

Chapter 9: Classical India Reading Questions

Eyewitness – p. 169

1. Who was Megasthenes? Why did he write so much about India?

The Fortunes of Empire in Classical India – p. 170

2. What event or events led to a “political vacuum” in Gandhara (northern Punjab)?
3. Who ruled the Magadha, and ultimately used it to set up an empire?
4. Compare and contrast the rule of Ashoka with the rule of Darius or Shihuangdi.
5. Why did the Mauryan dynasty decline?
6. To save themselves from financial ruin, Mauryan leaders tried debasing the currency. What does this mean?

Emergence of Regional Kingdoms – p. 172

7. To what ethnic group did the Bactrians belong?
8. How did the Kushians aid trade with India and along the Silk Road?
9. Besides being smaller, how did Gupta rule differ from Mauryan rule?
10. List the advances of Gupta scientists.
11. Attacks by the _____ brought down the Gupta.

Economic Development and Social Distinctions – p. 174

12. There were a growing number of towns. What kinds of manufacturing products did they produce?
13. What was the main highway for trade produced in the towns?
14. From India, long-distance trade passed overland in two directions. Where did it go?
15. What did Indian Ocean traders notice that allowed them to travel safely through the Indian Ocean Basin?

Family Life and the Caste System – p. 175

16. The two great Indian epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, suggested what role for women?
17. What was a guild? How did guilds impact peoples' social lives?

Religions of Salvation in India – p. 177

18. Who founded Jainism?
19. The idea that everything has a soul was inspired by the _____.
20. What is *ahimsa*? In what ways did most occupations interfere with *ahimsa*?
21. Why was Jainism popular?

Early Buddhism – p. 179

22. Who was the founder of Buddhism?
23. According to Buddha, how did one achieve personal salvation (nirvana)?
24. Why was Buddhism appealing?
25. What Mauryan ruler was especially powerful in the spread of Buddhism?

Mahayana Buddhism – p. 181

26. What changes to Buddhist thought reduced the obligations of believers, thereby leading to the development of Mahayana (“Great Vehicle”) Buddhism?
27. How did the Buddhist monasteries change education?

The Emergence of Popular Hinduism – p. 182

28. List the important Hindu literary works and give a very brief description of each.
29. In popular Hindu ethics, how does one achieve the promise of salvation?
30. Ashoka had pushed Buddhism. Who pushed for the growth of Hinduism?