

Empire Achievement Hunt

Identify how Mauryan and Gupta rulers shaped government and culture.

SS.6.W.4.3 "Recognize the political and cultural achievements of the Mauryan and Gupta empires."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each political achievement and circle each cultural achievement. Write M or G beside each marked achievement to show which empire it belongs to.

India's Classical Empires

- ① The Mauryan Empire began about 322 BCE when Chandragupta Maurya united much of northern India. From the capital at Pataliputra, rulers used a central government. Officials collected taxes, kept records, and checked trade. Roads linked regions, helping the government move messages and goods. Chandragupta's grandson Ashoka expanded the empire through war. After a costly conquest of Kalinga, Ashoka said he regretted the suffering. He chose to rule by promoting dhamma, or ethical behavior, rather than seeking more wars.
- ② To share his new policy, Ashoka had messages carved on rocks and stone pillars across his empire. These edicts urged people to show kindness, respect different religious groups, and avoid needless violence. They also helped make government ideas known in distant places. Ashoka supported Buddhist sites and sent Buddhist missionaries beyond India, which helped Buddhism spread. Mauryan artists made polished stone pillars, often topped with animal capitals. The clear writing of the edicts and the skill of the pillars show cultural achievements that lasted after Mauryan rule ended.
- ③ The Gupta Empire ruled much of northern India from about 320 CE to 550 CE. Gupta kings, including Chandragupta I and Samudragupta, built power through marriage alliances, military campaigns, and ties with local rulers. This government allowed some local areas to keep their own leaders while recognizing Gupta authority. Gupta culture flourished in Sanskrit literature, art, mathematics, and astronomy. The poet Kalidasa wrote famous plays and poems. Mathematicians developed rules for using zero and improved number systems. The astronomer Aryabhata explained that Earth rotates on its axis and made careful calculations about astronomy.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What Mauryan political achievement helped rulers manage a large empire? Use one detail from the passage.

2 How did Ashoka's edicts serve both political and cultural purposes?

3 Name two areas of Gupta cultural achievement. Explain one contribution from either area.

4 Compare one way Mauryan rulers and Gupta rulers built or kept political power.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a three-sentence museum label about either the Mauryan or Gupta Empire. Name one political achievement and one cultural achievement, then explain how the achievements affected people or the empire.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each political achievement and circle each cultural achievement. Write M or G beside each marked achievement to show which empire it belongs to. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What Mauryan political achievement helped rulers manage a large empire? Use one detail from the passage.	The Mauryans used a central government with officials who collected taxes, kept records, and checked trade. Roads also linked regions and helped move messages and goods.
2	How did Ashoka's edicts serve both political and cultural purposes?	The edicts shared government ideas in distant places. They also spread cultural values such as kindness, respect for religious groups, and avoiding violence.
3	Name two areas of Gupta cultural achievement. Explain one contribution from either area.	Answers may name Sanskrit literature, art, mathematics, or astronomy. One contribution was developing rules for using zero, or Aryabhata's explanation that Earth rotates on its axis.
4	Compare one way Mauryan rulers and Gupta rulers built or kept political power.	Mauryan rulers used a central government, officials, and roads to manage regions. Gupta rulers used marriage alliances, military campaigns, and ties with local rulers, while allowing some local leaders to remain.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A Mauryan political achievement was its central government, which used officials and roads to connect regions. A cultural achievement was Ashoka's stone edicts, which shared ideas about kindness and respect. Together, these achievements showed how rulers could organize an empire and influence people's values.

Accept equivalent evidence from the passage and clear explanations of how an achievement was political or cultural. For the open task, accept either empire if the response has three sentences, includes one political and one cultural achievement, and explains an effect.