

I. Social Scientists

A) The people who study the world in which humans live are known as social scientists. Below is a description of various social scientists and what it is that they study:

- 1) Historians- Study written records of past events.
- 2) Geographers- Study the Earth's surface and its impact on humans. Geographers often examine topography (physical land features), climate (weather), human migrations (movement), and the way in which humans adapt to (learn to live in) different environments. Geographers will often examine two types of maps:
 - a) Political Maps- Show countries, their borders, and capital cities.
 - b) Physical Maps- Show topography (land features such as mountains, rivers, deserts, lakes, etc.).
- 3) Economists- Study how societies use available resources. They often ask and try to answer the following 3 questions about civilizations: What goods and services are produced? How are goods and services produced? How are goods and services distributed?
- 4) Anthropologists- Study past and present human cultures. Archaeologists are a type of anthropologist. They examine the culture of past human societies through analysis of physical remains (artifacts).

II. Historical Sources

A) Historians are concerned with the examination of written records from the past. There are 2 types of sources historians study:

- 1) Primary Source- A firsthand record of a historical event created by an eyewitness who actually experienced the event (Examples- Diaries, photographs, artifacts, autobiographies).
- 2) Secondary Source- A second hand record of a historical event created by a person who did NOT actually experience the event (Examples- Textbooks, encyclopedias, biographies).

I. Neolithic Age (8000-3000 BC)

A) Also called the "New Stone Age."

B) Key developments of this period:

- 1) Humans first discovered how to perform agriculture (farm) and domesticate (raise) animals for food and drink.
- 2) Humans switched from being nomads (people who wander from place to place hunting and gathering for food) to being settled farmers who lived in permanent villages.
- 3) Farming created a steady food supply (called a food surplus).
- 4) The permanent villages created during the Neolithic Age eventually turned into civilizations (SEE NEXT TOPIC BELOW).
- 5) The development of farming during this period was so important that it is often called the Neolithic Revolution

TOPIC: ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

I. Civilization

A) A civilization is a complex and highly organized society that includes a government, social classes, job specialization, a food surplus, writing, and religious beliefs.

B) Civilizations developed soon after humans discovered farming & settled down in permanent villages during the Neolithic Age

C) The first civilizations developed around 3000 B.C. in areas of land known as river valleys (low areas of land next to rivers).

The reason civilizations developed in river valleys is because these areas had favorable geography:

- 1) The flooding of rivers deposited silt on nearby lands that created fertile soil for farming.
- 2) People irrigated (watered) their crops with water from the nearby rivers.
- 3) Rivers provided a source of transportation.

D) Early river valley civilizations developed around the following rivers: The Nile River in Egypt, the Tigris River and Euphrates River in the Middle East, the Indus River in India, and the Yellow River and Yangtze River in China (SEE BELOW FOR MORE INFO ON THESE CIVILIZATIONS).

II. Ancient River Valley Civilizations (c. 3000 – 1000 B.C.)

A) Egypt

- 1) Location: Northeastern Africa

- 2) Major River: Nile River
- 3) Characteristics and achievements:
 - a) Developed hieroglyphics- Writing using picture symbols.
 - b) Constructed pyramids- Massive structures used to bury Egyptian Pharaohs (kings).
- B) Mesopotamia (Sumer)
 - 1) Location: Middle East
 - 2) Major Rivers: Tigris River and Euphrates River
 - 3) Characteristics and achievements:
 - a) Developed cuneiform- Writing system using wedge-shaped symbols.
 - b) Code of Hammurabi- Oldest written set of laws in the world that is known for its strict (harsh) punishments of crimes (i.e.- "an eye for an eye").
- C) Harappan Civilization
 - 1) Location: India
 - 2) Major River: Indus River
 - 3) Achievements: The urban (city) areas of Harappan civilization were organized and well- planned.
 - 4) NOTE: Early societies in India (and areas of Southeast Asia) were very affected by seasonal monsoons- Winds that brought rain needed to farm (but too much rain caused dangerous flooding).
- D) China
 - 1) Major Rivers- Yellow (Huang He) River and Yangtze River
 - 2) Early Chinese societies were very isolated from other civilizations because China is surrounded by natural boundaries (i.e.- mountains and deserts).
- E) Common Features- Many ancient societies had important traits in common:
 - 1) They existed in river valley regions.
 - 2) They were all polytheistic- People believed in many gods associated with nature (i.e.- Sun God, Rain God, Wind God, etc).
 - 3) They often had traditional economic systems with the following characteristics:
 - a) Barter- Trade without using money.
 - b) Subsistence agriculture- Farming in which the crops are used only to feed the farmer and his family. Food is not usually sold for a profit.
 - c) People have the same occupation (job) as their parents (usually related to farming/agriculture).

TOPIC: CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS

I. Introduction to Classical Civilizations

- A) Classical civilizations are the societies that were more advanced and more recent than the ancient civilizations discussed in the previous section.
- B) Most classical civilizations had a Golden Age- A period of great achievements in art, literature, math, and science.
- C) Below is a brief outline regarding the classical civilizations that the Regents would like you to know.

II. Classical Civilizations (c. 1000 BC-500 AD)

- A) Greece
 - 1) Located on a peninsula with an irregular coastline in southeastern Europe.
 - 2) Because Greece has a very mountainous geography, it was not one united civilization. Instead, Greece was divided into many independent (separate) city-states. Each citystate (or polis) had its own government and land. The two most famous city-states were Athens and Sparta. They were very different societies.
 - 3) Sparta
 - a) A military society where men spent almost all of their lives training for warfare.
 - b) People in Sparta had very little freedom.
 - 4) Athens

a) Athens is known for having the first democracy in the world. A democracy is a form of government in which people can vote. Athens had a direct democracy, which means that all citizens (adult males born in Athens) were able to vote on laws.

b) Unlike Sparta, which focused mainly on war, Athens focused heavily on culture and is known for its philosophers (Socrates, Aristotle, Plato) and writers (such as Homer).

5) Religion

a) The people of ancient Greece were polytheistic (believed in many nature gods).

b) The Olympic Games were held every 4 years in Greece to honor their god, Zeus.

6) Alexander the Great

a) Famous leader who conquered Greece, Egypt, Persia (Iran), and part of India.

b) Hellenistic culture- Alexander spread Greek (Hellenic) culture to all of the areas that he conquered. The word Hellenistic is used to describe the mixture of Greek, Egyptian, Persian, and Indian culture that took place in the areas that Alexander conquered.

B) Rome

1) Located on the peninsula of Italy.

2) Rome began as a small city-state but eventually created a large empire by conquering the regions that surrounded the Mediterranean Sea (i.e. - Western Europe, coast of Northern Africa, Greece, Anatolia, and Western Asia).

3) Key Features and Achievements of the Roman Empire:

a) Trade and Transportation Networks- The Romans were able to unite the areas of their empire and grow wealthy from trade because of the roads they built on land and because the Mediterranean Sea connected areas within their empire.

b) Twelve Tables of Rome- Written set of laws that stated the rules of behavior for members of Roman society. Although the laws favored the wealthy, these laws created stability (order) since they were displayed in public for all to see.

c) Ideas about Law- Romans developed important legal ideas that we still use today (such as “innocent until proven guilty”).

d) Pax Romana- Means “Roman Peace.” This was the 200-year Golden Age of Rome in which there was extensive trade and great achievements in art, literature, math, and science.

C) India

1) During the classical period, India was ruled by two successful dynasties (families of rulers): The Maurya Dynasty and the Gupta Dynasty.

2) Maurya Dynasty

a) Asoka- Famous ruler of India who wrote the laws of India on tall rock pillars (columns) that were displayed throughout India. Asoka converted to Buddhism during his reign and is known for his kind treatment of people and animals.

3) Gupta Dynasty

a) The Gupta Dynasty is considered the Golden Age of India since there were many achievements in art, literature, math, and science. Some of the achievements include the invention of zero in mathematics, the development of Sanskrit writing, and beautiful Buddhist paintings.

4) Caste System

a) The caste system was the social hierarchy of India in which people were born into a social class (called a caste) and remained in that class for the remainder of their lives. The four main castes were Brahmins (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaisyas (merchants and artisans), and Sudras (laborers). The lowest group included people who were known as Untouchables (they had the worst jobs).

b) Since people could not move up or down in the caste system, it provided order and structure to society.

c) The caste system is closely associated with the Hindu religion (DISCUSSED IN THE NEXT SECTION OF THIS PACKET).

D) China

1) During the classical period, China was also ruled by two main dynasties (families of rulers): The Qin Dynasty and the Han Dynasty.

2) Qin Dynasty

a) Lasted only 15 years.

b) Qin rulers based their government on the philosophy of Legalism- Believes that humans are evil and that harsh punishments are needed to keep order in society.

c) **NOTE:** Legalism was similar to the Code of Hammurabi in ancient Mesopotamia since both noted that harsh punishments were necessary in society.

3) Han Dynasty

- a) Lasted 400 years.
 - b) Key Features and Achievements:
 - 1) Trade and Transportation Networks- As with the Roman Empire, the Han Dynasty grew wealthy through trade because of the system of roads that was developed throughout the region.
 - 2) Civil Service System- System in which government positions were given only to skilled people who passed difficult exams. The Chinese were the first to use this kind of system.
 - E) Silk Road
 - 1) The Silk Road was a long trade route that extended about 4,000 miles from China in the East to the Mediterranean Sea in the West. The Silk Road connected the different classical civilizations (and later civilizations as well).
 - 2) Cultural Diffusion- Cultural diffusion is the exchange of goods and ideas between societies. The Silk Road led the exchange of many products (like Silk) and religious ideas (like Buddhism) between civilizations.
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TOPIC: WORLD RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES

I. The Monotheistic Religions

A) Monotheism

- 1) Monotheistic religions believe in only one God.
 - 2) The 3 main monotheistic religions are Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.
- B) Codes of Conduct (Behavior)- All 3 monotheistic religions have codes of behavior issued by God that state the religious and moral/ethical obligations (duties) of followers:
- 1) Ten Commandments- Code of behavior for Jews and Christians (i.e.- Do not kill, do not steal, do not worship false gods, etc.).
 - 2) Five Pillars- Code of behavior for Muslims (i.e.- Make a pilgrimage to Mecca, pray five times daily, etc.).

II. Religions and Philosophies of India

A) Hinduism

- 1) Reincarnation- The idea that after humans die, their souls are reborn into another body. Hindus believe that humans go through many rounds of reincarnation (death and rebirth).
- 2) Karma- Karma refers to all of the good and bad deeds that one does during their lifetime. Those who do good deeds develop good karma and are reborn at a higher level in the next life. Those who do bad deeds develop bad karma and are reborn at a lower level in the next life. Hindus follow the Caste System (SEE PREVIOUS SECTION ON INDIA) and believe that the social class that they are born into in this life is based on the karma they developed in a previous life.
- 3) The goal of Hindus is to achieve Moksha- Ending reincarnation and stopping the cycle of death and rebirth.

B) Buddhism

- 1) Buddhism was founded by Siddhartha Gautama (also called the Buddha).
- 2) Buddhism is very similar to Hinduism. Both religions believe in Reincarnation and Karma.
- 3) The goal of Buddhists is to achieve Nirvana- Ending reincarnation and stopping the cycle of death and rebirth (similar to Hindu concept of Moksha).
- 4) Buddhists believe that Nirvana can be achieved when people accept the Four Noble Truths (the idea that all of life is suffering and that suffering is caused by our selfish desires). People must work to end suffering and desire by following the Eightfold Path (a code of behavior for Buddhists that requires them to resist evil, act in a kind manner, meditate, etc.).

III. Philosophies of China

A) Legalism

- 1) Philosophy based on the idea that humans are evil and that harsh punishments are needed in order to prevent crime and keep order in society.

B) Confucianism

- 1) Major philosophy of China. It's main teachings include:

- a) The Five Relationships- The idea that every single person has specific roles and obligations that must be followed in order to keep order and stability (calmness) in society. For example, subjects must obey their ruler, wives must obey their husbands, and children must obey their parents.
- b) Filial Piety- The idea that people must honor and respect the elders of their family (i.e.- children must be loyal and obedient to their parents).

IV. Nature Religions

- A) Nature religions believe that both living and non-living things in nature (i.e.- trees, mountains, rivers, rain, rocks, animals, etc.) have a spirit.
 - B) **NOTE:** The two most common nature religions are Shinto (practiced in Japan) and Animism (practiced in Africa). The Regents wants you to know that both religions believe in nature spirits.
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TOPIC: LEGAL SYSTEMS OF THE ANCIENT AND CLASSICAL WORLDS

I. Legal Systems

- A) So far, a number of different legal systems have been discussed in this review packet. The 3 main ones include:
 - 1) Code of Hammurabi- Written set of laws used in ancient Mesopotamia. It is known for its harsh punishment of crimes (i.e. - “an eye for an eye”).
 - 2) Twelve Tables of Rome- Written set of laws used in Roman Empire. Laws favored the wealthy.
 - 3) Justinian Code- Written set of laws used in the Byzantine Empire. It was based on old Roman laws and was later adopted by many countries in Europe.
- B) **NOTE:** The Regents wants you to know the following about these 3 legal systems:
 - 1) They are all standardized (written) sets of laws.
 - 2) They each concern the relationship between the state (government) and the individual.
 - 3) They all helped create stability (a calm and orderly society) since people were able to learn what the laws were.