India and China
3000 B.C.–A.D. 500

Key Events
As you read, look for the key events in the history of the early civilizations of India and China.
• Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism profoundly affected the way of life of the early Indians and Chinese.
• The Silk Road provided a means for prosperous trade.
• The ruler of the Zhou overthrew the Shang dynasty and established the longest lasting dynasty in Chinese history.
• The Great Wall of China was built to keep out enemies.

The Impact Today
The events that occurred during this time period still impact our lives today.
• The well-organized government of the Harappan culture provided a public water supply, wastewater treatment, and trash disposal similar to what many cities provide today.
• The difficulties the ancient Chinese experienced in maintaining a strong central government are similar to those facing modern governments.
• The early Chinese created a written language and made lasting technological advances.

World History Video The Chapter 3 video, “Writings of India and China,” chronicles the emergence of civilization and cultural developments in India and China.
The Great Wall of China

HISTORY
Chapter Overview
Visit the Glencoe World History Web site at wh.glencoe.com and click on Chapter 3—Chapter Overview to preview chapter information.

Confucius

551 B.C.
Confucius is born

400 B.C.

A.D. 202
Han dynasty brings peace and prosperity to China

563 B.C.
Siddhartha Gautama, founder of Buddhism, is born

A.D. 202

A.D. 500

Han burial suit of jade

The Buddha
Two Great Leaders

In the sixth century B.C., two remarkable people appeared in the civilizations of India and China.

In India there lived a man named Siddhartha Gautama. He is better known as the Buddha. In his lifetime, he gained thousands of devoted followers. People would come to him seeking to know more about him, asking, “Are you a god?”

“No,” he answered.

“Are you an angel?”

“No.”

“Are you a saint?”

“No.”

“Then what are you?”

The Buddha replied, “I am awake.”

The religion of Buddhism began with a man who claimed that he had awakened and seen the world in a new way.

At about the same time the Buddha was teaching in India, a philosopher named Confucius traveled the length of China observing events and seeking employment as a political counselor. He had little success in his job search and instead became a teacher to hundreds of students who sought his wise advice. He taught by asking questions and expected much of his students. As he said, “Only one who bursts with eagerness do I instruct; only one who bubbles with excitement, do I enlighten.” Some disciples of Confucius recorded his sayings, which became guiding principles for Chinese civilization.

Why It Matters

Buddhism was the product of one man, Siddhartha Gautama, whose simple message of achieving wisdom created a new spiritual philosophy in India. In China, the philosophy of Confucius opened the door to a new idea of statecraft that would be put into widespread use. Both Buddhism and Confucianism continue to influence the ways of peoples in India, China, and around the world.

History and You Using the Internet and print sources, prepare a chart that compares the historical origins, central ideas, and the spread of Confucianism and Buddhism. Show how those ideas are put into practice today. Be sure to cite three reliable sources that support the data in your chart.
Arjuna was in despair as he prepared for battle. Many of his friends were in the opposing army. Some of them he had known since childhood. According to the Bhagavad Gita, India’s great religious poem, Arjuna appealed to the god Krishna:

“O Krishna, when I see my own people... eager for battle, my limbs shudder, my mouth is dry, my body shivers, and my hair stands on end. I can see no good in killing my own kinsmen.” Krishna replied, “Do not despair of your duty. If you do not fight this just battle you will fail in your own law and in your honor.”

Arjuna understood. He was a warrior, and he must do his duty without regard for the consequences.

—The Bhagavad Gita

Arjuna’s decision—to fight no matter what the personal cost—illustrates the importance of Hinduism’s concept of divine life. In fact, two religions—Hinduism and Buddhism—were crucial in shaping the civilization of India.

The Land of India

India is a land of diversity. Today, about 110 languages and more than 1,000 dialects (varieties of language) are spoken in India. Diversity is also apparent in India’s geography. The Indian subcontinent, shaped like a triangle hanging from the southern ridge of Asia, is composed of a number of core regions,
including mountain ranges, river valleys, a dry interior plateau, and fertile coastal plains.

In the far north are the **Himalaya**, the highest mountains in the world. Directly south of the Himalaya is the rich valley of the **Ganges** (GAN•JEEZ) River, one of the chief regions of Indian culture. To the west is the Indus River valley, a relatively dry plateau that forms the backbone of the modern state of Pakistan. In ancient times, the Indus Valley enjoyed a more moderate climate and served as the cradle of Indian civilization.

South of India’s two major river valleys—the valleys of the Ganges and the Indus—lies the **Deccan**, a plateau that extends from the Ganges Valley to the southern tip of India. The interior of the plateau is relatively hilly and dry. India’s eastern and western coasts are lush plains. These plains have historically been among the most densely populated regions of India.

The primary feature of India’s climate is the **monsoon**, a seasonal wind pattern in southern Asia. One monsoon blows warm, moist air from the southwest during the summer and another blows cold, dry air from the northeast during the winter. The southwest monsoon brings heavy rains, and throughout history Indian farmers have depended on these rains to grow their crops. If the rains come early or late, or too much or too little rain falls, crops are destroyed and thousands starve.

**Reading Check**  
**Describing** How does the monsoon affect Indian farmers?

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**India’s First Civilization**

As in Mesopotamia and Egypt, early civilization in India and China emerged in river valleys. Between 3000 B.C. and 1500 B.C., the valleys of the Indus River supported a flourishing civilization that extended hundreds of miles from the Himalaya to the coast of the Arabian Sea. Archaeologists have found the remains of more than a thousand
Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro

At its height, Harappa had 35,000 inhabitants, and Mohenjo-Daro perhaps 35,000 to 40,000. Both cities were carefully planned. The main, broad streets ran in a north-south direction and were crossed by smaller east-west roads. Both cities were divided into large walled neighborhoods, with narrow lanes separating the rows of houses. Houses varied in size, some reaching as high as three stories, but all followed the same plan of a square courtyard surrounded by rooms.

Most buildings were constructed of mud bricks baked in ovens and were square, forming a grid pattern. Public wells provided a regular supply of water for all the inhabitants. Bathrooms featured an advanced drainage system. Wastewater flowed out to drains located under the streets and then was carried to sewage pits beyond the city walls. A system of chutes took household trash from houses to street-level garbage bins. Only a well-organized government could have maintained such carefully structured cities.

**Rulers and the Economy**

As in Egypt and Mesopotamia, Harappan rulers based their power on a belief in divine assistance. Religion and political power were closely linked. The fact that the royal palace and the holy temple were combined in the citadel, or fortress, at Harappa shows this close connection. Priests at court probably prayed to a god or goddess of fertility to guarantee the annual harvest.

Like those in Mesopotamia and along the Nile, the Harappan economy was based primarily on farming. The Indus River flooded every year, providing rich soil for the growing of wheat, barley, and peas, the chief crops.

This Indus valley civilization also carried on extensive trade with city-states in Mesopotamia. Textiles and food were imported from the Sumerian city-states in exchange for copper, lumber, precious stones, cotton, and various types of luxury goods. Much of this trade was carried by ship via the Persian Gulf, although some undoubtedly went by land.

**Explaining**

What evidence leads us to conclude that there must have been well-organized governments in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro?
Eventually, floods, an earthquake, changes in climate, and even a change in the course of the Indus River weakened the once-flourishing civilization in the Indus River valley. Invaders—the Aryans—brought its final end.

Who Were the Aryans?

Around 1500 B.C., a group of Indo-European nomadic peoples began to move out of their original homeland in central Asia. Known as the Aryans, they moved south across the Hindu Kush mountain range into the plains of northern India. They conquered the Harappans and created a new Indian society based on Aryan culture and institutions.

Like other nomadic peoples, the Aryans excelled at the art of war. Between 1500 and 1000 B.C., the Aryan peoples gradually advanced eastward from the Indus Valley, across the fertile plain of the Ganges. Later they moved southward into the Deccan Plateau. Eventually they extended their control throughout most of India.

Aryan Ways of Life

Organized in groups, the Aryans were a pastoral people with a strong warrior tradition. After settling in India, the Aryans gave up the pastoral life for regular farming. The introduction of iron—probably from Southwest Asia, where it had first been used by the Hittites (see Chapter 2)—played a role in this change. The creation of the iron plow, along with the use of irrigation, made it possible for the Aryans and their subject peoples to clear the dense jungle growth along the Ganges River and turn it into a rich farming area.

The basic crops in the north during this period were wheat, barley, and millet. Rice was common in the fertile river valleys. In the south, grain and vegetables were grown, supplemented by cotton and spices such as pepper, ginger, and cinnamon.

Like most nomadic peoples, the Aryans had no written language. The Aryans developed their first writing system, known as Sanskrit, by 1000 B.C. This enabled them to write down the legends and religious chants and rituals that had previously been passed down orally from generation to generation.

The early writings of the Aryans reveal that between 1500 and 400 B.C., India was a world of warring kingdoms and shifting alliances. Various Aryan leaders, known as rajas (princes), carved out small states and fought other Aryan chieftains. They
Aryans in India and Nazi Germany

The Aryans were a group of Indo-European nomadic peoples who began moving into the plains of northern India about 1500 B.C. In the nineteenth century A.D., linguists (people who study languages) borrowed the term *Aryan* to identify people speaking a common set of languages known as Indo-European.

In the twentieth century, Adolf Hitler and the Nazis used the term *Aryan* in a new way. They identified the Aryans as a race that included the Greeks and Romans of the past and the Germans and Scandinavians of the present. They viewed the Germans as the true descendants and chief leaders of the Aryans.

Hitler believed that the Aryan race, to which all “true Germans” belonged, was the highest race of humanity. According to Hitler, “All the human culture, all the results of art, science, and technology that we see before us today, are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan.” The Aryans, according to Hitler, were once rulers of the earth. The German people were destined to regain the former ruling position of the Aryan race and ensure Aryan world domination.

To Hitler, however, one major obstacle stood in the way of Aryan destiny—the Jews. Hitler thought the Jews were poisoners of the blood of the Aryan race. To eliminate them became Hitler’s special “higher mission.” The Holocaust, the deliberate attempt to kill all of Europe’s Jews during World War II, was a result of Hitler’s twisted ideas of the Aryans as a race.

In our time, the existence of such organizations as the Aryan Nations shows the continuing influence of Hitler’s ideas. The Aryan Nations is but one of a number of neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups in the United States and Europe that continue to follow Hitler’s racist ideas.

Society in Ancient India

The conquest by the Aryans had a lasting impact on Indian society. Out of the clash between conqueror and conquered came a set of social institutions and class divisions that has lasted in India, with only minor changes, to the present day.

**The Caste System**

The caste system of ancient India was a set of rigid social categories that determined not only a person’s occupation and economic potential, but also his or her position in society. It was based in part on skin color.

The Aryan invaders were primarily a light-skinned people. They looked down on their subjects, who were dark skinned, despite the fact that the civilization of the dark-skinned inhabitants of the Indus Valley was much more advanced than the Aryan civilization.

There were five major divisions of Indian classes (known as castes in English) in ancient times. At the top were two castes that were clearly the ruling elites in Aryan society: the priests and the warriors.

The priestly class, whose members were known as the Brahmans, was usually considered to be at the top of the social scale. They were in charge of the religious ceremonies that were so important in Indian society.

The second caste was the Kshatriyas (KSHA•tree•uhz), or warriors. As Aryan society changed, the Kshatriyas often found new forms of employment. At the same time, families from other castes were sometimes accepted into the ranks of the warriors.

The third-ranked caste in Indian society was the Vaisyas (VYSH•yuhz), or commoners. Most Vaisyas were merchants who engaged in commerce, or farmers caring for the land.

The evaluation question has been completed as follows:

**Reading Check**

**Evaluating** How did the introduction of iron impact the Aryan way of life?

**Connections Past To Present**

**Aryans in India and Nazi Germany**

**Adolf Hitler**

**Neo-Nazi rally**

**Comparing Past and Present**

Identify ways that Hitler misapplied the term *Aryan*. How does this point out the importance of studying history?
Below these three castes were the **Sudras** (SOO•druhz), who made up the great bulk of the Indian population. The Sudras were not Aryans, and the term probably originally referred to the conquered dark-skinned natives. Most Sudras were peasants and people who worked at other forms of manual labor. They had only limited rights in society.

At the lowest level of Indian society—and in fact not even considered a real part of the caste system—were the **Untouchables**. The Untouchables were given menial, degrading tasks that other Indians would not accept, such as collecting trash and handling dead bodies. The Untouchables probably made up about 5 percent of the total population of ancient India.

The life of the Untouchables was extremely difficult. They were not considered human, and their very presence was considered harmful to members of the other classes. No Indian would touch or eat food handled by an Untouchable. Untouchables lived in separate areas. When they traveled outside their quarters, they were required to tap two sticks together so that others could hear them coming and avoid them.

**The Family in Ancient India**  Life in ancient India centered on the family, the most basic unit in society. The ideal was an extended family, with three generations—grandparents, parents, and children—living under the same roof. The family was basically patriarchal, because in most of India the oldest male held legal authority over the entire family unit.

The superiority of males in ancient Indian society was evident in a number of ways. Only males could inherit property, except in a few cases where there were no sons. Women were not allowed to serve as priests, and generally, only males were educated. In high-class families, young men began their education with a **guru**, or teacher, then went on to higher studies in one of the major cities.

Upper-class young men were not supposed to marry until they completed 12 years of study. Divorce was usually not allowed. Husbands, however, could take a second wife if the first was unable to bear children.

Children were an important product of marriage, primarily because they were expected to take care of their parents as they grew older. Marriage, arranged by the parents, was common for young girls, probably because daughters were seen as an economic drain on their parents.

Perhaps the most vivid symbol of women’s dominance by men was the ritual of suttee (suh•TEE). In ancient India, the dead were placed on heaps of material called pyres, which were then set on fire. Suttee required a wife to throw herself on her dead husband’s flaming funeral pyre. A Greek visitor reported that “he had heard from some persons of wives burning themselves along with their deceased husbands and doing so gladly; and that those women who refused to burn themselves were held in disgrace.”

**Reading Check**  **Summarizing**  What are the names of the castes in Indian society?
**Hinduism**

Hinduism had its origins in the religious beliefs of the Aryan peoples who settled in India after 1500 B.C. Evidence about the religious beliefs of the Aryan peoples comes from the Vedas, collections of hymns and religious ceremonies that were passed down orally through the centuries by Aryan priests and then eventually written down.

Early Hindus believed in the existence of a single force in the universe, a form of ultimate reality or God, called Brahman. It was the duty of the individual self—called the atman—to seek to know this ultimate reality. By doing so, the self would merge with Brahman after death.

By the sixth century B.C., the idea of reincarnation had appeared in Hinduism. **Reincarnation** is the belief that the individual soul is reborn in a different form after death. As one of the Vedas says, “Worn-out garments are shed by the body/Worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller [the soul].” After a number of existences in the earthly world, the soul reaches its final goal in a union with Brahman. According to Hinduism, all living beings seek to achieve this goal.

Important to this process is the idea of **karma**, the force generated by a person’s actions that determines how the person will be reborn in the next life. According to this idea, what people do in their current lives determines what they will be in their next lives. In the same way, a person’s current status is not simply an accident. It is a result of the person’s actions in a past existence.

The concept of karma is ruled by the dharmas, or the divine law. The law requires all people to do their duty. However, people’s duties vary, depending on their status in society. More is expected of those high on the social scale, such as the Brahmans, than of the lower castes.

The system of reincarnation provided a religious basis for the rigid class divisions in Indian society. It justified the privileges of those on the higher end of the scale. After all, they would not have these privileges if they were not deserving. At the same time, the concept of reincarnation gave hope to those lower on the ladder of life. The poor, for example, could hope that if they behaved properly in this life, they would improve their condition in the next.

How does one achieve oneness with God? Hindus developed the practice of **yoga**, a method of training designed to lead to such union. (In fact, yoga means “union.”) The final goal of yoga was to leave behind the cycle of earthly life and achieve union with Brahman, seen as a kind of dreamless sleep. As one Hindu writing states, “When all the senses are stilled, when the mind is at rest, that, say the wise, is the highest state.”

Most ordinary Indians, however, could not easily relate to this ideal and needed a more concrete form of heavenly salvation. It was probably for this reason that the Hindu religion came to have a number of human-like gods and goddesses.

There are hundreds of deities in the Hindu religion, including three chief ones: Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver, and Siva (SH•vuh) the Destroyer. Many Hindus regard the multitude of gods as simply different expressions of the one ultimate reality, Brahman. However, the various gods and goddesses give ordinary Indians a way to express their religious feelings. Through devotion at a Hindu temple, they seek not only salvation but also a means of gaining the ordinary things they need in life. Today, Hinduism is still the religion of the vast majority of the Indian people.
### Buddhism

In the sixth century B.C., a new doctrine, called **Buddhism**, appeared in northern India and soon became a rival of Hinduism. The founder of Buddhism was **Siddhartha Gautama** (sih DAHR tuh GOW tuh muh), known as the Buddha, or “Enlightened One.”

#### The Story of the Buddha

Siddhartha Gautama came from a small kingdom in the foothills of the Himalaya (in what is today southern Nepal). Born around 563 B.C., he was the son of a ruling family. The young and very handsome Siddhartha was raised in the lap of luxury and lived a sheltered life. At the age of 16, he married a neighboring princess and began to raise a family.

Siddhartha appeared to have everything: wealth, a good appearance, a model wife, a child, and a throne that he would someday inherit. In his late twenties, however, Siddhartha became aware of the pain of illness, the sorrow of death, and the effects of old age on ordinary people. He exclaimed, “Would that sickness, age, and death might be forever bound!” He decided to spend his life seeking the cure for human suffering. He gave up his royal clothes, shaved his head, abandoned his family, and set off to find the true meaning of life.

At first he followed the example of the **ascetics**, people who practiced self-denial to achieve an understanding of ultimate reality. The abuse of his physical body, however, only led to a close brush with death from not eating. He abandoned asceticism and turned instead to an intense period of meditation. (In Hinduism, this was a way to find oneness with God.) One evening, while sitting in meditation under a tree, Siddhartha reached enlightenment as to the meaning of life. He spent the rest of his life preaching what he had discovered. His teachings became the basic principles of Buddhism.

#### The Basic Principles of Buddhism

Siddhartha denied the reality of the material world. The physical surroundings of humans, he believed, were simply illusions. The pain, poverty, and sorrow that afflict human beings are caused by their attachment to things of this world. Once people let go of their worldly cares, pain and sorrow can be forgotten. Then comes **bodhi**, or wisdom. (The word **bodhi** is the root of the word **Buddhism** and of Siddhartha’s usual name—Gautama Buddha.) Achieving wisdom is a key step to achieving **nirvana**, or ultimate reality—the end of the self and a reunion with the Great World Soul.

Siddhartha preached this message in a sermon to his followers in the Deer Park at Sarnath (outside India’s holy city of Banaras). It is a simple message based on the Four Noble Truths:

1. Ordinary life is full of suffering.
2. This suffering is caused by our desire to satisfy ourselves.
3. The way to end suffering is to end desire for selfish goals and to see others as extensions of ourselves.

4. The way to end desire is to follow the Middle Path.

This Middle Path is also known as the Eightfold Path, because it consists of eight steps:

1. Right view We need to know the Four Noble Truths.
2. Right intention We need to decide what we really want.
3. Right speech We must seek to speak truth and to speak well of others.
4. Right action The Buddha gave five precepts: “Do not kill. Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not be unchaste. Do not take drugs or drink alcohol.”
5. Right livelihood We must do work that uplifts our being.
6. Right effort The Buddha said, “Those who follow the Way might well follow the example of an ox that arches through the deep mud carrying a heavy load. He is tired, but his steady, forward-looking gaze will not relax until he comes out of the mud.”
7. Right mindfulness We must keep our minds in control of our senses: “All we are is the result of what we have thought.”
8. Right concentration We must meditate to see the world in a new way.

Siddhartha accepted the idea of reincarnation, but he rejected the Hindu division of human beings into rigidly defined castes based on previous reincarnations. He taught instead that all human beings could reach nirvana as a result of their behavior in this life. This made Buddhism appealing to the downtrodden peoples at the lower end of the social scale.

Buddhism also differed from Hinduism in its simplicity. Siddhartha rejected the multitude of gods that had become identified with Hinduism. He forbade his followers to worship either his person or his image after his death. For that reason, many Buddhists see Buddhism as a philosophy rather than as a religion.

Siddhartha Gautama died in 480 B.C. at the age of 80 in what is today Nepal. After his death, his followers traveled throughout India, spreading his message. Temples sprang up throughout the countryside. Buddhist monasteries were also established to promote his teaching and provide housing and training for monks dedicated to the simple life and the pursuit of wisdom.

**Reading Check**

How does Buddhism differ from Hinduism?

**Contrasting** How does Buddhism differ from Hinduism?
Finding Exact Location on a Map

Why Learn This Skill?
A friend tells you that she lives at the northwest corner of Vine Street and Oak Avenue. By giving you the names of two streets that cross, she has pinpointed her exact location. We use a similar system to identify the exact location of any place on Earth.

Learning the Skill
Over many centuries, cartographers developed a grid system of imaginary lines—lines of latitude and lines of longitude. Lines of latitude run east and west around the earth. Because they always remain the same distance from each other, they are also called parallels. The parallel lines of latitude measure distance north and south of the Equator, which is located at 0 degrees latitude. Each line of latitude is one degree, or 69 miles (110 km), from the next. There are 90 latitude lines between the Equator and each pole. For example, New York City lies about 41 degrees north of the Equator, or 41°N.

Lines of longitude, or meridians, run north and south from pole to pole. Unlike lines of latitude, lines of longitude are not always the same distance from each other. Lines of longitude are farthest apart at the Equator, and they intersect at the North and South Poles. The prime meridian marks 0 degrees longitude and runs through Greenwich, England, and western Africa. Longitude lines are measured by their distance east and west of the prime meridian up to 180 degrees. New York City, for example, lies about 74 degrees west of the prime meridian, or 74°W.

With this system we can pinpoint the “grid address” of any place on Earth. For example, if we wanted to find a grid address for New York City, we would first find the line of latitude closest to it. Then, by following this line, we would locate the nearest line of longitude to cross it. The point where the lines intersect is the grid address. New York City’s grid address would be about 41°N, 74°W.

Practicing the Skill
Use the map above to answer the following questions.
1. What is Babylon’s approximate grid address?
2. What city sits at approximately 30°N, 31°E?
3. What is Nineveh’s approximate grid address?
4. What is Tyre’s approximate grid address?

Applying the Skill
Create a travel itinerary for a tour of the ruins of ancient Egypt, Greece, or Southwest Asia. Choose at least 10 sites to visit. Draw a map of each region, including grid lines. On the map, identify each site’s approximate grid location.

Glencoe’s Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2, provides instruction and practice in key social studies skills.
Voices from the Past

One of the decrees of Asoka read:

“By order of the Beloved of the Gods [Asoka] to the officers in charge: Let us win the affection of all people. All people are my children, and as I wish all welfare and happiness in this world and the rest for my own children, so do I wish it for all men... For that purpose many officials are employed among the people to instruct them in righteousness and to explain it to them.”

— Asoka, Maurya, B. G. Gokhale, 1966

Asoka is remembered as one of India’s greatest rulers, one who used Buddhist ideas as a guide to good governing.

The Mauryan Dynasty

Both Hinduism and Buddhism developed out of the Aryan culture in India. As we have seen, however, the Aryans brought little political unity to India. Between 1500 and 400 B.C., warring kingdoms and shifting alliances prevented a lasting peace. After 400 B.C., India faced new threats from the west. First came Persia, which extended its empire into western India. Then came the Greeks and Macedonians.

The Macedonian king Alexander the Great had heard of the riches of India. After conquering Persia, he swept into northwestern India in 327 B.C., but his soldiers refused to continue fighting. They departed almost as quickly as they had come. His conquests in western India, however, gave rise to the first dynasty to control much of India.
The Founding of the Mauryan Dynasty  The new Indian state was founded by Chandragupta Maurya (CHUN•druh•GUP•tuh MAH•oor•yuh), who ruled from 324 to 301 B.C. He drove out the foreign forces and established the capital of his new Mauryan Empire in northern India at Pataliputra (modern Patna) in the Ganges Valley.

This first Indian Empire was highly centralized. According to the Arthasastra, a work on politics written by a Mauryan court official, “It is power and power alone which, only when exercised by the king with impartiality, over his son or his enemy, maintains both this world and the next.”

The king divided his empire into provinces which were ruled by governors appointed by him. He had a large army and a secret police that followed his orders. According to Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to the Mauryan court, Chandragupta Maurya was always afraid of assassination. All food was tasted in his presence, and he made a practice of never sleeping two nights in a row in the same bed in his large palace.

The Reign of Asoka The Mauryan Empire flourished during the reign of Asoka (uh•SHOH•kuh), the grandson of Chandragupta Maurya. Asoka is generally considered to be the greatest ruler in the history of India. After his conversion to Buddhism, Asoka used Buddhist ideals to guide his rule. He set up hospitals for both people and animals. He ordered that trees and shelters be placed along the road to provide shade and rest for weary travelers.

Asoka was more than a kind ruler, however. His kingdom prospered as India’s role in regional trade began to expand. India became a major crossroads in a vast commercial network that extended from the rim of the Pacific to Southwest Asia and the Mediterranean Sea.

After Asoka’s death in 232 B.C., the Mauryan Empire began to decline. In 183 B.C., the last Mauryan ruler was killed by one of his military commanders. India then fell back into disunity.

Reading Check Evaluating Why was Asoka considered a great ruler?

Geography Skills Chandragupta Maurya formed the first Indian empire, the Mauryan Empire, unifying India and bringing it a greater role in the region.

1. Applying Geography Skills Look at the map closely. Pose and answer a question about the geographic distributions and patterns shown on the map.
The Kushan Kingdom and the Silk Road

After the collapse of the Mauryan Empire, a number of new kingdoms arose along the edges of India in Bactria, known today as Afghanistan. In the first century A.D., nomadic warriors seized power and established the new Kushan kingdom. For the next two centuries, the Kushans spread over northern India as far as the central Ganges Valley. In the rest of India, other kingdoms fought for control.

The Kushans prospered from the trade that passed through their land on its way between the Mediterranean Sea and the countries bordering the Pacific Ocean. Most of that trade was between the Roman Empire and China. It was shipped along the route known as the Silk Road, so called because silk was China’s most valuable product. One section of the Silk Road passed through the mountains northwest of India.

The Silk Road, which had arisen sometime between 200 B.C. and A.D. 100, reached from the city of Changan in China across central Asia to Mesopotamia. It covered a distance of about 4,000 miles (6,436 km). On it, people and camels transported goods through mountains and deserts, winding up at Antioch in Syria, a port city on the Mediterranean Sea.
His successor, his son Samudragupta, expanded the empire into surrounding areas. A court official wrote of Samudragupta that he “was skillful in waging hundreds of battles with only the strength of his arms. The beauty of his charming body was enhanced by the number of wounds, caused by the blows of battle axes, arrows, spears, pikes, barbed darts, swords, lances, javelins, iron arrows, and many other weapons.”

Eventually the new kingdom of the Guptas became the dominant political force throughout northern India. It also established loose control over central India, thus becoming the greatest state in India since the Mauryan Empire.

Under a series of efficient monarchs—especially Chandragupta II, who reigned from 375 to 415—the Gupta Empire created a new age of Indian civilization. The greatness of its culture was reported by a Chinese traveler, Faxian (FAY•SYEN), who spent several years there in the fifth century. Faxian, a Buddhist monk, admired the Gupta rulers, their tolerance of Buddhism, and the prosperity of the country.

The Gupta Empire actively engaged in trade with China, Southeast Asia, and the Mediterranean and also encouraged domestic trade in cloth, salt, and iron. Cities famous for their temples as well as for their prosperity rose along the main trade routes
throughout India. Much of their wealth came from religious trade as pilgrims (people who travel to religious places) from across India and as far away as China came to visit the major religious centers.

Much of the trade in the Gupta Empire was managed by the Gupta rulers, who owned silver and gold mines and vast lands. They earned large profits from their dealings. They lived in luxury, awakening to the sound of music and spending much time in dining with followers and guests. It was said that “the king and his companions drank wine out of ruby cups while lutes were strummed.”

The good fortunes of the Guptas did not last. Beginning in the late fifth century A.D., invasions by nomadic Huns from the northwest gradually reduced the power of the empire. A military commander briefly revived the empire in the middle of the seventh century, but after his death, the empire fell completely apart. North India would not be reunited for hundreds of years.

Examining What characteristics made the Gupta Empire great?

The World of Indian Culture

Few cultures in the world are as rich and varied as that of India. The country produced great works in almost all cultural fields, including literature, architecture, and science.

Literature: A Lasting Legacy The earliest known Indian literature comes from the Aryan tradition in the form of the Vedas, which were primarily religious. Originally, these were passed down orally from generation to generation. After the Aryan conquest of India and the development of a writing system, the Vedas were written down in Sanskrit.

With the development of writing, India’s great historical epics, the Mahabharata (muh•HAH•BAH•ruh•tuh) and the Ramayana, were also put into written form. Both of these epics told of the legendary deeds of great warriors.

The Mahabharata consists of over ninety thousand stanzas (a series of lines of poetry), making it the longest poem in any written language. Probably written about 100 B.C., it describes a war between cousins in Aryan society for control of the kingdom about 1000 B.C. The most famous section of the book, called the Bhagavad Gita (BAH•guh•VAHD GEE•tuh), is a sermon by the god Krishna on the eve of a major battle. In this sermon, he sets forth one of the key points of Indian society: In taking action, one must not worry about success or failure. One should only be aware of the moral rightness of the act itself.

The Ramayana, written at about the same time, is much shorter than the Mahabharata. It is an account of the fictional ruler Rama. As a result of a palace plot, he is banished from the kingdom and forced to live as a hermit in the forest. Later, he fights the demon-king of Ceylon, who had kidnapped his beloved wife Sita.

Like the Mahabharata (and most works of the ancient world), the Ramayana is strongly imbued with religious and moral lessons. Rama projects the supreme duty of wifely loyalty to her husband. To this day, the Mahabharata and Ramayana continue to inspire the people of India.

One of ancient India’s most famous authors was Kalidasa, who lived during the Gupta dynasty. Kali-dasa’s poem, The Cloud Messenger, remains one of the most popular of Sanskrit poems. It tells of an exiled male earth spirit who misses his wife and shares his grief with a passing cloud. He laments:

\[\begin{align*}
&\text{I see your body in the sinuous creeper, your gaze in the startled eyes of deer,} \\
&\text{your cheek in the moon, your hair in the plumage of peacocks,} \\
&\text{and in the tiny ripples of the river I see your sidelong glances,} \\
&\text{but alas, my dearest, nowhere do I find your whole likeness!}
\end{align*}\]

Reading Check

Examine What characteristics made the Gupta Empire great?
Architecture
Some of the earliest examples of Indian architecture stem from the time of Asoka, when Buddhism became the religion of the state. The desire to spread the ideas of Gautama Buddha inspired the great architecture of the Mauryan dynasty and the period that followed.

There were three main types of structures, all serving religious purposes: the pillar, the stupa, and the rock chamber. The pillar is the most famous. During Asoka’s reign, many stone pillars were erected alongside roads to mark sites related to events in Buddha’s life. These polished sandstone pillars weighed up to 50 tons (45.4 t) each and rose as high as 50 feet (15 m). Each was topped with a carving. The carvings usually depicted lions uttering the Buddha’s message.

A stupa was originally meant to house a relic of the Buddha, such as a lock of his hair. These structures were built in the form of burial mounds. Eventually, the stupa became a place for devotion and the most familiar form of Buddhist architecture. Each stupa rose to considerable heights and was surmounted by a spire. According to legend, Asoka ordered the construction of eighty-four thousand stupas throughout India.

The final development in early Indian architecture was the rock chamber, carved out of rock cliffs. This structure was developed by Asoka to provide a series of rooms to house monks and to serve as a hall for religious ceremonies.

Science
Ancient Indians possessed an impressive amount of scientific knowledge, particularly in astronomy. They charted the movements of the heavenly bodies and recognized that Earth was a sphere that rotated on its axis and revolved around the sun.

Their most important contribution was in the field of mathematics. Aryabhata, the most famous mathematician of the Gupta Empire, was one of the first scientists known to have used algebra. Indian mathematicians also introduced the concept of zero and used a symbol (0) for it.

After Arabs conquered parts of India in the eighth century A.D., Arab scholars adopted the Indian system. In turn, European traders borrowed it from the Arabs, and it spread through Europe in the 1200s. Today it is called the Indian-Arabic numerical system.

Reading Check
Evaluating How have Indian advances in science and mathematics impacted our world today?
The Good Life in Gupta India

In the fifth century A.D., a Chinese Buddhist monk, Faxian, made a visit to the India of the Guptas in search of documents recording the teachings of the Buddha. He provides a description of life in part of India under the Guptas.

"Beyond the deserts are the territories of western India. The kings of these territories are all firm believers in the law of [the] Buddha. They remove their caps of state when they make offerings to the priests. The members of the royal household and the chief ministers personally direct the food giving. When the distribution of food is over, they spread a carpet on the ground and sit down before it. They dare not sit on couches in the presence of the priests.

Southward from this is the so-called middle-country. The climate of this country is warm and equable, without frost or snow. The people are very well off, without poll-tax or official restrictions. Only those who farm the royal lands return a portion of profit of the land [to the king]. If they desire to go, they go; if they like to stop, they stop. The kings govern without corporal punishment; criminals are fined, according to circumstances, lightly or heavily. Even in cases of repeated rebellion they only cut off the right hand. The king’s personal attendants, who guard him on the right and left, have fixed salaries. Throughout the country the people kill no living thing nor drink wine, nor do they eat garlic or onions, with the exception of the [U]ntouchables only. The [U]ntouchables are named ‘evil men’ and dwell apart from others; if they enter a town or market, they sound a piece of wood in order to separate themselves; then men, knowing who they are, avoid coming in contact with them. In this country they do not keep swine nor fowls, and do not deal in cattle; they have no shambles or wine-shops in their market-places. The [U]ntouchables only hunt and sell flesh."

—Faxian, Describing Life under the Guptas

Analyzing Primary Sources

1. What was good about life in Gupta India?
2. Is there anything that the monk viewed as positive about life in Gupta India that you view as negative? Explain your answer.
3. Analyze your high school community (students, teachers, administrators, and other staff). Is there a caste system? What is the high school good life? Is school life equally good for everyone? Develop your ideas.

The caves of Ajanta, India, are famous for the paintings and sculptures of the Buddha found inside.

Gupta painting of Prince Gautama, from Ajanta caves shown above
### Early Chinese Civilizations

#### Guide to Reading

**Main Ideas**
- Chinese dynasties followed a rise and fall pattern.
- Three schools of thought about the nature of humans and the universe emerged.

**Key Terms**
aristocracy, Mandate of Heaven, Dao, filial piety, Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism

**Preview of Events**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1800 B.C.</th>
<th>1400 B.C.</th>
<th>1000 B.C.</th>
<th>600 B.C.</th>
<th>200 B.C.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1750 B.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1045 B.C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>403 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shang dynasty begins</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zhou dynasty begins</td>
<td></td>
<td>“Period of Warring States” begins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**People to Identify**
Confucius, Laozi

**Places to Locate**
Huang He, Mongolia, Chang Jiang, Yellow Sea

**Preview Questions**
1. Why was family important in ancient China?
2. What are the major ideas associated with Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism?

**Reading Strategy**
Classifying Information: As you read this section, create a diagram like the one below that illustrates the dynastic cycle.

- A new dynasty establishes power with a Mandate of Heaven
- 
- 

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### Voices from the Past

Confucius wanted to promote good government in China. Confucius said:

> **If the people be led by laws, and uniformity be imposed on them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but will have no sense of shame. If they be led by virtue, and uniformity be provided for them by the rules of propriety, they will have the sense of shame, and will become good.** He also said, “Let the ruler be filial and kind to all people; then they will be faithful to him. Let him advance the good and teach the incompetent; then they will eagerly seek to be virtuous.”

— *The Chinese Classics*, James Legge, 1893

Confucianism, along with Daoism and Legalism, sought to spell out the principles that would create stability and order in society.

### The Geography of China

The Huang He (HWONG•HUH), or Yellow River, stretches across China for more than 2,900 miles (4,666.1 km), carrying its rich yellow silt all the way from Mongolia to the Pacific Ocean. The Chang Jiang (CHONG•JYONG), or Yangtze River, is even longer, flowing for about 3,400 miles (5,470.6 km) across central China before emptying into the Yellow Sea. The densely cultivated valleys of these two rivers began to emerge as one of the great food-producing areas of the ancient world.
China, however, is not just a land of fertile fields. In fact, only 10 percent of the total land area is suitable for farming, compared with 19 percent of the United States. Much of the rest of the land in China consists of mountains and deserts, which ring the country on its northern and western frontiers.

This forbidding landscape is a dominant feature of Chinese life and has played an important role in Chinese history. Geographical barriers—mountains and deserts—isolated the Chinese people from peoples in other parts of Asia. In the frontier regions created by these barriers lived peoples of Mongolian, Indo-European, and Turkish backgrounds. The contacts of these groups with the Chinese were often marked by conflict. The northern frontier of China became one of the areas of conflict in Asia as Chinese armies tried to protect their precious farmlands.

**Reading Check**

Describing What isolated the Chinese people from peoples in other parts of Asia?

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**The Shang Dynasty**

Historians of China have traditionally dated the beginning of Chinese civilization to the founding of the **Xia** (SYAH) dynasty over four thousand years ago. Little is known about this dynasty, which was replaced by a second dynasty, the **Shang**.

China under the **Shang dynasty** (about 1750 to 1045 B.C.) was a mostly farming society ruled by an aristocracy whose major concern was war. An **aristocracy** is an upper class whose wealth is based on land and whose power is passed on from one generation to another.

Archaeologists have found evidence of impressive cities in Shang China. Shang kings may have had at least five different capital cities before settling at Anyang (AHN-YAHNG), just north of the Huang He in north-central China. Excavation of some of these urban centers reveals huge city walls, royal palaces, and large royal tombs.
**Political and Social Structures**

The Shang king ruled from the capital city of Anyang. His realm was divided into territories governed by aristocratic war-lords (military leaders), but the king had the power to choose these leaders and could also remove them. The king was also responsible for defending the realm, and he controlled large armies, which often fought on the fringes of the kingdom. The king’s importance is evident in the ritual sacrifices undertaken at his death. Like rulers in Mesopotamia and Egypt, early Chinese kings were buried with the corpses of their faithful servants in the royal tombs.

The Chinese believed in supernatural forces with which they could communicate to obtain help in worldly affairs. To communicate with the gods, rulers made use of oracle bones. These were bones on which priests scratched questions asked by the rulers, such as: Will the king be victorious in battle? Will the king recover from his illness? Heated metal rods were then stuck into the bones, causing them to crack. The priests interpreted the shapes of the cracks as answers from the gods. The priests wrote down the answers, then the bones were stored. The inscriptions on the bones have become a valuable source of information about the Shang period.

The king and his family were at the top of Shang society, aided by a number of aristocratic families. The aristocrats not only waged war and served as officials but also were the chief landowners. The great majority of people were peasants who farmed the land of the aristocratic landowners. In addition to the aristocrats and peasants, Shang society also included a small number of merchants and artisans, as well as slaves.

**Religion and Culture under the Shang**

The early Chinese had a strong belief in life after death. Remains of human sacrifices found in royal tombs are evidence of peoples’ efforts to win the favor of the gods. The Chinese also wanted to provide companions for the king and members of his family on their journey to the next world.

From this belief in an afterlife would come the idea of the veneration of ancestors (commonly

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**Ancestral Rites**

Shang bronzes are one of the great cultural achievements of the ancient world. One reason for the unusual quality of Shang bronze work is the method of casting used. Clay molds made in several sections were tightly fitted together before the liquid bronze was poured. This technique enabled artisans to apply their designs directly to the mold. In this way they could use intricate motifs in a rich surface decoration. The most important decorative motif on Shang bronzes was the *taotie* mask. It featured a pair of large eyes, nostrils, and fangs, giving it the look of a fantastic beast. Although fierce in appearance, the *taotie* represented a protective force against evil spirits. These bronze vessels played a significant role in ceremonies for the veneration of ancestors.
Political Structure The Zhou dynasty continued the political system of the rulers it had overthrown. At the head of the government was the Zhou king, who was served by an increasingly large and complex bureaucracy. The king was seen as the link between Heaven and Earth. The correct performance of rituals or ceremonial acts that served to strengthen those links was crucial to a king’s duties.

The Shang practice of dividing the kingdom into a number of territories governed by officials appointed by the king was continued under the Zhou. The governing officials of these territories were members of the aristocracy. They were appointed by the king and were subject to his authority. Like the Shang rulers, the Zhou king was in charge of defense and controlled armies that served under his command throughout the country.

The Mandate of Heaven The Zhou kings also made some changes, however, as the Chinese began to develop a theory of government. The Zhou dynasty claimed that it ruled China because it possessed the Mandate of Heaven. What was the Mandate of Heaven? It was believed that Heaven—which was an impersonal law of nature—kept order in the universe through the Zhou king. Thus, he ruled over all humanity by a mandate, or authority to command, from Heaven. The king, who was chosen to rule because of his talent and virtue, was then

The vessels were used as instruments for preparing and serving food in the ancestral rites.

Ancestor veneration was important to the Chinese. They believed that the souls of the dead could bring good or evil fortune to the living members of a family. Thus, ancestral rites had to be properly performed. As one poet observed, “Every custom and rite is observed, every smile, every word is in place.”

As part of the ritual, members of the family knelt before several vessels that held offerings of wine and various kinds of food. The quality of the vessels was considered an important part of the ceremony. Well-to-do families, who were the only ones who could afford bronze vessels, competed to acquire these magnificently crafted pieces.

Once a year, the Chinese also celebrated a major festival called Qingming (“Clear and Bright”). On the day of the festival, people visited their family graves, usually located on hillsides outside their villages. They cleaned the graves and left offerings of food for the spirits of their deceased ancestors.

Reading Check Identifying How did the Shang rulers communicate with the gods?

The Zhou Dynasty

According to legend, the last of the Shang rulers was a wicked tyrant who swam in “ponds of wine” and ordered the writing of lustful music that “ruined the morale of the nation.” This led the aggressive ruler of the state of Zhou (JOH) to revolt against the Shang and establish a new dynasty. The Zhou dynasty lasted for almost eight hundred years (1045 to 256 B.C.), making it the longest-lasting dynasty in Chinese history.

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Connecting to the Past

1. Drawing Inferences Did death sever familial ties for the Chinese?
2. Writing about History Why would rituals and festivals be important to Chinese families? Do you have any family traditions? If so, explain what they are and how they evolved.
CHAPTER 3  India and China

The Fall of the Zhou Dynasty  The Zhou dynasty, too, followed the pattern of rise, decline, and collapse. For centuries the dynasty was ruled by wise and efficient rulers, but later Zhou rulers began to decline, both intellectually and morally. The Zhou kingdom had been divided into several small territories, and some of these territories began to evolve into powerful states that challenged the Zhou ruler. In 403 B.C., civil war broke out, beginning an age known in Chinese historical records as the “Period of the Warring States.”

By this time, the nature of warfare had also changed in China. Iron weapons, more powerful than bronze weapons, came into use. Foot soldiers (the infantry) and soldiers on horseback (the cavalry) made their first appearance. Members of the cavalry were now armed with the powerful crossbow, a Chinese invention of the seventh century B.C. Eventually, one of the warring states—that of Qin (CHIN)—took control. In 221 B.C., it created a new dynasty.

Life during the Zhou Dynasty  During the Zhou dynasty, the basic features of Chinese economic and social life began to take shape. The Zhou continued the pattern of land ownership that had existed under the Shang. The peasants worked on lands owned by

responsible for ruling the people with goodness and efficiency. The concept of the heavenly mandate became a basic principle of Chinese statecraft.

The Mandate of Heaven, however, was double-edged. The king was expected to rule according to the proper “Way,” called the Dao (DOW). It was his duty to keep the gods pleased in order to protect the people from natural disaster or a bad harvest. If the king failed to rule effectively, he could be overthrown and replaced by a new ruler.

This theory has strong political side effects. It sets forth a “right of revolution” to overthrow a corrupt or evil ruler. It also makes clear that the king, though serving as a representative of Heaven, is not a divine being himself. In practice, of course, each founder of a new dynasty would say that he had earned the Mandate of Heaven. Who could disprove it except by overthrowing the king? The saying, “He who wins is the king; he who loses is the rebel,” sums up this view.

The Mandate of Heaven was closely tied to the pattern of dynastic cycles. From the beginning of Chinese history to A.D. 1912, China was ruled by a series of dynasties. The Zhou dynasty, as we have seen, lasted for almost eight hundred years. Others did not last as long, but the king of each dynasty ruled with the Mandate of Heaven.

No matter how long the dynasties lasted, all went through a cycle of change. A new dynasty established its power, ruled successfully for many years, and then began to decline. The power of the central government would begin to collapse, giving rise to rebellions or invasion. Finally, the dynasty collapsed and a new dynasty took over, beginning another dynastic cycle.

The ruler of the state of Zhou established the longest-lasting dynasty in Chinese history.

1. Interpreting Maps  Describe the extent of the Zhou Empire.

2. Applying Geography Skills  Compare this map to the map on page 89. What do you notice about the location of the Zhou Empire in relation to the rest of China?
their lord, but they also had land of their own, which they farmed for their own use. A class of artisans and merchants lived in walled towns under the direct control of the local lord. Merchants did not operate freely but were considered the property of the local lord. There was also a class of slaves.

Trade in this period involved the exchange of local products that were used on an everyday basis. Eventually, it increased to include goods brought in from distant regions. Among these goods were salt, iron, cloth, and various luxury items.

**Economic and Technological Growth** The period from the sixth to the third centuries B.C. was an age of significant economic growth and technological change, especially in farming. For thousands of years, farmers had depended on rainfall to water crops such as rice and millet. By the sixth century B.C., irrigation was in wide use. Large-scale water projects were set in motion to control the flow of rivers and spread water evenly to the fields.

Changes in farming methods also increased food production. By the mid-sixth century B.C., the use of iron had led to the development of iron plowshares, which made it possible to plow land that had not yet been used for farming. This development allowed the Chinese to add to the amount of land available for growing crops. Because of these advances in farming, the population of China rose as high as fifty million people during the late Zhou period.

Improved farming methods were also a major factor in encouraging the growth of trade and manufacturing. One of the most important items of trade in ancient China was silk. Chinese silk fragments from the period have been found throughout central Asia and as far away as Athens, Greece—clear indications of a far-reaching trade network.

**The Family in Ancient China** Few social institutions have been as closely identified with China as the family. As in most agricultural societies, in ancient China the family served as the basic economic and social unit. However, the family there took on an almost sacred quality as a symbol of the entire social order.

At the heart of the concept of family in China was the idea of *filial piety*. *Filial piety, then, refers to the duty of members of the family to subordinate their needs and desires to those of the male head of the family. More broadly, the term describes a system in which every family member had his or her place. The concept is important in Confucianism, as you will see later in this section.

What explains the importance of the family in ancient China? Certainly, the need to work together on the land was a significant factor. In ancient times, as today, farming in China required the work of many people. Children, too, were essential to the family’s needs. They worked in the fields during their early years. Later, sons were expected to take over the burden of physical labor on the family plots and provide for the well-being of their parents.

Male supremacy was a key element in the social system of ancient China, as it was in the other civilizations that we have examined. The male was considered so important because he was responsible for providing food for his family. In ancient China, men worked in the fields. They also governed society and were the warriors, scholars, and government ministers. Women raised the children and worked in the home.

Although women did not hold positions of authority, some did have influence in politics. This was especially true at the royal court, where wives of the ruler or other female members of the royal family played a part in court affairs. These activities were
clearly looked down upon by males, as this Chinese poem indicates:

“A clever man builds a city,
A clever woman lays one low;
With all her qualifications, that clever woman
Is but an ill-omened bird.”

The Chinese Written Language  Perhaps the most important cultural contribution of ancient China to later Chinese society was the creation and development of the Chinese written language. By Shang times, the Chinese had developed a simple script that is the ancestor of the highly complex written language of today. Like many other ancient languages, it was primarily pictographic and ideographic in form.

Pictographs are picture symbols, usually called characters, that form a picture of the object to be represented. For example, the Chinese characters for mountain 山, sun 日, and moon 月 were meant to represent the objects themselves. Ideographs are characters that combine two or more pictographs to represent an idea. For example, the word east 东 symbolizes the sun coming up behind the trees.

Each character, of course, would be given a sound by the speaker when pronounced. In other cultures, this process eventually led people to stop using pictographs and ideographs and to adopt a written language based on phonetic symbols representing speech sounds, such as the Roman alphabet. The Chinese, too, eventually began to attach phonetic meaning to some of their symbols. However, although the Chinese language has evolved continuously over a period of four thousand years, it has never entirely abandoned its original format.

The Chinese Philosophies

Confucius believed that the government should be open to all men of superior talent. This concept became a crucial part of Chinese history after his death.

Between 500 and 200 B.C., toward the end of the Zhou dynasty, three major schools of thought about the nature of human beings and the universe emerged in China—Confucianism, Daoism, and Legalism. While Hindus and Buddhists focused on freeing the human soul from the cycle of rebirth, Chinese philosophers were more concerned about the immediate world in which people lived and how to create a stable order in that world.

Chinese Numbering System

The Chinese system of numbering is based on units of 10. It uses characters to represent 0 through 9 and the powers of 10 (10, 100, 1,000, etc).

Below are some examples of how Arabic numbers would be written in Chinese.

- 20 is written as 二十 (2 x 10)
- 200 is written as 二百 (2 x 100)
- 3,000 is written as 三千 (3 x 1,000)
- 456 is written as 四百五十六 [(4 x 100) + (5 x 10) + (6)]

Reading Check

Describing  What is the pattern of dynastic cycles?

Zhou jade dragon
Confucianism  Confucius was known to the Chinese as the First Teacher. (Confucius is the western form of the name Kongfuzi [KOONG•FOO•DZUH], meaning “Master Kung,” as he was called by his followers.) Confucius was born in 551 B.C. He hoped to get a job as a political adviser, but he had little success in finding a patron.

Upset by the violence and moral decay of his age, Confucius traveled around China in an attempt to persuade political leaders to follow his ideas. Few listened at the time, but a faithful band of followers revered him as a great teacher, recorded his sayings in the Analects, and spread his message. Until the twentieth century, almost every Chinese pupil studied his sayings. This made Confucianism, or the system of Confucian ideas, an important part of Chinese history.

Confucius lived at a time of great confusion in China. The chaos in China was largely caused by unceasing warfare among numerous Chinese armies, which did not hesitate to slaughter opposing soldiers and their families. Men, women, and children were beheaded in mass executions. China was faced with one basic question: How do we restore order to this society? Confucius provided a basic set of ideas that eventually came to be widely accepted.

Confucius’s interest in philosophy was political and ethical, not spiritual. He believed that it was useless to speculate on spiritual questions. It was better by far to assume that there was an order in the universe and then focus on ordering the affairs of this world. The universe was made in such a way that, if humans would act in harmony with its purposes, their own affairs would prosper. Much of his concern was with human behavior. The key to proper behavior was to behave in accordance with the Dao (Way).

Two elements stand out in the Confucian view of the Dao: duty and humanity. The concept of duty meant that all people had to subordinate their own interests to the broader needs of the family and the community. Everyone should be governed by the Five Constant Relationships: parent and child, husband and wife, older sibling and younger sibling, older friend and younger friend, and ruler and subject. Each person in the relationship had a duty to the other. Parents should be loving, and children should revere their parents. Husbands should fulfill their duties, and wives should be obedient. The elder sibling should be kind, and the younger sibling respectful. The older friend should be considerate, and the younger friend deferential. Rulers should be benevolent, and subjects loyal. Three of these five relationships concern the family, which shows the family’s importance to Confucius: “The duty of children to their parents is the foundation from which all virtues spring.”

The Confucian concept of duty is often expressed in the form of a “work ethic.” If each individual
worked hard to fulfill his or her duties, then the affairs of society as a whole would prosper as well. As Confucius stated,

“If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there is beauty in the character, there will be harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. If there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.”

Above all, the ruler must set a good example. If the king followed the path of goodness and the common good, then subjects would respect him, and society would prosper.

The second key element in the Confucian view of the Dao is the idea of humanity. This consists of a sense of compassion and empathy for others. It is similar in some ways to Christian ideas but with a twist. Christians are taught, “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” Confucius would say, “Do not do unto others what you would not wish done to yourself.” To many Chinese, this meant that others should be tolerated. Confucius urged people to “measure the feelings of others by one’s own,” for “within the four seas all men are brothers.” The ideas of Confucius had a strong appeal to his contemporaries. After his death in 479 B.C., his message spread widely throughout China. Confucius was a harsh critic of his own times. He seemed to stress the need to return to the values of an earlier age—the Golden Age of the early Zhou dynasty. He saw it as an age of perfection that no longer existed. In referring to that age, he is quoted as saying the following:

“When the Great Way was practiced, the world was shared by all alike. The worthy and the able were promoted to office and practiced good faith and lived in affection. The aged found a fitting close to their lives, the robust their proper employment; the young were provided with an upbringing and the widow and widower, the orphaned and the sick, with proper care. Men had their talks and women their hearths. They hated to see goods lying about in waste, yet they did not hoard them for themselves; they disliked the thought that their energies were not fully used, yet they used them not for private ends. Therefore all evil plotting was prevented and thieves and rebels did not arise, so that people could leave their outer gates unbolted. This was the age of Grand Unity.”

Confucius was not just living in the past, however. Many of his key ideas looked forward rather than backward. Perhaps his most striking political idea was that the government should not be limited solely to those of noble birth but should be open to all men of superior talent. This concept of rule by merit was, of course, not popular with the aristocrats who held political offices based on their noble birth. Although Confucius’s ideas did not have much effect in his lifetime, they opened the door to a new idea of statecraft that would later be put into widespread use.

**Daoism**

Daoism was a system of ideas based on the teachings of Laozi (LOW•DZUH). According to tradition, Laozi, or the Old Master, was a contemporary of Confucius. Scholars do not know if Laozi actually existed. Nevertheless, the ideas people associate with him became popular in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.
The chief ideas of Daoism are discussed in a short work known as *Tao Te Ching* (The Way of the Dao). Scholars have argued for centuries over its meaning. Nevertheless, the basic ideas of Daoism, as interpreted by followers of the doctrine, are straightforward. Like Confucianism, Daoism does not concern itself with the underlying meaning of the universe. Rather, it tries to set forth proper forms of behavior for human beings on Earth.

Daoism’s point of view is quite different from that of Confucianism. Followers of Confucius believe that it is the duty of human beings to work hard to improve life here on Earth. Daoists believe that the true way to follow the will of Heaven is not action but inaction:

> Without going outside, you may know the whole world.
> Without looking through the window, you may see the ways of heaven.
> The farther you go, the less you know.
> Thus the sage [wise man] knows without traveling;
> He sees without looking;
> He works without doing.

The best way to act in harmony with the universal order is to act spontaneously and let nature take its course by not interfering with it:

> The universe is sacred.
> You cannot improve it.
> If you try to change it, you will ruin it.
> If you try to hold it, you will lose it.

**Legalism** A third philosophy that became popular in China was Legalism. Unlike Confucianism or Daoism, Legalism proposed that human beings were evil by nature. They could only be brought to follow the correct path by harsh laws and stiff punishments. Legalists were referred to as the “School of Law” because they rejected the Confucian view that government by “superior men” could solve society’s problems. Instead, they argued for a system of impersonal laws.

The Legalists believed that a strong ruler was required to create an orderly society. Confucius had said, “Lead the people by virtue and restrain them by the rules of good taste, and the people will have a sense of shame, and moreover will become good.” The Legalists did not believe this. To them, people were not capable of being good. Fear of harsh punishment would cause the common people to serve the interests of the ruler. The ruler did not have to show compassion for the needs of the people.
Main Ideas
- The Qin and Han dynasties established strong central governments that were the basis for future dynasties.
- Technical and cultural achievements during the Qin and Han dynasties included the invention of paper and written literary classics.

Key Terms
regime, censorate

Preview of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>202 B.C.</td>
<td>Han dynasty begins</td>
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<td>87 B.C.</td>
<td>Han Wudi dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D. 170</td>
<td>Han dynasty begins collapse</td>
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People to Identify
Qin Shihuangdi, Xiongnu, Liu Bang, Han Wudi

Places to Locate
Gobi, South China Sea, Indian Ocean

Preview Questions
1. Why was the Great Wall of China built?
2. How did nomadic peoples affect Chinese history?

Reading Strategy
Compare and Contrast As you read this section, compare and contrast the Qin and Han dynasties using a Venn diagram.

Voices from the Past
Faced with the invasion of China’s northern frontier, Emperor Qin Shihuangdi responded forcefully. According to an ancient Chinese historian:

“The emperor dispatched Meng T’ien to lead a force of a hundred thousand men north to attack the barbarians. He seized control of all lands south of the Huang He and established border defenses along the river, constructing forty-four walled district cities overlooking the river and manning them with convict laborers transported to the border for garrison duty. Thus he utilized the natural mountain barriers to establish the border defenses, scooping out the valleys and constructing ramparts and building installations at other points where they were needed.”


The First Qin Emperor unified the Chinese world, though his dynasty was short-lived. The Han dynasty that followed, however, lasted more than four hundred years.

The Qin Dynasty (221–206 B.C.)
As we have seen, from about 400 to 200 B.C., China experienced bloody civil war. Powerful states fought one another and ignored the authority of the Zhou kings. One state—that of Qin—gradually defeated its chief rivals. In 221 B.C., the Qin ruler declared the creation of a new dynasty.
The ruler of Qin was Qin Shihuangdi (CHIN SHUR•HWONG•DEE), meaning “the First Qin Emperor.” A person of much ambition, Qin Shihuangdi had come to the throne of Qin in 246 B.C. at the age of 13. In 221 B.C., he defeated the last of Qin’s rivals and founded a new dynasty, with himself as emperor.

**Changes under the Qin Dynasty** The Qin dynasty dramatically changed Chinese politics. Legalism was adopted as the *regime’s* (the government in power) official ideology. Those who opposed the policies of the new regime were punished or executed. Books presenting ideas opposed to the official views were publicly burned. (See page 991 to read excerpts from Li Su’s *The Burning of Books* in the Primary Sources Library.)

The Qin dynasty made a number of important administrative and political changes, which served as models for future dynasties. In the first place, unlike the Zhou dynasty, the Qin dynasty ruled a highly centralized state. The central bureaucracy was divided into three parts: the civil division, the military division, and the *censorate*. The censorate had inspectors who checked on government officials to make sure they were doing their jobs. This became standard procedure for future Chinese dynasties.

Below the central government were two levels of administration—provinces and counties. Officials at these levels did not inherit their positions (as was done under the Zhou), but were appointed and dismissed by the emperor. The censors, who reported directly to the throne, kept a close watch over officials. Those found guilty of wrongdoing were executed.

Qin Shihuangdi unified the Chinese world. He created a single monetary system and ordered the building of a system of roads throughout the entire empire. Many of these roads led out from his capital city of Xianyang (SYEN•YONG), just north of modern-day Xian (SYEN).

Qin Shihuangdi was equally aggressive in foreign affairs. His armies advanced to the south, extending the border of China to the edge of the Yuan (YOO•AHN) River, or Red River, in modern-day Vietnam. To supply his armies, he had a canal dug from the Chang Jiang in central China to what is now the modern city of Guangzhou (GWONG•JOH).

**The Great Wall** The Qin emperor’s major foreign concern was in the north. In the vicinity of the Gobi, there resided a nomadic people known to the Chinese as the Xiongnu (SYEN•NOO). Mounted on their horses, the Xiongnu ranged far and wide in search of pasture for their flocks of cattle, sheep, or goats. They were organized loosely into tribes, and moved with the seasons from one pasture to another.

The Xiongnu had mastered the art of fighting on horseback. The historian Sima Qian remarked that “the little boys start out by learning to ride sheep and shoot birds and rats with a bow and arrow, and when they get a little older they shoot foxes and rabbits, which are used for food. Thus all the young men are able to use a bow and act as armed cavalry in time of
war.” The Xiongnu soon became a challenge to Chinese communities near the northern frontier. A number of Chinese states in the area began to build walls to keep them out.

Qin Shihuangdi’s answer to the problem in the north was to strengthen the existing system of walls to keep the nomads out. Today we know Qin Shihuangdi’s project as the **Great Wall of China**. However, the wall that we know today from films and photographs was not built at the order of the First Qin Emperor but 1,500 years later. Some of the walls built by Qin Shihuangdi do remain standing, but many of them were constructed of loose stone, sand, or piled rubble and disappeared long ago. Defensive walls against nomads had existed in parts of North China for years. Qin Shihuangdi linked these sections of walls together to create “The Wall of Ten Thousand Li” (a li is about a third of a mile, or half a kilometer).

This is not to say, of course, that the wall was not a massive project. It required the efforts of thousands of laborers. Many of them died while working there and, according to legend, are now buried within the wall. With his wall, the First Qin Emperor enjoyed some success in fighting off the threat of the nomads, but the victory was only temporary.

**The Fall of the Qin Dynasty** By ruthlessly gathering control over the empire into his own hands, Qin Shihuangdi had hoped to establish a rule that “would be enjoyed by his sons for ten thousand generations.” In fact, the First Qin Emperor had angered many Chinese. The emperor died in 210 B.C., and his dynasty was overthrown four years later.

The fall of the Qin dynasty was followed by a period of civil war, but it did not last long. A new dynasty would soon arise.

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**Reading Check** Identifying What were the three parts of the central bureaucracy developed by the Qin dynasty?

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**The Han Dynasty (202 B.C.–A.D. 220)**

One of the greatest and most long-lasting dynasties in Chinese history—the **Han** (Hahn) dynasty—emerged in 202 B.C. The founder of the Han dynasty was Liu Bang (LYOH BONG), a man of peasant
origin who became known by his title of Han Gaozu (“Exalted Emperor of Han”). Under his strong rule and that of his successors, the new dynasty quickly established its control over the empire.

**Political Structure** The first Han emperor discarded the harsh policies of the Qin dynasty. Confucian principles, rather than Legalism, soon became the basis for the creation of a new state philosophy. However, Han Gaozu and his successors found it convenient to keep some of the practices of the First Qin Emperor, including the division of the central government into three ministries—the military, civil service, and censorate. The Han rulers also kept the system of local government that divided the empire into provinces and counties.

Most important, the Han rulers continued the Qin system of choosing government officials on the basis of merit rather than birth. To create a regular system for new officials, the Han dynasty introduced the civil service examination and established a school to train these candidates. This system for officials influenced Chinese civilization for two thousand years. Students were expected to learn the teachings of Confucius, as well as Chinese history and law. (For a discussion of the civil service examination system, see Chapter 8.)

China under the Han dynasty was a vast empire. The population increased rapidly—by some estimates rising from about twenty million to over sixty million at the height of the dynasty. The large size of the population created a growing need for a large and efficient bureaucracy to keep the state in proper working order.

**Expansion of the Empire** In addition to providing a strong central government, the Han emperors continued to expand the Chinese Empire. Han rulers, especially Han Wudi (HAHN WOO•DEE) (“Martial Emperor of Han”), added the southern regions below the Chang Jiang into the empire. Along the coast of the South China Sea, part of what is today northern Vietnam became part of the empire. Han armies also went westward into central Asia, extending the
Chinese boundary there. Han Wudi also had to deal with the Xiongnu, the nomads beyond the Great Wall to the north. His armies drove the Xiongnu back, and after his death in 87 B.C., China experienced almost another 150 years of relative peace.

**Society in the Han Empire** The Han period was one of great prosperity. Free peasants, however, began to suffer. Land taxes on land-owning farmers were fairly light, but there were other demands on them, including military service and forced labor of up to one month per year. Then, too, the tripling of the population under the Han dynasty eventually reduced the average size of the individual farm plot to about one acre per person—barely enough for survival.

As time went on, many poor peasants were forced to sell their land and become tenant farmers, who paid rents ranging up to half of the annual harvest. Land once again came to be held in the hands of the powerful landed aristocrats. These nobles often owned thousands of acres worked by tenants. They gathered their own military forces to bully free farmers into becoming tenants.

**Technology in the Han Empire** New technology added to the economic prosperity of the Han Era. Much progress was made in such areas as textile manufacturing, water mills for grinding grain, and iron casting. Iron casting technology led to the invention of steel. In addition, paper was developed under the Han dynasty.

With the invention of the rudder and fore-and-aft rigging, ships could sail into the wind for the first time. This made it possible for Chinese merchant ships carrying heavy cargoes to travel throughout the islands of Southeast Asia and into the Indian Ocean, leading to a major expansion of trade in the Han period. Trade relations were even established with areas as far away as India and the Mediterranean.

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**Papermaking in Han China**

The ancient Chinese were responsible for four remarkable inventions that were crucial to the development of modern technology: the magnetic compass, paper, printing, and gunpowder. How to make paper was one of their early discoveries.

The oldest piece of paper found in China dates from the first century B.C. Made from hemp fibers, it was thick, rough, and useless for writing. That was not a problem for the ancient Chinese, however, because they preferred to write on bamboo or silk.

Paper with writing on it dates from around A.D. 100. By this time, the Chinese had figured out how to make paper of better quality. After hemp or linen rags were soaked in water, they were mixed with potash and mashed into a pulp. A frame with a fine bamboo mesh was lowered into this vat of pulp. When the frame was removed, it held a thin sheet of pulp. Any extra water was removed before the sheets of paper were hung up to dry.

The art of papermaking spread westward from China beginning in the eighth century A.D. First India and then the Arab world developed the technique. The Arab cities of Baghdad, Damascus, and Cairo all had large papermaking industries. Paper was shipped from these centers to the West, but Europeans did not begin their production of paper until the twelfth century.

**Describing What did the Chinese use to make paper?**

Chinese boundary there. Han Wudi also had to deal with the Xiongnu, the nomads beyond the Great Wall to the north. His armies drove the Xiongnu back, and after his death in 87 B.C., China experienced almost another 150 years of relative peace.
The Fall of the Han Empire  Over a period of time, the Han Empire began to fall into decay. As weak rulers amused themselves with the pleasures of court life, the power of the central government began to decline. The great noble families filled the gap, amassing vast landed estates and forcing free farmers to become their tenants. Official corruption and the concentration of land in the hands of the wealthy led to widespread peasant unrest. Then, too, nomadic raids on Chinese territory continued in the north.

By A.D. 170, wars, intrigues at the court, and peasant uprisings brought the virtual collapse of the Han dynasty. In 190, rebel armies sacked the Han capital, Luoyang (LWÔ•YONG). The final blow came in 220, when a general seized control but was unable to maintain his power. China again plunged into civil war, made worse by invasions of northern peoples. The next great dynasty would not arise for four hundred years.

Reading Check  Identifying What new technology developed during the Han Era?

Culture in Qin and Han China

The Qin and Han dynasties were also known for their cultural achievements. The key works of the Confucian school, for example, were made into a set of Confucian classics, which became required reading for generations of Chinese schoolchildren. These classics introduced children to the forms of behavior that they would need as adults.

Reading Check  Describing What was the purpose of the terra-cotta figures discovered near Xian?

An army of life-sized terra-cotta soldiers was found in Qin Shihuangdi’s tomb.

Perhaps the most remarkable artistic achievement of the Qin period was discovered in 1974. Farmers digging a well about 35 miles (56 km) east of Xian discovered an underground pit near the burial mound of the First Qin Emperor. It contained a vast army made of terra-cotta (hardened clay). Chinese archaeologists believed that it was a re-creation of Qin Shihuangdi’s imperial guard and was meant to be with the emperor on his journey to the next world.

The army, dressed in uniforms, is contained in four pits. Archaeologists estimate that there are more than six thousand figures in the first pit alone, along with horses, wooden chariots, and seven thousand bronze weapons. The figures are slightly larger than life-size. They were molded, then fired and painted in brilliant colors. To achieve individuality in the faces of the soldiers, ten different head shapes were used, which were finished by hand.

Critical Thinking

6. Explain What is the importance of the technological advancements in sailing that were made during the Han dynasty?

7. Organizing Information Create a flow chart showing the government organization during the Han dynasty and the duties for each division.

Analyzing Visuals

8. Examine the illustration on page 99. What is the significance of the political decision the emperor made to burn books? What else is being depicted?

Writing About History

9. Expository Writing Write an essay that explains what the Chinese archaeological site east of Xian tells us about the people of the Qin dynasty. What might future historians conclude about us should they uncover memorials such as the Washington Monument or Lincoln Memorial?
Using Key Terms

1. Aryan leaders known as ____ (princes) fought other Aryan chieftans and seized their property.
2. The major divisions of the Indian classes of people were called ____ in English.
3. The belief that the individual soul is reborn in a different form after death is ____.
4. ____ is a method of training designed to lead to a union with Brahma.
5. In Buddhism, reaching ____, or ultimate reality, is the end of the self and a reunion with the Great World Soul.
6. The Kushan kingdom prospered from trade that passed through their land along the ____.
7. According to Confucius, the key to proper behavior was to behave in accordance with the ____ (Way).
8. The Qin bureaucracy had civil and military divisions and a ____.

Reviewing Key Facts

9. Geography Describe the diverse geography of the Indian subcontinent.
10. Culture Explain the following statement: “The Harappan rulers were closely linked to their religion.”
11. History Identify the physical changes that occurred in the Indus River valley that contributed to the collapse of the once-flourishing civilization there.

Critical Thinking

12. Culture Discuss the connection between the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.
13. History “Faxian, a Chinese Buddhist monk, traveled through the Gupta Empire and admired the character of their rule, their tolerance of Buddhism, and the prosperity of the country.” Describe what Faxian found in India that supports this quote.
14. Geography Describe the geography of China.
16. Culture Discuss the life of a peasant during the Han Era.
17. Culture How does the ancient Chinese system of writing differ from cuneiform and hieroglyphic writing?
18. Government The dynastic cycles in China meant each dynasty would eventually fall. What factors caused this to happen?

Chapter Summary

Chinese and Indian civilizations are remarkable for their achievement and innovation. This chart shows their accomplishments in several areas.

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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Confucianism Daoism Legalism</td>
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<td>Analects, Confucian classics, Tao Te Ching, Poetry</td>
<td>Patriarchal Monarchy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Analyzing Maps and Charts

Study the map above to answer the following questions.

28. Compare this map to the maps of the Fertile Crescent and Egyptian civilizations in previous chapters. What geographic features are common to each of these civilizations?

29. In what mountain range does the Indus River originate?

30. What major rivers empty into the Yellow Sea?

31. Name the river valley civilizations studied thus far.

Self-Check Quiz

Visit the Glencoe World History Web site at wh.glencoe.com and click on Chapter 3–Self-Check Quiz to prepare for the Chapter Test.

Writing About History

22. Persuasive Writing Prepare an editorial for a newspaper in which you discuss the philosophies of Confucianism, Legalism, and Daoism. Explain why you think the current government of your country should adopt one of these philosophies in its system of government.

Analyzing Sources

Read the following decree of Asoka, one of India’s greatest rulers.

“By order of the Beloved of the Gods [Asoka] to the officers in charge: Let us win the affection of all people. All people are my children, and as I wish all welfare and happiness in this world and the rest for my own children, so do I wish it for all men. . . . For that purpose many officials are employed among the people to instruct them in righteousness and to explain it to them.”

23. What is the relationship between Asoka and the Beloved of the Gods?

24. How does this quote reflect the Buddhist beliefs that were adopted by Asoka?

Applying Technology Skills

25. Using the Internet The Chinese had the Great Wall of China built for protection from enemies. Using the Internet, research how other countries have protected themselves. Using a word processor, write a brief description of two examples. List the name of the country, what it used for protection, and who was being kept out.

Making Decisions

26. In this chapter you read about Chinese pictographs and ideographs. In Chapter 2, you learned about cuneiform, hieroglyphic writing, and hieratic script. How do archaeologists, historians, and linguists decipher (translate) an unknown language?

27. Religion has always played a major role in Indian society. How might religious differences have affected India and its development as a nation?

Standardized Test Practice

Directions: Choose the best answer to the following question.

In general, women in ancient India
A could not get an education or inherit property.
B passed down the Vedas to the younger generation.
C traded with Chinese merchants.
D became a force in politics.

Test-Taking Tip: Even if you don’t know the correct answer, you still may know which answer choices are wrong. Eliminating only one or two answer choices improves your chances of answering the question correctly. Using all of your knowledge about ancient India, eliminate the answer choices you know are wrong. Then choose the best answer from the choices that remain.