

CLASS VI (2020-21)

SOCIAL STUDIES (HISTORY)

CHAPTER-1 An Introduction to History

Pre history

The earliest period of human history for which we have no written record is known as Pre-history.

History

The study of that period of our past for which we have written records . Herodotus, a Greek Historian who lived in the fifth century, is referred to as “ The Father of History”. Historians use the term BC (Before Christ) and AD (Anno Domini) to classify the time of historical events..

Sources of History

1.Archaeological Sources: Archaeology means digging up the past. It is a systematic study of past cultures and the way people lived ,based

on objects and materials they left behind, such as tools, pottery, graves, buildings, etc. Archaeological Sources include monuments, inscriptions, artefacts, coins, etc.

- Monuments are the forts, palaces, temples and buildings built by the rulers in the past e.g. The Taj Mahal in Agra, the Red Fort in Delhi, etc.
- Inscriptions or the writings engraved on hard surfaces like pillars, cave walls, stones, walls of temples, copper or clay tablets often have names and dates of the kings.
- Artefacts: While digging at the excavation sites, the archaeologists sometimes find pottery, vessels, jewellery, paintings, etc. made or used by the people of ancient civilisations.
- Coins: Engravings on the coins give us important information about the kings, the

names and dates of dynasties, the extent of their kingdom, the language, life and economic condition of the kingdom.

2. Literacy Sources: History is based mainly on written records such as manuscripts, books, writing on the rocks, pillars, stones walls, clay tablets, etc. Literary sources can be divided into three categories:

- **Religious Literature:** includes the religious text of the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jains.
- **Secular Literature:** includes text of non-religious nature such as biographies, autobiographies, plays, poems, etc.
- **Accounts of Foreign Travellers** of their journey and the lands they visited are an important source of understanding the past.

Influence of Geography on History

The geography of India has greatly influenced and shaped the history of our country-

1.The Himalayas in the north, have protected our country from invaders from the north

2.The **Passes** in the mountains in the north-west, served as trade routes for traders from central Asia.

3.Since southern India is **surrounded by sea, on three sides**, the long coastline helped many rulers to establish trade relations with many countries.

4.India has many **rivers**, places near the rivers offer many opportunities and attract more people to settle on the banks of rivers.

5.**The Satpura and the Vindhya ranges** in the middle of India almost cut off the north India from the south India. Because of this, even powerful kingdoms of the north could not have a strong hold over southern kingdoms.

How did India get its name?

Two names we use for our country are **India** and **Bharat**. The name India is derived from the name of the **Indus**. The Iranians and the Greeks called it the **Hindos** or the **Indos**, and the land to the east of the river was called India. According to the Puranas, India was called **Bharatvarsh** after the **King Bharata Chakravarti**.

ASSESSMENT ZONE

A. Explain the following terms:

a. History: is the study of that period of our past for which we have written records.

b. Archaeology: it means digging up of the past . It is a systematic study of past cultures and the way people lived, based on objects and materials they left behind, such as tools, pottery, graves, buildings, etc.

c. Fossils: are the imprints of plants, humans and animals preserved in rocks.

d. Artefacts: While digging at the excavation sites, the archaeologists sometimes find pottery, vessels, stone tools, jewellery, coins, and sculpture, paintings, etc., made or used by the people of ancient civilisations.

e. Manuscript: means the hand written records.

f. Inscriptions: inscriptions are the writings engraved on hard surfaces like pillars, cave walls, stones, walls of temples and monuments, copper or clay tablets often have names and dates of the kings.

B. Fill in the blanks:

1. Historians get an idea about early men from their cave paintings.

2. The study of the remains of ancient civilisations is known as Archaeology.

3.The famous book written by Megasthenes is Indika.

4.The number of years between 200 BC and 200 AD are 400 years.

5.Manuscript is a literary source.

6.Edicts are royal commands issued by rulers.

7.AD stands for Anno Domini.

8.Al- Beruni, a Muslim scholar has given a detailed account of 11th century India in his book 'Tarikh Al- Hind'.

9.The Indian manuscript were written in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit.

10.Meghaduta is a famous chronicle written by Kalidasa.

11.India was called Bharatvarsha after the king Bharata Chakravarti.

C. Match the following:

1. Early period of human history of which there is no record	Prehistory
2. Handwritten records	Manuscript
3. Harshacharita, a biography of King Harshavardhana	Banabhatta
4. The study of coins	Numismatics
5. Arthashastra, a famous book of politics	Kautilya
6. Digging up of the past	Archaeology
7. Akbarnama by Abul Fazl, a record rule of Akbar	Chronicle
8. Period of past of which we have written record	History
9. The study of inscriptions	Epigraphy
10. Abhijnanashakutalam, a famous drama	Kalidasa
11. Forts, palaces, buildings built by the rulers in the past	Monuments

D. Name the following:

a. Two famous Chinese travellers in India Fa Hien and Hiuen Tsang.

b. Famous Greek traveller Megasthenes.

c. Caves in Madhya Pradesh famous for cave paintings Bhimbetka.

d. Two Hindu epics Ramayana and Mahabharata.

e. Two Buddhist literary sources Jatakas and Tripitakas.

E. Give reasons:

a. Why India has faced many invasions from the North West?

Ans. a The **Passes** in the mountains in the north-west, served as trade routes for traders from central Asia. Invaders and travellers also entered the country through these passes.

b. Why even powerful kingdoms of the north could not get a strong hold over southern kingdoms?

Ans. b The **Satpura and the Vindhya ranges** in the middle of India almost cut off the north India from the south India. Because of this, even powerful kingdoms of the north could not have a strong hold over southern

kingdoms.

c. Why instead of BC or AC we add circa with some dates?

Ans. c If the exact date of an event is not known and an approximate date close to it is given, then the term **circa** is added before the date.

F. Answer the following questions:

Ques. 1 List the various sources of history. Give one example of each.

Ans. 1 The various sources of history are-

1. Archaeological sources

- Monuments- eg:-The Taj Mahal in Agra.
- Inscriptions- eg:- Edicts of Ashoka inscribed on pillars.
- Artefacts-eg:-The presence of metal jewellery indicates the level of scientific advancement.

- Coins-eg:- coins of Samudragupta playing Veena indicate his love for music.

2. Literary Sources

- Religious literature-eg:- The Jain literature includes the Angas.
- Secular literature- eg:- biographies.
- Accounts of Foreign Travellers-eg:- Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador.

Ques. 2 How is the study of history important to us?

Ans. 2 The study of history is important to us because of the following reasons-

- History helps us to learn about our past.
- History helps us to know our own culture.
- It helps us to understand other cultures.
- History provides us the data about various happenings in the past.
- History tells us about the great kings.
- History helps us to understand change.

Ques. 3 How do the archaeological sources helps us in reconstructing history?

Ans. 3 The archaeologists excavate the remains and objects by digging up the archaeological sites. They look for clues, recover them, study them and try to reconstruct an image as to how the people of that civilisation must have lived and how they might have used these objects.

Ques. 4 Give three examples to show how coins tell us about the history of a place.

Ans. 4 (a) Information drawn from the coins of Gupta and Kushan rulers are our main sources on which the history of that period is based.

(b) Presence of gold and silver coins indicates that kingdom was rich and prosperous.

(c) Coins of Samudragupta playing Veena indicate his love for music.

Ques. 5 How are accounts of foreign travellers important for history?

Ans. 5 Travellers accounts are an important source of understanding the past.

- The earliest foreign accounts of India are by the Greeks. They are the only source of information on Alexander's invasion in 326BC.
- Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador, has given a vivid description of India, its people and society under the Mauryan Empire in his famous book **Indika**.

Home Work

Ques. 1 How is the history of India influenced by the Geography of the country?

Note: Students are requested to note down the above exercises in rough register and learn them.

