History
Depth Study 3: The Asian World
3a - Ancient India

Developed for Winmalee High School by Sara Korman, in a project funded and supported by the DEC Learning and Leadership Directorate – Secondary Education, HSIE Unit
The Learning and Leadership Directorate has been working with a number of schools on a programming project. The purpose of the project has been to explore the principles of curriculum planning and programming and to support teachers in the introduction of the new Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards NSW K-10 History Syllabus.

The programs are NOT lesson plans but they provide a number of tasks based on syllabus content.

The school and learning context

Winmalee High School is a comprehensive secondary school, located in the Blue Mountains, with approximately 1000 students in years 7-12. The school has a strong focus on academic success and extra-curricular achievement in the creative arts and student leadership. The school is renowned for its development of student social and emotional wellbeing and strong community involvement. Winmalee High school is a Positive Behaviour for Learning school, focusing on the core value of developing safe, respectful learners. The school’s focus is on delivering learning that engages 21st Century students in meaningful and significant learning experiences.

In 2014, Winmalee implemented a whole school literacy program, based on the “Super 6” comprehension strategies, designed to support students of all abilities in improving their reading and responding. The following stage four program makes reference to the six strategies: Visualise, Summarise/Evaluate, Predict/Infer, Make Connections, Monitor and Question.

The stage 4 History course is taught in its entirety to students throughout year 8, with Geography having been studied in year 7. The aim of year 8 History teachers is to foster a love of History by providing rich, authentic and engaging teaching and learning sequences that successfully develop the historical and thinking skills of all students. Winmalee High School students have a wide range of abilities and learning needs so pedagogy with a focus on inclusivity informs programming and assessment in History.
Stage Four Depth Study 3a: Ancient India

Duration
8 weeks
16 x 75 minute lessons

Inquiry questions
- How, where and when did civilisations develop in ancient India?
- How did ancient Indians live, work and worship?
- How and why did the ancient civilisations of India change over time?
- How did significant individuals influence and shape life in ancient India?

Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HT4-2</th>
<th>Describes major periods of historical time and sequences events, people and societies from the past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HT4-3</td>
<td>Describes and assesses the motives and actions of past individuals and groups in the context of past societies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT4-6</td>
<td>Uses evidence from sources to support historical narratives and explanations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT4-9</td>
<td>Uses a range of historical terms and concepts when communicating an understanding of the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HT4-10</td>
<td>Selects and uses appropriate oral, written, visual and digital forms to communicate about the past</td>
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Historical Concepts

- Continuity and change
- Cause and effect
- Empathetic understanding
- Interpretation
- Influence and legacy (significance)
### Historical Skills

- Analysis and use of sources
- Explanation and communication
- Research
- Comprehension of historical terms and concepts

### Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Student:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Teaching and Learning Strategies</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • describe the geographical setting and natural features of the ancient society  
• explain how the geographical setting and natural features influenced the development of the ancient society | **Sequence One: How, where and when did ancient civilisations develop in India?** |
| | **Make connections:** Have students list words that they already associate with ancient India. |
| | **Monitor:** Ask students to focus on adding new words to describe ancient India to their list while viewing the short film. Discuss the words students have added. |
| | Provide students with a range of images of objects and words associated with ancient India and other ancient civilisations. In teams, students sort the images and words into ‘ancient India’ and ‘other ancient civilisations’. |
| | Teacher reveals the correct answers. |
| | **Adjustment:** *This can be made into a competition to promote engagement and excitement at the beginning of the unit.* |
| | Once the correct answers have been revealed, provide students with a worksheet that contains vocabulary words and images in a two-column table. Provide students with a jumbled list of definitions and statements about each object. Students then match the text to the correct image or term. |
| | **Extension:** *Rather than match the definitions, students to discuss the significance of each term or image to life in ancient India. What assumptions can they make about the civilisation based on these items?* |
| | Display a map of modern day India (it is helpful to extend the map to include Pakistan). Include reference points that students may be able to identify, i.e. the Taj Mahal, The Himalayas, The Ganges, Mumbai (Bollywood). Provide students with a basic copy of this map. |
Now, display a map of India that indicates the ancient civilisations of the Indus Valley. Students shade the area on their map and annotate the names of important ancient sites. During this activity the teacher explains that this area was the site of the first ancient civilisations in India. (Haywood and Millard provide excellent maps - see resource list.)

**Extension:** Have students hypothesise why they think this area was ideal for the growth of civilisation.

**Visualise:** Highlight the features of the Indus Valley: rivers, flood plains, mountains. Show students images of these features. Have students complete the following table, indicating the impact of these features on ancient people:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Benefits for ancient people</th>
<th>Challenges/dangers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Students use print resources (text books, teacher created resources) and the internet to research the features of the ancient city of Mohenjo Daro, to create a ‘postcard from the past’. The postcard needs to have an image of the city on one side and a description of what they would see if visiting the ancient city. (Hamblin provides an excellent photo essay on Mohenjo Daro - see resource list.)

**Adjustment:** The teacher could develop a PowerPoint presentation on Mohenjo Daro, with images and text. Students then use the presentation to inform their postcards.

**Students:**
- outline the main features of the social structures and government of the ancient society, including the role of law and religion
- describe the role of key groups in the society
- describe the everyday life of men, women and children in the society

**Sequence Two: How did ancient Indians live, work and worship?**

Explain to students that around 1500BC, tribal people known as the Aryans arrived in the Indus Valley. They were a warlike people with a strict social hierarchy. When they came to the Indus Valley they enforced their social hierarchy on the original inhabitants.

The beliefs, culture and social framework of the Aryans was passed down orally in a number of stories known as ‘Vedas’. The Vedas would become the basis of Hinduism.

Present an image of Purusha or ‘Cosmic Man’. Recount the Vedic story of how Purusha sacrificed himself to create Aryan society (Rig Veda, 10.90). Label the image with each of the ‘Varnas’ or classes.
Head/Mouth - Brahmans (priests, teachers)
Arms - Kshatriyas (warriors)
Thighs - Vaishya (farmers, merchants, craftspeople)
Feet - Shudras (servants, labourers)

**Predict and Infer:** What does the location of each of Varna’s body parts suggest about the status of these jobs?

Divide students into small groups. Assign each group a particular Varna. Each group creates a poster that includes the rights, responsibilities, freedoms and contribution to society of each Varna. The poster is to include appropriate images. Students can use digital or print resources to do this.

Every student should create a social pyramid, with a section for each Varna. Students conduct a gallery walk to view each group’s poster and record essential information regarding each Varna onto their own social pyramid.

**Make connections:** What are the major differences between our social structure in Australia today and the Varna structure?

Explain to students that the ancient Varna system continues to influence the social structure of India today. Explain to students that over time a fifth caste has developed known as the ‘Untouchables’.

**Predict:** What role, rights and freedoms do you think the untouchables have, based on the title alone?

Watch the United Nations report on the ‘Untouchables’ in India. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LD3HrIRPVhw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LD3HrIRPVhw)

**Summary and Reflection:** In groups students create a tableau depicting the relationship between the different castes. Each student is assigned a caste (preferably the one that they researched to create the above poster), plus another student to act as narrator. The students develop a scene in which the castes are interacting together to show hierarchy. The narrator explains to the class what is happening in the scene, each caste and what they are doing. The teacher may like to provide simple props but this is not essential.
Present students with a range of primary and secondary sources (written and visual) that present information regarding daily life in ancient India, for example:
- Houses
- Clothing
- Work
- Laws
- Towns.

**Infer:** The sources are set up in stations around the room. Students walk around the room in pairs. They are given one minute to view each source. After viewing, students suggest one thing the source could tell an historian about life in ancient India and write it next to the source. They cannot repeat something another group has written (to encourage critical and deep thinking).

**Summary and reflection:** Present students with informative statements regarding life in ancient India under the headings housing, work, clothing, towns and laws. For each section they need to explain how one of the sources they studied in the previous exercise demonstrates this aspect of life in ancient India.

**Adjustment:** Rather than provide source evidence for each aspect of life, the teacher may set comprehension questions based on the statements provided, then discuss which sources may match each statement as a class.

**Research task:** (may be used as an assignment)

Students research the religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Indians. Students are given one of the following:
- Hinduism
- Buddhism
- Jainism

Students can use websites, textbooks and encyclopedias to find information on the following aspects of the religion:
- Origins
- Gods
- Central beliefs
- Rituals

**Extension:** Students present this information in the form of a Piktochart diagram (www.piktochart.com). Their Piktochart should conclude with a reference list. In preparation for this, the teacher should model and guide students in the selection of appropriate and reliable sources of information and how to correctly reference a source. Teachers should provide examples of how to do this. The completed Piktocharts can be printed and displayed in the classroom.

**Adjustment:** The teacher may decide to complete the task with a web 2.0 tool or computer program such as Publisher that the students are familiar with rather than introducing Piktochart.
### Students:
- explain how the beliefs and values of the ancient society are evident in death and funerary customs

### Questions:
The teacher devises as series of ‘Here, Hidden and Head’ questions, for each of the images and text, for students to respond to (for explanation see [http://www.mooreteachingtips.com/](http://www.mooreteachingtips.com/)).

Model to students the level of answer required for each type of question in the three levels. Students should be challenged to question their immediate responses to the customs and instead try to understand the connection between practices and ancient religious and cultural beliefs.

### Extension:
Discuss the death and funerary customs in modern Australian society and what this reveals about our beliefs and social values.

### Students:
- identify contacts and conflicts of people within the ancient Asian world
- outline significant contacts with other societies (trade, warfare and conquest)
- explain the consequences of these contacts with other societies, e.g. developments in trade, the spread of philosophies and religious beliefs and the emergence of empires
- explain the legacy of the chosen Asian society

### Sequence Three: How and why did the ancient civilisations of India contact and conflict with other societies?

Present the students with a timeline of ancient India, highlighting major events and empires from c.3500 BCE to c.550 CE

Shade these major periods, each a different colour:
- Indus Valley (Harappan) Civilisation
- Aryan Period
- Mauryan Empire
- Satavahana Empire
- Gupta Empire

### Predict and Infer:
What does it mean for a civilisation to ‘rise and fall’? For what reasons do you think various civilisations and empires in ancient India ‘rose and fell’?

Introduce students to the concepts of ‘conflicts and contact’ in the ancient world and brainstorm how these major events changed and developed ancient civilisations dramatically.

### Make connections:
Ask students to recount examples of important conflicts and contacts from other civilisations that they have previously studied.

Provide students with a fact sheet, or use a textbook, with information regarding major conflicts and trade contacts of ancient India.

### Extension:
The teacher may also like to present students with examples of key spices that were traded through India and discuss their importance.

### Monitoring:
Read through the fact sheet as a class. While reading students highlight the following and add a colour key:
First Colour - Conflicts
Second Colour - Consequences/effects of conflicts
Third Colour - Trade contacts
Fourth Colour - Effect of trade contacts

Summarising:
Using their highlighted points, students complete the following sentences by turning each one into a paragraph;

a. A major conflict that occurred was the...
b. The results of this conflict were...
c. The conflict affected India in the following ways...
d. Evidence suggests that ancient Indians had trade contact with...
e. This trade contact resulted in...

Adjustment: The teacher may choose to model completion of the first paragraph and complete some as a class in a joint construction to support learners who find writing difficult. If necessary, the exercise could also be made into a cloze passage.

Extension: Rather than complete the guided paragraphs, high performing students could answer the following essay question based on their reading: “Explain the impact of conflict and trade contacts on life in ancient India.”

To inform students of the legacy of ancient India, view the video documentary What the Ancients Knew: India. While watching the documentary, students complete a graphic organiser that summarises the inventions of ancient India and the influence these inventions have on modern life.

Adjustment: The teacher may provide a scaffolded graphic organiser that already has some points to act as models and guides for student responses.

Extension: Students may design their own graphic organiser.

Evaluation: Once the film and graphic organiser are completed, students rank the inventions from most to least influential and justify their choices.

Sequence Four: How did significant individuals influence and shape life in ancient India?

Assign students in small groups significant individuals such as:
- Chandragupta Maurya
- Ashoka
- Budhayana
- Aryabhata
- Charaka
- Patanjali
- Siddartha Gautama.

Students research their assigned individual and devise a mini
documentary (approx. 5 mins) of their life, achievements and legacy. The documentary can be created using the web tool Educreations (www.educreations.com), which allows students to add their own ‘voice-over’ commentary and annotate images. The presentation should have appropriate images, source references and text.

For each presentation, students should develop a series of ‘Here, Hidden and Head’ questions (no more than 6 based on the information given) for their peers to answer. The last question is set by the teacher: “Based on the information you have been given, explain the importance of the significant individual to ancient India”.

Once the presentations are completed, in their small groups students are to view at least two other presentations, complete the questions and submit to the teacher for marking.

Resources

Books
Chatterjee, M., *Eyewitness: India*, DK Children, 2002

Websites
Public Broadcasting Service [http://www.pbs.org/thestoryofindia/](http://www.pbs.org/thestoryofindia/)
The British Museum [www.ancientindia.co.uk](http://www.ancientindia.co.uk)
Moore Teaching Tips [http://www.mooreteachingtips.com](http://www.mooreteachingtips.com)

Webtools
[www.educreations.com](http://www.educreations.com)
[www.piktochart.com](http://www.piktochart.com)

Video
| Science Channel, *What the Ancients Knew: India*, 2005 |

**Suggested assessment**

**Virtual Museum**

**Outcomes:** HT 4 - 2, 6, 9 &10

**Task Summary:**

Students research and choose a number of primary source objects, sites and artefacts that provide information about ancient India. In their virtual museum students provide an image of each primary source. Each image is then hyperlinked to text written by the student that explains:

- What the object is, what it was used for, provenance and age
- What information can be inferred or derived from the artefact and what it suggests about life in ancient India.

**NOTE:** There are a number of ways that the virtual museum can be created. The method of construction should be chosen by the teacher, based on student ability, access to the internet/software and time constraints.

**Suggested options:**

a. The teacher can provide a virtual museum PowerPoint template. Excellent templates can be found here: [http://christykeeler.com/EducationalVirtualMuseums.html](http://christykeeler.com/EducationalVirtualMuseums.html)  
This website also has outstanding examples of student created virtual museums.

b. Students can also create their own interactive exhibition template using advanced features of PowerPoint. Instructions on how to do this can be found here: [http://christykeeler.com/EducationalVirtualMuseums.html](http://christykeeler.com/EducationalVirtualMuseums.html)

c. Students can create their own virtual museum using a number of web 2.0 tools such as Prezi and Educreations.