

Name: _____

Hammurabi's Code



Civilization began in Mesopotamia. People had to make laws to keep order. Sets of laws to keep order are called codes. The oldest known written code was the Code of Ur-Nammu. It was made around 2100–2050 B.C.E. We still have some parts of it. However, the Code of Hammurabi—written around 1755–1750 B.C.E.—is much longer. We also have much more of it!

The Code of Hammurabi was found in 1901. It was written by King Hammurabi of Babylon. There are 282 laws in all. They are split into groups about things like family, business, and owning land. One law says if you cut down a tree on another's land, you must pay them for it. Another says what boats should cost to rent. One famous law is about fighting. If you put out someone's eye, then your eye should be put out too!

A lot of its punishments are harsh by today's standards. Sometimes punishments



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- a. property rights
- b. land ownership
- c. slave ownership
- d. business rates

3. Which word is a synonym for *harsh*?

- a. too mean
- b. very fair
- c. confusing
- d. lasting

4. How many laws are in the Code of Hammurabi? _____

5. Name two big differences between the Code of Hammurabi and today's laws.

ANSWER KEY

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