

Chapter

4

David Cumming/CORBIS

Early India

The Hindu temple of Devi Jagadambika in Khajuraho, India ▼



NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Where & When?



2500 B.C.

c. 3000 B.C.
India's early civilization begins

1500 B.C.

c. 1500 B.C.
The Aryans arrive in India

500 B.C.

563 B.C.
The Buddha is born

A.D. 500

A.D. 320
The Gupta empire begins

CONTENTS

The Big Ideas

Section 1

India's First Civilizations

People's social status affects how they live. The earliest Indian civilization developed on the Indus River. Later, the Aryans arrived in northern India. A social system that determined how people lived evolved.

Section 2

Hinduism and Buddhism

Religion shapes how culture develops, just as culture shapes how religion develops. India's two main religions were Hinduism and Buddhism. These two religions affected every aspect of people's lives.

Section 3

India's First Empires

Civilizations are strengthened by a variety of advances. Early India had two great empires: the Maurya and the Gupta. Both empires made advances in the arts, sciences, and math.

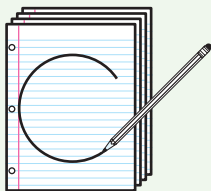


View the Chapter 4 video in the Glencoe Video Program.

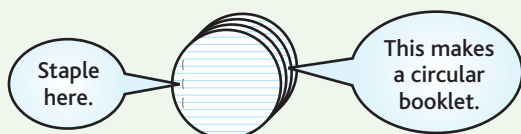
FOLDABLESTM Study Organizer

Identifying Make this foldable to help you identify and learn key terms.

Step 1 Stack four sheets of paper, one on top of the other. On the top sheet of paper, draw a large circle.



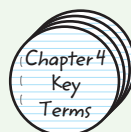
Step 3 Staple the paper circles together at one point around the edge.



Step 2 With the papers still stacked, cut out all four circles at the same time.



Step 4 Label the front circle as shown and take notes on the pages that open to the right.



Reading and Writing

As you read the chapter, write the terms from Building Your Vocabulary in your foldable. Write a definition for each term. Then turn your foldable over (upside down) to write a short sentence using each term.

Get Ready to Read

Questioning

**Reading Skill**

1 Learn It!

One way to make sure you understand what you are reading is to ask questions of the text. Learn to ask good questions by using question starters such as *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how*. Think deeply about the main ideas, and ask questions such as "What would have happened if . . . ?"

An easy way to practice asking questions during reading is to turn the headings into questions. A heading that reads "China Reunites" can be turned into "How did China reunite?" The author has done this for you in some places in this chapter. When you turn the heading into a question, you can expect that it will be answered in the passage. Read the following passage from Section 2.

Hinduism (HIHN • doo • IH • zuhm) is one of the oldest religions in the world, and today it is the third largest. The basic principles of what is known today as Hinduism were already formulated by 1500 B.C. They are to be found in the four Vedas. The Aryans believed in many deities who controlled the forces of nature and governed society. We know about Aryan religion from their sacred hymns and poetry, especially their epics, or long poems.

— from page 247

Reading Tip

Make studying like a game. Create questions and then read to find answers to your own questions.

Here are some questions you might ask about this paragraph:

- What is the oldest religion in the world?
- What is the largest religion in the world today?
- Who were the Aryans?

2 Practice It!

Read the following paragraph. Then answer these questions with a partner: **Who built India's first empire? What assistance was provided by Alexander the Great?**

India's first empire was founded by Chandragupta Maurya (CHUHN • druh • GUP • tuh MAH • oor • yuh). Chandragupta was an Indian prince who conquered a large area in the Ganges River valley soon after Alexander invaded western India. Alexander's invasion weakened many of India's kingdoms. After Alexander left, Chandragupta seized the opportunity to conquer and unite almost all of northern India.

—from page 260

Read to Write

Write a *What If?* paragraph based on what you read in this chapter. For example, *what if* Alexander had not left India, or *what if* Hinduism were influenced by other religions of the time? Your paragraph should answer your *What If?* questions.



Ganesha ▶

3 Apply It!

As you read the chapter, look for answers to section headings that are in the form of questions.

Section

1

India's First Civilizations

Guide to Reading



History Social Science Standards

WH.6.5 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of India.

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

In India, just as in Egypt and Mesopotamia, the first civilizations developed in fertile river valleys.

Focusing on the Main Ideas

- Climate and geography influenced the rise of India's first civilization. (page 239)
- For the Indian civilization, new ideas and technology were developed. (page 242)
- The Aryans created a caste system that separated Indians into groups. (page 243)

Locating Places

Himalaya (HIH•muh•LAY•uh)
Ganges River (GAN•JEEZ)
Indus River (IHN•duhs)
Deccan Plateau
 (DEH•kuhn pla•TOH)
Harappa (huh•RA•puh)
Mohenjo-Daro
 (moh•HEHN•joh DAHR•oh)

Meeting People

Aryans (AR•ee•uhnz)
Brahmins (BRAH•mihns)

Content Vocabulary

subcontinent
 (SUHB•KAHN•tuhn•uhnt)
monsoon (mahn•SOON)
Sanskrit (SAN•SKRIHT)
raja (RAH•juh)
caste (KAST)
guru (GUR•oo)

Academic Vocabulary

similar (SIH•muh•luhr)
individual (IHN•duh•VIHJ•wuhl)

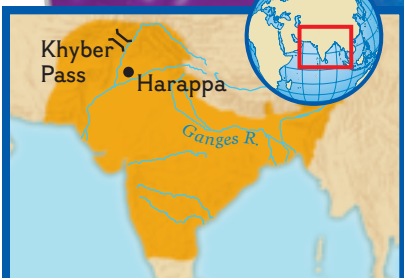
Reading Strategy

Organizing Information Complete a diagram like the one below showing how the Aryans changed India.

Major Ways Aryans Changed India



Where & When?



3000 B.C.

c. 3000 B.C.

India's early civilization begins

2000 B.C.

c. 1500 B.C.

Aryans arrive in India

1000 B.C.

c. 1000 B.C.

Aryans control northern India



WH6.5 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of India.

WH6.5.1 Locate and describe the major river system and discuss the physical setting that supported the rise of this civilization.

The Land of India

Main Idea Climate and geography influenced the rise of India's first civilization.

Reading Connection Do you have tornadoes or hurricanes where you live? Read to find out how geography and weather affected India's first civilization.

Look at the map below. India looks like a diamond hanging from the bottom of Asia. India is a **subcontinent** (SUHB•KAHN•tuhn•uhnt) because even though it is part of Asia, huge mountains separate it from the rest of Asia. These mountains are the **Himalaya** (HIH•muh•LAY•uh), the highest mountains in the world.

Today, six nations make up the Indian subcontinent: India; Pakistan in the northwest; Nepal; Bhutan; Bangladesh in the northeast; and Sri Lanka, an island to the southeast.

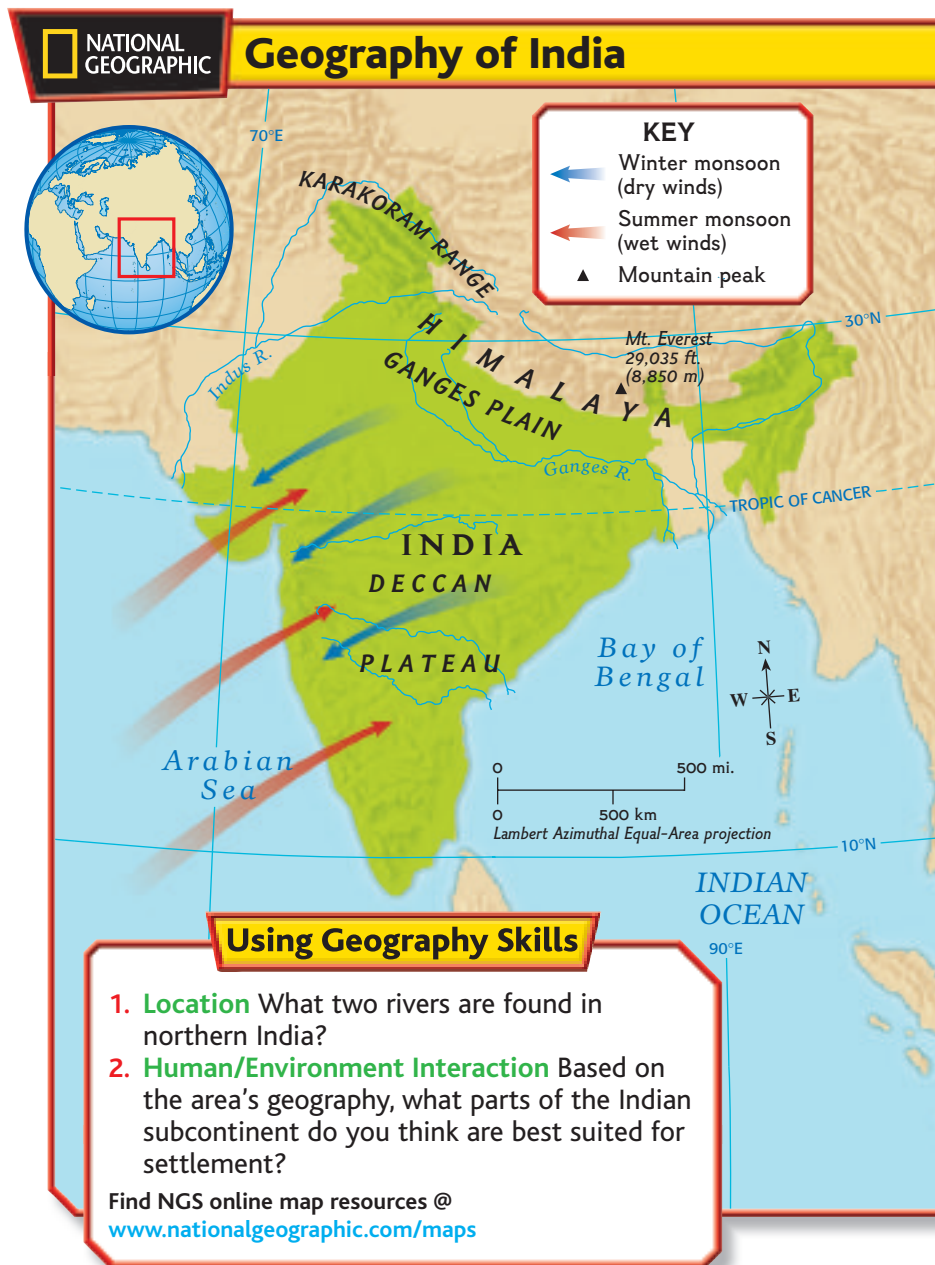
India has two very fertile river valleys. Both are fed by the mountains in the north. When the snow in the Himalaya melts, water flows into the **Ganges River** (GAN•JEEZ) and the **Indus River** (IHN•duhs). If the water is controlled, the land near these rivers can be used for farming.

The Ganges River runs south of the Himalaya and flows into the Indian Ocean. The Indus River empties into the Arabian Sea. South of the river valleys is the dry and hilly **Deccan Plateau** (DEH•kuhn pla•TOH). The east and west coasts of India are lush, fertile plains.

Monsoons (mahn•SOONZ) are an important part of the Indian climate. A monsoon is a

strong wind that blows one direction in winter and the opposite direction in summer. The winter monsoon brings the cold, dry air of the mountains. The summer monsoon brings warm, wet air from the Arabian Sea, which produces drenching rains.

When the monsoon rains begin, many farmers celebrate. If the rains come on time and the rainy season lasts long enough, the crop will be good. If the rains are delayed, a drought will occur. This extended period



without rain can be disastrous for farmers. Few crops will be harvested, and many people will starve.

India's Early Civilization In earlier chapters, you learned about civilizations that began in river valleys. Indian civilization also began in a river valley.

India's early civilization grew up near the Indus River. When the summer monsoon began, the river rose higher and higher. When the river flooded nearby land, it left behind silt, a rich, fertile soil.

Farmers used the rich soil to grow crops to feed their families. Because people had a plentiful supply of food, they could spend time doing other things, such as making tools or building houses. As people began to trade their extra food and goods with other people, their wealth grew. This allowed them to build larger and larger cities.

India's early civilization in the Indus River valley began about 3000 B.C. and lasted until 1500 B.C. This region is today part of Pakistan. More than a thousand villages and towns were part of this civilization, which stretched from the Himalaya to the Arabian Sea. We know about these people from studying the ruins of two major cities, **Harappa** (huh•RA•puh) and **Mohenjo-Daro** (moh•HEHN•joh DAHR•oh). Archaeologists call this civilization the Harappan or Indus civilization.

Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro were large cities for their time. The well-planned cities had as many as 35,000 people. A fortress was built on a brick platform to keep guard over the residents. There were wide main streets and smaller side streets. A wall surrounded each neighborhood, and narrow lanes separated the houses.

Early Indian Civilization

The ruins of Mohenjo-Daro (below) show a carefully planned city. The picture to the right shows a typical house in the city. **From what material were most of the houses in Mohenjo-Daro made?**



▲ Harappan priest-king

Necklace from Mohenjo-Daro ▶



Model of oxcart from Mohenjo-Daro ▶



Most houses had flat roofs and were constructed with mud bricks that were baked in ovens. Some houses were larger than others, but they all had a **similar** layout. There was a courtyard in the middle and smaller rooms around it.

These ancient city dwellers had some surprising conveniences. Wells supplied water, and residents even had indoor bathrooms. Wastewater flowed to drains under the streets, running through pipes to pits outside the city walls. Houses also had garbage chutes connected to a bin in the street. In addition, residents built large granaries to store food for the entire city.

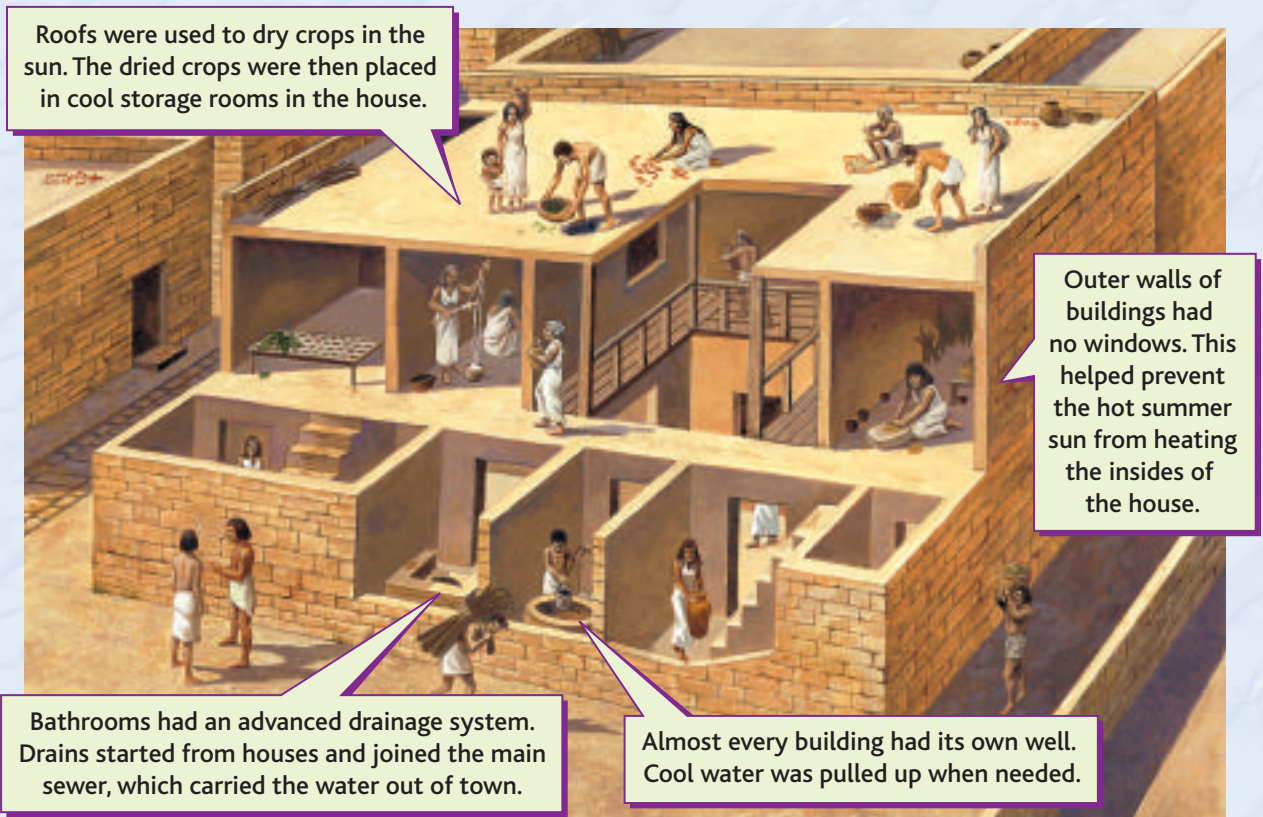
Harappan Society The Harappans used a special script to write on seals and stamps. However, historians have not agreed on how to decipher these markings. Because the Harappans did not leave other historical records, we do not know much about their

society or government. From the ruins, though, we can tell that the royal palace and the temple were both enclosed in the fortress. This reveals that religion and politics were closely connected.

Most Harappans were farmers. They grew rice, wheat, barley, peas, and cotton. City dwellers made copper and bronze tools, clay pottery, and cotton cloth, as well as jewelry from gold, shells, and ivory. Archaeologists have also found many toys among the ruins, such as small monkeys that could be made to climb up a string.

It is likely that the Harappans began trading with the Mesopotamians about 2300 B.C. Some Harappan sailors followed the coastline and crossed the Arabian Sea, and others traveled the difficult overland route through the mountains.

 **Reading Check Explain** How did India's geography help early civilizations?





WH6.5.2 Discuss the significance of the Aryan invasions.

WH6.5.7 Discuss important aesthetic and intellectual traditions (e.g., Sanskrit literature, including the *Bhagavad Gita*; medicine; metallurgy; and mathematics, including Hindu-Arabic numerals and the zero).

The Aryans

Main Idea For the Indian civilization, new ideas and technology were developed.

Reading Connection What would your life be like without cars or computers? Read to find out how new ideas and technology affected the Indians.

The Harappan civilization collapsed about 1500 B.C. Historians think that several earthquakes and floods damaged the cities. Then the Indus River changed its course, killing many people and forcing others to flee the area. In the years that followed, a group of people called the **Aryans** (AR•ee•uhn) began settling in the region. Soon a new civilization emerged.

Who Were the Aryans? The Aryans came from central Asia where they raised and herded animals. The Aryans were not a race or ethnic group. Some historians believe that the Aryans were part of a larger group they refer to as the Indo-Europeans. The Indo-Europeans all spoke similar languages. Some migrated south to India and Iran. Others went west to Europe.

Cattle were a prized possession among the Aryans because they provided meat, milk, and butter. Cattle were so important that they were even used as money. **Individual** wealth was measured by the number of cattle a person owned.

The Aryans were good warriors. They were expert horse riders and hunters. They

had metal-tipped spears and wooden chariots, which the Aryans sometimes used to invade nearby villages for food.

About 2000 B.C., the Aryans began leaving their home territory. They moved in waves, and some groups crossed through the mountain passes in the Himalaya. They entered the Indus River valley around 1500 B.C.

Around 1000 B.C., the Aryans had begun expanding across the Punjab and Ganges Plains and south into the Deccan Plateau. Their civilization spread to all of India except the southern tip.



Using Geography Skills

- Place** After crossing the mountains, what physical feature did the Aryans follow into India?
- Location** Into what area of southern India did the Aryans travel?



The Aryans Bring Change When the Aryans arrived in India, they no longer lived as nomads. They became farmers but continued to raise cattle. Eventually, the Aryans would declare that cattle were sacred and forbid them to be used as food.

Aryan technology improved farming in India. They invented an iron plow to help clear India's many jungles and constructed canals to irrigate. They slowly turned the Ganges River valley into good farmland.

India's varied climate supported many types of crops. In the north, farmers grew grains such as wheat, barley, and millet. Rice was grown in the river valleys. In the south, there was a mix of crops, including spices such as pepper, ginger, and cinnamon.

The Aryans also brought a new language to India. As nomads, they had no written language, but in India they developed a written language called **Sanskrit** (SAN•SKRIHT). Now the sacred songs, poems, and prayers that Aryans had known for many centuries could be written down.

The Aryans were organized into tribes. Each tribe was led by a **raja** (RAH•juh), or prince. The rajas ran their own small kingdoms, which often fought among themselves. Rajas fought over cattle and treasure and over women kidnapped from other states. These small rival kingdoms existed in India for about a thousand years, from 1500 B.C. to 400 B.C.

Reading Check Analyze How did the arrival of the Aryans change India?

History online

Web Activity Visit ca.hss.glencoe.com and click on *Chapter 4—Student Web Activity* to learn more about India.

Society in Ancient India

Main Idea The Aryans created a caste system that separated Indians into groups.

Reading Connection Have you ever wondered why some people seem to be treated differently than other people? As you read, try to find out why this idea was accepted in India.

One of the results of the Aryan arrival in India was the development of a caste system. A **caste** (KAST) is a social group that someone is born into and cannot leave.

HISTORY MAKERS

Development of Sanskrit c. 1500 B.C.

Sanskrit became the most important language for public affairs in much of ancient India. Hindi, the national language of India today, and other regional languages evolved out of Sanskrit. The earliest example of orally transmitted, ancient Sanskrit is the four Vedas. Sanskrit was in common usage until about A.D. 1100 and was used in some official communications until A.D. 1830.

Sanskrit Influences on English Words			
Sanskrit word	Definition	English word	Definition
Nava	Ship	Naval or navy	A fleet of ships
Dua	Two	Dual	Consisting of two parts
Deva	God	Divine	Divine God; relating to being a god

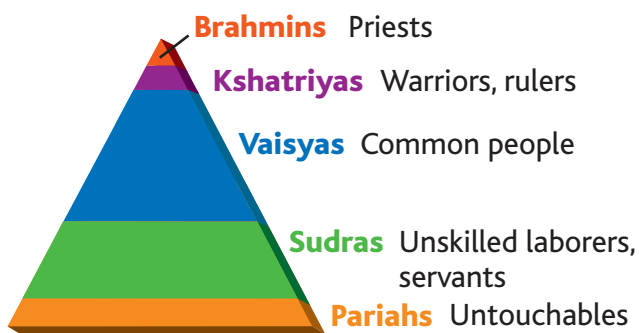


A Brahmin ►

Today, Untouchables refer to themselves as *Dalit*, which means "oppressed." **Why did the Aryans create the caste system?** ►



Early India's Social System



A caste dictates what job you will have, whom you can marry, and with whom you can socialize. In India, no one uses the word caste, which is the word Portuguese merchants used to describe India's social groups. Indians call these groups *jati*. Thousands of *jati* exist in India.

Why was this system created? No one is sure, but ideas about skin color were probably part of it. The Aryans were a light-skinned people. They thought they were better than the dark-skinned people they encountered in India. This idea was wrong, but the Aryans believed it.

Another reason the Aryans might have created the caste system was because the people they had encountered in India greatly outnumbered them. The caste system kept groups separate and set the rules

for everyone's behavior. This helped the Aryans maintain control.

Social Levels of the Caste System The thousands of different castes, or *jati*, in India were grouped together into four classes called *varnas*. The top two *varnas* were **Brahmins** (BRAH•mihns) and Kshatriyas (KSHA•tree•uhs). Brahmins were the priests—the only people who could perform religious ceremonies. The Kshatriyas were warriors who ran the government and army.

Next were the Vaisyas (VYSH•yuhs), or commoners. Vaisyas were usually farmers and merchants. Below the Vaisyas came the Sudras (SOO•druhs). Sudras were manual laborers and servants and had few rights. Most Indians belonged to the Sudra *varna*.

There was one group that did not belong to any *varna*. Its members were called Pariahs or Untouchables. They performed dirty work such as skinning animals or handling dead bodies.

Life for an Untouchable was very hard. Most Indians believed that being near an

Untouchable was harmful, so they forced them to live apart from others. When Untouchables traveled, they had to tap two sticks together so that everyone would hear them coming and have time to move away.

The Role of Men and Women In ancient India, the family was the center of life. Grandparents, parents, and children all lived together in an extended family. The oldest man in the family was in charge.

Men had many more rights than women. Typically, only sons could inherit property, and only men could go to school or become priests. Women's education was mostly done at home.

In families at the top of society, a boy had a **guru** (GUR•oo), or teacher, until he went to the city for more education. Young men from these families could marry only after finishing 12 years of schooling.

In India, parents arranged marriages for their children. Even today, parents arrange

90 percent of marriages in India. Boys and girls often married in their teens, but ideally not until after completing their education. Divorce was not allowed, but if a couple could not have children, the husband could marry a second wife.

One custom shows how the lives of Indian men were considered to be more important than the lives of Indian women. In India, people were cremated, or burned, when they died. When a man from a prominent family died, his wife was expected to leap into the flames. This practice was called suttee (suh•TEE). If the wife resisted and did not kill herself, it was a great shame. Everyone would avoid the woman from then on.

 **Reading Check Identify** What were the five major groups in Indian society?

Section 1 Review

History online

Study Central Need help understanding Aryan society? Visit ca.hss.glencoe.com and click on Study Central.

Reading Summary

Review the Main Ideas

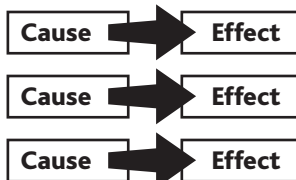
- India's first civilization, including the cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, developed in the fertile Indus River valley.
- The Aryans, a group of nomadic herders, arrived in northern India about 1500 B.C. They brought the iron plow and the Sanskrit language to India.
- India's caste system divided people into rigid social and economic classes. Ancient Indian society favored men over women.

What Did You Learn?

- Describe the cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro.
- Why are monsoons important to Indian farmers?

Critical Thinking

- Cause and Effect** Why did the Harappan civilization collapse? **CA 6RC2.7**
- Cause and Effect** Draw a diagram to show how the Aryans changed the lifestyle of the Indians. **CA 6RC2.4**



- The Big Ideas** In what ways did the caste system affect the people who lived in India? **CA 6RC2.3**

- Explain** How did the Aryans control people in India? **CA CS3.**

- Persuasive Writing** Write a description of Harappa or Mohenjo-Daro that could have been used to attract people to the city. **CA 6WA2.5**

- Reading Questioning** Create a list of questions about India's geography that will help you understand how it shaped Indian civilization. **CA HRI.**