SECTION 1

Step-by-Step Instruction

Objectives
As you teach this section, keep students focused on the following objectives to help them answer the Section Focus Question and master core content.

- Describe the Indian subcontinent’s geography.
- Understand the clues archaeology has provided about the rise and fall of the Indus civilization.
- Analyze the main characteristics of the Aryan civilization and the Vedic Age.
- Explain what ancient Indian epics reveal about Aryan life.

Prepare to Read

Build Background Knowledge

Have students locate present-day India and Pakistan on a world map or a globe. Ask them to describe any mountain ranges, bodies of water, or other interesting geographic features within the countries. Have them predict how these geographic features may have affected early civilizations in India and Pakistan.

Set a Purpose

- WITNESS HISTORY: Read the selection aloud or play the audio.
- chips: Witness History Audio CD, Forgotten Civilization Discovered
- Focus: Point out the Section Focus Question and write it on the board.

Tell students to refer to this question as they read. (Answer appears with Section 1 Assessment answers.)

Preview

- Have students preview the Section Objectives and the list of Terms, People, and Places.
- Reading Skill: Have students use the Reading Strategy: Compare and Contrast worksheet.

Vocabulary Builder

Use the information below and the following resources to teach the high-use word from this section.

High-Use Word: embodied, p. 73

- Teaching Resources, Unit 1, p. 46; Teaching Resources, Skills Handbook, p. 3

High-Use Word Definition and Sample Sentence

embodied, p. 73

v. to give a visible form to something abstract

The winning team embodied qualities such as creativity, hard work, and determination.

Focus Question

How have scholars learned about India’s first two civilizations, the Indus and the Aryan?

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Terms, People, and Places

- Subcontinent
- Plateau
- Mohenjo-Daro
- Rishikesh
- Harappa
- Brahman
- Rajah
- Mythic

Geography of the Indian Subcontinent

The Indian Valley is located in the region known as South Asia, or the Indian subcontinent. A subcontinent is a large landmass that juts out from a continent. The Indian subcontinent is a huge peninsula extending into the Indian Ocean. Today, it includes three of the world’s ten most populous countries—India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh—as well as the island nation of Sri Lanka (sree LAHNG kuh) and the mountain nations of Nepal and Bhutan.

Towering, snow-covered mountain ranges mark the northern border of the subcontinent, including the Hindu Kush and the Himalayas. These mountains limited contacts with other lands, leaving India’s distinct culture to develop on its own. However, the mountains were not a complete barrier. A river path through the Hindu Kush served as gateways to migrating and invading peoples for thousands of years.

Early Civilizations of India and Pakistan

In the early 1900s, archaeologists digging in the Indus River valley of Pakistan made some startling discoveries. They unearthed bricks, small clay seals, figurines, and other artifacts dissimilar in style to any they had seen before. The archaeologists soon realized they had uncovered a civilization that flourished 4,500 years earlier. It had been unknown to the world until then.

Focus Question

How have scholars learned about India’s first two civilizations, the Indus and the Aryan?
Natural Features Define Regions

The Indian subcontinent is divided into three major zones: the fertile Gangetic Plain in the north, the dry Deccan plateau, and the coastal plains on either side of the Deccan.

The Gangetic Plain lies just south of the Himalayas. This fertile region is watered by mighty rivers: the Indus, which gives India its name, the Ganges (GAN jeez), and the Brahmaputra (brah muh POO truh). These rivers and their tributaries carry melting snow from the mountains to the plains, making agriculture possible.

The Deccan is a plateau, or raised area of level land, that juts into the Indian Ocean. Much of it lacks the melting snows that feed the rivers of the north and provide water for irrigation. As a result, parts are arid, agriculturally unproductive, and sparsely populated.

The coastal plains are separated from the Deccan by low-lying mountain ranges, the Eastern and Western Ghats. Rivers and heavy seasonal rains provide water for farmers. Also, from very early times, people in this region used the seas for fishing and as highways for trade.

Monsoons Affect Climate

A defining feature of life in the Indian subcontinent is the monsoons, or seasonal winds that regularly blow from a certain direction for part of the year. In October, the winter monsoons blow from the northeast, bringing hot, dry air that withers crops. In mid-June, the summer monsoons blow from the southwest. They pick up moisture over the Indian Ocean and dump it on the land.

The monsoons have shaped Indian life. Each year, people welcome the rains that are desperately needed to water the crops. If the rains are late, famine may occur. However, if the rains are too heavy, rushing rivers will unleash deadly floods.

**Checkpoint**

How has geography affected where people live in the Indian subcontinent?

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How has geography affected where people live in the Indian subcontinent?
About 2600 B.C., the earliest South Asian civilization emerged in the Indus River valley, in present-day Pakistan. The Indus civilization flourished for about 700 years. However, only since the 1920s have its once-prosperous cities emerged beneath the archaeologists’ picks and shovels.

Archaeologists have investigated numerous Indus sites. Unfortunately, they have not yet turned up any names of kings or queens, tax records, literature, or accounts of famous victories. The written remains of Indus civilization are found only rarely, usually on small clay seals that do not include any long passages. Still, we do know that the Indus Valley civilization covered the largest area of any civilization until the rise of Persia more than 1,000 years later. We know, too, that its cities rivaled those of Sumer.

Well-Planned Cities Reveal Organized Government

Archaeologists’ investigations in recent years have led them to believe that at least five large cities may have been prominent during the course of the civilization’s history. A few hundred smaller sites have also been studied. Since their discovery in the 1920s, the Indus cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro (moh HEN joh DAH roh) have been considered possible twin capitals of the civilization or cities that ruled the area one after the other. Both were large, some three miles in circumference. Each was dominated by a massive hilltop structure whose exact purpose is unknown. Each city also included a huge warehouse used for storage.

A notable feature of Mohenjo-Daro and a few smaller sites is how carefully planned they were. Mohenjo-Daro was laid out in an organized pattern, with long, wide main streets and large rectangular blocks. Most of its houses were built with baked clay bricks of a standard size. At Harappa and other Indus sites, mud and unbaked bricks were also common building materials. In addition, Indus houses had complex plumbing systems, with baths, drains, and water chutes that led into sewers beneath the streets. Indus merchants used a uniform system of weights and measures. From such evidence, archaeologists have concluded that these Indus cities had a well-organized government.

Making a Living by Farming and Trading

As in other early civilizations, most people living in the Indus civilization were farmers. They grew a wide variety of crops, including wheat, barley, melons, and dates. They also may have been the first people to cultivate cotton and weave its fibers into cloth.

Some people were merchants and traders. Their ships carried cargoes of cotton cloth, grain, copper, pearls, and ivory combs to distant lands. By hugging the coast of the Arabian Sea and sailing up the Persian Gulf, Indus vessels reached the cities of Sumer. Scholars think that this contact with Sumer may have prompted the people of the Indus Valley to develop their own system of writing; however, the Indus writing system is unique, showing no relationship to Sumerian cuneiform.

Religious Beliefs Develop

From clues such as statues and images on small clay seals, archaeologists have speculated about the religious beliefs of Indus Valley people. Many think that, like other ancient peoples, the people of the Indus were polytheistic. A mother goddess, the source of creation, seems to have been widely honored, as perhaps was a leading male god. Indus people also seem to have viewed certain animals as sacred.
History Background

The Significance of Seals
When excavating the cities of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, archaeologists unearthed more than 2,000 small clay seals showing images and writing. The seals often bear images of animals, such as bulls. Other symbols with unknown meanings sometimes appear on seals, and they may have religious significance. Archaeologists believe that merchant families used their own seals to label their goods, and it is possible that the undeciphered writings found on some seals could be the merchants’ names. Because seals are so durable, large numbers of them are often found during archaeological digs. The study of art history has benefited from the discovery of these seals, but the seals have also enriched cultural history because they provide pictorial details about a civilization’s environment, clothing, and equipment.

Independent Practice
Ask students to study The Remnants of Indus Civilization in their text. Then have small groups use this information and their reading as the basis to create and submit plans for a museum exhibit on the cities of the Indus Valley civilization. Each group’s presentation should include maps, sketches of artifacts, diagrams of urban plans, and so on, all with brief descriptive captions.

Monitor Progress
Have each group present its museum exhibit plans to the class. Encourage questions and discussion. Ask students to describe aspects of Indus Valley civilization that they were unable to include in their exhibit.

Answers
- Cities laid out in an organized pattern, bricks of standard size, complex plumbing systems, and a uniform system of weights and measures
- Evidence of a high level of sophistication, such as writing, crafts, architecture, and evidence of trade and urban sanitation
Aryan Civilization Develops During the Vedic Age

Instruct

■ Introduce: Vocabulary Builder
Have students read the Vocabulary Builder term and definition. Explain that in polytheistic religions, each god or goddess may embody a specific quality. Ask students to name symbols (religious or otherwise) they know that embody certain qualities, and to describe what those qualities are.

■ Teach
Have students discuss the characteristics of the Aryan civilization. Ask: How do we know about Aryan civilization? (from the Vedas, a collection of prayers, hymns, and other religious teachings) How did the Aryan civilization differ from the Indus Valley civilization that came before it? (Responses should address differences in where and how the people lived, the structure of the societies, and religious beliefs.)

■ Quick Activity
Display Color Transparencies 13: Indo-European Migration to investigate the migration routes of Indo-European peoples. Point out that it was not just the ancestors of the Aryans who migrated, and that the migrations ended in other places besides India. Use the lesson suggested in the transparency book to guide additional discussion.

Color Transparencies, 13

Independent Practice
Have students fill in the Outline Map Ancient India.

Monitor Progress
■ Circulate to make sure students are filling in their Outline Maps accurately by correctly labeling major rivers, landforms, and regions.

■ Administer the Geography Quiz.

Answer

PRIMARY SOURCE

72 Ancient India and China

Aryan Civilization Develops During the Vedic Age

During the centuries between 2000 B.C. and 1500 B.C., waves of nomadic peoples migrated slowly with the herds of cattle and horses from Central Asia. They traveled through the mountain passes into northwestern India. Aryan civilization emerges in India. These nomadic tribes belonged to one of many groups of speakers of Indo-European languages who migrated across Europe and Asia. The nomads intermarried with local peoples to form a group who called themselves Aryans. Through acculturation, or the blending of two or more cultures, the Aryans combined the cultural traditions of the nomads with those of earlier Indian peoples. The early Aryans in India built no cities and left behind very little archaeological evidence. Most of what we know about them comes from the Vedas, a collection of hymns, chants, ritual instructions, and other religious teachings. Aryan priests memorized and recited the Vedas for a thousand years before they ever wrote down these sacred teachings. This period, from 1500 B.C. to 500 B.C., is often called the Vedic Age.

In the Vedas, the Aryan appear as warriors who fought in chariots with bows and arrows. They loved food, drink, music, chariot races, and dice games. These nomadic herders valued cattle, which provided them with food and clothing. Later, when they became settled farmers, families continued to measure their wealth in cows and bullocks.

From Nomadic Life to Farming
Gradually, the Aryans gave up their nomadic ways and settled in villages to cultivate crops and breed cattle. From local farmers, the Aryans learned to raise crops. They also took up other skilled crafts.

In time, the Aryans spread southeast to colonize the heavily forested Ganges basin. By about 800 B.C., they learned to make tools out of iron. Equipped with iron axes and weapons, ruthless pioneers carved farms and villages out of the rain forests of the northeast.

Aryan tribes were led by chiefs who were called rajahs. A rajah, who was often the most skilled warrior, had been elected to his position by an assembly of warriors. As he ruled, he administered the advice of a council of elders made up of the heads of families. Rajahs often fought with one another to control trade and territory across the Gangetic Plain. Some rajahs became powerful hereditary rulers, extending their influence over many villages.

Aryan Structure Society
From the Vedas, we learn that the Aryans divided their society into ranked groups based on occupation. The highest group was made up of the Brahmins, or priests. Next came the Rajahtrinas (kuchuhatyuhz), or warriors. The third group, the Vaisyas (VY yuhz), included herders, farmers, artisans, and merchants. The Aryans separated people who had little or no Aryan heritage into a fourth group, the Sudras (SOO druz). This group included farmers, servants, and other laborers. The lowest social group, the dalits (DA lihz), was considered outside of the caste system. These people did work that others wouldn’t, such as making leather from animal skins.

Geologist

A geologist is a scientist who studies the earth, including its composition, structure, physical properties, and history. There are many subdisciplines within geology, and geologists usually choose a specialty to concentrate on in graduate school. Some may study minerals and rocks, others volcanoes, and others mining, to name a few. Geologists who study geologic history, including fossils and the fossil record, can be very helpful to archaeologists as they excavate and study ancient civilizations, such as the Indus Valley civilization. Geologists can also help societies in other practical ways, such as in the search for coal, oil, and natural gas sources on Earth. Geologists who study earthquakes have been able to help engineers design buildings to withstand them.
Chapter 3 Section 1

Epic Literature Tells About Aryan Life

Instruct

- **Introduce** Have students read the first two sentences under this heading (on the next page). Then ask how did the Aryan world in 500 BC differ from early Aryan civilization? (Kingdoms and cities had developed.)

- **Teach** Have students discuss what epic literature showed about Aryan life. Ask what does the **Mahabharata** tell us about Aryan history? (There were many battles between rival Aryan tribes to gain control of the Ganges region.) How did the epics mix history, mythology, adventure, and religion? (Sample: The **Mahabharata** recounts battle histories and reflects religious beliefs such as immortality. The **Ramayana** contains tales of adventure, such as the rescue of Sita, and examples of mythology, such as tales of the monkey general Hanuman.)

Independent Practice

- **Link to Literature** To help students better understand the values reflected in the **Ramayana**, have them read the selection **Sita and Rama’s First Meeting** and answer the questions on the worksheet. **Teaching Resources, Unit 1, p. 48**

Monitor Progress

- **Ask students to summarize what the **Mahabharata** and the **Ramayana** tell about Aryan life.**
- **Check Reading and Note Taking Study Guide entries for student understanding.**

Answers

- Aryan society was divided into five groups: the **Brahmins**, or priests; the **Kshatriyas**, or warriors; the **Vaisyas**, or herders, farmers, artisans, and merchants; the **Sudras**, or servants and laborers; and **dalits**, who had to do work that others wouldn’t. Aryan had tribes that were led by rajahs, chiefs who were elected by an assembly of warriors, and they ruled with advice from a council of elders.

**Vocabulary Builder**

**embodied** - (em BAH deed) vt. gave a visible form to something abstract

**Communing With the Divine**

Below, a young woman in China practices yoga, which is popular around the world today. At left, a 1,500-year-old Indian sculpture shows a Hindu man seated in a traditional meditation pose. Meditation, too, is still practiced by many people. Why do you think these disciplines have appealed to people for so long?

**Differentiated Instruction Solutions for All Learners**

- **Advanced Readers** Ask students to research the practice of meditation and yoga today and make an oral presentation to the class. Students should consider the following questions: What traditional elements do the practice of meditation and yoga retain? How have these practices been modernized? What are some of the different types of meditation and yoga practiced today? Why are there many different types? Why are these practices so popular today?

- **Gifted and Talented** Ask students to research the practice of meditation and yoga today and make an oral presentation to the class. Students should consider the following questions: What traditional elements do the practice of meditation and yoga retain? How have these practices been modernized? What are some of the different types of meditation and yoga practiced today? Why are there many different types? Why are these practices so popular today?

Aryan Religious Beliefs Develop

The Aryans were polytheistic. They worshiped gods and goddesses who embodied natural forces such as sky, sun, storm, and fire. The chief Aryan deity was fierce Indra, the god of war. Indra’s weapon was the thunderbolt, which he used not only to destroy demons but also to announce the arrival of rain, so vital to Indian life. Other major gods included Virauna, the god of order and creation, and Agni, the god of fire and the messenger who communicated human wishes to the gods. The Aryans also honored animal deities, such as monkey and snake gods.

**Brähmins** offered sacrifice of food and drink to the gods. Through the correct rituals and prayers, the Aryans believed, they could call on the gods for health, wealth, and victory in war.

As the lives of the Aryans changed, so too did their beliefs. Some religious thinkers were moving toward the notion of **brahman**, a single spiritual power that existed beyond the many gods of the Vedas and that resided in all things. There was also a move toward mysticism: Mystics are people who seek direct communion with divine forces. Aryan mystics practiced meditation and yoga, spiritual and bodily disciplines designed to enhance the attempt to achieve direct contact with the divine. The religions that emerged in India after the Vedic Age were influenced by both mysticism and the notion of brahman.

**Checkpoint** How were Aryan society and government structured?

**Aryan society was divided into five groups:** the **Brahmins**, or priests; the **Kshatriyas**, or warriors; the **Vaisyas**, or herders, farmers, artisans, and merchants; the **Sudras**, or servants and laborers; and **dalits**, who had to do work that others wouldn’t. Aryan had tribes that were led by rajahs, chiefs who were elected by an assembly of warriors, and they ruled with advice from a council of elders.

**Caption** They appeal to basic human spiritual and physical needs.

**Advanced Readers**

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**Gifted and Talented**

Ask students to research the practice of meditation and yoga today and make an oral presentation to the class. Presentations should consider the following questions: What traditional elements do the practice of meditation and yoga retain? How have these practices been modernized? What are some of the different types of meditation and yoga practiced today? Why are there many different types? Why are these practices so popular today?

**Answers**

- Aryan society was divided into five groups: the **Brahmins**, or priests; the **Kshatriyas**, or warriors; the **Vaisyas**, or herders, farmers, artisans, and merchants; the **Sudras**, or servants and laborers; and **dalits**, who had to do work that others wouldn’t. Aryan had tribes that were led by rajahs, chiefs who were elected by an assembly of warriors, and they ruled with advice from a council of elders.

**Caption** They appeal to basic human spiritual and physical needs.
Epic Literature Tells About Aryan Life

By 500 B.C., Indian civilization consisted of many rival kingdoms. Archaeologists have learned that cities were growing rapidly at this time and that people left the countryside to practice skilled crafts. By this time, too, the written language, Sanskrit, that priests had used to write sacred texts began to flourish in literary usage.

The Aryan maintained a strong oral tradition as well. They continued to remember and recite ancient hymns, as well as two long epic poems, the Mahabharata (mah hah buh rah tuh) and the Ramayana (ruh mah yuh nuh). Like the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh, the Indian epics mix history, mythology, adventures, and religion.

Mahabharata Tells of Warfare and Religion

The Mahabharata is India’s greatest epic. Through its nearly 100,000 verses, we hear echoes of the battles that rival Aryan tribes fought to gain control of the Ganges region. Five royal brothers, the Pandavas, lose their kingdom to their cousins. After a great battle that lasts 18 days, the Pandavas regain their kingdom and restore peace to India. One episode, a lengthy poem known as the Bhagavad Gita (BUH uh vud GEE tuh), reflects important Indian religious beliefs about the immortality of the soul and the value of performing one’s duty. In the verses, the god Krishna instructs Prince Arjuna on the importance of duty over personal desires and ambitions.

Ramayana Tells Values of Behavior

The Ramayana is much shorter but equally memorable. It recounts the fantastic deeds of the hero Rama and his beautiful wife Sita. Early on, Sita is kidnapped by the demon-king Ravana. The rest of the story tells how Rama finally rescues Sita with the aid of the monkey general Hanuman.

Like the Aryan religion, these epics evolved over thousands of years. Priest-poets added new morals to the tales to teach different lessons. For example, they pointed to Rama as a model of virtue or as an ideal king. Likewise, Sita came to be honored as an ideal woman who remained loyal and obedient to her husband through many hardships.

What types of values are revealed in Indian epics?

For additional assessment, have students access Progress Monitoring Online at Web Code naa-0311.
The Mahabharata

An epic of the ancient Aryans, the Mahabharata has served as a major source of social and religious doctrine for India for many hundreds of years. Indian storytellers still recite segments of the 100,000 stanzas to entertain and instruct village audiences. This excerpt tells of the rewards the god Indra bestows upon a dutiful king, Vasu, who upholds the law of the gods.

Indra said:

May never on earth, O lord of this earth, the Law be confused! Protect it, for the upheld Law holds up all the world. Guard the this-worldly Law, forever on guard and attentive; if yoked to the Law, you shall win the blessed worlds of eternity. You standing on earth have become the dear friend of me standing in heaven—now possess a country that is the ruler of this world, abounding in cattle and holy of stable [climate], with wealth and rice aplenty, protected by the skies...

The country people are accustomed to the Law, quite content and upright. No lies are spoken there even in jest, let alone in earnest. Sons are devoted to their elders there; they do not divide off from their fathers. Cows are never yoked to the cart, and even lean cows yield plenty. All the classes abide by their own Law, in this land...

This large celestial crystaline chariot in the sky which it is the God’s privilege to enjoy, this airborne chariot will come to you as my gift. Among all mortals you alone shall stand upon a grand and sky-going chariot, and this garland Vaijayanti, woven of lotuses that never fade, which shall sustain you in battle forever, and fame this garland Indra’s Garland!}

Thinking Critically

1. Identify Central Issues: What seems to be the king’s most important function, and why do you think it is so significant?
2. Synthesize Information: What rewards does Indra say Vasu will receive for pleasing the gods?

History Background

The Mahabharata: This great Sanskrit epic of western India is probably based on fact—a war for control of the Ganges Valley around 1000 B.C. Twice the length of the western epics the Iliad and the Odyssey combined, the Mahabharata is the longest poem ever created. In addition to the main story line—the struggle of five brothers to regain their kingdom—the Mahabharata gathers many myths, episodes, prayers, narratives, and stories. The principal teaching of the Mahabharata’s stories is dharma, or devotion to one’s duty. One element that has become very popular in the West is the Bhagavad Gita, a classic Hindu text of devotion that is analogous to Christ’s Sermon on the Mount in that each work contains essential teachings of Hinduism and Christianity, respectively.