### 5.1 – Geography and Early India

**Essential Question:** How do India’s rich history and culture affect the world today?

**Big Idea:** Indian civilization developed on the Indus River.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Memory Clue</th>
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</table>
| subcontinent | A large landmass that is smaller than a continent, and usually separated from the rest of their continents by physical features  
• India is considered a subcontinent                                                                                                     |             |
| monsoons    | Seasonal wind patterns that cause wet and dry seasons, heavily influencing a region’s climate  
• Indian summers → winds blow from the Indian Ocean, bringing heavy rains and terrible floods  
• Indian winters → winds blow from the mountains, forcing moisture out of the air, and causing warm, dry winters |             |
| Vedas       | Religious writings that are collections of poems, hymns, myths, and rituals written by Aryan priests.  
• Much of what we know about Aryan society comes from the Vedas!                                                                         |             |
| raja        | A skilled warrior and leader who ruled an Aryan village and the land around it  
Although many rajas were related and sometimes joined forces to fight a common enemy, they often went to war against each other. |             |
| Sanskrit    | The most important language in ancient India due to the fact that it was originally only a spoken language used to memorize poems and hymns important to Aryan culture  
Because Aryans figured out how to write it down to keep records, it now serves as a major source of information about their society.  
Sanskrit is no longer spoken today, but it’s the root of many modern South Asian languages. |             |
5.1 - Geography and Early India

Essential Question: How do India’s rich history and culture affect the world today?

Big Idea: Indian civilization first developed on the Indus River.

A. Geography of India

India is known as a __________________________ of Asia. The __________________ Mountains and the __________________ Mountains separate India from the rest of the continent. Most of India is covered by _______________ plains and rugged _______________, but to the west of the Himalayas is an enormous _______________. The valley of the _______________ River, which flows out of the Himalayas, was the location of India’s first _______________. Just like other rivers, the Indus _______________, which caused a layer of fertile _______ to be left behind for ideal farmland. India’s _______________ is hot and humid, which is influenced by seasonal wind patterns called _______________. In the summers, monsoons brought ___________ ___________ that caused terrible _______________. In the winters, winds forced moisture out of the air, creating a ___________ and __________ season.

B. Harappan Civilization

The first Indus River Valley civilization is called the _______________ civilization. Just like other ancient societies, they grew as _______________ and _______________ improved. The food surpluses from the farms led to ___________, which led to the appearance of _______________. We have information about Harappan civilization because of the ruins of two large cities, _______________ and _______________. The two cities were similar, well planned, and each near a towering _______________. Most houses had bathrooms with _______________. Artisans created advanced goods, as well as a system of weights and measures. Harappans also developed India’s first ___________ ___________, but because we can’t interpret the language, we know little about their society. The society ended by the early _______________, but no one is sure why.
C. Aryan Migration

After the Harappan civilization crumbled, the ____________ arrived in the Indus River Valley and became the dominant group in India. They first arrived in the ____________ BC, crossing into India through ________________ ____________ in the northwest. They eventually spread _________ and __________ into central India, then into the ________________ River Valley. Much of what we know about Aryan society comes from religious writings known as the ____________.

Although the Aryans were originally nomads, or wanderers, they eventually settled in ____________ and began to ____________. One big difference between the Harappans and the Aryans is that the Aryans did not build big ____________. They also had a different ________________ system than the Harappans. Instead of having a king and central government, The Aryans lived in small ________________ based on family ties, each with its own leader. These leaders, often skilled warriors, were known as ________________. Although many rajas were ________________, they did not always get along. At times, they would join forces to fight a common ________________, but other times, they would go to _______ against ___________ ____________.

The first Aryan settlers did not ____________ or ____________, so in order to pass down information important to their culture, they needed to ________________ it. This included poems and hymns such as the ________________. The language in which these poems and hymns were composed was ________________. At first, it was only a spoken language, but eventually, they figured out how to ________________ it down to keep records. These ________________ records are a major source of information about ________________ society.
**Main Idea #1:** The geography of India includes high mountains, great rivers, and heavy seasonal rain.

Q: What is the shape of the Indian subcontinent?
A: 

Q: How is the geography of the northeastern part of the subcontinent different from the northwestern?
A: 

Q: Why may Indian farmers consider the monsoons both a blessing and a curse?
A: 

**Main Idea #2:** Harappan civilization developed along the Indus River.

Q: What were the two main cities of the Harappan civilization?
A: 

Q: When did the Harappan civilization thrive?
A: 

Q: What are some explanations for why Harappa and Mohenjo Daro were very similar?
A: 

Q: How do we know about Harappan civilization?
A: 

Q: What are some characteristics of the cities of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro?
A: 
Main Idea #3: The Aryan migration into India changed the region’s civilization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>From where did the Aryans come?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>How was the Aryan civilization different from the Harappan?</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>A</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Why are the Vedas so important to historians?</th>
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<tr>
<th>Q</th>
<th>Why did the Aryans memorize their poems and hymns?</th>
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Reading Checks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q #1</th>
<th>How do you think monsoons affected settlement in India?</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Q #2</th>
<th>Why don’t we know much about Harappan civilization?</th>
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<th>Q #3</th>
<th>What source provides much of the information we have about the Aryans?</th>
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</table>
1. What major river was the basis of the first Indian civilizations? ________________

2. Geographers call India a subcontinent. Give explanations as to why.
   ____________________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________________

3. The Indus River flooded frequently leaving behind a grained soil called **silt**. Why is this important?
   ____________________________________________________________________________________

4. Name the two other civilizations that have grown up around the river systems listed below.
   Nile River - ________________ Tigris and Euphrates Rivers - ________________