



Social Science

Class 6

Chapter 6: The Beginnings of Indian Civilisation



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Questions, Activities & Projects

Q 1. Why does the civilisation studied in this chapter have several names? Discuss their significance.

Ans: This civilization was given names like Indus Valley Civilization, Harappa Civilization, Indus-Saraswati Civilization. These names have been given to this civilization due to the following reasons-

1. **Indus Valley Civilization** - It got its name due to its location on the banks of the Indus River. This name reflects its geographical expansion.
2. **Harappa Civilization**- Since the first major site of this civilization was Harappa, it was called "Harappa Civilization". This name reflects its discovery and identity.
3. **Indus-Saraswati Civilization**- According to many archaeologists, this civilization developed not only on the banks of Indus but also on the banks of the extinct Saraswati River. This name reflects its wider area.

Importance of these names:

1. These names reflect the geographical location, culture, history, and order of discovery of the civilization.
2. Different names help us understand many characteristics of the civilization.
3. This shows that this civilization was not limited to only one area, but had a wide cultural influence.

Q 2. Write a brief report (150 to 200 words) summing up some of the achievements of the Indus-Saraswati civilisation.

Ans: The Indus-Saraswati Civilization (about 3300-1300 BC) was one of the oldest and most developed urban civilizations in the world. Its major achievements are as follows:

1. The cities of this civilization, such as Harappa and Mohenjodaro, were built on a well-planned grid system.
2. The roads were straight and wide.
3. The houses were made of baked bricks.
4. It had the best drainage system in the world, with paved drains.
5. Wheat, barley and cotton were cultivated here.
6. Evidence of worship of Mother Goddess has been found here.

Q 3. Imagine you have to travel from the city of Harappa to Kalibangan. What are your different options? Can you make a rough estimation of the amount of time each option might take?

Ans:

Travel options in ancient times: (Estimates of travel during the Indus-Saraswati Civilization)

- Travel on foot – about 700-800 km, time: 30-40 days
- Bullock cart or horse cart – time: 15-20 days
- River route (along the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra rivers) – time: 10-15 days

Travel options in modern times:

- Railway (via Lahore-Bikaner) – time: 12-15 hours
- Road route (via Lahore-Bikaner) – time: 10-12 hours
- Air route (Lahore to Jaipur/Delhi, then by road) – total time: 6-8 hours

Conclusion: In ancient times, this journey used to take weeks, whereas with today's modern means, it can be completed in hours.

Q 4. Let us imagine a Harappan man or woman being transported to an average kitchen in today's India. What are the four or five biggest surprises awaiting them?

Ans: If a person from the Harappan civilization comes to today's kitchen, these things will surprise him the most:

1. Gas stove and induction - Cooking food without burning wood will be like magic for them.
2. Steel and non-stick utensils - Such shining utensils instead of clay or bronze utensils will surprise them.
3. Refrigerator and microwave - These machines to keep food cold or hot will be a completely new thing for them.
4. Spices and packaged food - Different types of spices and readymade food items will seem very unique to them.
5. Taps and sinks - Seeing water coming out of the tap automatically and seeing the cleanliness in the sink will be like a miracle for them.

Thus, today's kitchen will seem like a magical world to the Harappans.

Q 5. Looking at all the pictures in this chapter, make a list of the ornaments/gestures / objects that still feel familiar in our 21st century.

Ans:

1. **Jewellery:-** bracelets, necklaces like Mangalsutra, hair ornaments like pearls or clips, rings
2. **Gestures:-** dance, joining hands, women sitting well-dressed
3. **Objects:-** comb, mirror, grinder, sindoor daan, utensils and earthen pots

Q 6. What mindset does the system of reservoirs at Dholavira reflect?

Ans:

1. Dholavira's system of reservoirs reflects advanced engineering and a deep understanding of water conservation.
2. Despite being located in an arid region, the people there adopted efficient techniques of rainwater harvesting and water management.
3. The well-planned architecture, canals, reservoirs and underground structures are an example of sustainable development and innovation.
4. This system makes it clear that the residents of Dholavira were environmentally conscious.
5. They were technically adept and believed in collective cooperation.

Q 7. In Mohenjo-daro, about 700 wells built with bricks have been counted. They seem to have been regularly maintained and used for several centuries. Discuss the implications.

Ans: About 700 brick-built wells have been found in Mohenjodaro, which show the people's understanding of water management.

1. Good water system - Such a large number of wells shows that people planned ahead to meet their water needs.
2. High population - Many people lived in the city, so many wells were built to ensure that everyone had access to water.
3. Attention to cleanliness - Water was used not only for drinking, but also for bathing, cleaning, and perhaps in public bathrooms.

4. Societal responsibility - The maintenance of these wells shows that the society worked together and preserved water.
5. Technologically advanced - These wells made of baked bricks show that the people of Mohenjodaro were very skilled in construction and technology.

Q 8. It is often said that the Harappans had a high civic sense. Discuss the significance of this statement. Do you agree with it? Compare with citizens in a large city of India today.

Ans:

1. The significance of this statement is that the people of Harappan Civilization were very responsible and disciplined citizens.
2. They kept their city clean and well-maintained.
3. Every house had a system of drains, wells and clean water.
4. They thought for the society, not just for themselves.
5. They followed the rules, so there are no signs of fights or violence.

Do I agree?

Yes, I agree that the Harappans were good and responsible citizens.

Comparison with today's metropolises:

1. Dirt, traffic and water crisis are common in today's cities.
2. Many people do not follow the rules.
3. Everyone thinks about their own benefit, not about the society.

So we learn from the people of Harappa how important it is to be a good citizen.

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