

# Primary History & Literature

*Year 01: Ancients* 8000 BC-476 AD

*Month 01: Early Civilizations*



- 01**     [\*Story of the World Vol. I: Introduction & Chapter 1\*](#)  
[\*Gilgamesh the King\* by Ludmila Zeman](#)
- 02**     [\*Story of the World Vol. I: Chapter 2\*](#)  
[\*Egyptian Cinderella\* by Shirley Climo](#)
- 03**     [\*Story of the World Vol. I: Chapter 3\*](#)  
[\*The Seeker of Knowledge\* by James Rumford](#)
- 04**     [\*Story of the World Vol. I: Chapter 4\*](#)  
[\*Mummies Made in Egypt\* by Alike](#)

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# The Study of History & Early Nomadic People

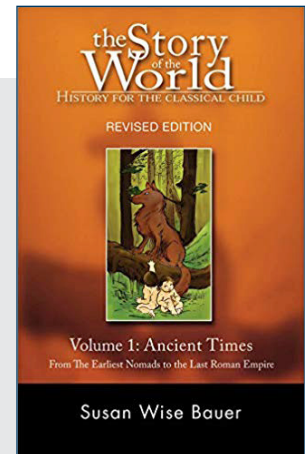
We will kick off this History and Literature Collection by learning about what history is and how archaeologists help us learn about the past. From there we will jump right into our first chapter about the nomads and the Fertile Crescent. In literature, we will begin the year with one of the oldest stories in the world that is sure to engage your child(ren), Gilgamesh the King.

## The Story of the World Volume 1: Ancient Times

by Susan Wise Bauer

**Hist Reading 01:** Introduction

**Hist Reading 02:** Chapter 1



According to the New Oxford American Dictionary, history is defined as “the study of past events.” This first unit begins by explaining to our young learners that history is more than what happened long ago; they have a history as well! Once children understand what history is and how archeologists help historians put the past together, we will move right into the earliest people—the nomads! Nomads were the first farmers who settled around the Fertile Crescent, which was formed by the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in present day Asia.



### Reading 01

How do we learn about the history of people who lived long ago?  
*We can ask adults, read letters, or books.*

What does an archaeologist do?

*Archaeologists find items left behind and use them to learn the story of the people who used to live there.*



## Reading 02

How did the nomads survive?

*Answer: Nomads traveled from place to place to find food and shelter needed to survive.*

Where was the best place for nomads to live?

*Answer: Nomads needed water and fertile land.*

What are the names of the rivers in the Fertile Crescent?

*Answer: The rivers are the Tigris and Euphrates.*

When nomads began to settle and live near the Fertile Crescent year-round, what did they become?

*Answer: They became farmers.*

Why did farmers build houses close together?

*Answer: They built houses close together so they could easily help one another.*

How did villages keep themselves safe?

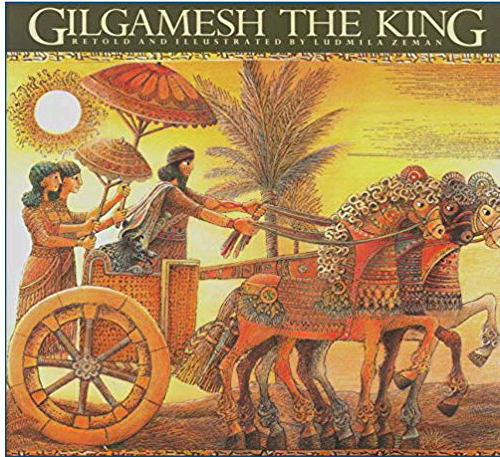
*Answer: Villages stayed safe by building walls around their cities.*



To get ready for Narration, have your child's journal, a pencil, and possibly the book. Remember to guide your child to respond in a complete sentence(s). Either write the narration directly in their journal, or have them glue it in after.

**Level 1**—What is one thing you remember about nomads?

**Level 2**—What are three things you remember about nomads and early farmers?



## *Gilgamesh the King*

Retold & Illustrated by Ludmila Zeman

**Lit Reading 01:** Read from the beginning of the book to the page ending in, "... so no one would think of challenging his rule."

**Lit Reading 02:** Read from the end of Lit Reading 01 through the end of the book.



The epic of Gilgamesh is one of the oldest stories in the world. It was first told by the Sumerians, then it was told over and over again until it was finally written down on clay tablets in Cuneiform somewhere around 1300 BCE by a Babylonian writer. Cuneiform was the first written language in the world. Many scholars believe Gilgamesh was a real person and a king of Uruk.

Gilgamesh, the king of Uruk, is a lonely and unhappy half-man and half-god. To show the people how powerful he is, he demands a great wall be built. He pushes his people so hard and for so long on this massive wall that they cry for help from the sun-god. In an effort to soften Gilgamesh's heart, the sun-god sends a beast-man named Enkidu to win over Gilgamesh. They battle fiercely, but in the end, Enkidu does win Gilgamesh in friendship. Gilgamesh realizes that relationships and being a good king to his people are what is important.



### **Reading 01**

Why was Gilgamesh a harsh king?

*Answer: Gilgamesh was harsh because he wanted to show the people how powerful he was so that no one else would try to be king instead.*

What is the weather like throughout the story: sunny, rainy, snowy, cold, windy?

*Answer: The weather is mainly hot.*



Would you like to visit the place(s) in the story? Why or why not?  
*Answers will vary.*

Does the story take place over a minute, an hour, day, week, year(s), etc.? How do you know?

*Answer: The story takes place over a longer period of time, weeks or perhaps months. We know this because it takes a long time to build a wall, the time for Enkidu to be created and fall in love with Shamhat is also longer, the hours for the battle between Enkidu and Gilgamesh, and because of the days of celebration.*

Who are the main characters in the story and what do we know about them?

*Answer: The main characters are Gilgamesh and Enkidu. Gilgamesh is a mighty king and very prideful. Enkidu was created by the Sun god, is very caring, loves Shamhat, and is also very strong.*

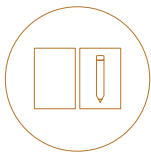
## Reading 02

What does the main character want?

*Answer: Gilgamesh wants to be in control of his people and to be the strongest man in the world. Enkidu wants to be a friend.*

Does the main character get what he/she wants? Why or why not?

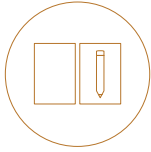
*Answer: Gilgamesh does NOT get what he wants, but it ends up being OK! The work on the wall is stopped when Gilgamesh realized he could care about another person, and became friends with Enkidu. Enkidu did get what he wanted.*



Gather together your child's paper and pencil, the whiteboard or paper you wrote the copywork on, the literature book, and colored pencils or crayons. After reading from the literature book, sit with your child while they do the appropriate level of copywork. Don't forget to watch their letter formation and placement as they go, correcting in the moment as needed. After you have discussed each copywork sentence, invite them to do an illustration of that sentence in their journal next to where the copywork is (or will be) glued in.

**Copywork 01 (Level 1)**—Gilgamesh watched from his tower on top of the great wall.

**Copywork 01 (Level 2)**—From morning until dusk, Gilgamesh watched from his tower on top of the great wall of Uruk.



Focus: Study the illustration of Gilgamesh watching from his tower. How does the word “great” make us feel about Gilgamesh’s location and size of the wall?

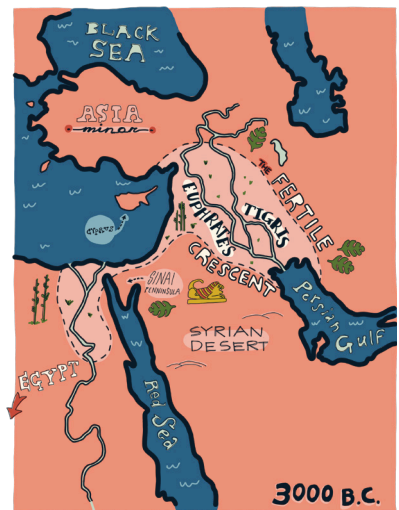
**Copywork 02 (Level 1)**—Enkidu reached over the wall and grabbed Gilgamesh by the arm.

**Copywork 02 (Level 2)**—Enkidu reached over the wall, grabbed Gilgamesh by the arm and raised him to safety.

Focus: Gilgamesh was a very strong man, probably very large and heavy. With your child, discuss what we learn about Enkidu from his ability to grab Gilgamesh by the arm and hoist him over the wall.



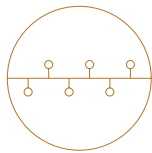
**Enrichment Activity 01—Fertile Crescent Map.** You will need [the maps at the end of this document](#), colored pencils, a large world map, and a glue stick. Using the full color map, review the two rivers and the crescent shape they make together. On the black and white map, ask your child to lightly color in the “crescent.” Also, have them label the Tigris River and the Euphrates River. While they are coloring it, remind them why this area was fertile and why that was important for survival. Using your world map, show your child where the Fertile Crescent is, and always point out where you are on the map too. Have your child glue their map into their journal.



**Enrichment Activity 02—What Was Your Favorite Part?** To complete this activity, you only need the Gilgamesh book, standard unit blocks, and wooden peg dolls or other figurines that can be used for characters from Gilgamesh. Begin a discussion of the story of Gilgamesh with your child. Review the characters, plot, climax, and resolution with them. Ask them to think about what their favorite part was, but make sure they do not tell you! Ask your child to build their favorite part of the story with the blocks and the peg dolls. Guide your child to build a structure as detailed as possible, helping them get any other materials you have on hand that they would like to use. Have them place the peg dolls or



figurines in places that will help you to understand what part of the story this scene is from. Some children will be excited and spend a long time building their scene. Other children may need some encouragement to add details. You can strategically provide input on details for them, such as, "Oh, if this is the part I am thinking of, I remember a tree (or rock, wall, character, etc.) being here!" When it is finally time for the big reveal, talk through what you see that your child has built: "I see a big wall here. I see Gilgamesh on top watching the people below." Or whatever the scene is that your child built. If you really don't know what it is, ask for clues and then see if you can guess. "Can you tell me about this piece over here?" At the end, talk about the creativity that your child used, and work together to add more details or to share ideas for other ways to build things. You can even build your own scene and see if your child can guess it when you are finished. If you would like, you can also have your child use acrylic paint to paint the peg dolls for the scene.



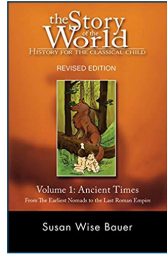
**Timeline.** The materials you need are particular to the style of timeline that you and your child have chosen to make. Gather those timeline materials, brainstorm together what your child can draw for this date, and invite them to work.

*7000 BC—Nomads roam the Fertile Crescent.*

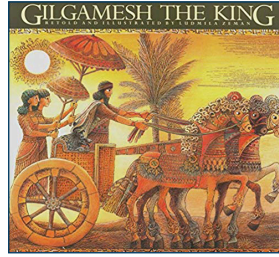


["Yesterday is History" by Emily Dickinson](#)





[The Story of the World Volume 1: Ancient Times](#)



[Gilgamesh the King](#)



[Peg People](#), or other figurines

Maps of the Fertile Crescent,  
at end of this document  
Copywork Materials  
Journal  
Timeline Materials  
Whiteboard, optional for  
Copywork

World Map  
Colored Pencils  
Glue Stick  
Lined Paper, Zaner Bloser  
Pencil  
Standard Unit Blocks  
White Printer Paper



[Dinosaur Bones for Archaeological Dig](#)



[Archaeology Dig](#)



[Grow a Vegetable Garden](#)

