

Section

3

India's First Empires

Guide to Reading

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

In the last section, you learned about Hinduism and Buddhism. Both religions developed when India was a land of small kingdoms. These rival kingdoms would be forced to unite, however, when foreigners invaded.

Focusing on the **Main Ideas**

- The Mauryan dynasty built India's first great empire. (page 260)
- The Gupta empire reunited much of northern India and became wealthy through trade. (page 264)
- The Mauryan and Gupta empires made important contributions in literature, mathematics, and science. (page 265)

Locating Places

Pataliputra
(PAH • tuh • lih • POO • truh)

Meeting People

Chandragupta Maurya (CHUHN • druh • GUP • tuh MAH • oor • yuh)
Asoka (uh • SOH • kuh)
Kalidasa (KAH • lih • DAH • suh)

Content Vocabulary

dynasty (DY • nuh • stee)
stupa (STOO • puh)
pilgrim (PIHL • gruhm)

Academic Vocabulary

dominate (DAH • muh • NAYT)
concept (KAHN • SEHPT)

Reading Strategy

Categorizing Information Create a chart, identifying the important dates, capital, and government of the Mauryan empire.

	Mauryan Empire
Dates	
Capital City	
Government	

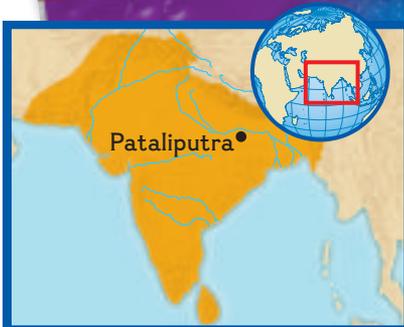


History Social Science Standards

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



Where & When?



350 B.C.

321 B.C.
Chandragupta Maurya founds Mauryan dynasty

A.D. 1

232 B.C.
Mauryan ruler Asoka dies

A.D. 350

A.D. 320
Gupta empire begins



The Mauryan Dynasty

Main Idea The Mauryan dynasty built India's first great empire.

Reading Connection Do you think political leaders should promote religion? How might religion help a king hold his country together? Read to learn why one Indian emperor decided to support Buddhism.

India's princes fought over their small kingdoms for centuries. Then two big invasions taught the Indians a lesson. First, the Persians invaded the Indus Valley in the

500s B.C. and made it part of the great Persian Empire. Then, Alexander the Great, a Greek general you will read about in Chapter 8, invaded India in 327 B.C.

Although Alexander's troops conquered northern India, he did not stay long. His soldiers were homesick and tired and threatened to rebel unless he turned back. The invasion did have one important effect, however. It led to the first great Indian empire.

Who Built India's First Empire? 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.

He founded the Mauryan dynasty in 321 B.C. A **dynasty** (DY • nuh • stee) is a series of rulers from the same family. To run his empire, Chandragupta set up a centralized government. In a centralized government, rulers run everything from a capital city. To maintain control from his capital of **Pataliputra** (PAH • tuh • lih • POO • truh), Chandragupta had to have a strong army. He also needed a good spy system to make sure no one was planning to rebel. Communications were also important, so he set up a postal system.



Using Geography Skills

- 1. Location** Where was the Mauryan capital of Pataliputra located?
- 2. Movement** What part of India did the Mauryans not conquer?



CHANDRAGUPTA MAURYA

Ruled 321–298 B.C.

Chandragupta Maurya may have come from humble birth, but he was a powerful ruler. Part of his great success was the result of knowing how to take advantage of a good opportunity. Alexander the Great's conquests in northwest India had left the region there, called Punjab, weak. The Indians were not happy about foreign rulers. Beginning in 317 B.C., Chandragupta began attacking the Greek overlords. He was successful and quickly organized a powerful army. Greek rulers left the region rather than prolong the fight.

Later, in 305 B.C., the Greek ruler Seleucus tried to retake Greek territory in India. Chandragupta raised a powerful army with more than 9,000 war elephants. It did not take Seleucus long to rethink engaging in battle. Instead, he formed an alliance with the Indian ruler. Instead of losing territory in war, Chandragupta forced Seleucus to give up lands through a treaty.

After conquering most of India, Chandragupta went about establishing the governmental system. He used local rulers and had a council of governors to help him. Because of the size of the empire, many supervisors were required on the local level. However, Chandragupta maintained authority over most matters. He also developed an extensive spy network to keep him notified of happenings in his capital city and within the army. Having conquered the region himself, he did not want someone else to come along and overthrow him.

Late in his life, Chandragupta is said to have converted to Jainism. Having spent much of his efforts in battle or ruling the country, he decided to turn to a simpler way of living. Despite this, his grandson, Asoka, also became a powerful military leader for a time.



▲ Chandragupta Maurya

Then and Now

Chandragupta used a powerful military to keep the peace. Do you think that a large military is necessary in today's world? Explain and provide examples to support your answer.



The Buddha ▶

▲ This stupa from central India is one of the best-preserved shrines from the 200s B.C. **What other type of structure did Indians create to honor the Buddha?**

Emperor Asoka's Reign Chandragupta founded the Mauryan dynasty, but many historians think the empire's greatest king was **Asoka** (uh•SOH•kuh). Asoka ruled from about 273 B.C. to 232 B.C.

Asoka was an unusual ruler. Like many kings, he was a strong military leader, but he came to hate bloodshed. After one bloody fight, he walked over the battlefield. When he saw the dead and wounded, he was horrified. He later made a vow to dedicate his life to peace and follow the teachings of the Buddha.

Asoka focused on the welfare of others. He created hospitals for people and for animals, too. He built new roads so it was easier to trade and put shelters and shade trees along the roads where travelers could rest.

Asoka sent many Buddhist teachers throughout India and the rest of Asia. They carried the religion to new believers. In India, laborers carved the Buddha's teachings on stone pillars for people to read. Asoka also

had laborers build thousands of **stupas** (STOO•puhs). Stupas are Buddhist shrines that have the shape of a dome or mound. Although he was a Buddhist, Asoka allowed his Hindu subjects to practice their religion.

With a good road system and a strong ruler, the empire prospered. India became the center of a huge trade network that stretched to the Mediterranean Sea.

The Fall of the Mauryan Empire Asoka died in 232 B.C. Unfortunately, the kings who followed him were not very good leaders, and the empire grew weak.

These kings made bad decisions that turned the people against them. They forced merchants to pay heavy taxes and seized peasants' crops for themselves. Things were so bad that in 183 B.C., the last Mauryan ruler was killed by one of his own generals.

✔ **Reading Check Summarize** Why was Asoka an important ruler?



EMPEROR ASOKA

Reigned c. 273–232 B.C.

In the early years of his reign, Asoka was a powerful military ruler. He used his armies to conquer and unify almost all of India under one leader. After watching a very bloody battle that left many people dead, however, he decided to stop fighting and follow Buddhism.

Emperor Asoka vowed to relieve suffering wherever he found it. He discovered that Buddhism reflected his new beliefs, so he became a Buddhist.

Emperor Asoka had a strong, energetic personality. He began preaching Buddhist ideas that people should be honest, truthful, and nonviolent. He preached that people should live with compassion toward all humans and animals. Asoka taught by example and tried to live his life with "little sin and many good deeds." He ordered his government officials to adopt those virtues for their own lives. He helped spread the concepts of Buddhism and

ahimsa, or nonviolence, throughout his empire and abroad. At the same time, Asoka practiced tolerance toward other religions.

Emperor Asoka regularly visited people in the rural areas of his kingdom and found practical ways to improve their lives. He founded hospitals and supplied medicine. He ordered wells to be dug and trees to be planted along the roads. He also ordered his officials to keep him informed of the needs of the people in his empire.

▼ Asoka



◀ Carving from top of pillar created under Asoka

Then and Now

Asoka combined religion and government. Do you think that the two should be combined or kept separate? Explain, providing examples to support your answer.



The Gupta Empire

Main Idea The Gupta empire reunited much of northern India and became wealthy through trade.

Reading Connection What types of products does the United States trade with other countries? Read to learn how the Gupta empire built its wealth on trade.

For 500 years, India had no strong ruler. Once again, small kingdoms fought with one another and made life miserable for their subjects. Then, in A.D. 320, one prince in the Ganges River valley grew more powerful than the others. Like an earlier ruler, his name was Chandragupta. This Chandragupta chose to rule from the old capital of the Mauryan empire—Pataliputra.

Chandragupta founded the Gupta dynasty. When he died, his son, Samudragupta, took over the throne and expanded the Gupta empire in northern India. Soon, the new kingdom **dominated** almost all of northern India. The Guptas ruled for about 200 years. Gupta rulers had one advantage over the earlier Mauryan kings. The empire was smaller and that made it easier to manage.

The Gupta empire grew wealthy from trade. Salt, cloth, and iron were common goods traded in India. Indian merchants also traded with China and with kingdoms in southeast Asia and the Mediterranean. The Gupta rulers controlled much of the trade and became very wealthy. They owned silver and gold mines and large estates.

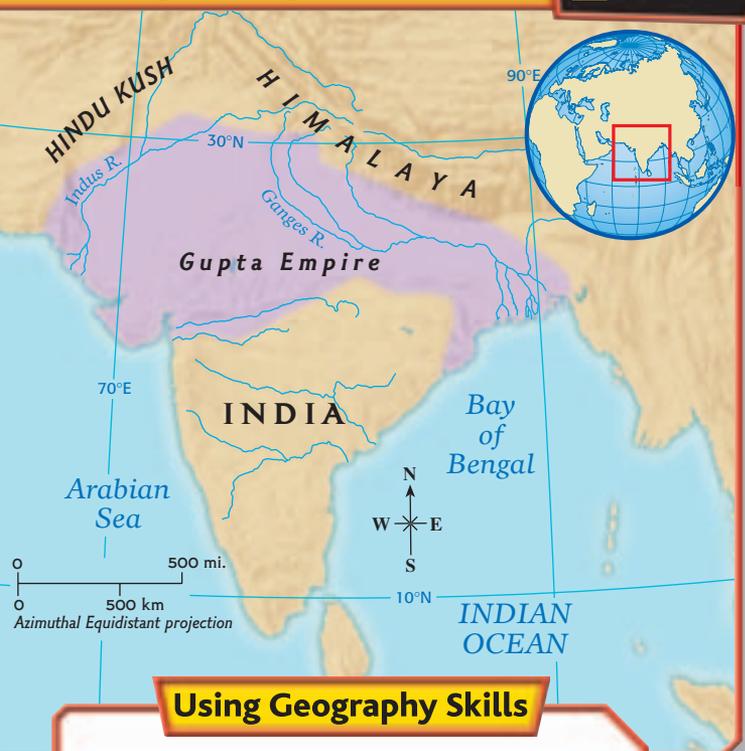
Trade created jobs for people in India and made many people and cities prosperous. Cities grew up along the trade routes, and many people traveled. Some people, called **pilgrims** (PIHL•gruhms), often used the trade routes to travel to a religious shrine or site. Just as cities today make money from tourism, Indian cities that were famous for their temples became wealthy from donations given by visiting pilgrims.

Asoka had converted to Buddhism, but the Guptas were Hindus like many of their subjects. They made Hinduism the official religion and gave money to support Hindu scholars and Hindu shrines. The shrines they built to Hindu deities inspired Hindus. They often had brightly painted sculptures of images from the Upanishads and other sacred writings.

During the Gupta empire, art and science also began to develop. Earlier, you learned that Greece had a golden age of art and learning. India also had a golden age of art and learning during the Gupta empire.

Reading Check Explain How did the Gupta empire become wealthy?

Gupta Empire c. A.D. 600



Using Geography Skills

- Region** What river valleys were found within the borders of the Gupta empire?
- Movement** How does the area of the Gupta empire compare to that of the Mauryan empire as shown on the map on page 260?





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).

Indian Literature and Science

Main Idea The Mauryan and Gupta empires made important contributions in literature, mathematics, and science.

Reading Connection What do you think modern movies, books, and television reveal about our values? As you read, try to see if Indian poetry tells a story about values during the Gupta period.

Artists, builders, scientists, and writers produced many works while the Mauryan and Gupta kings ruled.

India's Sacred Texts The Vedas of India are an ancient collection of sacred verses, hymns, prayers, and teachings. No one is certain how old they are because for a long time they were only recited, not written down. Once Aryan people came to India and developed Sanskrit, then the Vedas could be recorded.

Later, other kinds of literature were also written down in Sanskrit. Two sacred texts are very famous in India, and Indians today still love to read them. One is the *Mahabharata* (muh•HAH•BAH•ruh•tuh), and the other is the *Ramayana* (rah•mah•YAH•nah). Both of these sacred texts tell about brave warriors and their heroic deeds.

The *Mahabharata* is a long sacred text—about 88,000 verses. Historians think several different authors wrote it and that it was written down around 100 B.C. It describes a great war for control of an Indian kingdom about 1,000 years earlier.

The best-known section is the *Bhagavad Gita* (BAH•guh•VAHD GEE•tuh), or “Song of the Lord.” In it, the deity Krishna accompanies the prince Arjuna to a great battle. Krishna preaches a sermon to Arjuna. He tells him that it is noble to do one’s duty even when it is difficult and painful.

Primary Source

The Bhagavad Gita

In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Arjuna prepares to go into battle. He asks the deity Krishna questions about war and death. The following passage is part of Krishna’s answer.

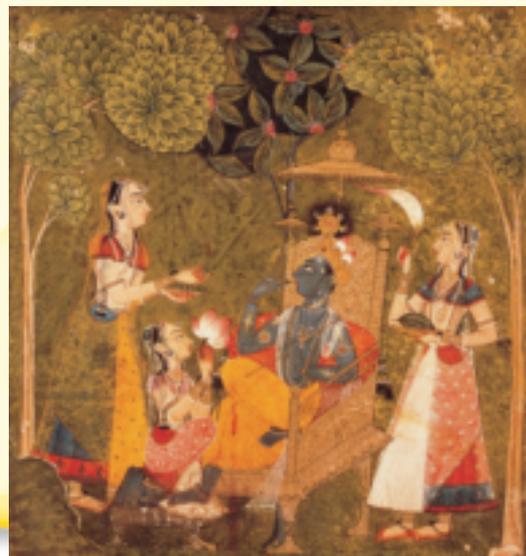
“Thou grievest where no grief should be! . . .

.
All, that doth live, lives always! . . .

.
The soul that with a strong and constant calm
Takes sorrow and takes joy indifferently,
Lives in the life undying!

—*Bhagavadgita*, Sir Edwin Arnold, trans.

▼ Painting titled *Krishna and Maidens*



DBQ Document-Based Question

What does Krishna believe about life after death?

HISTORY MAKERS

The Invention of Zero c. A.D. 500

Early humans understood the idea of nothing, but they did not have a symbol to represent that idea. During the Gupta dynasty, Indian mathematicians

invented the symbol "0" and connected it with the idea of nothing. The Indians' invention of zero had a great impact on the study of mathematics and science—then and now. Without the concept of zero, modern technology, such as computers, would not be possible.

▲ The middle dot is the first symbol for zero.

The teachings in the *Mahabharata*, especially the Bhagavad Gita, contain many of the central beliefs in Hinduism. They provide important religious and moral lessons. For this reason, they have had a great impact on Hinduism. Through the ages, many books have been written on it. It continues to influence Indian philosophy in modern times.

An important writer from the Gupta period is **Kalidasa** (KAH•lih•DAH•suh). He wrote plays, poems, love stories, and comedies. One popular poem, *The Cloud*

Messenger, contains beautiful descriptions of northern India's mountains, forests, and rivers.

Music, Art, and Architecture Music played an important part in the religious and social lives of people in India. Many of the early sacred texts like the Bhagavad Gita were probably sung in group settings. At annual festivals people danced, sang, and ate good food. They also used music in their plays. Musical instruments included tambourines, flutes, drums, and lutes.

Much of early Indian art was made of materials that have not survived. What exists today is mostly religious art made in stone. There are many sculptures of the Buddha, for example. These statues teach different Buddhist messages based on the figure's pose. Buddhist temples also used carvings of local scenes of the community.

Hindu architecture typically had carvings of people in different poses that represented different aspects of eternity. They also created images of deities with many hands to show that they had many abilities.

Indian Math and Science Indian mathematicians, especially in the Gupta period, made important contributions. Aryabhata (AHR•yuh•BUHT•uh) was the leading mathematician of the Gupta empire. He was one of the first scientists known to have used algebra. Indian mathematicians developed the idea of zero and a symbol to represent it. They also explained the **concept** of infinity—something without an end.

Gupta mathematicians created the symbols for the numbers 1 to 9 that we use today. These number symbols, or numerals, were adopted by Arab traders in the A.D. 700s. European traders borrowed them

from the Arabs. Use of these numbers spread through Europe in the A.D. 1200s, replacing Roman numerals. Today, this system of number symbols is known as the Hindu-Arabic numerical system.

Early Indians also invented mathematical algorithms. An algorithm (AHL•gohr•ih•thuhm) is a series of steps that solve a problem. If you follow the steps, you get the right answer. Computer programmers today often use algorithms to tell computers what to do.

Ancient Indians made important contributions in other scientific fields, especially astronomy. They followed and mapped movements of planets and stars. They understood that the Earth was round and revolved around the sun. They also seem to have understood gravity.

Particularly under the Gupta, Indian scientists made advances in metallurgy, or

metal technology. In addition to iron tools and weapons, they made steel tools. An iron pillar in Delhi dating from around A.D. 400 was so well made that it has hardly rusted. The Gupta also made sophisticated gold coins and metal mirrors.

In the field of medicine, Gupta doctors were advanced for their time. They could set broken bones and perform operations. They also invented many medical tools.

An Indian doctor named Shushruta (shoosh•ROO•tah) carried out an early form of plastic surgery. He worked to restore damaged noses. Indian doctors used herbs in treating illnesses. They also believed it was important to remove the causes of a disease and not just cure the disease itself.

 **Reading Check Summarize** In what areas of science did ancient Indians make advances?

Section 3 Review

History online
Study Central Need help understanding the advances of the Mauryan and Gupta empires? Visit ca.hss.glencoe.com and click on Study Central.

Reading Summary

Review the Main Ideas

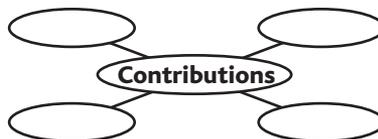
- The Mauryan empire, under leaders such as Chandragupta Maurya and Asoka, united most of India for over a hundred years.
- The Gupta dynasty reunited northern India and grew wealthy from trade.
- During the Mauryan and Gupta empires, the arts and sciences flourished in India. Several great sacred texts, including the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, came from this period.

What Did You Learn?

1. Describe trade during the Gupta empire.
2. What is the message of the Bhagavad Gita?
5. **The Big Ideas** Create a time line showing the advances in art, science, and math in India. Include information telling why these advances were important. **CA 6WS1.3**

Critical Thinking

3. **Organizing Information** Draw a diagram to show the contributions of Indian mathematicians during the Mauryan and Gupta empires. **CA 6RC2.3**



4. **Analyze** How did Asoka's actions as king show his Buddhist beliefs? **CA HI2.**
6. **Math Connection** Why would the development of a number system be important in a civilization that depended on trade? **CA HI2.**
7. **Analysis** Many historians say that Asoka was the greatest ruler of the Mauryan dynasty. Reread the section and decide if you agree. Write 3 to 4 paragraphs supporting your opinion. **CA HR5.**

Analyzing Primary Sources



WH6.5.5 Know the life and moral teachings of the Buddha and how Buddhism spread in India, Ceylon, and Central Asia. **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).

India's Early Religions

Ancient India's two main religions, Hinduism and Buddhism, used symbols to convey ideas. These symbols represented something deeper and more profound than the simple image. While the two religions shared this common form, they were quite different.

Read the passages on pages 268 and 269, and answer the questions that follow.



Siva ▶

Reader's Dictionary

kinsmen (KIHNZ•mehn): relatives
sandalwood (SAN•duhl•WOOD): a tree with a sweet odor

rosebay (ROHZ•BAY): an herb
jasmine (JAZ•muhn): a sweet-smelling flower

Krishna's Wise Words

In the Hindu religion, the deity Krishna is the teacher of the world. In this excerpt from the Hindu sacred text the *Bhagavad Gita*, Krishna explains some Hindu beliefs.

19. If any man thinks he slays, and if another thinks he is slain, neither knows the ways of truth. The Eternal in man cannot kill: the Eternal in man cannot die.
20. He is never born, and he never dies. He is in Eternity: he is for evermore. Never-born and eternal, beyond times gone or to come, he does not die when the body dies.
21. When a man knows him as never-born, everlasting, never-changing, beyond all destruction, how can that man kill a man, or cause another to kill?
22. As a man leaves an old garment and puts on one that is new, the Spirit leaves his mortal body and then puts on one that is new.
23. Weapons cannot hurt the Spirit and fire can never burn him. Untouched is he by drenching waters, untouched is he by parching winds.

—*The Bhagavad Gita*, Juan Mascaró, trans.

A Buddhist Story

The Buddha believed it was important for people to follow the Eightfold Path. In the following passages, the Buddha explains a few of his beliefs.

Treasure

A woman buries a treasure in a deep pit, thinking: “It will be useful in time of need, or if the king is displeased with me, or if I am robbed or fall into debt, or if food is scarce, or bad luck befalls me.”

But all this treasure may not profit the owner at all, for she may forget where she has hidden it, or goblins may steal it, or her enemies or even her **kinsmen** may take it when she is careless.

But by charity, goodness, restraint, and self-control man and woman alike can store up a well-hidden treasure—a treasure which cannot be given to others and which robbers cannot steal. A wise person should do good—that is the treasure which will not leave one.

Virtue

The perfume of **sandalwood**,
Rosebay or **jasmine**
Cannot travel against the wind,

But the fragrance of virtue
Travels even against the wind,
As far as the ends of the world.

Like garlands woven from a heap of flowers,
Fashion from your life as many good deeds.

—*Teachings of the Buddha*, edited by Jack Kornfield



The Buddha ▶

DBQ Document-Based Questions

Krishna's Wise Words

1. What does Krishna mean when he says that the Spirit leaves the mortal body and puts on another like a change of clothes?
2. Why is the Spirit not affected by weapons or the elements?

A Buddhist Story

3. How do you think the Buddha feels about money or other kinds of material wealth?
4. How can you build up a treasure that will never leave you?

Read to Write

5. Imagine that you have no knowledge of the Hindu and Buddhist religions. After reading the two primary sources above, how would you describe the religious ideas that are important in each religion? Write an essay that describes the similarities between the two religions based on these two passages.

CA HI.2 CA 6WA.2

Chapter 4 Assessment

Standard WH6.5

Review Content Vocabulary

1. Write a paragraph about the basic beliefs of Buddhism using the following words.

reincarnation karma dharma

Write the vocabulary word that best completes each sentence.

- a. stupa
 - b. caste
 - c. raja
 - d. pilgrim
 - e. theocracy
 - f. dynasty
2. Each Aryan tribe was led by a ____.
 3. In a ____, government is led by religious leaders.
 4. A ____ is a line of rulers who belong to the same family.
 5. A ____ travels to religious places.

Review the **Main Ideas**

Section 1 • India's First Civilizations

6. What new technology did the Aryans introduce to India?
7. What was the purpose of the caste system?

Section 2 • Hinduism and Buddhism

8. What is the link between the Aryans and Hinduism?
9. Describe the differences between Hinduism and Buddhism.

Section 3 • India's First Empires

10. Which dynasty built India's first great empire?
11. What poem expresses many of Hinduism's central beliefs?

Critical Thinking

12. **Compare** How do you think the Eightfold Path is similar to the Ten Commandments of Judaism? **CA 6RC2.2**
13. **Analyze** How does the *Mahabharata* reflect the ideals of ancient India? **CA 6RC2.7**

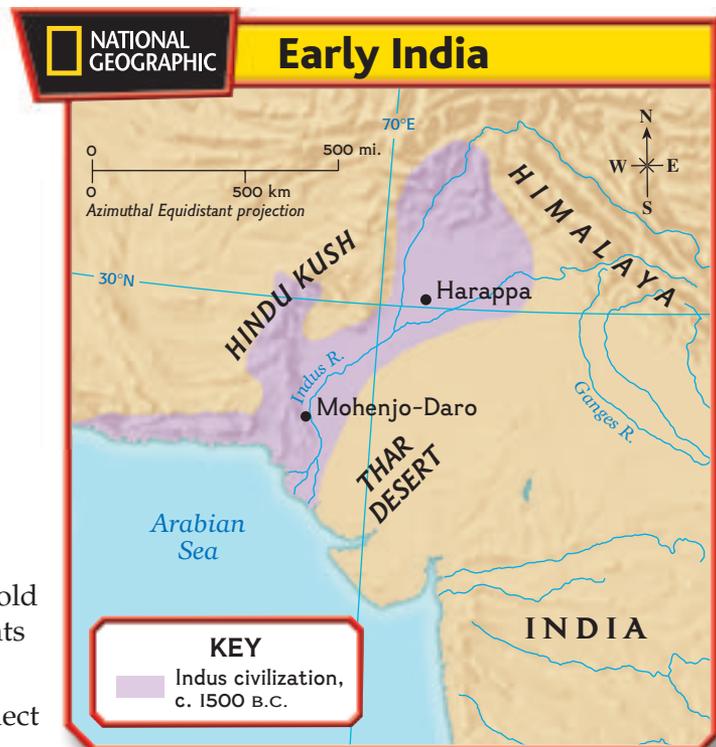
14. **Explain** How did the monsoons affect the development of India's first civilizations? **CA CS3.**

15. **Predict** What do you think might have happened if Asoka had approved of the slaughter on the battlefield during his wars of conquest? **CA HI2.**

Geography Skills

Study the map below and answer the following questions.

16. **Human/Environment Interaction** Why did Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro develop so near the Indus River? **CA CS3.**
17. **Place** The winter monsoon winds come from the northeast. What makes the winds from that monsoon cold? **CA CS3.**
18. **Location** Name at least two natural features that protected Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro from invaders. **CA CS3.**



Read to Write

19. **The Big Ideas** **Persuasive Writing** Literature written during the Mauryan empire played an important role in Indian beliefs. Write a paragraph in which you agree or disagree with this statement. **CA 6WA2.5**
20. **Using Your FOLDABLES** Use the information you recorded in your foldable to create a fill-in-the-blank quiz for a classmate. Write a paragraph about one of the sections, leaving blanks for your classmates to fill in. Also write an answer key. **CA 6RC2.4**

Using Academic Vocabulary

21. Using information from the chapter, write a sentence in the past tense for each of the words below.
- affect dominate
require

Building Citizenship

22. **Analyzing Information** Dharma is the Hindu idea of duty. Is it important for people in a society to do their duty? Make a list of duties Americans have today. Then write a paragraph explaining why those duties are important. **CA HI2.**
23. **Persuasive Writing** Under Emperor Asoka religion and government were combined. Write an essay in which you describe what you think the relationship between government and religion should be. **CA 6WA2.5**

Linking Past and Present

24. **Learning From Writing** After the Aryans arrived in India, they developed a written language called Sanskrit. With this form of writing, the sacred songs and poems of early India could be recorded. Search your local library for a book of modern poetry. Read some of the poems. How does the book's author introduce the poems? Write an essay describing what the poems tell us about today's society. **CA 6RC2.1**

Reviewing Skills

25. **Reading Skill** **Questioning** Select a part of the chapter that is interesting and write a series of questions about it that you would like answered. Conduct research and write down answers to the questions you posed. **CA HR1.**
26. **Analysis Skill** **Fact and Opinion** Reread the list of the Four Noble Truths on page 250. Do you agree with these Truths? Why or why not? Write an essay defending your position. **CA HR2.**



Standards Practice

Select the best answer for each of the following questions.

27. **When the Indus River flooded nearby land, it**
- A forced early settlers to become nomads.
 - B left behind rich, fertile soil perfect for farming.
 - C destroyed the first Indian civilization, Harappa.
 - D ruined crops and the people starved.
28. **According to Siddhartha, the only way to find the truth about the world was to**
- A give up all desires.
 - B live like a hermit.
 - C meditate for 49 days.
 - D fast until you are nearly starved.