This glossary lists key terms and other useful terms from the book.

**A**

**absolute power** (uh suh loot pow ur) *n.* complete control over someone or something, p. 77

**acropolis** (uh krah puh lis) *n.* the fortified, or strengthened, hill of an ancient Greek city; the acropolis of Athens when spelled with a capital A, p. 172

**A.D.** the abbreviation for the Latin term, *Anno Domini*, or “in the year of the Lord”; used with dates, p. 14

**afterlife** (af tur lyf) *n.* a life after death, p. 82

**agora** (ag uh ruh) *n.* a public market and meeting place in an ancient Greek city; the agora of Athens when spelled with a capital A, p. 182

**ahimsa** (uh him sah) *n.* the Hindu idea of nonviolence, p. 119

**Alexander the Great** (al ig zan dur thuh grayt) *n.* the king of Macedonia from 336 to 323 B.C.; conqueror of Persia and Egypt and invader of India, p. 197

**alphabet** (al fuh bet) *n.* a set of symbols that represent the sounds of a language, p. 54

**ancestor** (an ses tur) *n.* a person from whom one is descended, especially of a generation earlier than a grandparent, p. 16

**aqueduct** (ak wuh dukt) *n.* a structure that carries water over long distances, p. 222

**archaeologist** (ahr kee AHL uh jist) *n.* a scientist who examines objects such as bones and tools to learn about past peoples and cultures, p. 11

**architecture** (ahr kuh tek chur) *n.* the art and work of designing and constructing buildings or other large structures; the style and design of a building, p. 27

**aristocrat** (uh ris tuh krat) *n.* a member of a rich and powerful family, p. 172

**artisan** (ahr tuh zun) *n.* a worker who is especially skilled in crafting items by hand, pp. 25, 100

**assassinate** (uh sas uh nayt) *v.* to murder for political reasons, p. 197

**astronomer** (uh STRAHN uh mur) *n.* a scientist who studies the stars and other objects in the sky, p. 94

**Athens** (ATH unz) *n.* a city-state in ancient Greece; the capital of present-day Greece, p. 181

**avatar** (av uh taHR) *n.* a representation of a Hindu god or goddess in human or animal form, p. 117

**B**

**Babylon** (bab uh lahn) *n.* the capital of Babylonia; a city of great wealth and luxury, p. 43

**barbarian** (bahr BEHR ee un) *n.* a wild and uncivilized person, p. 196

**barge** (bahrj) *n.* a large, flat-bottomed boat, p. 87

**battering ram** (bat ur ing ram) *n.* a weapon having a wooden beam mounted on wheels; used to knock down walls or buildings, p. 45

**bazaar** (buh ZAHHR) *n.* a market selling different kinds of goods, p. 43

**B.C.** the abbreviation for “before Christ”; used with dates, p. 14

**blockade** (blah KAYD) *n.* an action taken to isolate an enemy and cut off its supplies, p. 193

**boomerang** (BOOM ur ang) *n.* a flat, curved object, traditionally made of wood, that can be thrown so that it returns to the thrower, p. 70

**brahman** (BRAH mun) *n.* a single spiritual power that, according to Hinduism, lives in everything, p. 117

**bronze** (brahnz) *n.* a yellowish-brown alloy of copper, tin, and traces of other metals, p. 27

**Buddhism** (buhd iz um) *n.* a religion based on the teachings of Buddha; characterized by the belief that enlightenment comes from within rather than from worshipping gods, p. 121
canal (kuh NAL) n. a waterway dug into the earth or modified by people to transport water or people, or to provide drainage, p. 24

caravan (KA ruh van) n. a group of travelers journeying together, p. 43

caste (kast) n. a social class of people, p. 113

catacombs (KAT uh kohmz) n. an underground cemetery of many tunnels and passageways, p. 231

cataract (KAT uh rakt) n. a large waterfall or steep rapids, p. 71

Chandragupta (chun drum GUP tuh) n. (died c. 297 B.C.) the founder of India's Maurya Empire in 321 B.C.; unified most of India under one ruler, p. 128

chieftain (CHEEF tun) n. a leader or head of a group, such as a clan or a tribe, p. 172

Christianity (kris chee AN uh tee) n. the Christian religion, based on the life and teachings of Jesus and on the Christian holy book, the Bible, p. 229

circa (sur kuh) prep. the Latin word meaning "about"; often abbreviated as c., p. 14

circus (SUR kus) n. an arena in ancient Rome; also the show held there, p. 226

citadel (sit uh del) n. a fortress in a city, p. 110

city-state (SHEE tee stayt) n. a city that is also a separate, independent state, p. 37

civilization (sih vuhuuh ZAY shur) n. a society with cities, a central government run by official leaders, and workers who specialize in certain jobs, leading to social classes; characterized by writing, art, and architecture, p. 27

civil service (SIV ul SUR vis) n. the group of people whose job is to carry out the work of the government, p. 150

code (kohd) n. an organized list of laws or rules, p. 48

Colosseum (kahl uh SEE um) n. a large amphitheater built in Rome around A.D. 70; site of contests and combats between people and animals, p. 222

Confucius (kun FYOO shus) n. (551–479 B.C.) a Chinese philosopher and teacher; originator of Confucianism, greatly influenced Chinese life, pp. 143, 146

conqueror (KAHN kur ur) n. a person who uses force to gain control of other people, land, or possessions, p. 43

Constantine (KAHN stun teen) n. (c. A.D. 278–337) the emperor of Rome from A.D. 312 to 337; encouraged the spread of Christianity, p. 236

consul (KAHN sul) n. one of two officials who led the ancient Roman Republic, p. 212

convert (kun VURT) v. to change one's beliefs; in particular, to change from one religion to another, p. 130

covenant (KUV uh nunt) n. a promise made by God; a binding agreement, p. 61

culture (KUL chur) n. the language, religious beliefs, values, customs, and other ways of life shared by a group of people, p. 11

cuneiform (kyoo nee uh fawrm) n. a form of writing that uses groups of wedges and lines; used to write several languages of the Fertile Crescent, p. 50

currency (KUR un see) n. the kind of money used by a group or a nation, p. 153
dam (dam) n. a barrier across a waterway to control the level of water, p. 24

Dead Sea Scrolls (ded see skroh IZ) n. ancient parchment manuscripts containing the earliest version of the first few books of the Bible, p. 61

delta (DEL tuh) n. a triangular-shaped pain at the mouth of a river, formed when sediment is deposited by flowing water, p. 72

democracy (dihk MAHK ruh see) n. a form of government in which citizens govern themselves, p. 173

descendant (dee SEN dunt) n. child, grandchild, great-grandchild (and so on) of an ancestor, p. 60

dharma (DAHR muh) n. the religious and moral duties of Hindus, p. 119

diaspora (dy AS pur uh) n. the scattering of people who have a common background or beliefs, p. 64

dictator (DIK tay tur) n. a ruler who has total control of the government, p. 213

dike (dyk) n. a protective wall that controls or holds back water by a river, p. 140

disciple (dih SY pul) n. a follower of a person or belief, p. 230

district (DIS trikt) n. an area set by law for a particular purpose; an area having particular characteristics, p. 152

domesticate (duh MES tih kayt) v. to adapt wild plants for human use; to tame wild animals and breed them for human use, p. 20

drama (DRAH muh) n. a type of literary work, such as a play, that tells a story and is written to be performed by actors, p. 180

dynasty (DY nus tee) n. a series of rulers from the same family or ethnic group, p. 77

emperor (EM pur ur) n. a ruler of widespread lands, p. 151

empire (EM pyr) n. many territories and people controlled by one government, p. 43

epistle (ee PIS ul) n. a letter; in the Christian Bible, letters written by disciples to Christian groups, p. 232

exile (EK syll) v. to force someone to live in another place or country, p. 57

extended family (ek STEM did FAM uh lee) n. closely related people of several generations, p. 142

famine (FAM in) n. a time when there is so little food that many people starve, p. 56

Fertile Crescent (FUR tul KRES en) n. a region in Southwest Asia; site of the world’s first civilizations, p. 36

finances (FY nan siz) n. the amounts of money or money-related resources a person has; the management of money, p. 184

floodwaters (FLUD wah turz) n. water from a flood; generally used to describe floods caused in the spring by excess water from rain and melting snow, p. 24

geography (jee AHRG ruh fee) n. the study of Earth’s surface and the processes that shape it, p. 13

Giza (GEE zuh) n. an ancient Egyptian city; site of the Great Pyramid, p. 86

gladiator (GLAD ee ay tur) n. in ancient Rome, a person who fought in an arena for the entertainment of the public; usually a slave, p. 226

god (gahd) n. a being considered to be the creator or ruler of the universe or parts of the universe; the object of worship in some cultures and societies, p. 37
goddess (GAHD is) n. a female being considered to be the creator or ruler of the universe or parts of the universe; the object of worship in some cultures and societies, p. 37

Gospels (GAHS pulz) n. in the Christian Bible, the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which are the first four books of the New Testament, p. 230

Gupta Empire (GOOP tuh EM pyr) n. an empire in northern India, p. 132

H

Hammurabi (hah muh RAH bee) n. (died 1750 B.C.) the King of Babylon from about 1792 to 1750 B.C.; creator of the Babylonian Empire; established one of the oldest codes of law, p. 43

Hammurabi's Code (hah muh RAH bee kohd) n. a set of laws created by Babylonian king Hammurabi, telling his people how to live and settle conflicts, p. 47

Hellenistic (hel uh NIS tik) adj. having to do with history or Greek-influenced culture in the Middle East and countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea after the death of Alexander the Great, p. 199

helot (HEL ut) n. a member of a certain class of servants in ancient Sparta, p. 189

herbalism (HUR bul iz um) n. the practice of creating medicines from plants, p. 95

hieroglyphs (HY ur ohr glifs) n. pictures and other written symbols that stand for ideas, things, or sounds, p. 93

Hinduism (HIN doo iz um) n. a religion developed in India, introduced by the Aryans, and based on sacred books called the Vedas and Upanishads; recognizes many gods as different aspects of one supreme being, p. 116

history (HIS tuh ree) n. the written and other recorded events of people, p. 11

hominid (HAHM uh nid) n. a modern human or a member of an earlier group that may have included ancestors or relatives of modern humans, p. 16

hunter-gatherers (HUN tur GATH ur urz) n. people who gather wild food and hunt animals to survive, pp. 17, 22

I

Iliad (IL ee ud) n. a Greek epic, credited to the poet Homer, telling about quarrels among Greek leaders in the last year of the Trojan War, p. 171

immortal (ih MAWR tul) n. someone or something that lives forever, p. 176

imperialism (im PHR ee ul iz um) n. the practice of gaining control over foreign lands and peoples, p. 214

inflation (in FLAY shun) n. an economic situation in which there is more money with less value, p. 239

irrigation (ihr uh GAY shun) n. a method of supplying land with water through a network of canals, p. 24

Islam (IS lahm) n. the religion practiced by Muslims; based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad and on the holy book of Islam, the Quran, p. 64

J

Jesus (JEE ZUS) n. (c. 4 B.C.–A.D. 29) founder of Christianity; believed by Christians to be the Messiah; crucified by the Roman government, p. 229

Judaism (JO0 day iz um) n. the religion of the Jewish people, which developed from ancient Israelite beliefs; based on belief in one God and the teachings of the Hebrew Bible, p. 60

L

landform (LAND fawrm) n. an area of Earth's surface with a definite shape; examples include mountains and hills, p. 169

linen (LIN un) n. a smooth, strong cloth made of the fibers of the flax plant, p. 82
Liu Bang (LYOH bahng) n. the founder of the Han dynasty of China in 202 B.C.; born a peasant; stabilized the government and promoted education, p. 154

loess (LOH es) n. a yellow-brown soil, p. 140

Lower Nubia (LOH ur NOO bee uh) n. an ancient region in northern Africa extending from the Nile Valley in Egypt to present-day Sudan, specifically, between the first and second Nile cataracts, p. 99

M

martyr (MAHR tur) n. a person who dies for a cause he or she believes in, p. 233

Maurya Empire (MOWR yuh EM pyr) n. Indian empire founded by Chandragupta, beginning with his kingdom in northeastern India and spreading to most of northern and central India, p. 128

meditate (MED uh tayt) v. to focus the mind inward in order to find spiritual awareness or relaxation, p. 122

mercenary (MUR suh neh ree) n. a soldier who serves for pay in a foreign army, p. 238

merchant (MUR chunt) n. a person who buys or sells goods for a profit; person who runs a store or business, p. 28

messiah (muh SY uh) n. a savior in Judaism and Christianity, p. 230

Middle Kingdom (MID ul KING dum) n. the period from about 1991 to 1786 B.C., during which Dynasty 12 ruled ancient Egypt, p. 77; a name for the land of ancient China, p. 139

migrate (MY grayt) v. to move from one place to settle in another area, p. 112

mina (MY nuh) n. a unit of weight or money used in ancient Greece and Asia, p. 47

missionary (MISH un ehr ee) n. a person who spreads his or her religious beliefs to others, p. 123

monotheism (MAHN oh thee iz um) n. the belief in one god, p. 55

monsoon (mahn SOOHN) n. a strong, seasonal wind that blows across East Asia, p. 109

moral (MAWR ul) adj. acting in a way that is considered good and just by a society’s standards, p. 131

Moses (MOH zuz) n. (c. 1200s B.C.) Israelite leader who, according to the Torah, led the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan; said to have received the Ten Commandments from God, p. 61

mummy (MUM ee) n. a dead body preserved in lifelike condition, p. 84

myth (mith) n. a traditional story; in some cultures, a legend that explains people’s beliefs, p. 38

N

New Babylonian Empire (noo bab uh LOH nee un EM pyr) n. a revival of the old Babylonian empire stretching from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean Sea, p. 45

New Kingdom (noo KING dum) n. the period from about 1567 to 1085 B.C., during which dynasties 18, 19, and 20 ruled ancient Egypt, p. 77

New Stone Age (noo stohn aij) n. the later part of the Stone Age during which people began to grow their own foods and lived in the same place year after year, p. 19

nirvana (nur VAH nuh) n. the lasting peace that Buddhists seek by giving up selfish desires, p. 123

noble (NOH bul) n. in certain societies, a person of high rank; in early civilizations, members of the upper class who were government officials, p. 48

nomad (NOH mad) n. a person who has no settled home, p. 18

Nubia (NOO bee uh) n. a desert region and ancient kingdom in the Nile River Valley, on the site of present-day southern Egypt and northern Sudan, p. 71
Odyssey (uhd ih see) n. a Greek epic, credited to the poet Homer, describing the adventures of the hero Odysseus after the Trojan War, p. 171

Old Kingdom (ohld king dum) n. the period from about 2686 to 2181 B.C., during which dynasties 3, 4, and 5 ruled ancient Egypt, p. 77

Old Stone Age (ohld stohn ayj) n. the early part of the Stone Age during which people learned to hunt in groups, discovered how to use fire, and became nomads, p. 17

oracle (AWR uh kul) n. in ancient Greece, a sacred site where a god or goddess was consulted; any priest or priestess who spoke for the gods, p. 177

oral traditions (AWR ul truh Dlsh unz) n. stories passed down through generations by word of mouth, p. 12

ore (awr) n. a mineral or a combination of minerals mined for the production of metals, p. 99

peasant (PEZ unt) n. a member of a class that makes its living through small-scale farming and labor, p. 91

Peloponnesian War (pel uh puh NEE shun wawr) n. (431–404 B.C.) a war fought for 27 years between Athens and Sparta in ancient Greece that involved almost every Greek city-state, p. 192

peninsula (puh NIN suh luh) n. an area of land almost completely surrounded by water and connected to a mainland by a narrow strip of land, p. 169

Persian Empire (PUR zhun EM pyr) n. an empire centered in modern Iran that covered the Fertile Crescent, Egypt, Asia Minor, and parts of Central Asia and India, p. 46

pharaoh (fehr oh) n. a king of ancient Egypt, p. 76

philosopher (fih LAHS uh fur) n. someone who uses reason to understand the world, pp. 146, 177

philosophy (fih LAHS uh fee) n. a system of beliefs and values, p. 148

plague (playg) n. a widespread disease, p. 193

playwright (PLAY ryt) n. a person who writes dramas; also called a dramatist, p. 180

plebeian (plih BEE un) n. an ordinary citizen in the ancient Roman Republic, p. 212

polytheism (PAHL ih thee iz um) n. the belief in many gods, p. 38

prehistory (pree HIS tuh ree) n. before history; the events in the period of time before writing was invented, p. 11

prophet (PRAHF it) n. a religious teacher who is regarded as speaking for God or a god, p. 63

province (PRAH vins) n. a unit of an empire; in the Roman Empire each one having a governor supported by an army, p. 219

pyramid (Puh ruh mid) n. a huge building with four sloping triangle-shaped sides; built as a royal tomb in Egypt, p. 86
quarry (kwǎwr ee) n. a site where large holes are dug into the ground and stone is collected by digging, cutting, or other means, p. 87

rapids (rap idz) n. a very fast-moving part of a river, p. 70

rebellion (rih bel yun) n. an organized resistance to the government or other authority, p. 189

reeds (reedz) n. tall, hollow-stemmed grasses that grow in wet places, p. 93

regent (ree junt) n. someone who rules for a child until the child is old enough to rule, p. 80

reincarnation (ree in kahr nay shun) n. the rebirth of the soul in the body of another living being, p. 119

republic (rih rep lik) n. a type of government in which citizens who have the right to vote select their leaders, p. 212

Roman Empire (roh mun em pyr) n. an empire lasting from 27 B.C. to A.D. 476, whose boundaries changed over time; at its greatest extent stretching from Britain to North Africa and the Persian Gulf, p. 215

Rosetta Stone (roh zet uh stohn) n. an ancient tablet covered with Egyptian and Greek hieroglyphics; provided a key to deciphering hieroglyphics, p. 94

rubble (rub ul) n. irregularly shaped pieces of rock or other materials, p. 45

Shi Huangdi (shur hwahtng dee) n. (c. 259-210 B.C.) the founder of the Qin dynasty and China’s first emperor, ruled from about 221 to 210 B.C., p. 151

silk (silk) n. a valuable cloth originally made only in China from threads spun by caterpillars called silkworms, p. 160

Silk Road (silk rohd) n. an ancient trade route between China and Europe, p. 158

silt (silt) n. fine soil found on river bottoms, p. 72

Sima Qian (sih mah chen) n. (c. 145-85 B.C.) a Chinese scholar, astronomer, and historian; wrote the most important history of ancient China, Historical Records, p. 161

slavery (slay vur ee) n. the condition of being owned by, and forced to work for, someone else, p. 184

social class (soh shul klas) n. a group, or class, that is made up of people with similar backgrounds, income, and ways of living, p. 28

society (suh sy uh tee) n. a group of people distinct from other groups, who share a common culture, p. 12

Sparta (spaahr tuh) n. a city-state in the southern part of ancient Greece, p. 188

spiritual (spih rih choo ul) n. concerned with religious or sacred matters, p. 122

Stone Age (stohn ay) n. a period of time during which people made lasting tools and weapons mainly from stone; the earliest known period of human culture, p. 17

subcontinent (sub kahn teh nunt) n. a large landmass that juts out from a continent; for example, India, p. 109

surplus (sur plus) n. more of a thing or product than is needed, p. 25

Taoism (dow iz um) n. a religious philosophy of simple and selfless living, based on the writings of the Chinese philosopher, Laozi, p. 149
Ten Commandments (ten kuh MAND munts) n. according to the Bible, a code of laws given to the Israelites by God, p. 56

terra cotta (TEHR uh KAHT uh) n. a hard, ceramic-like clay used in pottery and building construction, p. 151

timeline (TYM lyn) n. a simple diagram showing how dates and events relate to one another, p. 14

tolerance (TAHL ur uns) n. freedom from prejudice, p. 131

topsoil (TAHP soyl) n. the layer of soil on the top of the ground, p. 36

Torah (TOH ruh) n. the most sacred text of the early Israelites; recorded their laws and history, p. 55

trade (trayd) n. buying and selling goods; an exchange of one thing for another, p. 27

tragedy (TRAY uh dee) n. a type of serious drama that ends in disaster for the main character, p. 180

tribute (TRIB yoot) n. regular payment made to a powerful state or nation by a weaker one, p. 175

Trojan War (TROH jun wawr) n. in Greek epic poems and myths, a ten-year war between Greece and the city of Troy in Asia Minor, p. 171

tyrant (TY runt) n. a ruler in ancient Greece who took power by force, with the support of the middle and working classes, p. 172

Upper Nubia (UP ur NOO bee uh) n. an ancient region in northeastern Africa in present-day Sudan, p. 99

V

Vedas (VAY duz) n. a series of religious texts, written in Sanskrit by the Aryan peoples; later a basis for Hinduism, p. 113

vendor (VEN dur) n. a seller of goods, p. 182

veto (VEE toh) n. the rejection of any planned action or rule by a person in power; the Latin word for “forbid,” p. 213

villa (vil uh) n. a country estate usually owned by a wealthy family; an important source of food and wealth for ancient Rome, p. 225

W

warlord (WAWR lawrd) n. a local leader of an armed group, p. 155

welfare (WEL fair) n. health, happiness, and good fortune; financial or other aid provided to people, especially by the state, p. 118

Wudi (woo dee) n. (c. 156–86 B.C.) the Chinese emperor from 140 to 86 B.C., p. 154

Z

ziggurat (zig oo rat) n. a temple of the ancient Sumerians and Babylonians, made of terraces connected by ramps and stairs, roughly in the shape of a pyramid, p. 38

Zoroastrianism (zohr AS tree un iz um) n. a religion that developed in ancient Persia, p. 46

A ziggurat