

CHAPTER
23

India



ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How is India's traditional way of life changing in response to modern forces?

1

HISTORY

Empires and Independence

2

CULTURE

A Rich and Ancient Legacy

3

GOVERNMENT & ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Democracy

CONNECT

Geography & History



Use the map and the time line to answer the following questions.

1. Which Indian cities have the greatest populations?
2. The Taj Mahal was built in Agra, halfway between Delhi and Kanpur. In what year was it built? What is the population density in that area?

Geography

c. 1500 B.C. According to theory, the Aryans migrate to India where they encounter the Dravidians.

1500 B.C.

History

273 B.C. Asoka becomes king of Mauryan empire and builds pillars inscribed with his laws. ▶

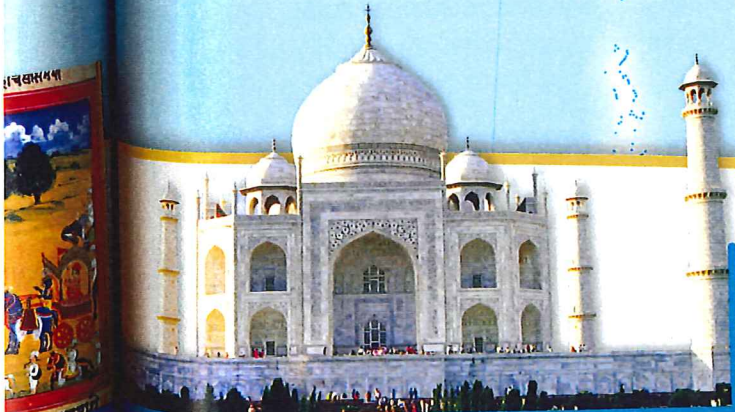
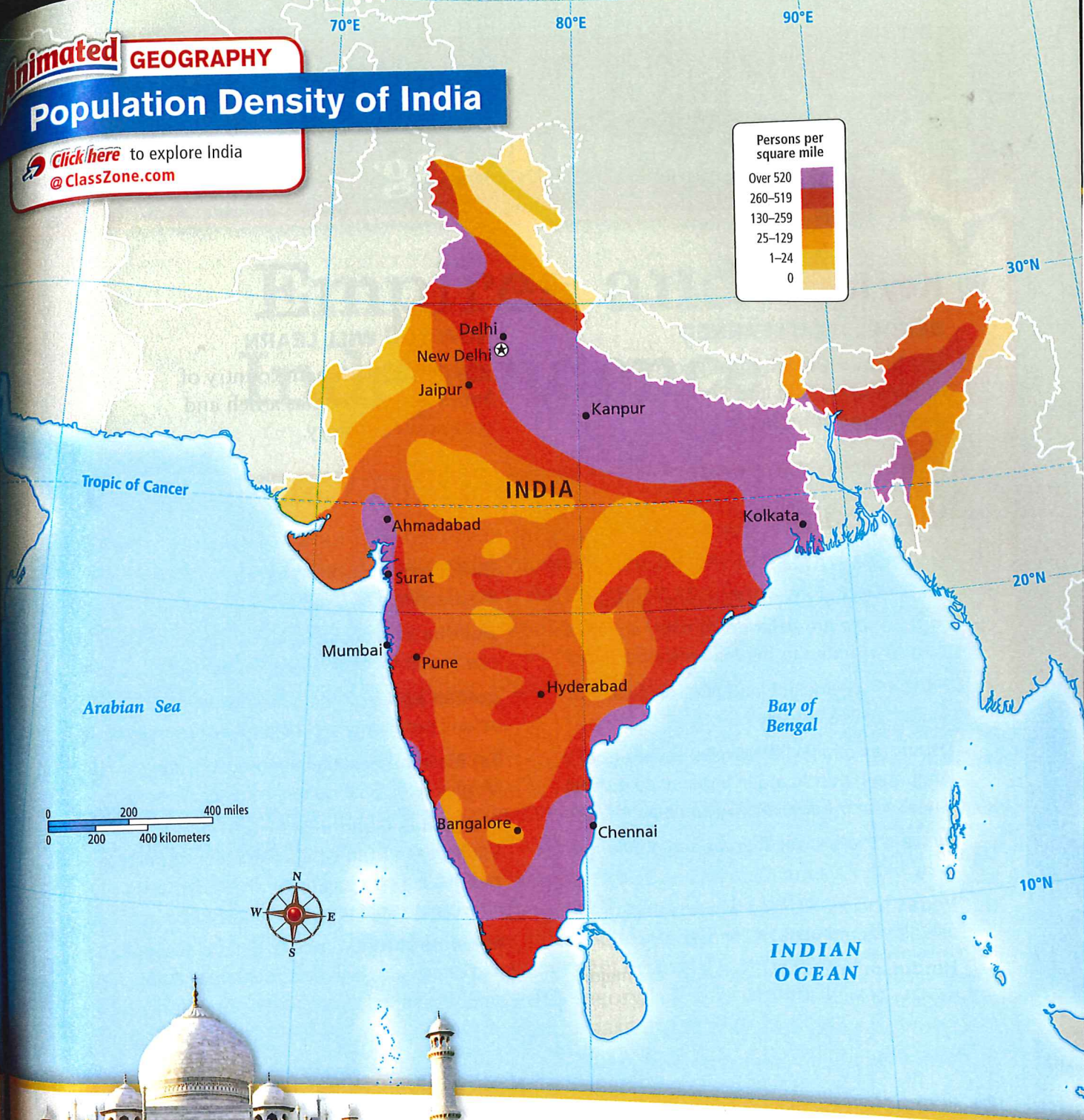
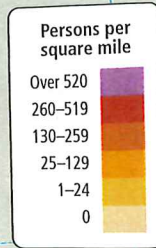
Culture

▲ c.A.D. 400s Ancient Sanskrit epic the *Mahabharata* reaches its present form.



Population Density of India

[Click here](#) to explore India @ ClassZone.com



Culture

◀ **c. 1648** The Taj Mahal is built in Agra, India.

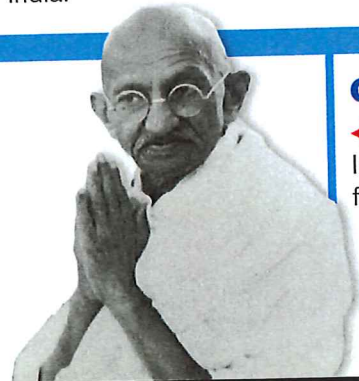
Today

Government

◀ **1947** Led by Gandhi, India gains independence from Great Britain.

History

1526 The Mughal empire is established.



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Reading for Understanding

▶ Key Ideas

BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

The history and physical geography of Southwest Asia and South Asia are diverse and complex.

NOW YOU WILL LEARN

India is the dominant country of South Asia, and it has a rich and complicated history.

▶ Vocabulary

TERMS & NAMES

Aryan a group of Indo-European nomadic herders who are believed by many scholars to have migrated to the Indian subcontinent

Sanskrit an ancient language of India, first spoken by the Aryans

Dravidian (druh•VIHD•ee•uhn) speakers of a language group found in India since earliest times; mostly spoken in South India today

caste a social class that a person belongs to by birth

Vedas ancient Sanskrit writings that are the earliest sacred texts of Hinduism

Hinduism the modern name for the major religion of India

Buddhism a major world religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama

Buddha a name, meaning the "enlightened one," used for Siddhartha Gautama

golden age a period during which a society attains prosperity and cultural achievements

Taj Mahal a beautiful tomb built by the Mughal ruler Shah Jahan to honor his wife

Mohandas Gandhi (MOH•hehn•DAHSGAHN•dee) a 20th-century Indian who helped lead his country to independence by using nonviolent resistance to colonial rule

nonviolent resistance a method of protest that draws attention to a problem without using violence

▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the chart that is shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the chart to note the main ideas about India's long history.



Skillbuilder Handbook, page R4

FIND MAIN IDEAS

EARLY SOCIETY	ANCIENT EMPIRES	BRITISH RULE	INDEPENDENCE
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.



GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS

Go to Interactive Review @ ClassZone.com

The page features a background image of the Taj Mahal on the left and a tiger on the right. At the top center, there is a yellow circular badge with the word "SECTION" in a curved font above the number "1". Below this badge is a red horizontal bar with the word "HISTORY" in white capital letters.

SECTION
1

HISTORY

Empires and Independence

Connecting to Your World

When you learned about U.S. history in the past, where did you start? Perhaps you began in 1492 with Columbus. The history of India begins further back in time. In fact, the Harappan civilization dates back to about 2500 B.C. So when you study Indian history, you are studying a time period of 4,500 years. During those years, many changes have occurred on the Indian subcontinent.



Lions Asoka's laws were carved on pillars, some of which were decorated with lions—a symbol of India.

Early Societies

KEY QUESTION Which two groups contributed to the development of a complex culture in India?

As you read in an earlier chapter, the Harappan civilization had many advanced cities with streets and sewers. After several centuries, the civilization went into decline and people left the cities. Scholars still don't know why. But many believe that another important event occurred shortly after the cities were abandoned. According to this theory, a group of people from the north or northwest came through a pass in the Hindu Kush Mountains onto the Indian subcontinent by about 1500 B.C.

Hindu Kush This mountain range in eastern Afghanistan and northern Pakistan borders India.



First Inhabitants The group of people who are believed to have migrated to India was the **Aryans**. They spoke an Indo-European language called **Sanskrit**, and their way of life was very different from that of the **Dravidians** (druh•VIHD•ee•uhn), the people living in India when the Aryans arrived. The term Dravidian refers to the family of languages they spoke. The Aryans were nomadic herders. The Dravidians might have been descended from the urban Harappan civilization, although until the Harappan script is deciphered, the language of the Indus Valley remains a mystery. The Aryans taught the Dravidians their language and religion and the Dravidians taught the Aryans about city life. A new and complex culture arose in India.

The idea of the Aryan migration is still a theory because no one has found physical evidence of such a move. Historians formed the theory because of clues in ancient religious stories and also because they noticed patterns in the languages that people speak.

Social Structure In earliest times, Aryan society was organized into three classes: warriors, priests, and commoners. In time, a system developed that divided society into five groups based broadly on work or occupation. The first group was the Brahmins, which included priests and teachers. The second was the Kshatriya (kuh•SHAT•ree•uh), which included rulers, nobles, and warriors. The third group, the Vaishya (VY•shuh), included bankers, merchants, and farmers. The fourth group, the Sudra, was made of artisans and laborers. The fifth group, which came into being much later, was the Untouchables. They did the jobs that no one else wanted to do. When Europeans first came to India in the 1500s, they called the social classes of India **castes**, classes to which people belonged by birth.

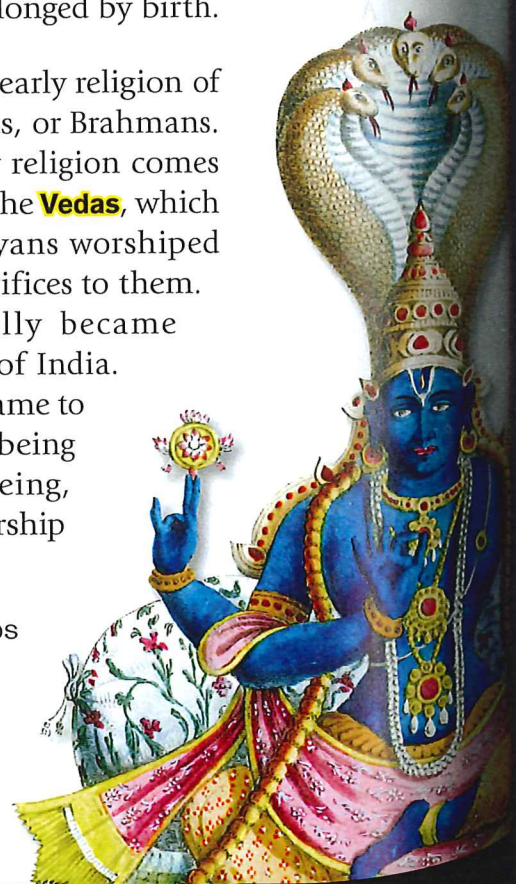
Early Religion Today, people call the early religion of the Aryans Brahmanism, after the priests, or Brahmins. Most of what we know about this early religion comes from ancient Sanskrit sacred texts called the **Vedas**, which contain hymns and teachings. The Aryans worshiped nature deities, and the priests made sacrifices to them.

Over time, Brahmanism gradually became **Hinduism**, which is the major religion of India.

One big change was that many people came to believe that only one spirit or supreme being governs the universe. That supreme being, God, has different powers, so Hindus worship God in different forms.

CATEGORIZE Describe the two groups that contributed to a complex culture in India.

Vishnu Vishnu the preserver is an important Hindu deity. He is blue, the color of infinity for Hindus. ▶



Sanskrit Sanskrit has been used by the educated classes in India for thousands of years. It is important in the history of India because it is the language of the sacred texts. Sanskrit is part of a major group of languages called the Indo-European family. Languages from the same family often have similar words for basic things.

English	father	mother	two	three	mouse
Sanskrit	pitar	matar	dva	trayas	mooshak
Greek	patros	matros	duo	treis	mūs
Latin	pater	mater	duo	tres	mūs
Spanish	padre	madre	dos	tres	raton
German	vater	mutter	zwei	drei	maus

CRITICAL THINKING

Compare Which word do you think is most alike in all of these Indo-European languages?

Scroll of Sanskrit text with illustrations of Hindu stories ▶



The Empires of India

KEY QUESTION What were the three main empires to rule India?

Different powers controlled India during its long history. Of the various empires that ruled India, some were Indian and some were not.

The Mauryan Empire About 321 B.C., an Indian ruler named Chandragupta Maurya (CHUNH•druh•GUHP•tuh MAH•ur•yuh) built an empire that would control most of India. About 50 years later, his grandson Asoka became the ruler of the Mauryan empire. Asoka adopted a religion called **Buddhism**, based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, also called the **Buddha**, or “enlightened one.” Asoka gave up warfare and sent missionaries to spread Buddhism, but he also allowed non-Buddhists to practice their faiths.

Golden Age of the Guptas After Asoka died, the Mauryan empire began to decline. The last Mauryan emperor died in 185 B.C. The Gupta empire took over India in A.D. 320. Trade made the Gupta empire wealthy. Historians call the Gupta empire a **golden age**—a time of prosperity and cultural achievements. Indians developed the decimal system and zero. Kalidasa wrote plays that are great works of literature. Beautiful temples and cave paintings were created.



Ancient Empires of India



CONNECT Geography & History

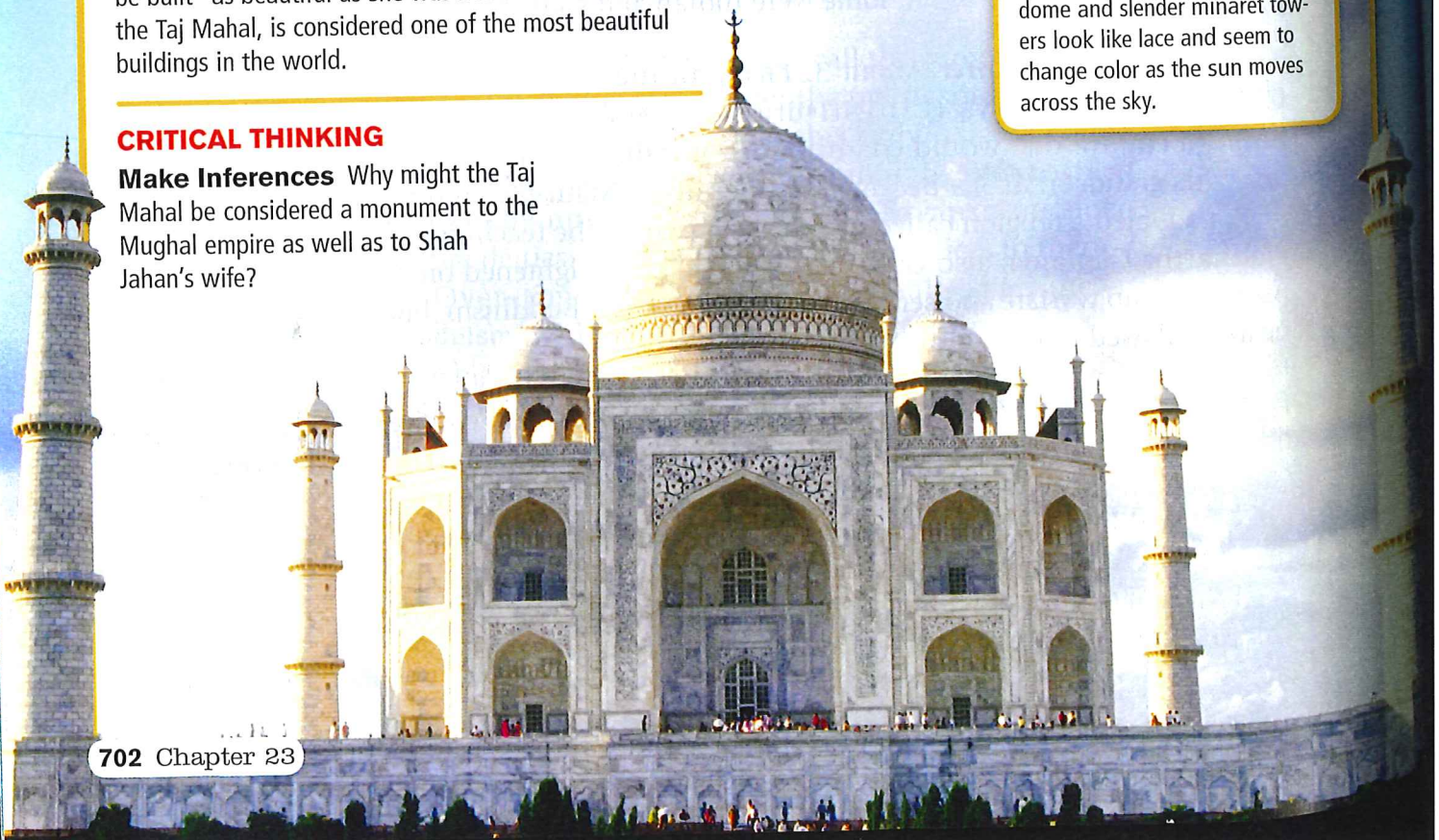
The Mughal Empire at Its Height

The Taj Mahal Shah Jahan was a descendant of Akbar. Shah Jahan's wife died in 1631, and he ordered that a tomb be built "as beautiful as she was beautiful." This memorial, the Taj Mahal, is considered one of the most beautiful buildings in the world.

Taj Mahal Fine white marble and fabulous jewels were gathered from many parts of the Mughal empire to build the Taj Mahal. Its towering marble dome and slender minaret towers look like lace and seem to change color as the sun moves across the sky.


CRITICAL THINKING

Make Inferences Why might the Taj Mahal be considered a monument to the Mughal empire as well as to Shah Jahan's wife?



Muslims and Mughals As you learned earlier, the religion of Islam began in Arabia during the 600s. Starting in the 700s, different groups of Muslims invaded India. The Muslims who came to India brought their beliefs with them, and some Indians converted to Islam. Over time, Muslims became a large minority group in India.

In 1526, a Muslim group from Central Asia called the Mughals made India part of their empire. The greatest ruler of this empire was Akbar, who ruled India fairly and gave many Hindus jobs in his government. A later Mughal ruler, Shah Jahan, is famous for having built the **Taj Mahal**, a beautiful memorial tomb for his wife. It is one of the most famous and most frequently visited buildings in the world.

 **SUMMARIZE** Describe the ancient empires that ruled India.

Independence

 **KEY QUESTION** What steps led to Indian independence?

During the 1600s, the Mughal emperor fought wars that weakened his empire. Meanwhile, traders from Portugal, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and France had set up trading posts on India's coasts. As the Mughal empire weakened, Europeans seized more power. Of these, the British took over the most Indian territory.

British Rule In 1858, Britain established direct rule over most of India. Britain allowed local princes to retain their thrones as long as they swore allegiance to the British throne. Britain imposed taxes, took over Indian lands, and passed laws that gave the British more rights than Indians. In addition, Britain used Indian crops and products to enrich the British Empire. Indian resentment against British rule grew.

Indian National Congress In 1885, the Indian National Congress was formed to gain equal status for Indians. Its members included people from all over India. The Congress became a nationalistic organization and adopted the goal of independence for India. By 1920, an Indian lawyer named **Mohandas Gandhi** became one of the Indian National Congress's best-known leaders for independence from Britain.



HISTORY MAKERS

Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948)

Gandhi (pictured above with his granddaughters) was born in India and studied law in England. His beliefs were influenced by Hinduism and his studies of Christianity and Islam. A few years after his return to India in 1915, Gandhi convinced the Indian National Congress to use nonviolent methods in the struggle for independence. Gandhi himself, the father of modern India, died violently when an assassin shot him. His methods and leadership influenced others such as Martin Luther King, Jr.



ONLINE BIOGRAPHY

For more on the life of Mohandas Gandhi, go to the Research & Writing Center @ ClassZone.com

ANALYZING Primary Sources

Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) was arrested by the British for his protests against colonial rule. In 1922, he was brought to trial for organizing opposition to the government. This excerpt comes from his testimony.

I came reluctantly [unwillingly] to the conclusion that that British connection had made India more helpless than she ever was before, politically and economically. . . . The government established by law in British India is carried on for this exploitation [unfair treatment for gain] of the masses.

Source: *India Emerges* by Steven Warshaw

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

According to Gandhi, what did the British government do to the majority of Indians?

Gandhi leads a protest march ▶



ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE

To read more of Gandhi's writing, go to the **Research & Writing Center** @ ClassZone.com

Gandhi wanted the British to leave India, but he did not believe in fighting to make that happen. He urged Congress to practice **nonviolent resistance**, which meant that only peaceful methods would be used to force the British to give up their rule. Such methods included holding marches, refusing to buy British products, and refusing to pay taxes. Gandhi led many marches himself. His emphasis on nonviolence also included the teaching that Indians of all religions could live peacefully together.

Muslim League Many Muslim members of the Indian National Congress shared Gandhi's dream of a free India where Muslims and Hindus could live in harmony. But other Muslims within Congress feared that the Hindu majority would shut them out of government after India gained independence. These Indians created a second nationalistic group called the Muslim League. An important member of the Muslim League was Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

At first, the Muslim League's goal was to give Muslims a role in Indian government. Over time, however, they began to fear that Muslims would suffer discrimination under majority rule by the Hindus. The Muslim League began to demand that India be partitioned, or split, into two independent countries—one Hindu and the other Muslim.

Independence and Partition Talks between British and Indian leaders went on for decades. Finally, the British government granted India independence in 1947. Because of the disagreements between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, India was partitioned into two nations. The lands that had a Hindu majority became India. The lands that had a Muslim majority became Pakistan—which was made of two regions separated by over a thousand miles of Indian territory. West Pakistan lay on the northwest border of India, while East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) lay in the east.

Although there was a clear religious majority in most areas, both Hindus and Muslims lived in every part of India and Pakistan. After the partition, millions of Indian Muslims decided to move to Pakistan, and millions of Pakistani Hindus decided to move to India. This sudden migration of ten million people reawakened old angers, and about one million people were killed. Today, although conflicts continue, the two countries are learning to live and work together.



Partition Muslim refugees cram into coaches and climb onto the roof of a train leaving New Delhi, India, for Pakistan.

FIND MAIN IDEAS Explain the steps that led to Indian independence.

Section 1 Assessment

ONLINE QUIZ
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TERMS & NAMES

1. Explain the importance of

- Sanskrit
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- nonviolent resistance

USE YOUR READING NOTES

2. Find Main Ideas

Use your completed chart to answer the following question:
What are some of the elements that contributed to India's rich history?

EARLY SOCIETY	ANCIENT EMPIRES	BRITISH RULE	INDEPENDENCE
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.

KEY IDEAS

3. What were the five major social classes that developed in ancient Indian society?
4. What cultural achievements occurred under the Guptas?
5. What two nationalistic groups worked for Indian independence, and what did they achieve?

CRITICAL THINKING

6. **Contrast** What is one major difference between Brahmanism and Hinduism?
7. **Analyze Effects** Which of Gandhi's goals were achieved, and which were not?
8. **CONNECT to Today** Recently, some cities changed their names to sound more Indian. For instance, the city that Europeans called Bombay was renamed Mumbai. Why do you think Indian cities did this?
9. **WRITING** **Write an Editorial** Choose a view held by members of the Indian National Congress, such as equal rights for Indians. Write an editorial expressing that viewpoint.