

## WHAT IS MESOPOTAMIAN SOCIETY LIKE?

Mesopotamian society has privileged and non-privileged groups.

**Privileged people** are very rich and have all the power:

- **The aristocracy** consists of the king's family and the nobility. They govern and own most of the land. The **king** is a religious and military leader.
- **Priests** control religious rituals, agriculture and taxes.
- **Scribes** write laws and commercial transactions. They know how to read, write and count.

**Non-privileged people** are free people or slaves:

- **Peasants** or country people are free, but they rent the lands around cities from the king or the temple. Peasants have to give part of the crops to the king or temple. They cultivate crops, such as wheat, beans and barley, and use simple ploughs.
- **Craftsmen** work in workshops. There are different types of craftsmen, such as carpenters, weavers and jewellers
- **Slaves** are war prisoners. They have no rights.

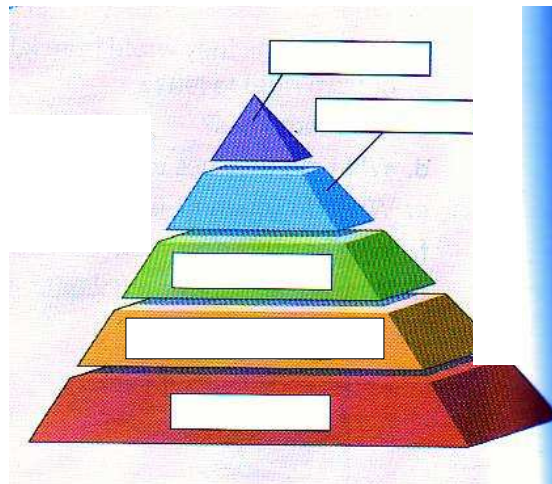
**Exercises:**

**1.- Make a social pyramid:**

- The groups with a high social position are at the top.
- The groups with low social position are at the bottom.

Fill in the gaps with the following words:

Craftsmen and Peasants - Scribes - king and nobility - slaves - priests



**2.- What is the difference between a slave and a free person?**

**3.- What do scribes do?**

**4.- What do priests do?**

**5.- Who is the king?**

**6.- What do peasants cultivate?**

**7.- Who is the owner of the land in Mesopotamian society?**

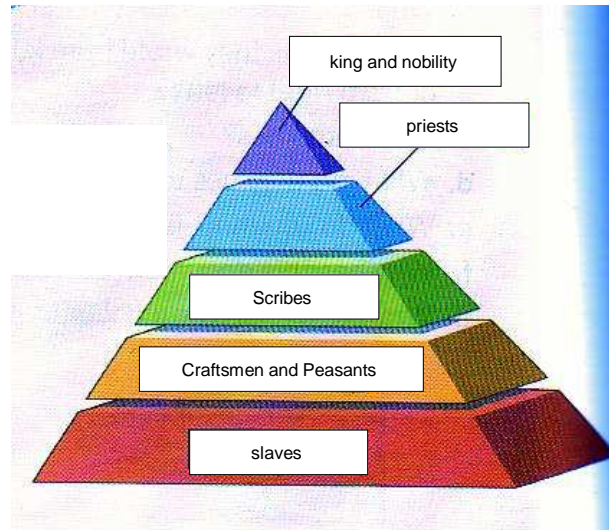
## **SOLUTIONS ABOUT MESOPOTAMIAN SOCIETY**

### **1.- Make a social pyramid:**

- The groups with a high social position are at the top.
- The groups with low social position are at the bottom.

Fill in the gaps with the following words:

Craftsmen and Peasants - Scribes - king and nobility - slaves - priests



### **2.- What is the difference between a slave and a free person?**

Slaves are war prisoners. They have no rights.

A free person can be peasants or craftsmen: they can rent the lands, cultivate crops, work in workshops.

### **3.- What do scribes do?**

Scribes write laws and commercial transactions. They know how to read, write and count.

### **4.- What do priests do?**

Priests control religious rituals, agriculture and taxes.

### **5.- Who is the king?**

The king is a religious and military leader.

### **6.- What do peasants cultivate?**

They cultivate crops, such as wheat, beans and barley, and use simple ploughs.

### **7.- Who is the owner of the land in Mesopotamian society?**

The king and the priests are the owner of the land in Mesopotamia.