Cities to Kingdoms

Trace change in early Indian societies

AWH.C.8.1 "Describe the origins of Indian civilizations such as those of the Indus Valley, the evolution and central principles of Hinduism and the development of early Indian societies and their organizational structures."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two clues to organization in Indus cities, circle two changes in later communities, and number one Hindu principle and one social framework. Use your marks to track how societies developed over time.

What Changed in Early India?

1. Around 2600 BCE, cities such as Harappa and Mohenjo-daro flourished in the Indus River basin. Farmers raised crops near rivers, while trade linked settlements to distant regions. Many streets followed a grid, and brick drains carried wastewater away from homes. Standardized weights suggest that merchants used shared measures. The Indus script remains undeciphered, so archaeologists cannot read its records. These physical remains reveal organized labor and exchange, but they do not identify a king or a single form of government.

2. After Indus cities declined around 1900 BCE, communities across South Asia continued to change. Indo-Aryan-speaking groups entered the region over time, and Vedic hymns, first passed down aloud, became important religious texts. Early Vedic communities relied heavily on herding; later, farming and settlements expanded in the Ganges plain. Leaders and councils helped make decisions, while some larger kingdoms emerged. These changes did not create one uniform society: customs differed across regions and changed over centuries.

3. Hindu traditions developed over many centuries from Vedic practices and other South Asian beliefs, rather than beginning with one founder. The Vedas remained influential, while later texts explored *karma*, the effects of actions, and *reincarnation*, rebirth after death. *Dharma* refers to duties and right conduct; *moksha* is release from rebirth. In some societies, a *varna* framework grouped people into broad social categories linked to roles. Actual social life was more complex, with many local communities and unequal access to status and work.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do brick drains and standardized weights show that Indus cities were organized?

2. Why can archaeologists describe Indus city life but not identify its rulers?

3. Describe two ways some communities changed between the early Vedic period and later centuries.

4. How did *dharma* and the *varna* framework each relate to social roles?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four- or five-sentence museum label linking evidence from an Indus city to a later change in society and one Hindu principle or social framework. Explain why these developments do not describe one unchanging society.

ANSWER KEY

Cities to Kingdoms

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two clues to organization in Indus cities, circle two changes in later communities, and number one Hindu principle and one social framework. Use your marks to track how societies developed over time. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do brick drains and standardized weights show that Indus cities were organized?	**Brick drains suggest coordinated construction, while standardized weights suggest merchants used shared measures.**
2	Why can archaeologists describe Indus city life but not identify its rulers?	**Physical remains show how cities worked, but the Indus script is undeciphered and the remains do not identify a ruler.**
3	Describe two ways some communities changed between the early Vedic period and later centuries.	**Farming and settlements expanded in the Ganges plain, and some larger kingdoms emerged.**
4	How did *dharma* and the *varna* framework each relate to social roles?	**Dharma concerned duties and right conduct; the varna framework grouped people into broad categories linked to roles.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Brick drains and standardized weights show that Indus cities coordinated work and trade, although their rulers remain unknown. After those cities declined, farming and settlements expanded in the Ganges plain. Some larger kingdoms also emerged. Over centuries, Hindu traditions developed from Vedic practices and other beliefs, and dharma came to describe duties and right conduct. These developments took place in different regions and periods, not in one unchanging society.

Accept other passage-supported examples of organization or change. The museum label should distinguish Indus evidence from later developments rather than presenting them as features of one society.