

PRIMARY SOURCES

One-Paragraph Primary Source

Directions: Use information about a great flood from the tale of Gilgamesh to answer the questions that follow.

Six days and seven nights
came the wind and flood, the storm flattening the land.
When the seventh day arrived . . .
The sea calmed, fell still, the whirlwind (and) flood stopped up . . .
I fell to my knees and sat weeping . . .
I looked around for coastlines in the expanse of the sea,
and at twelve leagues there emerged a region (of land).
On Mt. Nimush the boat lodged firm . . .
I sent forth a dove and released it.
The dove went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a swallow and released it.
The swallow went off, but came back to me;
no perch was visible so it circled back to me.
I sent forth a raven and released it.
The raven went off, and saw the waters slither back.
It eats, it scratches, it bobs, but does not circle back to me.

- 1 How many days did the flood last?
 - A two
 - B four
 - C six
 - D eight
- 2 How did the speaker react when the storm stopped?
 - A He slept.
 - B He cried.
 - C He laughed.
 - D He jumped up and down.
- 3 Which bird flew away and did not come back?
 - A an owl
 - B a dove
 - C a raven
 - D a swallow

Test Your Knowledge

Which groups made up the Mesopotamian class system, and how did the system work?