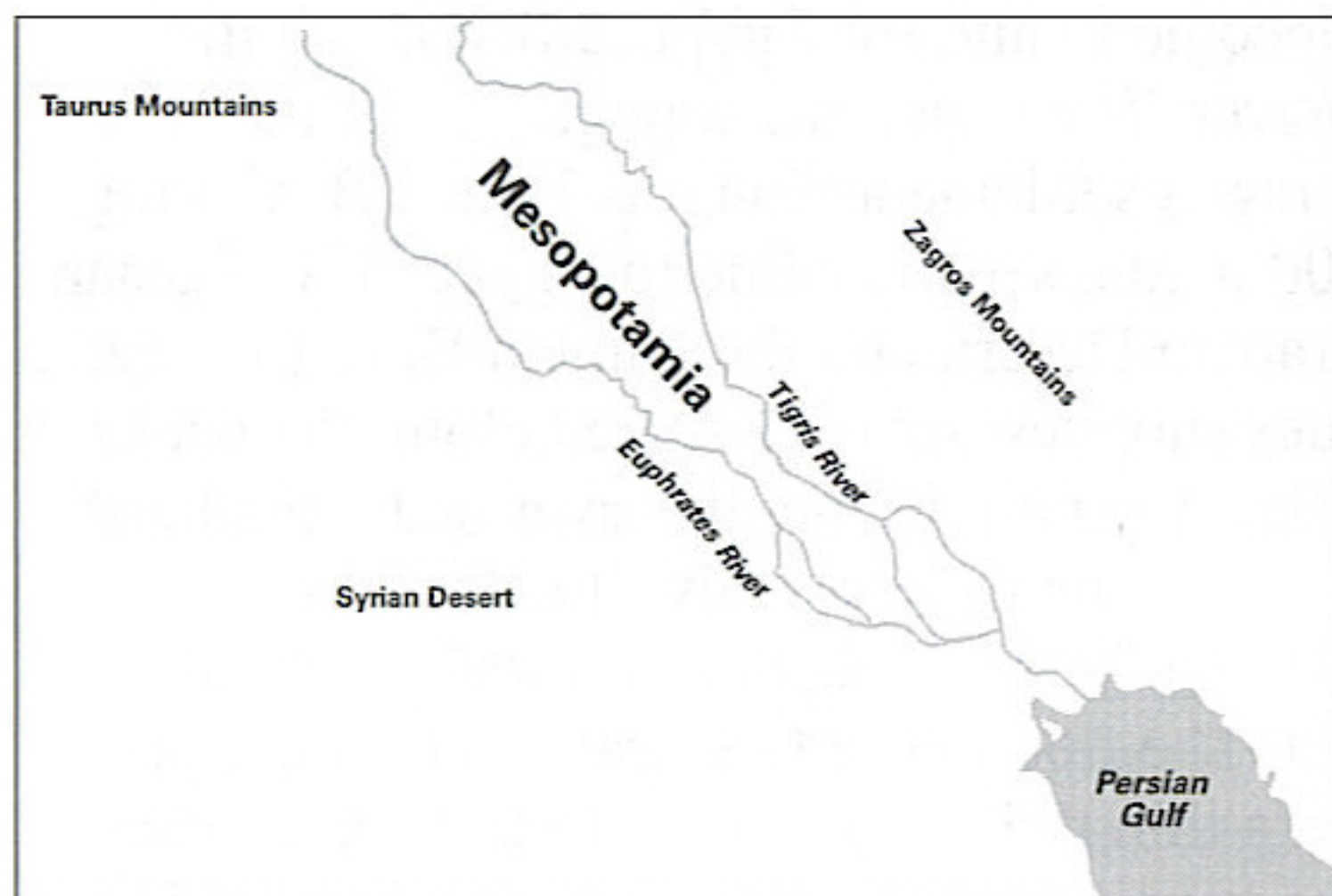


## Information About Settlement in Mesopotamia



Most people in Mesopotamia settled in southern Mesopotamia between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. A rich water supply and the topography between the Tigris and Euphrates encouraged settlement there. The land in this area was flat and fertile, making large-scale farming possible. Because of the rivers, southern Mesopotamia also had a rich supply of fish and waterfowl that could be used for food. The first people who settled in southern

Mesopotamia were the Sumerians. The settlements they built were called *city-states*. Each city-state consisted of a city plus the farmland around it. **Place ten dots between the Tigris and Euphrates to represent the locations of the first Sumerian city-states.**

Over time, the Sumerians discovered that there were also disadvantages to settling between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The flood patterns of the Tigris and Euphrates are irregular. The level of the rivers can vary considerably, depending on the amount of snow that falls on the mountains that feed them. As a result, Sumerian city-states often fought with each other over water rights. City-states downstream were particularly vulnerable to dry periods, since their water supply could be cut off by city-states located upstream. To protect their water rights, Sumerian leaders formed armies and built thick walls around their cities. **Draw circles around the dots on your map to show that city-states built walls to protect themselves.**

The topography of southern Mesopotamia was also not ideal, as it did not provide natural barriers against invaders. This made it easy for nomadic groups from the Syrian Desert and Zagros Mountains to move into Mesopotamia. Their movement touched off many battles and forced Mesopotamian city-states to enlarge their armies. **On the map, draw symbols in the Syrian Desert and Zagros Mountains to represent nomadic groups that were able to move into Mesopotamia easily.**

Limited mineral and vegetation resources in Mesopotamia also encouraged warfare in the region. Timber was abundant in the Lebanon Mountains. The Taurus Mountains contained important minerals, such as copper and tin. Mesopotamian peoples continually fought for access to trade routes, which allowed them to obtain these goods. **On the map, draw arrows and visuals to show trade routes that Mesopotamians would use to obtain natural resources, such as copper and tin.**