Ancient India Notes

For this section you will need to know the following:

**Locations:**

* Himalayan – highest mountains in the world.
* Deccan Plateau
* Ganges River – Sacred Hindu river
* Indus River – Site of Indus River valley civilization
* Tibet

**People:**

* Aryans
* Siddhartha Gautama

**Government:**

* The warrior class ran the government, usually ruled by a king.
* Small kingdoms were forced to unit when foreigners invaded.

**Economy:**

* Farming
* Trade

1. Salt
2. Cloth
3. Iron

**Vocabulary:**

* Subcontinent – A section of a continent that stick out from the rest of the continent.
* Monsoon – A strong wind that blows one direction in winter and the opposite direction in summer.
* **Sanskrit** – Oldest written language in India.
* Raja – Aryan tribal leader or prince.
* Caste - A social group someone is born into and cannot change.
* Guru – Teacher
* Suttee – Wife jumping onto funeral flames of her husband.
* **Pilgrims** – People who travel to religious sites.
* **Dynasty** – A series of rulers from the same family.
* **Theocracy** – A government where the ruler is also the religious leader.

**Caste System**

* **Brahmins** – Priests
* **Kshatriyas** - Rulers & warriors
* **Vaisyas** – Common people
* **Sudras** – Unskilled laborers, servants

Not fit for the system

* **Untouchables** – collecting trash, skinning animals, or handling dead bodies.

**Religion:**

* Hinduism
* Buddhism

**Hinduism:**

* **Brahman** (deity) – Universal spirit
* **Siva** (deity) – destroyer of the earth.
* **Ganesha** (deity) – Lord of existing beings, remover of obstacles, has the head of an elephant.
* **Brahmins** – Hindu priests
* **Upanishads** – Sacred text
* **Vedas of India** – collection of sacred Hindu verses, hymns, prayers and teachings.
* Hinduism grew out of the ancient belief of the Aryans.
* **Reincarnation** – The idea of passing through many lives to reach Brahman.
* **Dharma** – The divine law that requires people to perform the duties of their caste.
* **Karma** – The consequences of how a person lives their lives.

**Buddhism:**

* **Siddhartha Gautama**, a prince who became **Buddha** “Enlightened One”
* The only way to find the truth about the world was to give up all desires.
* **Nirvana** – A state of wisdom when someone gives up all desires.
* **Stupa** – Buddhist shrines that have the shape of a dome or mound.
* **Dalai Lama** – The lama who is the head of the Tibetan Buddhists.

***Four Noble Truths***

1. Life is full of suffering.
2. People suffer because they desire worldly things and self-satisfaction.
3. The way to end suffering is to stop desiring things.
4. The only way to stop desiring things is to follow the ***Eightfold Path.***

***Eightfold Path***

1. Know and understand the *Four Noble Truths.*
2. Give up worldly things and don’t harm others.
3. Tell the truth, don’t gossip, and don’t speak badly of others.
4. Don’t commit evil acts, like killing, stealing, or living an unclean life.
5. Do rewarding work.
6. Work for good and oppose evil.
7. Make sure your mind keeps your senses under control.
8. Practice meditation as a way of understanding reality.

**Innovations:**

* Concept of zero
* Used algebra
* Symbols for numbers 1-9
* **Algorithms** – Steps for solving a math problem.
* Astronomy – The earth revolved around the sun.
* Gold coins
* Metal mirrors
* Plastic surgery

**Literature:**

* **Upanishads** – Sacred text of Hinduism.
* **Vedas of India** – collection of sacred Hindu verses, hymns, prayers and teachings.
* **Mahabharata** – Longest epic in the world, describes a great war for control of an Indian kingdom. Teachings in the Mahabharata contain many Hindu beliefs.
* **Ramayana** – Describes how Rama and his brothers are born after their mother and father receive a magical potion. Together, the brothers constitute the seventh incarnation of the deity Vishnu. During the story, Rama wins his wife, Sita, because he can bend Shiva’s bow, which no one else can even pick up. During his banishment, Rama becomes an ally of the monkey king, Sugriva and they eventually save the kidnapped Sita.

**Be able to explain the following:**

How did India’s geographic setting affect the lives of its people?

What is a caste?

How did India’s caste system determine the lives of India’s people?

Sequence the events of the beginning of Buddhism.

Compare the differences between Hinduism and Buddhism.