

Section 1 Summary

7th Grade Ancient India Chapter 4

India's Geographic Setting

The land of India sticks out from the rest of Asia into the Indian Ocean. India is part of a subcontinent. The Himalayas and the Hindu Kush mountain range cut India off from Asia. Like these mountains, the bodies of water around India separated it from surrounding areas. Because of this, India had little contact with the rest of the world for many years.

India's climate is ruled by **monsoons**, or strong seasonal winds. From October to May, the winter monsoon blows from the northeast. It spreads dry air across the country. The summer monsoon comes in the middle of June. It picks up moisture from the Indian Ocean. The people rely on summer monsoons for rain. If the monsoon is late or weak, crops die and there is famine. If there is too much rain, rivers may flood. ✓

The first people of northern India probably came through openings in the Hindu Kush mountains. Great rivers rise in the mountains. The Indus (IN dus) River flows into the Arabian Sea. The Ganges (GAN jeez) River flows into the Bay of Bengal. The rivers let farmers grow crops in the plains of northern India.

Life in the Indus River Valley

The Indus Valley had rich soil. With surplus food, the number of people grew. From around 2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C., cities grew up in the valley. One large city was Mohenjo-Daro (moh HEN joh DAH roh). It was on the banks of the Indus River.

Mohenjo-Daro was well planned. It was built above ground level to protect it from floods. Homes and shops were on one side of the city. Public buildings were on the other side. A wall protected the city's most important buildings. These buildings included the citadel.

Key Terms

subcontinent (sus kahn tih nunt) *n.* a large piece of land that sticks out from a continent

monsoon (mahn soon) *n.* a strong wind that blows across East Asia at certain times of the year

citadel (sit uh del) *n.* a fortress in a city

Supplemental Assignment for Retake

Target Reading Skill



Circle one cause described in the bracketed paragraph and underline its effect.

✓ Reading Check

How do winter monsoons differ from summer monsoons?

✓ Reading Check

Describe the city plan for Mohenjo-Daro.

Vocabulary Strategy

Remember to look for compound words as you read. There are two on this page. As you find each one, draw a line between the two words that form the compound.



Then write the words you found on the lines below.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____

✓ Reading Check

How was Aryan society organized?

Mohenjo-Daro had a means of draining water from the land. Clay pipes under the streets sent waste away from the city. Canals ran next to the Indus River. They helped to keep flood water from the city. ✓

Around 2000 B.C., the people of the Indus Valley began to leave their land. From 2000 B.C. to 1500 B.C., newcomers from the north came to the area.

A New Culture Arises

The new people were called Aryans (AYR ee uhnz). They migrated from their homelands in central Asia. They were nomadic herders. Local people adopted the Aryans' language. They also adopted some of their beliefs. A new mixed Aryan culture began.

This new culture first started in the northern Indus Valley. It spread into the Ganges Valley to the east. By about 800 B.C., the people of northern India had learned to make tools and weapons of iron. With iron axes, they cleared the thick rain forests.

Aryan society was grouped into three classes. Priests, called Brahmans, performed religious services. Below them were warriors and nobles. Next came the artisans and merchants. Finally, a fourth class of people made up of farm workers, laborers, and servants was formed.

This division of classes is the caste system. People had to stay in the caste of their parents. Each caste had many groups. People did the same work as their parents and other members of their group. ✓

Review Questions

- 1. How do the monsoons affect India's climate?

- 2. Who were the Aryans?

Key Terms
migrate (MY grayt) *v.* to relocate; to move from one place and settle in another
caste (kast) *n.* a social class of people

Section 2 Summary

Vocabulary Strategy

The words below appear in this section. Each word contains a prefix. Underline the prefix in each word.

- reborn
- nonviolence



Now look at the chart on the previous page. Use the chart to find the prefix's meaning. Then, add the meaning of the prefix to the meaning of the root.

1. Reborn means _____
2. Nonviolence means _____

Reading Check

List the most important Hindu gods.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The Beginnings of Hinduism

1 Aryan culture mixed with India's existing cultures. From this blend of ideas and beliefs came one of the world's oldest living religions, Hinduism. It has picked up beliefs from other religions in its 3,500 years. It

5 became very complex. Hindus believe that there are many ways of coming to god.

Hinduism is one of the world's major religions. More than 850 million people in India follow it today. Its beliefs have influenced people of many religions.

10 But it is different from other major world religions. There is no one founder. Hindus worship many gods and goddesses. But they believe in one single spiritual power. This power is called **brahman**.

The gods and goddesses of Hinduism stand for different parts of brahman. The three most important

15 gods are Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Shiva is the Destroyer. Each one takes many forms. These forms are called **avatars**. ✓

Hindus believe that Brahma created Earth and all

20 that is on it. But he is not as widely worshipped as Vishnu and Shiva. Vishnu is kind. He tries to protect humans. Shiva is responsible for both the creative and destructive forces in the universe. Hindu gods have families. Many Hindus worship Shiva's wife, Shakti.

The Teachings of Hinduism

25 All Hindus share certain beliefs. They are in religious writings. One of these is the Upanishads (oo PAN uh shadz). *Upanishad* means "sitting near a teacher."

One of the shared ideas is **reincarnation**. Hindus believe that when a person dies, the soul is reborn in

30 another living thing. They believe that every living thing has a soul.

Key Terms

brahman (BRAH mun) *n.* a single spiritual power that Hindus believe lives in everything

avatar (av uh TAHR) *n.* a Hindu god or goddess in human or animal form

reincarnation (ree in kahr NAY shun) *n.* rebirth of the soul in the body of another living thing

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Hindus believe that a person's actions in this life affect his or her fate in the next. Good behavior is rewarded. Bad behavior is punished. Faithful followers
35 of Hinduism will be born into a higher position. Those who have been bad may be born into a lower caste. They may even return as an animal. A perfect life may free a soul from the cycle of death and rebirth. As a result, this person's soul is united with brahman. ✓

40 To do this, a person must obey his or her dharma. The duties of dharma depend on a person's class, job, and age. Ahimsa, or nonviolence, is also important. To Hindus, all people and things are part of brahman. They must be treated with respect. That is why many
45 Hindus do not eat meat. They try not to hurt living things.

The Practice of Hinduism

Hindus believe that there are many paths to the truth. They may worship in different ways. One way is by practicing yoga (YOH guh). Yoga means union. Hindus
50 believe yoga exercises help free the soul from the cares of the world. It helps the soul unite with brahman. There are many yogas that lead to brahman. Physical activity is one yoga. Another is selfless deeds, such as giving to the poor. ✓

Review Questions

1. How did the early Aryan culture influence Hinduism?

2. What does Hinduism teach about the path to truth?

Key Terms

dharma (DAHR muh) *n.* the religious and moral duties of Hindus
ahimsa (uh HIM sah) *n.* the Hindu idea of nonviolence

Target Reading Skill

What does *As a result* signal?

Reading Check

According to Hindu belief, what happens to a person's soul after death?

Reading Check

How is yoga practiced by Hindus?

Section 3 Summary

1 Buddhists believe that a young Hindu prince once lived a life of luxury in northern India. He had never seen old age, sickness, or death. Then, he traveled outside the palace walls. He saw an old man. He saw a
5 man who was very sick. He saw a dead body being carried to a funeral.

The young man gave up his life of ease. He wanted to find the causes of human suffering. The young man was Siddhartha Gautama (sih DAHR tuh GOW tuh muh).

10 What he learned after seven years of wandering led to the start of Buddhism.

The Buddha and His Teachings

Gautama travelled in the 500s B.C. and looked for the meaning of life. At first, he studied with Hindu thinkers. But their ideas did not satisfy him.

15 Gautama decided to look inside himself for understanding. He began to **meditate**. Meditation was an ancient Hindu practice. After 49 days, he found the answers he had been looking for. He traveled across India and shared what he had learned. His followers
20 called him the Buddha (BOO duh), or "Enlightened One." His teachings became known as Buddhism.

Buddhism teaches people to follow the Eightfold Path, also called the Middle Way. By doing this, a person avoids extreme pleasure or extreme unhappiness.

25 Buddha taught that selfish desires cause humans to suffer. To end suffering, people must give up these selfish desires for wealth, power, and pleasure. Instead, they must follow the Eightfold Path. Buddhists must learn to be wise, to behave correctly, and to develop
30 their minds.

Key Term

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

Vocabulary Strategy



The word *northern* appears in the paragraph to the left. Find the word as you read and underline the suffix. Then, on the line below, write a definition of the word using the information in the chart on the previous page.

Northern means _____

Target Reading Skill

Circle the factors in the bracketed paragraph that affect a Buddhist trying to reach nirvana.



Reading Check

Why do Buddhists try to follow the Middle Way?

Reading Check

What other countries has Buddhism spread to?

To find this Middle Way, people must act unselfishly. They must treat people fairly. They must tell the truth at all times. They should also avoid violence and the killing of any living thing. By following the Buddha's path, their sufferings would end. They would find nirvana. They would not be reincarnated. ✓

Buddhism taught that all people are equal. Anyone could follow the path to nirvana. This idea appealed to many people. Like other religions, Buddhism has 40 priests. People of any social class can be a priest or monk. The Buddha encouraged his followers to establish monasteries. There they would learn, meditate, and teach. He urged monks to become missionaries.

Buddhism Inside and Outside India

45 For many years, Buddhism and Hinduism lived side by side in India. Both share a number of basic ideas. Both believe that it is wrong to harm living things. Both value nonviolence. However, Buddhists do not accept the sacred texts of Hinduism.

50 Buddhism spread all over Asia. It took root in China and grew there. Buddhist monasteries were centers of religious thought in China. From China, Buddhism spread to Korea and Japan. Today, it is part of the cultures of countries such as Japan, China, and 55 Vietnam. ✓

Review Questions

1. How did Siddhartha Gautama look for the cause of human suffering?

2. What are some of the similarities between Hinduism and Buddhism?

Key Terms

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

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

Section 4 Summary

- 1 Around 321 B.C., Chandragupta (chun druh GOOP tuh) Maurya began his rule in northeastern India. His small kingdom grew into the huge Maurya Empire.

The Rise of the Maurya Empire

Before Chandragupta came to power, India was made up of a number of states. These states fought each other. Chandragupta's armies overthrew kingdoms along the Ganges River. Then they turned west, to the Indus River valley. Within a few years, he controlled most of north and central India.

10 Chandragupta thought that a ruler must have absolute power. According to legend, one of his advisors gave him a book of advice called *Arthashastra*. The book urged kings to control their people. It said kings should keep an army of spies to inform on them.

15 Chandragupta commanded a huge army. Under him, the empire became wealthy. Much of its wealth came from farming. But the Maurya Empire also traded with faraway lands. Some of these lands were Greece, Rome, and China.

As his rule continued, Chandragupta began to fear that he would be killed. According to one story, near the end of his life, he left the throne to his son. He became a monk and starved himself to death fasting and praying.

25 His rule was harsh. But Chandragupta used his wealth to improve his empire. New irrigation systems brought water to farmers. Trees were cut down, and more food was grown. Government officials promoted crafts and mining. New roads made trade with foreign lands easier. Chandragupta brought order and peace to his people. ✓

Asoka's Leadership

Chandragupta's grandson, Asoka, built the greatest empire India had ever seen. His rule ended in 232 B.C.

Vocabulary Strategy

There are several words with suffixes in the bracketed paragraph. Circle each word in the paragraph that has a suffix.



✓ Reading Check

What kind of ruler was Chandragupta?

Key Term

Maurya Empire (MOWR yuh EM pyr) *n.* Indian empire founded by Chandragupta, including most of northern and central India

Asoka ruled for more than 35 years. His empire included much of India. At first, he was as warlike as his grandfather. In about 261 B.C., he won a fight in Kalinga. Thousands of people died there. He was very sad about the deaths. He gave up war. He freed his prisoners. Later, he converted to Buddhism. ✓

Asoka practiced and preached the Buddha's teachings. He thought of his people as his children. He cared about them. He had hospitals built throughout the land. He had wells dug along roads so that travelers and animals would have water.

Asoka wanted to share the Buddha's message with all people in his empire. He gave moral advice. Asoka practiced tolerance toward Hindus. He also sent Buddhist missionaries to spread Buddhism to Sri Lanka, China, Southeast Asia, Korea, and Japan.

After Asoka died, the Maurya Empire weakened and split apart. Conflicts among small states and foreign invaders occurred during this time. However, from A.D. 320 to 540, the Gupta Dynasty built an empire across northern India.

Under the Guptas, India enjoyed a rich culture. Indians developed advanced schools of philosophy. They also invented the decimal point and the system of numbers that we use today.

Review Questions

1. How did Chandragupta build the Maurya Empire?

2. What were some of Asoka's accomplishments?

Key Terms

convert (KUN VURT) *v.* to change one's beliefs
tolerance (TAHL UR UNS) *n.* freedom from prejudice

Target Reading Skill

What effects did the Battle of Kalinga have on Asoka's life?

Reading Check

What event caused Asoka to become a Buddhist?

Chapter 4 Assessment

1. India is separated from the rest of Asia by the Himalayas and
 - A. the Ganges River.
 - B. the Indus River.
 - C. the Hindu Kush mountain range.
 - D. the Great Wall of China.
2. As Aryans migrated into the northern Indus Valley, local people adopted their
 - A. children.
 - B. language and domesticated dogs.
 - C. language and beliefs.
 - D. beliefs and citadel style buildings.
3. Which of the following is NOT true of Hindu gods and goddesses?
 - A. They are all kindly and concerned with human matters.
 - B. They stand for different parts of the same spirit.
 - C. They can take many different forms.
 - D. They have their own families.
4. Buddhism teaches that all people should
 - A. pursue pleasure.
 - B. follow The Twelfefold Path.
 - C. be part of a caste system.
 - D. regard themselves as equal.
5. Which of the following happened under Chandragupta's rule?
 - A. Buddhism was carried throughout the empire.
 - B. Government officials promoted crafts and mining.
 - C. Hospitals were built throughout the empire.
 - D. Wells were dug along roads so that travelers and animals would not go thirsty.

Short Answer Question

What are some ways in which Hinduism and Buddhism differed from each other?
