanced Level*

# The Meaning of Monotheism

### ★ Key Ideas and Details

- 3. (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- 3. (11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### ★ Using This Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 3 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 3 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to follow the way a set of ideas or sequence of events in a text interacts together to describe a process or develop a central idea. The activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand various connections between each detail and the next in a complex text. It also asks them to evaluate the explanation offered in the passage and consider how adequate it is.

### ★ Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment

Answers to the first assessment question should identify the passage's central idea as the claim that monotheism evolved over a long period of time during which the Hebrew Bible was supposedly written down in stages. The two quotes from different parts of the Bible are key to supporting this claim. The first quote seems to imply that "other gods" than the Hebrew God exist. The second quote is more purely monotheistic in that God says, "Apart from me there is no God." How fully these quotes support the claim depends on how we interpret them. For example, when God speaks of "all the gods of Egypt," is he saying those gods actually exist or only that the Egyptians believe they exist? When God tells the Hebrews to have "no other gods before me," is he implying there actually are such gods or only that the Hebrew people might believe there are? There is room for debate about both quotes. Answers to the second assessment question could include the study of inscriptions or the statues of other gods in different layers of ruins in the lands the Hebrews occupied. It could mean comparing language patterns in passages in the Bible to determine which were written earlier and which later. It could mean finding out what other cultures said about the Hebrews and their beliefs at different times. And so on.

## The Meaning of Monotheism

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in it. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 3: (9–10)** Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them. **(11–12)** Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### A Secondary Source Document

A belief in one god only is called “monotheism.” The Hebrews’ religion is often seen as the first fully monotheistic religion. However, some scholars say this may not have been the case at first. They suggest that earlier parts of the Bible’s story do not depict the Hebrews’ God as the only god. In Exodus 12:12, for example, God tells Moses and Aaron of steps he will take to “bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt.” Later, as part of the Ten Commandments, God says:

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. (Exod. 20:2–3)

Many historians say the full monotheism of the Hebrew Bible only developed over several centuries. Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the Bible, includes the statement, “Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is one.” (Deut. 6:4) However, some scholars think parts of Deuteronomy were written long after the first parts of the Bible. The Bible’s prophetic books were also probably written at a later time. They record the words of several prophets from around 750 to 450 BCE. Here is the prophet Isaiah:

This is what the Lord says—Israel’s King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come—yes, let them foretell what will come. Do not tremble, do not be afraid. Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago? You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock; I know not one. (Isa. 44:6–8)

The prophets warned the Hebrew people of the danger that would result from their failure to follow God’s law. And they urged the people to reform, forgive one another, and renew their lives together. They all express a deep sense of monotheism, of God as a single, awesome moral authority, not only for the Hebrew people but for all humanity.

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source about the development of monotheism as the central belief of the ancient Hebrews. The quotations in the passage are from the New International Version of the Hebrew Bible, and their original text is available from the website Bible Hub. The passage itself was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

## Assessment Questions

1. Summarize this document's central claim and explain why you do or do not think the quotations used in it support its case fully and convincingly.
2. What other evidence might historians or archaeologists look for to help them decide whether the Hebrews adopted monotheism all at once or only slowly over several centuries?

## Assessment 4 *Basic Level*

# A Sense of Universalism

### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 4. (6–8)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 4* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 6–8. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should be able to define *universalism* as something that applies everywhere or to everyone, or as something everyone experiences. The passage does not supply much context to clarify its particular meaning of universalism, except by linking the prophets' universalism to their concern for "social justice." This suggests universalism here means a single, universal standard of justice or morality applicable to all human beings. Answers to the second assessment question should see that the Jewish refusal to be amalgamated refers to the Jews' insistence that there be a separation between Jews and non-Jews. This supposed Jewish refusal to amalgamate is a refusal to join with others and accept or tolerate other religious traditions. The point seems to be that such a refusal kept the Hebrews from developing a full commitment to universalism. Whether or not it actually did do this may be worth discussing further.

## A Sense of Universalism

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information just below the document. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

### A Secondary Source Document

Out of the words of the prophets came new concepts that enriched the Jewish tradition, including a notion of universalism and a yearning for social justice. . . .

Although the Jewish prophets eventually developed a sense of universalism, the demands of the Jewish religion—the [need] to obey their God—encouraged a separation between the Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors. Unlike most other peoples of the [Middle] East, Jews could not simply be amalgamated into a community by accepting the gods of their conquerors and their neighbors. To remain faithful to the demands of their God, they might even have to refuse loyalty to political leaders.

**Source Information:** From approximately 1000 to 930 BCE, the Hebrews were united in a monarchy ruled by Saul, David, and Solomon. During that time, Hebrew prophets began to appear who challenged the Hebrew rulers and the people for their failings. After Solomon, the monarchy fell apart. However, the prophets and their warnings and challenges continued and grew stronger. This short secondary source passage deals with the impact these prophets had on their own society. The passage is from *Western Civilization: A Brief History*, volume 1, *To 1715* by Jackson Spielvogel, 8th edition (Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2013), p. 33.

### Assessment Questions

1. What do you think the word *universalism* means in this passage? Define the term as it is used here to describe the importance of the Jewish prophets.
2. The passage also speaks of a Jewish refusal to be amalgamated. What does *amalgamated* mean as it is used here, and what point does the passage make about this refusal to be amalgamated?

## Assessment 4 *Advanced Level*

# A Sense of Universalism

### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 4. (9–10) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- 4. (11–12) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 4* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 4 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to recognize that words and phrases must be understood in relation to the meaning of the text as a whole. In seeking to understand historical sources, this is an especially important challenge. Words and phrases need to be understood as they were used within their historical context. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand terms in these ways.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note how the passage links universalism with the concern for "social justice." This suggests that *universalism* here means the idea that justice and morality are the same for all people. The word *amalgamated* is used in the passage to describe a Jewish refusal to join with, or "amalgamate" with, others and accept their religious traditions. The point is that this refusal undercuts the promotion of any sense of universalism. Answers to the second assessment question may vary. The Jewish refusal to amalgamate was based on a firm belief that other gods and forms of worship went against God's commandments. Since those commandments were believed to embody universal truths, the prophets would have seen no contradiction in espousing those truths as universal while also refusing to amalgamate with other communities. Opinions as to whether the prophets were right about this may very well vary and should be discussed thoroughly.

## A Sense of Universalism

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information just below the document. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 4: (9–10)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science. **(11–12)** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

### A Secondary Source Document

Out of the words of the prophets came new concepts that enriched the Jewish tradition, including a notion of universalism and a yearning for social justice. . . .

Although the Jewish prophets eventually developed a sense of universalism, the demands of the Jewish religion—the [need] to obey their God—encouraged a separation between the Jews and their non-Jewish neighbors. Unlike most other peoples of the [Middle] East, Jews could not simply be amalgamated into a community by accepting the gods of their conquerors and their neighbors. To remain faithful to the demands of their God, they might even have to refuse loyalty to political leaders.

**Source Information:** From approximately 1000 to 930 BCE, the Hebrews were united in a monarchy ruled by Saul, David, and Solomon. During that time, Hebrew prophets began to appear who challenged the Hebrew rulers and the people for their failings. After Solomon, the monarchy fell apart. However, the prophets and their warnings and challenges continued and grew stronger. This short secondary source passage deals with the impact these prophets had on their own society. The passage is from *Western Civilization: A Brief History*, volume 1, *To 1715* by Jackson Spielvogel, 8th edition (Boston: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2013), p. 33.

### Assessment Questions

1. This passage suggests the prophets' universalism clashed with the Jewish community's refusal to be amalgamated into other communities. What is meant here by the words *universalism* and *amalgamated*, and why does the passage see them as in conflict?
2. Do you think the Jewish community's refusal to be amalgamated actually did conflict with the prophets' universalism? Why or why not?

Assessment 5 *Basic Level*

# Isaiah's Scorn for Meaningless Offerings

## ★ *Craft and Structure*

**5. (6–8)** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Assessment 5* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, and chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. These formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the assessment question should be able to identify the concept of "compare/contrast" as indicating a text pattern showing what is similar and what is different between two events, processes, trends, or concepts. In the first part of this passage, God delivers a somewhat sarcastic criticism of his people for trying to win his favor through trivial and meaningless ritual activities—animal sacrifices, ceremonial feasts, meetings, etc. Even though the Hebrew Bible called for such ritual observances in great detail, Isaiah depicts God as contemptuous of these acts, considering them empty gestures. Instead, God wants his people to show real obedience to him and to treat one another in a moral and just way. The text introduces this contrasting idea of obedience with the line, "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Put away the evil of your doings." In other words, the text compares and contrasts an older emphasis on ritual and ceremony with a newer emphasis on acting justly toward others, especially toward those in greatest need.

## Isaiah's Scorn for Meaningless Offerings

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and answer one question about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment question that follows.

**CCS Standard 5:** Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

### A Primary Source Document

To what purpose [are all] your sacrifices to me? said the LORD. I [have had enough] of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts. And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of the goats.

When you come to appear before me, who has required this [of you], to [trample on] my courts?

Bring no more vain [offerings]. Incense is an abomination to me. The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot [stand them]. It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them.

And when you spread forth your hands [in prayer], I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when [you offer] many prayers, I will not hear you. Your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil.

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, said the LORD. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.

But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it..

**Source Information:** After the collapse of the monarchy in 931 BCE, the Hebrew nation split into Judah in the south and Israel in the north. In 722 BCE the Assyrian Empire destroyed Israel. Then, between 597 and 582 BCE, the rising Babylonian empire conquered Judah and forced its people into exile in Babylon. In his book in the Bible, the prophet Isaiah warned of these approaching disasters as punishment for the Hebrews' failure to follow God's laws. Isaiah was critical of the way the Hebrews understood these laws. In this passage, he describes God speaking to his people to explain what true obedience does and does not mean. This document is from Isaiah 1:11–20 in the Hebrew Bible. The passage is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

**Assessment Question**

1. “Text structure” refers to the way paragraphs and longer texts are organized, with different structures serving different purposes. This text could be said to have a “compare/contrast” structure. Explain what you think that means and why it describes this text’s structure.

## Assessment 5 *Advanced Level*

# Isaiah's Scorn for Meaningless Offerings

### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 5. (9–10)** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.
- 5. (11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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*Assessment 5* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 5 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to a text's "structure"—that is, to the overall pattern or organizational arrangement of its headings, sentences, paragraphs, stanzas, and chapters, as well as its various stylistic features. Students should see how structure is deliberately used to enable the text to achieve certain goals. Such formal elements can contribute to a text's meanings in many ways. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand the impact of the way one historical primary source is structured to present its information.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable responses to the first assessment question should be able to identify the concept of "compare/contrast" as indicating a text pattern showing what is similar and what is different between two events, processes, trends, or concepts. In this case, the first part of the passage expresses God's somewhat sarcastic criticism of his people for seeking to win his favor through what he regards as trivial and meaningless ritual activities—animal sacrifices, ceremonial feasts, meetings, etc. These are then contrasted with what God really wants—that is, for his people to show real obedience and to treat one another in humane and just ways. In other words, the text compares and contrasts an older emphasis on ritual and ceremony with a newer emphasis on acting justly and toward others, especially those in greatest need. Acceptable responses to the second assessment question may vary. Some may feel Isaiah does substantially shift the focus to moral action and social justice over an earlier emphasis on ritual performances. Others may feel that ritual practice and the strict observance of Mosaic Law, if done in the proper spirit, foster the same values that Isaiah promotes. The issues here should be discussed thoroughly.

## Isaiah's Scorn for Meaningless Offerings

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one primary source document and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical primary source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 5: (9–10)** Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis. **(11–12)** Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

### A Primary Source Document

To what purpose [are all] your sacrifices to me? said the LORD. I [have had enough] of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts. And I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of the goats.

When you come to appear before me, who has required this [of you], to [trample on] my courts?

Bring no more vain [offerings]. Incense is an abomination to me. The new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot [stand them]. It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.

Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them.

And when you spread forth your hands [in prayer], I will hide mine eyes from you. Yea, when [you offer] many prayers, I will not hear you. Your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil.

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, said the LORD. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.

But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD has spoken it.

**Source Information:** After the collapse of the monarchy in 931 BCE, the Hebrew nation split into Judah in the south and Israel in the north. In 722 BCE the Assyrian Empire destroyed Israel. Then, between 597 and 582 BCE, the rising Babylonian empire conquered Judah and forced its people into exile in Babylon. In his book in the Bible, the prophet Isaiah warned of these approaching disasters as punishment for the Hebrews' failure to follow God's laws. Isaiah was critical of the way the Hebrews understood these laws. In this passage, he describes God speaking to his people to explain what true obedience does and does not mean. This document is from Isaiah 1:11–20 in the Hebrew Bible. The passage is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.



Assessment 6 *Basic Level*

# The Babylonian Exile

## ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (6–8)** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 6 is designed to measure students’ ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 6–8. It asks students to note a text’s point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author’s background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should identify two of the following: The psalm speaks of weeping and sadness at remembering the loss of Zion (Jerusalem); it speaks of the Hebrews being forced by their captors to sing a song of Zion “with mirth” in spite of their misery; it calls on those in exile never to forget Jerusalem; finally it expresses rage toward the Babylonian captors and takes pleasure imagining violent revenge on them and their children. Overall, the mood of the hymn is one of deep dismay and pessimism. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should note that Jeremiah’s letter describes the exile as God’s punishment of the Hebrews. Nevertheless, the overall message is one of hope. It is hopeful in that God tells his people to accept their captivity, rebuild their lives, live in peace, establish families, and increase in number. Second, God promises that after seventy years, he will bring them back to their own land, once they can pray to him again and seek him “with all your heart.” A good follow-up discussion could focus on the question of why both of these moods about the exile find expression in the Hebrew Bible.

## The Babylonian Exile

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer two questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 6:** Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

### Document 1: A Primary Source

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hung our harps upon the willows there.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song. And they . . . required of us mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her [skill].

If I do not remember you, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. If I [do not] prefer Jerusalem [as] my chief joy.

Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day Jerusalem [fell], who said, "[Destroy] it, [destroy] it, even to the foundation."

O daughter of Babylon, you who will be destroyed, happy shall he be who rewards you as you have [treated] us.

Happy shall he be, that takes and dashes your little ones against the stones.

**Source Information:** Between 597 and 582 BCE, the Babylonians conquered Judah, deported groups of Jews, and destroyed the First Temple in Jerusalem. This "Babylonian exile" had a dramatic impact on the Hebrews, as Psalm 137 from the Hebrew Bible makes clear. This version of Psalm 137 is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

## Document 2: A Primary Source

Thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, “To all that are carried away [as] captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon; build houses, and dwell in them. And plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. Take wives, and beget sons and daughters. And take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters, that you may [increase in numbers] there, and not diminish. And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away [as] captives. And pray to the LORD for it: for in the peace there shall you have peace.” This said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Let not your prophets and your diviners among you deceive you. Neither [listen] to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely in my name. I have not sent them,” said the LORD.

For the LORD said, “After seventy years [in] Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, [by] causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you,” said the LORD, “thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray to me, and I will hear you. And you shall seek me, and find me, when you search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you,” said the LORD: “And I will [end] your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places where I have driven you,” said the LORD. “And I will bring you again to the place from which I caused you to be carried away captive.

**Source Information:** Jeremiah was another Hebrew prophet. He warned his people that God would punish their sins with the Babylonian destruction of Judah and the Hebrews’ exile. However, after that exile took place, in this Letter to the Exiles, Jeremiah used a somewhat different tone in explaining to the Hebrew people what to do and what to hope for. This passage is adapted from that letter as it appears in Jeremiah 29:4–14 in the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

## Assessment Questions

1. In Psalm 137 (Document 1), a grim mood is expressed regarding the Hebrews’ exile to Babylon. Cite two specific ideas or details from the psalm that help it to convey this grim mood.
2. In what key ways does Jeremiah’s letter (Document 2) differ in point of view from Document 1 regarding the Babylonian exile and what the Hebrews should do about it?

## Assessment 6 *Advanced Level*

# The Babylonian Exile

### ★ *Craft and Structure*

- 6. (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- 6. (11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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*Assessment 6* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 6 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to note a text's point of view as expressed by looking closely at details in the text itself. These details may take the form of emotional language, distorted or exaggerated descriptions, stereotyped labeling, etc. However, even a text with a neutral tone may express bias or point of view by selectively emphasizing some facts while omitting others. Therefore, students also need to go outside the text to interpret point of view by considering sourcing information such as the author's background, purpose, and audience. In addition, students need to see that when sources express conflicting points of view they may still be reliable in certain ways—for example, by what they share in common or by backing up their claims with solid evidence.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Psalm 137 (Document 1) focuses on the misery felt by those who were exiled to Babylon. The exiles are described as weeping in sadness at the loss of Zion; being forced by their captors to gaily sing a song of Zion; being told never to forget Jerusalem; and expressing rage and a desire for revenge against their captors. This focus supports the psalm's overall mood of deep dismay and pessimism. Jeremiah's letter, on the other hand, is one of hopefulness. Its focus is on the positive things God urges the Hebrews to do while in exile. Basically they are told to rebuild their lives and prosper. Above all, they are assured that God intends to return them to their own land after seventy years, once they can pray to him again and seek him "with all your heart." Acceptable answers to the second assessment question may vary. Best answers should see that in the Hebrew Bible, God often punishes the Hebrews when they stray and then favors them again when they change their ways for the better. The contrasting points of view in these documents may be only one of many variations on this theme.

## The Babylonian Exile

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents carefully and answer two questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand these documents as historical primary sources, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 6: (9–10)** Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts. **(11–12)** Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hung our harps upon the willows there.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song. And they . . . required of us mirth, saying, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion."

How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?

If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her [skill].

If I do not remember you, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. If I [do not] prefer Jerusalem [as] my chief joy.

Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day Jerusalem [fell], who said, "[Destroy] it, [destroy] it, even to the foundation."

O daughter of Babylon, you who will be destroyed, happy shall he be who rewards you as you have [treated] us.

Happy shall he be, that takes and dashes your little ones against the stones.

**Source Information:** Between 597 and 582 BCE, the Babylonians conquered Judah, deported groups of Jews, and destroyed the First Temple in Jerusalem. This "Babylonian exile" had a dramatic impact on the Hebrews, as Psalm 137 from the Hebrew Bible makes clear. This version of Psalm 137 is adapted from the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

## Document 2: A Primary Source

Thus said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, "To all that are carried away [as] captives, whom I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon; build houses, and dwell in them. And plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. Take wives, and beget sons and daughters. And take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters, that you may [increase in numbers] there, and not diminish. And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away [as] captives. And pray to the LORD for it: for in the peace there shall you have peace." This said the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: "Let not your prophets and your diviners among you deceive you. Neither [listen] to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. For they prophesy falsely in my name. I have not sent them," said the LORD.

For the LORD said, "After seventy years [in] Babylon, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, [by] causing you to return to this place. For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," said the LORD, "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray to me, and I will hear you. And you shall seek me, and find me, when you search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you," said the LORD: "And I will [end] your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places where I have driven you," said the LORD. "And I will bring you again to the place from which I caused you to be carried away captive.

**Source Information:** Jeremiah was another Hebrew prophet. He warned his people that God would punish their sins with the Babylonian destruction of Judah and the Hebrews' exile. However, after that exile took place, in this Letter to the Exiles, Jeremiah used a somewhat different tone in explaining to the Hebrew people what to do and what to hope for. This passage is adapted from that letter as it appears in Jeremiah 29:4–14 in the King James Version of the Bible, and the original text is available on the website Bible Hub.

## Assessment Questions

1. Psalm 137 and Jeremiah's letter differ in their points of view about the Babylonian exile. The documents focus on different aspects of the exile. How does this selectivity help each document emphasize its point of view?
2. Why do you suppose both of these different points of view about the exile find expression in the Hebrew Bible?

## Assessment 7 *Basic Level*

# King Solomon's Realm

### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (6–8)** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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*Assessment 7* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 6–8. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in several primary sources presented in a variety of visual and textual formats.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

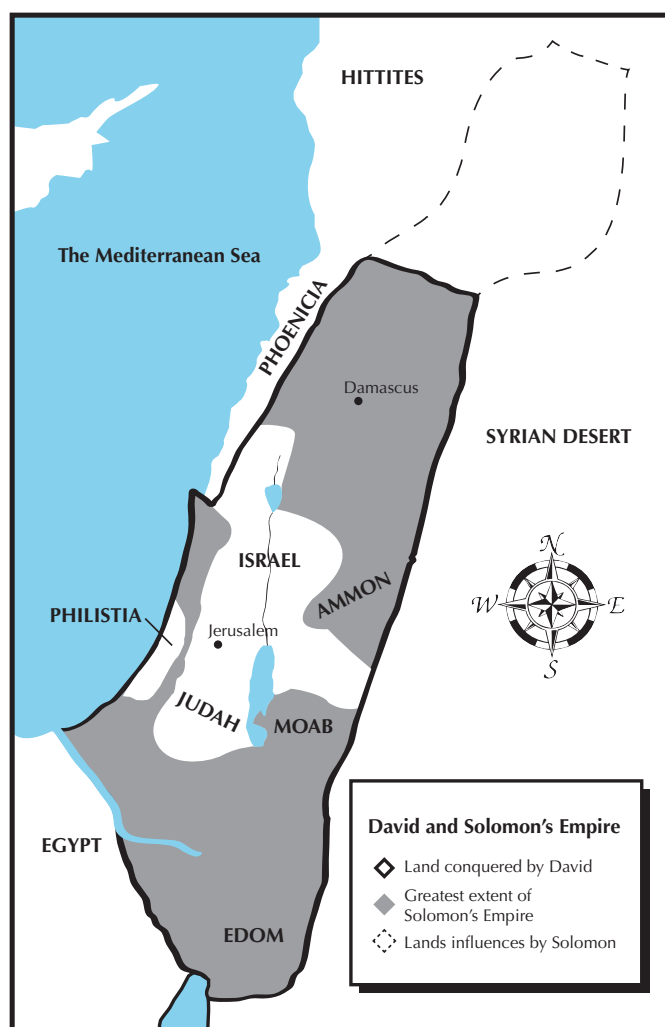
Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that Document 1 shows Solomon's realm as quite large—in fact large enough to fill the space between Egypt to the south and the Hittite empire to the north. Best answers will see how this map supports Document 3's discussion of Solomon's ability to control major trade routes between Egypt and the Mesopotamian empires. Document 2 indicates the huge size of the First Temple, constructed by Solomon. This suggests the king's ability to mobilize large numbers of workers and many resources for a major construction project. Document 3 is evidence of Solomon's power in that even Egypt's pharaohs wanted to establish friendly ties with him and treat him as an equal. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should see that the main problem with these sources is that all are based heavily on the Hebrew Bible. The question then is how reliable the Bible is as historical evidence. That is a topic of intense debate among historians. Most feel that some parts are reliable, but they also say that there is little or no other primary source evidence to back up much of the story it tells.

## King Solomon's Realm

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 7:** Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source



Map Source: Adapted from "The United Kingdoms of David and Solomon: 1000 BC," Bible Maps of Bible Times

**Source Information:** This is a map of the united monarchy under David and Solomon, according to the Hebrew Bible. The two kings are often said to have ruled from around 1000 to 931 BCE. However, archaeologists and other historians have some doubts as to the accuracy of both the map's outlines and these dates of the kings' rule.

## Document 2: A Secondary Source

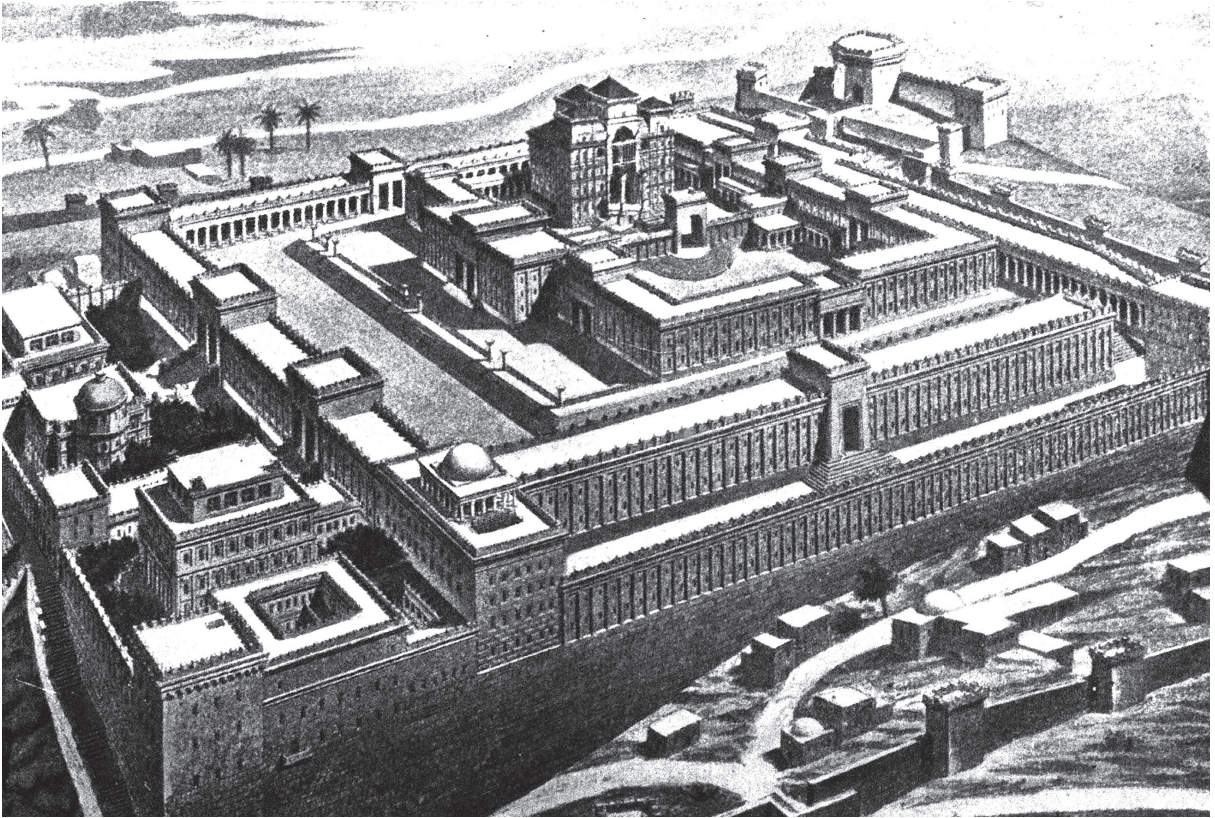


Image Credit: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

**Source Information:** This is an idealized reconstruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem, based on the description of the temple in the Bible. The reconstruction is not based on archaeological evidence.

## Document 3: A Secondary Source

To ensure peace and security along his borders, [Solomon] established close ties with neighboring states and with his vassals, ties drawn closer by treaties and by taking the daughters of their kings to wife. These marriages were frowned upon in I Kings 11:1–13 [in the Bible], because of the foreign cults which they introduced into Jerusalem. . . .

Another treaty of consequence was with Egypt, sealed by Solomon's espousal of the Pharaoh's daughter, who was accorded every honor in the Israelite capital. . . . The arrangement paved the way for a period of active political and economic cooperation, a far cry from the friction that had previously marred relations between the two countries. To give the daughter of a Pharaoh to a foreign king in marriage was almost unprecedented in Egyptian history, and attests to some degree to the value which Egypt attached to its connection with Solomon.

Obviously, the relations established with other countries, too, were signs of the respect in which Solomon's kingdom was held, and of Israel's geopolitical position. Solomon was now dominating the trade routes between Egypt and the Mesopotamian Basin and Arabia itself, and deployed a multitude of merchants busying themselves in the royal commerce. Moreover, his ports on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea provided him with exclusive maritime access to the most distant lands.

**Source Information:** This passage is from *A History of Israel and the Holy Land*, a book published in 1969. The details are based mainly on accounts found in the Hebrew Bible. It is important to keep in mind that very little archaeological or other historical evidence exists identifying Solomon or any of the details of his rule. The Bible disapproved of Solomon's marriages. However, such "state wedlock" was common among royalty as a way to strengthen alliances among states. This passage is from "The Canaanite and Israelite Periods (3200–332 BC)" by Hanoch Reviv, in *A History of Israel and the Holy Land*, edited by Michael Avi-Yonah (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1969), p. 76.

## Assessment Questions

1. How do *all three* of these documents offer evidence in support of the idea that Solomon ruled over a fairly powerful kingdom in the Middle East?
2. Why might historians have doubts about the reliability of the evidence that *all three* sources offer as to the nature of Solomon's kingdom?

## Assessment 7 *Advanced Level*

# King Solomon's Realm

### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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*Assessment 7* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

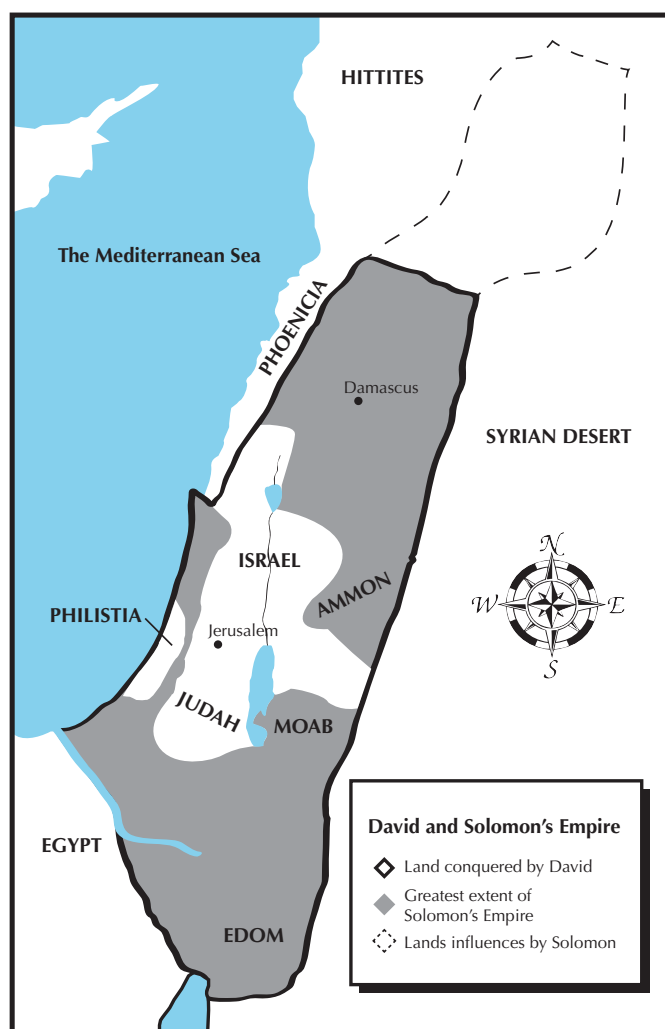
Acceptable answers to the first assessment question should see that all three documents offer evidence of the extent and power of Solomon's kingdom. Any thesis statement would have to make a claim about the nature of that kingdom and its impact on the region as a whole. Document 1 shows Solomon's realm as quite large—large enough to support Document 3's description of Solomon's control over major trade routes between Egypt and the Mesopotamian empires. Document 2 depicts the huge size of the First Temple. This suggests Solomon's religious orientation and his ability to mobilize substantial resources and manpower. Document 3 describes Solomon's ability to establish friendly ties with Egypt's pharaoh, who seems to have treated him as an equal. Acceptable answers to the second assessment question should suggest other kinds of evidence historians might want to discover—such as evidence of Solomon's dealings with other nations besides Egypt, descriptions of Solomon by other rulers from his time, artifacts indicating his major construction projects, etc. The main problem with these three sources is that all are based heavily on the Hebrew Bible. The Bible's historical reliability is a matter of intense debate among historians. Most feel that some parts are reliable, but they also say we have little or no other primary source evidence to corroborate much of the story it tells.

## King Solomon's Realm

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to study three documents carefully and answer two questions on what these sources have in common. In order to better understand the documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information located just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 7: (9–10)** Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

### Document 1: A Secondary Source



Map Source: Adapted from "The United Kingdoms of David and Solomon: 1000 BC," Bible Maps of Bible Times

**Source Information:** This is a map of the united monarchy under David and Solomon, according to the Hebrew Bible. The two kings are often said to have ruled from around 1000 to 931 BCE. However, archaeologists and other historians have some doubts as to the accuracy of both the map's outlines and these dates of the kings' rule.

## Document 2: A Secondary Source

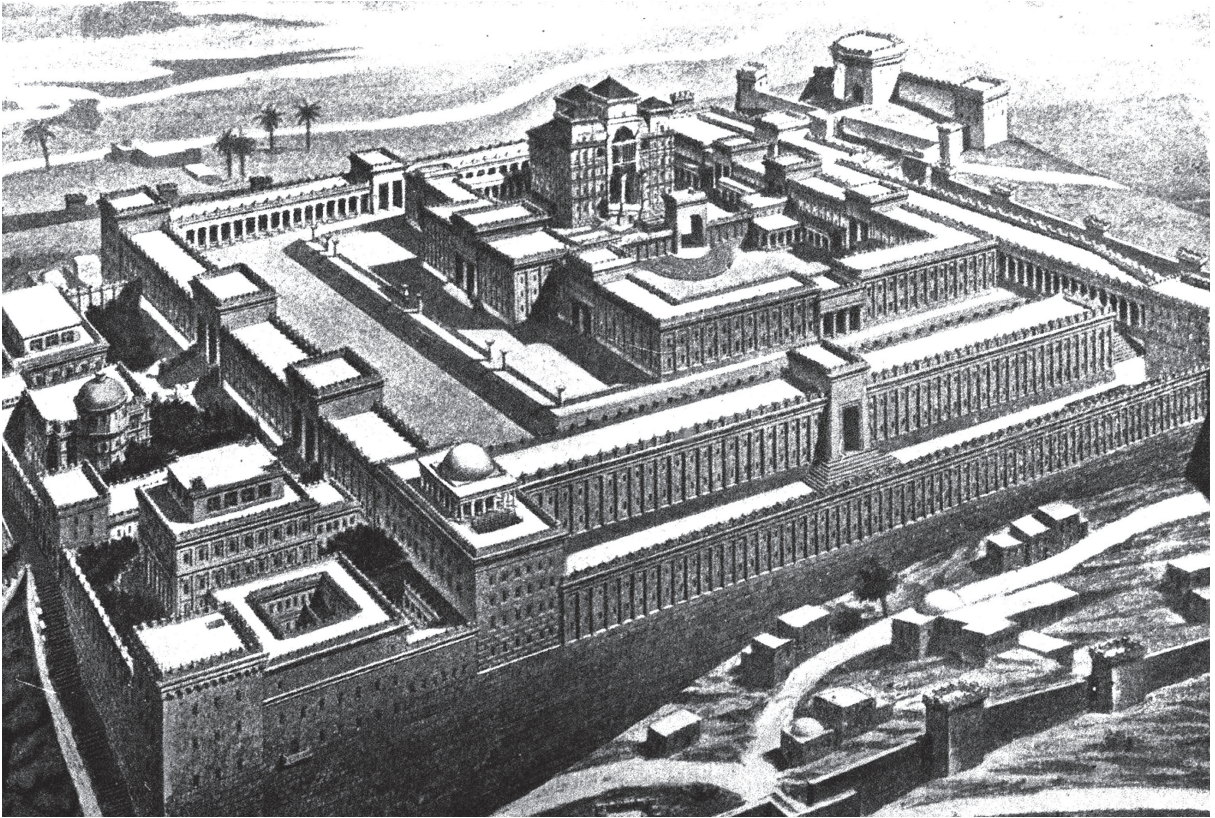


Image Credit: Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

**Source Information:** This is an idealized reconstruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem based on the description of the temple in the Bible. The reconstruction is not based on archaeological evidence.

## Document 3: A Secondary Source

To ensure peace and security along his borders, [Solomon] established close ties with neighboring states and with his vassals, ties drawn closer by treaties and by taking the daughters of their kings to wife. These marriages were frowned upon in I Kings 11:1–13 [in the Bible], because of the foreign cults which they introduced into Jerusalem. . . .

Another treaty of consequence was with Egypt, sealed by Solomon's espousal of the Pharaoh's daughter, who was accorded every honor in the Israelite capital. . . . The arrangement paved the way for a period of active political and economic cooperation, a far cry from the friction that had previously marred relations between the two countries. To give the daughter of a Pharaoh to a foreign king in marriage was almost unprecedented in Egyptian history, and attests to some degree to the value which Egypt attached to its connection with Solomon.

Obviously, the relations established with other countries, too, were signs of the respect in which Solomon's kingdom was held, and of Israel's geopolitical position. Solomon was now dominating the trade routes between Egypt and the Mesopotamian Basin and Arabia itself, and deployed a multitude of merchants busying themselves in the royal commerce. Moreover, his ports on the Mediterranean and the Red Sea provided him with exclusive maritime access to the most distant lands.

**Source Information:** This passage is from *A History of Israel and the Holy Land*, a book published in 1969. The details are based mainly on accounts found in the Hebrew Bible. It is important to keep in mind that very little archaeological or other historical evidence exists identifying Solomon or any of the details of his rule. The Bible disapproved of Solomon's marriages. However, such "state wedlock" was common among royalty as a way to strengthen alliances among states. This passage is from "The Canaanite and Israelite Periods (3200–332 BC)" by Hanoch Reviv, in *A History of Israel and the Holy Land*, edited by Michael Avi-Yonah (New York: Continuum Publishing, 1969), p. 76.

## Assessment Questions

1. Construct a thesis statement or claim about Solomon's kingdom that could be supported by evidence from *all three* of these sources.
2. Explain how some historians might criticize or challenge your claim as based on these sources.

## Assessment 8 *Basic Level*

# Gods, Kings, and Universal Truths

### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

**8. (6–8)** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 8 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 6–8. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text reasons about its factual claims and to distinguish between these and expressions of opinion. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered or to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim—as well as an ability to distinguish these from the text's biases or expressions of opinion. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should note the document's claim that monotheism leads to the idea that the universe as a whole is ruled by one set of truths. What is true in one society is true in all societies. It also implies there is one universal moral code, one standard of justice by which all people should live. The document suggests monotheism encouraged a belief that human reason could discover and understand these universal truths—whereas a belief in many gods might weaken this idea of one truth accessible to all cultures. Responses to the second assessment question should note the passage's claim that in a polytheistic world, each city or state's ruling deity was often linked with its king, who drew his authority from his close connection with the god. Monotheism, the passage suggests, undercut that since “no king, emperor, or pharaoh could claim any special relationship with the one god” who ruled all societies and all of life.

## Gods, Kings, and Universal Truths

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

### A Secondary Source Document

The term “polytheism” is used for the belief in many gods. Polytheists not only believed in their own gods, but often had no trouble accepting the existence of the gods of others, even enemies. Over time, a single god often came to be seen as supreme. As more powerful city-states and empires developed, their ruling deity was often linked in some special way with the king or emperor. This vastly strengthened the authority and prestige of that ruler, since only he could act to ensure the god would protect society. We can see this with Egypt’s pharaohs, the kings of Sumerian cities, the emperors of Assyria, and in many other places.

With the Hebrews in Israel, a new sense of religious truth emerged in the first millennium BCE. The term for this new religious awareness is “monotheism”—the belief in a single god to the exclusion of all other gods. The Hebrew Bible was the basis not only for the Jewish faith, but also, in time, for Christianity and Islam. Persia’s Zoroastrian religion may actually have been an even earlier form of monotheism. (Dating its origin has not been easy for historians.) In different ways, ancient Greek philosophy and certain branches of Hinduism also seemed to be moving toward a form of monotheism late in the first millennium BCE.

Monotheism developed slowly over several centuries, even within the Hebrew faith itself. However, when it did finally take shape, it was a radical break with the past. It was even a radical break with religions in which one god or unifying spiritual force was supreme over all their other gods. With monotheism, one god alone creates or guides all of reality, the entire universe. No other gods are admitted. In fact, for monotheists a belief in other gods was now seen as a denial of truth itself. It was a threat to god’s order and was not to be tolerated.

No king, emperor, or pharaoh could claim any special relationship with the one god, since that god ruled all societies and all of life. Instead of the king’s law, monotheists claimed that god had established a single universal moral code and a uniform truth to be accepted by all. The world was no longer filled with spiritual entities, but was now a more impersonal natural order. It followed god’s laws, not the whims of a host of competing deities. Perhaps this also meant it could be understood by the use of the reasoning abilities god had given humanity.

**Source Information:** This is a secondary source document about the rise of monotheistic beliefs among the Hebrews and others in ancient history. The passage is adapted from the Introductory Essay to *The Meaning of Monotheism* by Jonathan Burack, *Historian’s Apprentice* (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2010).

1. This passage says monotheism “was a radical break with the past.” In what ways does the passage see monotheism as “a radical break” in thinking about morality and truth?

2. The passage also sees monotheism as presenting a problem or challenge for kings and emperors. Explain the passage's reasoning about this.

## Assessment 8 *Advanced Level*

# Gods, Kings, and Universal Truths

### ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 8. (9–10)** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.
- 8. (11–12)** Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

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*Assessment 8* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 8 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to pay attention to the way a text backs up or seeks to explain its factual claims. This could mean paying close attention to the factual evidence offered in the text as compared with expressions of opinion. Or it could mean attention to the reasoning process and logic used to support a claim. It may also require students to examine underlying assumptions and bias in order to see how they shape or distort the reasoning process presented by the text. This activity assesses the students' ability to read closely in order to understand a text in these ways.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Responses to the first assessment question should note the document's claim that monotheism leads to a view that the universe as a whole is ruled by one set of truths, that what is true in one society is true in all societies. It also implies there is one universal moral code, one standard of justice by which all people should live. According to the passage, this paved the way for the belief that human reason could discover and understand these universal truths. As to monotheism's political impact, the passage claims that in a polytheistic world, each city's ruling deity was often linked to the king, who drew his authority from his connection with the god. Monotheism, undercuts that since no king could claim any special relationship with the one god who ruled or suffused the entire universe. Responses to the second assessment question may vary and should be discussed. The passage itself stresses the positive aspects of monotheism—its support of firmer standards of truth, a more universal sense of morality and justice, and a greater faith in reason. However, the passage does also suggest that a more tolerant polytheism may have given way to a more intolerant monotheism—given that “a belief in other gods could not be approved as it was now seen as a denial of truth itself.” There is a great deal to discuss more thoroughly here.

## Gods, Kings, and Universal Truths

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read one secondary source document carefully and answer two questions about specific details in the document. In order to better understand the document as a historical source, read and make use of the source information located just below the document itself. When you have studied the document and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 8: (9–10)** Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author’s claims. **(11–12)** Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

### A Secondary Source Document

The term “polytheism” is used for the belief in many gods. Polytheists not only believed in their own gods, but often had no trouble accepting the existence of the gods of others, even enemies. Over time, a single god often came to be seen as supreme. As more powerful city-states and empires developed, their ruling deity was often linked in some special way with the king or emperor. This vastly strengthened the authority and prestige of that ruler, since only he could act to ensure the god would protect society. We can see this with Egypt’s pharaohs, the kings of Sumerian cities, the emperors of Assyria, and in many other places.

With the Hebrews in Israel, a new sense of religious truth emerged in the first millennium BCE. The term for this new religious awareness is “monotheism”—the belief in a single god to the exclusion of all other gods. The Hebrew Bible was the basis not only for the Jewish faith, but also, in time, for Christianity and Islam. Persia’s Zoroastrian religion may actually have been an even earlier form of monotheism. (Dating its origin has not been easy for historians.) In different ways, ancient Greek philosophy and certain branches of Hinduism also seemed to be moving toward a form of monotheism late in the first millennium BCE.

Monotheism developed slowly over several centuries, even within the Hebrew faith itself. However, when it did finally take shape, it was a radical break with the past. It was even a radical break with religions in which one god or unifying spiritual force was supreme over all their other gods. With monotheism, one god alone creates or guides all of reality, the entire universe. No other gods are admitted. In fact, for monotheists a belief in other gods was now seen as a denial of truth itself. It was a threat to god’s order and was not to be tolerated.

No king, emperor, or pharaoh could claim any special relationship with the one god, since that god ruled all societies and all of life. Instead of the king’s law, monotheists claimed that god had established a single universal moral code and a uniform truth to be accepted by all. The world was no longer filled with spiritual entities, but was now a more impersonal natural order. It followed god’s laws, not the whims of a host of competing deities. Perhaps this also meant it could be understood by the use of the reasoning abilities god had given humanity.

**Source Information:** This is a secondary source document about the rise of monotheistic beliefs among the Hebrews and others in ancient history. The passage is adapted from the Introductory Essay to *The Meaning of Monotheism* by Jonathan Burack, *Historian’s Apprentice* (Culver City, CA: MindSparks, 2010).

## Assessment Questions

1. According to this passage, the rise of monotheism was a “radical break” that had both political and philosophical/moral implications. Explain the passage’s reasoning about this.
2. Some scholars see monotheism as a key step forward in humanity’s search for universal standards of morality and truth. Others see it as fostering a more intolerant or narrow-minded attitude. With which view do you agree more? Explain your answer.

Assessment 9 *Basic Level*

# Pharisees versus Sadducees

## ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

**9. (6–8)** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

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Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 6–8. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should identify the new conditions as the Hebrews' loss of control over the Holy Land and the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. The Pharisees put new emphasis on all Jews gathering in local settings called synagogues to study, learn, and discuss and take part in religious rituals there, rather than relying heavily on ritual practices at the temple in Jerusalem. The Pharisees helped Jews adjust to living away from the lands the Bible had originally promised them as their own. Answers to the second assessment question should be able to identify the parts of the two Bible passages in which God emphasizes his ties to the whole Hebrew nation, not just the Hebrew priesthood or a central location for religious rituals. In Document 1, for example, God says all the people of Israel will be a "kingdom of priests and a holy nation." In Document 2, God calls on all Hebrews to learn and discuss his words among themselves, in their families, with their children, etc.

## Pharisees versus Sadducees

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents and one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 9:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ‘. . . Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’”

**Source Information:** This passage is from the Hebrew Bible, Exodus 19:3–6. The passage is from the New International Version and is available on the website Bible Gateway.

### Document 2: A Primary Source

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

**Source Information:** This passage is from the Hebrew Bible, Deuteronomy 6:4–9. The passage is from the New International Version and is available on the website Bible Gateway.

### Document 3: A Secondary Source

In 587 BCE, the Hebrews were exiled to Babylon and the First Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed. That temple, built by King Solomon, had been the central place for performing key cultic rituals and guiding religious life among the Hebrews. In exile, a long, slow process of change began. The Hebrew people had to learn to preserve their religion without the First Temple, the monarchy, or the land of Israel itself.

In 537 BCE, the Persians allowed Jews to return to Israel, where they soon rebuilt a smaller Second Temple. That temple remained important, but it never fully regained its central role for Jews. In part that is because many Jews outside Israel needed to find their own ways of holding on to their traditions. It was also because Israel itself largely came under the control of other empires—first the Persians, then the Greeks, then the Romans. After a brief time of independence following the conclusion of the Maccabean revolt around 161 BCE, the Romans returned. They destroyed the Second Temple in 70 CE.

In these centuries, several opposing Jewish sects argued about the political and religious fate of the Jews. Perhaps the most important arguments were between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The Sadducees were mainly of the priestly and aristocratic class. They stressed the need for people to obey the priesthood and the literal word of the Bible's religious laws. For them, the rituals performed in the temple were central to Jewish religious life. The Pharisees were scholars and others who felt that every Jew should participate in interpreting and following the religious laws. For example, they said all Jews, not just the temple priests, should observe the Bible's strict purification rules. Instead of relying mainly on the temple in Jerusalem, the Pharisees looked to local places of worship, synagogues, as places for all the people to study and take part in common worship. They based their views in part on portions of the Bible that stressed the idea that God's covenant was with a whole nation, not just a priestly elite.

Many historians say the Pharisees led the way to Rabbinic Judaism, which has been the main form of Judaism since the fall of the Second Temple in 70 CE.

**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source about the conflict between two Jewish sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, in the century or so just before and just after the Roman Empire destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. This particular historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

## Assessment Questions

1. The Pharisees responded to new conditions in the Holy Land, especially after the destruction of the Second Temple. How did they try to adapt Judaism to those new conditions?
2. Why might the Pharisees see Documents 1 and 2 as supporting their ideas in their arguments with the Sadducees?

Assessment 9 *Advanced Level*

# Pharisees versus Sadducees

## ★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 9. (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- 9. (11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

## ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Assessment 9 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 9 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to understand the relationship between primary and secondary sources. This means students must know the difference between the two kinds of sources—that primary sources provide the evidence for secondary source claims and interpretations. This should lead them to adopt a critical approach to secondary sources themselves. That is, such secondary accounts should not be regarded as final and complete. They are interpretations of the past, not the past itself. Students should learn to weigh secondary source accounts against the relevant primary source evidence.

## ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to This Assessment*

Answers to the first assessment question should note that the Pharisees put a new emphasis on all Jews gathering in local settings called synagogues to study, learn, and discuss Judaism, as well as to take part in religious rituals there, rather than relying heavily on ritual practices at the temple in Jerusalem. In this sense, the Pharisees could be called more “democratic”—that is, they downgraded the role of elites and stressed a need for all to participate in understanding, debating, and interpreting the religious traditions and rules. In doing this, the Pharisees helped Jews adjust to living away from the lands the Bible had originally promised them as their own. Answers to the second assessment question should be able to identify the parts of the two Bible passages that emphasize God’s desire for the entire Hebrew nation—not just the Hebrew priesthood—to participate in his worship and understand his laws. In Document 1, God says all the people of Israel will be a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” In Document 2, God calls on all Hebrews to learn and discuss his words among themselves, in their families, with their children, etc.

## Pharisees versus Sadducees

**Directions:** This exercise asks you to read two primary source documents and one secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in them. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the assessment questions that follow.

**CCS Standard 9: (9–10)** Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. **(11–12)** Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

### Document 1: A Primary Source

Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the descendants of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ‘. . . Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’”

**Source Information:** This passage is from the Hebrew Bible, Exodus 19:3–6. The passage is from the New International Version and is available on the website Bible Gateway.

### Document 2: A Primary Source

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

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In these centuries, several opposing Jewish sects argued about the political and religious fate of the Jews. Perhaps the most important arguments were between the Sadducees and the Pharisees. The Sadducees were mainly of the priestly and aristocratic class. They stressed the need for people to obey the priesthood and the literal word of the Bible's religious laws. For them, the rituals performed in the temple were central to Jewish religious life. The Pharisees were scholars and others who felt that every Jew should participate in interpreting and following the religious laws. For example, they said all Jews, not just the temple priests, should observe the Bible's strict purification rules. Instead of relying mainly on the temple in Jerusalem, the Pharisees looked to local places of worship, synagogues, as places for all the people to study and take part in common worship. They based their views in part on portions of the Bible that stressed the idea that God's covenant was with a whole nation, not just a priestly elite.

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**Source Information:** This document is a secondary source about the conflict between two Jewish sects, the Pharisees and Sadducees, in the century or so just before and just after the Roman Empire destroyed the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE. This particular historical account was written in 2014 specifically for use as part of this activity.

## Assessment Questions

1. Some historians refer to the Pharisees as the “democrats” in their battles with the Sadducees. How does Document 1 help clarify what these historians mean? Cite details in the document to support your answer.
2. Do the Bible passages in Documents 1 and 2 support the ideas of the Pharisees? Why or why not?

## *Writing Assessment 1*

# Ancient Hebrews

### ★ *The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing*

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 1 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Writing Assessment 1* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 1. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that makes meaningful claims and that develops those claims using relevant evidence and sound reasoning. The essay should make clear the strengths and limitations of the claims it makes while also considering possible challenges or counter claims.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 1*

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the essay state a claim addressing all elements of the prompt?
- Does the essay use evidence from all or most of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence explained effectively using careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Does the essay defend the claim in relation to any relevant alternative claims?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its claims?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

## Ancient Hebrews

**The Standard:** Write a brief essay that presents a well-reasoned argument focused on historical content.

### The Question

Using your background history knowledge and the primary and secondary source documents listed here, explain why you do or do not agree with the following statement:

*"The monotheism of the Hebrews was bound to result in violence and intolerance given that it rejected as 'false' all other gods and systems of belief."*

**Documents:** Base your essay on your general background knowledge and all of the primary and secondary source documents in *The Hebrews* assessments.

### Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce a specific claim that you can defend in response to the question.
- Support your claim with an argument based on evidence from the documents and sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Consider other possible claims that may differ from your own.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect all parts of your essay to the claim you are making.
- Write a conclusion that follows from the argument your essay has made.

## *Writing Assessment 2*

# Ancient Hebrews

### ★ *The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing*

2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

This standard is the basis for the corresponding No. 2 Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects.

### ★ *Using This Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their ancient history coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

*Writing Assessment 2* is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standard for Writing 2. The Anchor Standards are the basis on which the various Common Core History/Social Studies Standards are based. This assessment asks students to write an essay that uses sources effectively to provide strong support and evidence clarifying and explaining a central idea or set of ideas and concepts.

### ★ *Evaluating Student Responses to Writing Assessment 2*

- Essays for this assignment should be scored according to these criteria.
- How well does the introduction address the prompt with a clear, well-defined central idea and a preview of supporting ideas?
- Does the essay use evidence from many of the documents assigned for this task?
- Is the evidence used effectively to support the essay's key ideas and concepts?
- Does the essay engage in careful reasoning and a logical flow of one idea to the next?
- Are ideas presented using precise language, effective transitions, and domain-specific vocabulary?
- Does the essay include an effective conclusion supporting its key ideas?
- How well does the essay follow rules of usage, spelling, and punctuation?

## Ancient Hebrews

**The Standard:** Write an informative/explanatory essay clearly describing and explaining historical events and trends.

### The Question

Some historians say the Hebrews' ideas about monotheism did not appear fully developed from the start. These historians say those ideas evolved slowly over time. Your task is to write an essay explaining why these historians conclude this. As a part of your task, you should also decide how valid you think their conclusions are. Your explanation should be based on a careful assessment of the sources used in this set of assessments, including sources that support the conclusion of these historians, as well as any that do not support their conclusions.

**Documents:** Base your essay on your general background knowledge and on your selection of sources from all the primary and secondary source documents in *The Hebrews* assessments.

### Instructions

- Write a brief, well-organized essay that includes an introduction, one to three internal paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Introduce the topic with a clear, well-defined central idea, and preview in a general way other key ideas your essay will develop.
- Support each of your key ideas with evidence from many of the documents and with sound reasoning about that evidence.
- Include related outside information based on your background knowledge of history.
- Use transitions and a logical arrangement of ideas to connect the major parts of your essay.
- Write a conclusion that follows from and summarizes the main points your essay has made.

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