

Ancient and Medieval History & Culture

for
Civil Services Examinations



Australia • Brazil • India • Mexico • Singapore • United Kingdom • United States



**Ancient and
Medieval History &
Culture
for
Civil Services
Examinations**

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PREFACE

If you ever happen to be walking down the streets of places where preparation for Civil Services is done, it will not be uncommon for you to come across or make the acquaintance of ‘several’ starry eyed yet completely committed IAS aspirants. Yet, ‘several’ would be an understatement given the number that runs into lakhs! But when we say committed, we mean it; these young men and women are ready to sacrifice almost all their youthful follies including sleep, comfort and even a semblance of a normal life to achieve one goal—IAS!

Sadly, this dream remains a distant one for a large majority of these aspirants in spite of the endless hours of study and sleep forsaken nights. When we tried to unravel WHY, the responses were almost synchronous:

“The subject was so vast that there was too much to cover and I could never complete it.”

“I read so much but could not retain it.”

“I studied something but was quizzed on something else in the exam.”

“I kept reading but did not attempt to solve the past year papers or give a mock exam.”

“Subscribing to several sources of information/preparation such as a coaching class, the internet and books was futile; after all there are only 24 hours in a day.”

“My almirah was full of too many books, but I could barely complete a few.”

And while the candid answers stated above clearly gave us a challenging problem—we did not attempt to solve it. We instead focused on a holistic solution—the synchronizing of effort i.e. Learning and Positive Results!

It is with this aim that we—PrepMate collaborated with Cengage India—are continuously striving to develop a comprehensive learning model that is a combination of print and digital product so as to effectively address the issues that most aspirants grapple with.

About the Print–Digital Learning Model

The learning model initiates the process with a series of books targeted at cracking the UPSC exam. The books stand apart from others available because of the following unique features:

- We use a conceptual approach, simple language, explain concepts with diagrams, cite sufficient examples, pose pertinent questions in a reader friendly format—to ensure that the contents of these books can be read and assimilated in a time-bound manner.
- The content is specially designed taking into account the trend in UPSC exams in recent years. We have also included the previous years’ questions (with solutions) after every chapter.

- The Practice Questions at the end of each chapter are exhaustive to provide sufficient preparation to crack the exams.
- The book series also contains additional information on 'how to write answers' along with what your approach should be for the mains—here too we have explained by solving questions and showing you the 'preferred answering style'.
- We have tried to encapsulate all that is required to be learnt for a particular subject into a single book.

Usually, an aspirant purchases a book, but never gets a chance to contact the authors. We believe that the contact among aspirants and authors is important for learning and motivation of the aspirants. That is precisely why we have developed an application and a web portal to answer your queries and provide you with continuous support during your preparation.

It is through this digital component that we provide the following services:

1. Videos covering important and difficult topics
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5. Regular updates
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7. Monthly current affairs magazine
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9. Educational videos
10. Previous years' papers and solutions
11. Free study materials

Looking forward to being your partner in the journey towards achieving your dream!

In case you have any specific queries or constructive feedback you can always share the same with us via e-mail at info@prepmate.in.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“We cannot accomplish all that we want to do without working together”

The complete UPSC learning module by PrepMate has been the culmination of more than a year of ideation and brain storming with a lot of people. It is only natural that we should gratefully acknowledge their valuable contribution sincerely. Nirmal Singla, Ramnik Jindal, Sharat Gupta, Subhash Singla and Vijay Singla—thank you for your continuous support and motivation.

We would also like to thank Maninder Mann, Rajinder Paul Singla and Sundeep Singh Garha who helped us in first conceiving and later developing the synergistic print–digital model of the project—without you we would be missing our competitive edge.

Implementation of strategy can more often than not prove challenging and the development of the digital component did prove to be tougher than we had envisaged. But our technical team was focused on enabling our dream and delivering the best and they surely did. With a specific mention to the testing of both the website and the application, we would like to thank Parth, Tanvir and Surabhi who did their job patiently and effectively in spite of the road blocks.

Our videos and books could not have been possible without the help of our graphics design team—Sandeep, Manjeet, Sukhjinder, Roshni and Uday toiled endlessly to ensure the best designed audio-visuals.

It is an understatement to state that the sourcing and reviewing of existing content and the generation of missing content was the most crucial part of this project and the backbone of our Learning Module. This would just not have been possible without our team of content contributors: Isha Gupta, Shelly Jindal, Gurdeep, Surabhi, Shantnu, Tanvir, Anmol, Kriti, Tanya, Sahil, Suraj and Dilshad, who left no stone unturned in their pursuit of excellence—your pivotal contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

We would like to extend a special thanks to our staff members Geeta, Jitender, Manoj and Pinki, who helped us in the most laborious job i.e. typing through the several manuscripts of our books—your contribution is sincerely appreciated.

It is imperative that we thank Isha Gupta, Shelly Jindal, Anjum Diwan, Rajesh Goel, Shikha Sharma and Ravinder Indoura, for their critical yet constructive feedback that identified and subsequently rectified the errors that crept in during the development process. We will never be able to thank them enough for this—you fortified the very foundation of our model.

We sincerely acknowledge the initiatives and support from the entire editorial team of Cengage India in the process of publishing this book.

PrepMate

LIST OF VIDEOS

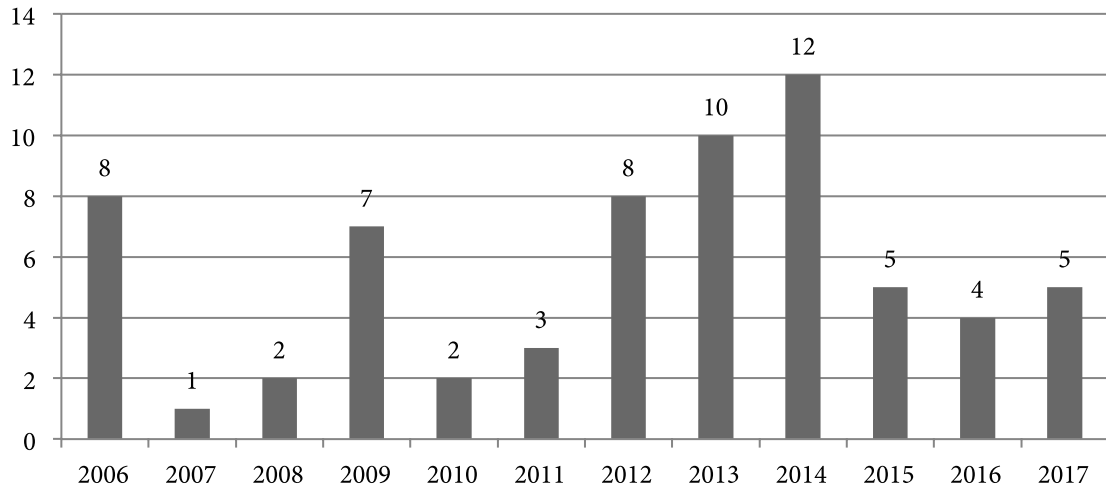
1	How to prepare Ancient and Medieval History & Culture?
2	Indus Valley Civilization
3	Religion and Philosophy
4	The Mahajanapadas
5	Mauryan Period
6	Gupta Empire
7	Delhi Sultanate
8	Mughals
9	Styles of Temple Architecture
10	Classical Dances

Chapter-wise Break Up of Previous Year's Questions (Prelims)

[illegible]

Chapter name	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2007	Total
Culture													
18 Science and Technology						1				1		1	3
19 Art and Architecture	1		2	2	2	1			3		1	3	15
20 Paintings			1		1			1					3
21 Classical Dance				1	1	1							3
22 Classical Music						1							1
23 Folk Arts	1			3					1				5
24 Miscellaneous			1	2									3
Total	5	4	5	12	10	8	3	2	7	2	1	8	67

Number of Questions Asked Under Section Ancient and Medieval History & Culture



Unit - 1

ANCIENT HISTORY

Chapter

1

PREHISTORIC PERIOD



Why Is This Period Known As Prehistoric Period?

The word “Prehistoric” is a misnomer. Nothing can predate history itself, which starts from the very moment the universe started. Then, why prehistoric?

This is because human history is assumed to start when written records started becoming available. In other words, invention of writing marked the start of human history. Since writing had not been invented during these times and the only available sources of information are fossils and tools, a clear account of the events of this period has not been recorded. Hence, this period is called Prehistoric or the period that occurred before written records started appearing.

Though the Universe is 13.8 billion years old, yet the Earth appeared only 4.5 billion years ago. The earliest human fossils have been found in Africa dating about 4.2 million years. Early humans arrived in India from Africa more than a million years ago. The stone tools found in Pallavaram, Chennai and Attirampakkam village in Tiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu, date back prior to 500000 years.

The Prehistoric period has been broadly differentiated into three subcategories namely:

1. Palaeolithic/Paleolithic age
2. Mesolithic age
3. Neolithic age

1 THE PALAEOLITHIC AGE (500000–10000 BC)

The Palaeolithic age is characterized by stone tools used by the early men. These tools were made of rock material such as quartzite and were sharpened by chipping techniques (cut or break from a hard material) which were primitive and crude. These tools were used for everyday activities like hunting, cutting, etc. Due to the use of quartzite in tool making, the early man is also known as “Quartzite men.”

With no knowledge of agriculture or construction, the early man in this age was essentially a hunter/gatherer and wanderer. He made his home in natural caverns that were near to a source of water, hunted prey or gathered fruits and other edible items.

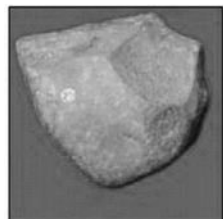
The Palaeolithic age has been further divided into three subcultures. This categorization takes into account two factors: The crudeness of stone tools used by the people and the prevailing climatic conditions. The subcultures are:

1. Lower Palaeolithic Culture
2. Middle Palaeolithic Culture
3. Upper Palaeolithic Culture

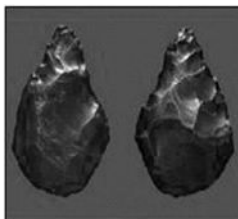
The Lower Palaeolithic Culture (500000–60000 BC)

This age mainly saw the use of crude tools like hand axes, choppers, and cleavers. The tools were not very sharp. Most of the tools were made up of quartzite and chert (a hard, dark, and opaque rock composed of silica), while some tools were made from basalt. This period saw the development of Soan and Madras regions. The major deposits of these tools were found throughout the Indian subcontinent. For example,

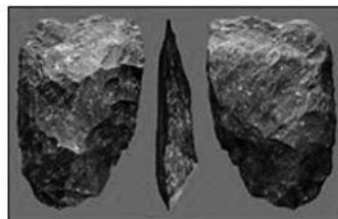
- Soan river valley (a tributary of Indus), Pakistan
- Attirampakkam (near Chennai) and Pallavaram, Tamil Nadu
- Belan river valley, Uttar Pradesh



Chopper



Handaxe



Cleaver

Tools of Lower Palaeolithic Era

No deposits were found in the alluvial plains of Indus, Ganga, and Brahmaputra. This may be attributed to non-availability of strong material to make tools.

This period was dominated by Hominids, who walked on four limbs and had a horizontal spine. However, evidence of emergence of *Homo erectus* has also been put forward. This period coincided with the greater part of the ice age and witnessed a cold climate. There are also some evidence of use and control of fire by humans during this period.

The Middle Palaeolithic Culture (60000–50000 BC)

This culture was characterized by tools that were smaller, thinner, sharper, and much more refined than the ones used in the lower period. The basic materials for making the tools were same and new materials like chalcedony (form of silica), agate (a mineral of quartz family), jasper (an opaque reddish-brown semiprecious stone), etc., were also used. New tools were introduced, such as scrapers (a tool used for removing dirt), borers (a tool for boring), blade tools, etc. Flakes were removed or

peeled off from large stones to make tools. As a result, the Middle Palaeolithic industries are often called flake tool industries.



Flake tools

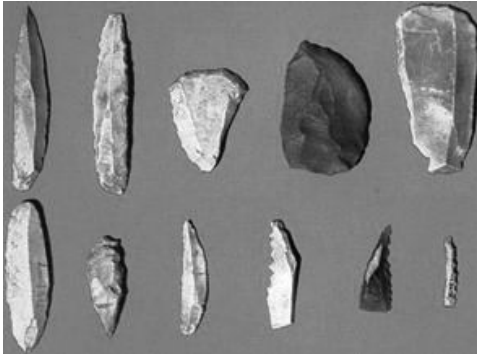
The main deposit sites were found at:

- Nevasa in Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra
- Hunsgi, Yadgir district in Karnataka
- Son and Narmada river valleys in Central India
- Belan river valley, Uttar Pradesh
- Luni valley, Rajasthan

The period was marked with reductions in temperature. The period was dominated by *Homo erectus* who could, like modern humans, stand on two limbs.

The Upper Palaeolithic Culture (50000–10000 BC)

This period was marked by tools that were still lighter and smaller than the ones used during the middle period. The tools now included blades and burins (a handheld tool used for engraving in metal or wood) and scrapers. This period saw development of flint (ark-colored variety of chert that produces sparks when struck with hard object) and bone tool industry. An increase in tools made from bones, such as harpoons and needles, was also recorded during this period.

**Flint tools****Bone tools**

The main sites that contained deposits are:

- Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh
- Bhimbetka caves, Madhya Pradesh
- Sanghav caves, Afghanistan
- Belan and Son valleys (Chopani Mando is an important site where fossil of animal bones have been found)

The Upper Palaeolithic age coincided with last phase of the ice age when climate became comparatively warm. The period also marks the appearance of modern men (*Homo sapiens*).

Earliest records of paintings correspond to this period. The rock art of Bhimbetka began in Upper Palaeolithic culture.

Ostrich egg shells were discovered at over 40 sites in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Maharashtra. This discovery shows that ostrich (a bird adapted to arid climate) was widely distributed in Western India during the Upper Palaeolithic culture.



The Belan river valley in Uttar Pradesh and the Narmada river valley in Madhya Pradesh have been witness to all the three ages of Prehistoric period, i.e., Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic.

2 THE MESOLITHIC AGE (TRANSITION PERIOD)

Not much is known about this age except that it was a transition stage between the Palaeolithic age and the Neolithic age. The early man assumed the role of a hunter/gatherer. The period was characterized by the “Microliths” which were small stone tools (0.5–1 inch in length) and were refined to a great extent. Man continued to hunt in the Mesolithic age but the prey were now smaller and faster animals. This could have been the most probable cause for developing smaller and more agile weapons. Small sized tools allowed them to make fish hooks to catch fishes. Bow and arrow were first used in this age.



Small stone tools

Flora and fauna flourished in warmer climates and allowed early humans to migrate to other areas. At the later stages of Mesolithic age, early men started practicing primitive agriculture (slash and burn). This, combined with the domestication of animals, formed a hybrid type of agriculture. The first cultivated crops were wheat and barley. The animals to be domesticated in the first place were dog, cattle, sheep, and goat. Animals were domesticated not only for their meat, but also for a number of other purposes like transportation, hides, milk, and agricultural assistance. Important sites of this time period are:

- Adamgarh in Madhya Pradesh and Bagor in Rajasthan (earliest proofs of animal domestication)
- Sambhar Salt Lake in Rajasthan (early proofs of plant cultivation in nearby areas)

Some important changes in society were observed in Mesolithic age. Due to the discovery of agriculture, temporary settlements began cropping up near the slash and burn sites. The structures were light and could not bear the brunt of harsh weather. Proper clothing made out of animal skin was first observed during Mesolithic age. Temporary settlements also resulted in systematic disposal of the dead. The dead were buried in a grave along with offerings, such as microliths, shells, eatables, etc. Evidence of such burials is found at Bagor (Rajasthan), Langhnaj (Gujarat), Bhimbetka (Madhya Pradesh), etc.

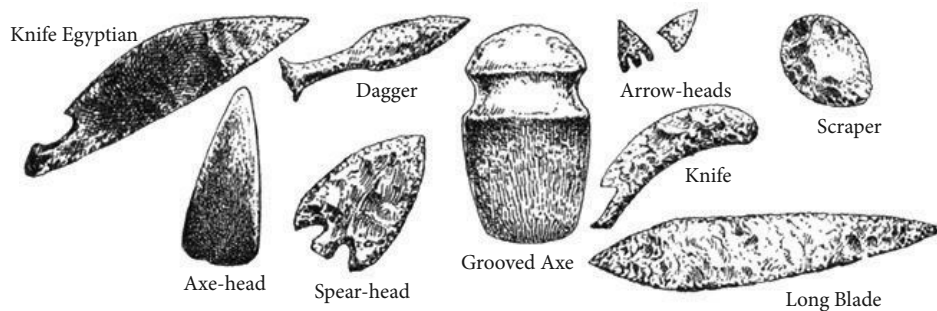


Although a primitive form of cultivation was observed during the Mesolithic age, true cultivation did not start until the advent of Neolithic age.

3 THE NEOLITHIC AGE (10000–4500 BC)

With the ushering in of the Neolithic or New Stone Age, a remarkable progress was observed in prehistoric India. A significant change was observed in the culture, tools, economy, and lifestyle of people at that time.

The stone tools included knives, daggers, arrow heads, long blade, spear head, grooved axe, etc. These tools were meant for specialized economic activities. These tools were either completely or partly polished or grinded or both. Excavations also revealed some bone objects and ornaments like arrow heads, combs, pendants, needles, hammers, etc.



Tools of Neolithic age

With sufficient experience and knowledge gained over time, man began leading a settled life and started practicing agriculture on a permanent basis. Bones of wild animals like elephants, rhino, stag, aquatic fishes, and turtles have also been discovered which implies that man did not give up hunting all together.

Due to permanent agricultural fields, man began building stronger and more practical structures for shelter. These structures were either wattle and daub structures (wattle and daub, in building construction, method of constructing walls in which vertical wooden stakes, or wattles, are woven with horizontal twigs and branches, and then daubed with clay or mud), or were pit dwellings (partly dug into the ground). The screen walls of huts were made from split bamboo and reed (a tall, slender-leaved plant of the grass family). Other structures included hearths (fireplace), pits, silos (grain storage), etc. It should be noted that there is no evidence of the use of bricks, baked, or unbaked from any site.

Due to ample food availability, occupations diversified. Pottery was invented during this period. Early specimens of pottery were believed to be handmade, with coarse and poorly baked clay. The pottery had cord (thin, flexible string, or rope) made designs/impressions on the outside. Subsequently, slow wheel method emerged and earthen wares became finer and properly finished. The vessels were then baked in fire. The post-firing painting styles were executed in red ochre (clay which appeared red due to presence of iron) and consisted of criss-cross lines or concentric circles. Scratching on the surface by sharp tools, resulting in geometric patterns, has also been observed.

Regional Distribution of Neolithic Cultures

A host of cultures existed during the Neolithic period which differed in their social and cultural practices. They were broadly classified into following groups:

Northwest India**Mehrgarh**

- Site on the bank of Bolan river in plains of Baluchistan, Pakistan
- Oldest site, earliest evidence of agriculture based on wheat, cotton, and barley and domestication of animals like sheep and goat (8000–6000 BC)

Kili Gul Mohammad

- Quetta valley, Baluchistan
- Wattle and daub houses
- Evolution from crude, handmade pottery to fine wheelmade black and red pottery

North India**Burzahom**

- Kashmir
- Lakeside pit dwellings
- Peculiar burial system where a person was buried with a dog or wolf, possibly domesticated by the person in his life

Gufkral/Gofkral

- South East of Srinagar
- Pit dwellings with complete absence of pottery
- Agriculture was practiced from early stages. Evidence of wheat, barley, and lentils has been found
- Copper hair pin from later phase resembling those of Indus Valley civilization

Kanishkapura

- Modern Kanispur, Baramulla district, Kashmir
- Discovery of copper objects like bangle, nose pins, needle, etc



The discovery of copper objects suggests some sort of contact between the Kashmir Neolithic and the Harappan civilization.

Central India and mid-Gangetic basin**Koldihwa and Mahagara**

- Both in Belan valley, Uttar Pradesh
- Oldest evidence of rice cultivation in form of charred (burnt) seeds and husk used in pottery (5500–4500 BC)

Chirand

- On the confluence of Sarayu and Ganga rivers in Bihar
- Bamboo and mud plaster huts, circular or semicircular in shape



Chopani Mando in Belan valley, Uttar Pradesh is the place where the earliest evidence of the use of pottery has been found.

Eastern India**Golbai Sasan**

- Banks of river Mandakini, Khurda, Odisha
- Handmade pottery with cord and tortoise shell impressions

North-east India**Daojali Hading**

- North Cachar Hills, Assam
- Tools made of stone and wood. Handmade dull red stamped pottery and plain red pottery
- Practiced agriculture and prepared processed food
- Jadeite Stone possibly from China

South India

- Spread over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, South India has produced the largest number of Neolithic settlements which is attributed to the easy availability of stones in the area
- People of South India were familiar with agriculture and practiced it for subsistence. They were the first to cultivate Rai/Ragi

The most interesting feature in these settlements is the presence of “Ash Mounds” close to the habitation sites indicating presence of animals. Ash mounds are heaps of ash produced by the burning of cow dung. They are speculated to be the remains of a ritual burning of animal waste. Ceremonies like these are observed in South India even in the present times. There have been evidences of Lapidary art in the south. Lapidary art involves cutting and polishing gems.

Burial system existed. Some graves were found to contain goods like stone axes, blades, spouted pot (watery pot), and milking vessel. Pottery urns were used to bury infants. Graves were situated among the houses.

Utnur

- Located in Telangana, presence of hoof impression in ash mounds
- Evidence of use of date palm wood

Budihal

- Located in Karnataka
- Four distinct habitation localities
- Butchering floor

Hallur

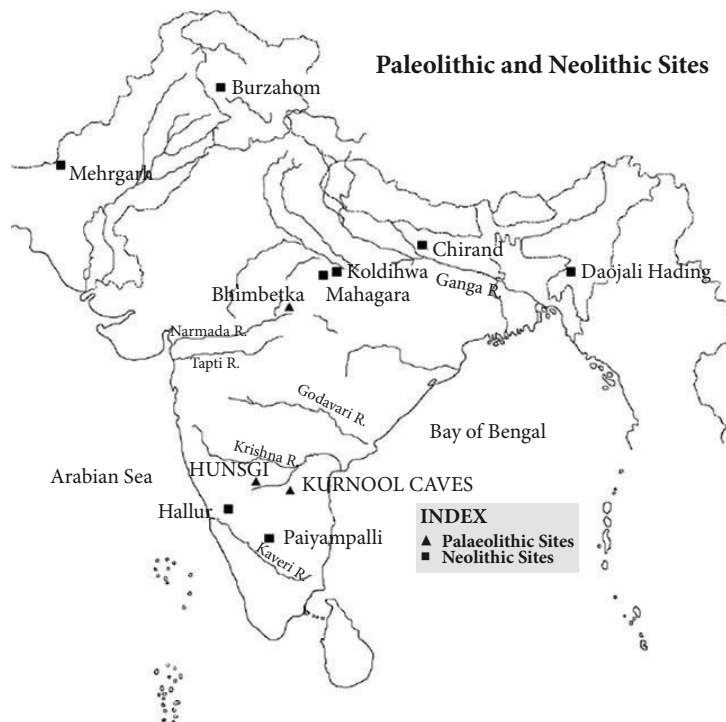
- Located in Karnataka
- Weapons, such as arrowheads, daggers, and knives have been found
- Pottery in this period was generally black-and-red ware with lines and patterns in white drawn over them

Paiyampalli

- Vellore, Tamil Nadu
- Pit dwellings (oval, circular) cut into natural soil
- Evidence of green gram and horse gram

Maski

- Located in Karnataka
- Paintings that have been crayoned rather than being painted. Subjects included cattle, deer, tigers, elephants (occasionally with riders), human figures, etc.



Practice Questions

1. The "Quartzite Men" were popular in which age?
 - (a) Paleolithic Age
 - (b) Mesolithic Age
 - (c) Neolithic Age
 - (d) Middle Paleolithic Age
2. Which region has been witness to all the three ages of Stone Age?
 - (a) Chambal River Valley
 - (b) Narmada River Valley
 - (c) Sutlej River Valley
 - (d) Godavari River Valley
3. What was the occupation of Paleolithic people?
 - (a) Agriculture
 - (b) Horticulture
 - (c) Ranching
 - (d) Hunting and gathering food
4. Consider the following statements:
 1. Mesolithic age people mainly used tools which were about one foot in length.
2. The tools of the Mesolithic people were known as Microliths. Which of the above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Consider the following statements:
 1. The people of all sites in Rajasthan during the Neolithic age were aware of bricks.
 2. The earliest evidence of Rice cultivation has come from Belan Valley.
 Which of the above statements is/are correct?
 - (a) 1 only
 - (b) 2 only
 - (c) Both 1 and 2
 - (d) Neither 1 nor 2



ANSWER KEYS

Practice Questions

- | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1. (a) | 2. (b) | 3. (d) | 4. (b) | 5. (b) |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|

Chapter

2

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

1 INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION



Indus Valley civilization is one of the oldest civilizations, which is believed to exist from 3300 BC to 1300 BC. Indus Valley civilization is called so because the civilization emerged around Indus and its tributaries. Some of the settlements also emerged around Ghaggar–Hakra river. Indus Valley civilization is also referred as the Harappan Civilization because the first city to be excavated (digging up) was Harappa. It was discovered in 1921 at the present day Harappa by the archaeologists Dr Raj Bahadur Daya Ram Sahni and John Marshall. At about the same time, R.D. Banerjee excavated the site of Mohenjodaro in Sindh. Large-scale excavations were carried out at Mohenjodaro under the supervision of Marshall in 1931.

The people of this civilization mainly used bronze in their equipment and thus, this time period is referred to as the Bronze age (bronze is an alloy of copper and tin) or Chalcolithic age.

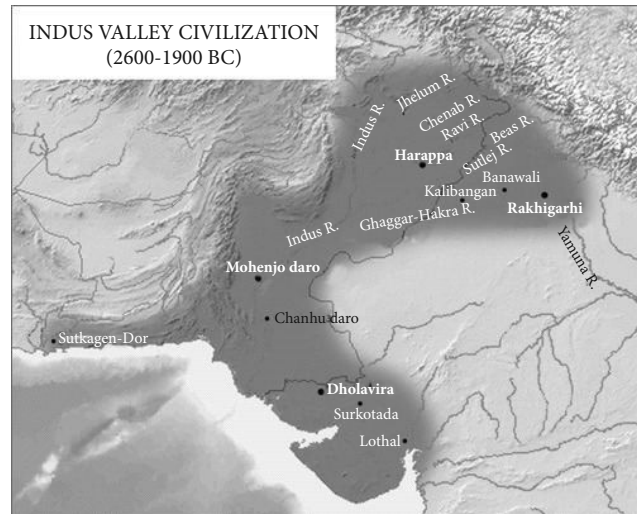
Geographical Extent

The geographical extent of Indus Valley civilization is bigger than ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. It rose from the Northwest part of the Indian subcontinent and spread Southward and Eastward. It extended from Jammu in the North to Narmada Valley in the South, and from the Makran coast of Baluchistan in the West to Yamuna in the East.

The Indus Valley civilization is classified into three phases:

1. The early phase from 3300 BC to 2600 BC
2. The mature phase (when the civilization was at its peak) from 2600 BC to 1900 BC
3. The late phase from 1900 BC to 1300 BC

So far, nearly 1400 Harappan sites are known in the subcontinent. These belong to early, mature, and late phases of the Harappan culture. However, the number of the sites belonging to the mature phase is limited. Of these, limited sites can be regarded as towns. These towns are Harappa in Pakistan Punjab; Mohenjodaro (literally means Mound of the Dead Men) Chanhudaro in Sindh, Pakistan; Lothal, Dholavira, and Surkotada in Gujarat; Banawali and Rakhigarhi in Haryana; and Kalibangan in Rajasthan.



Town Planning and Urban Architecture

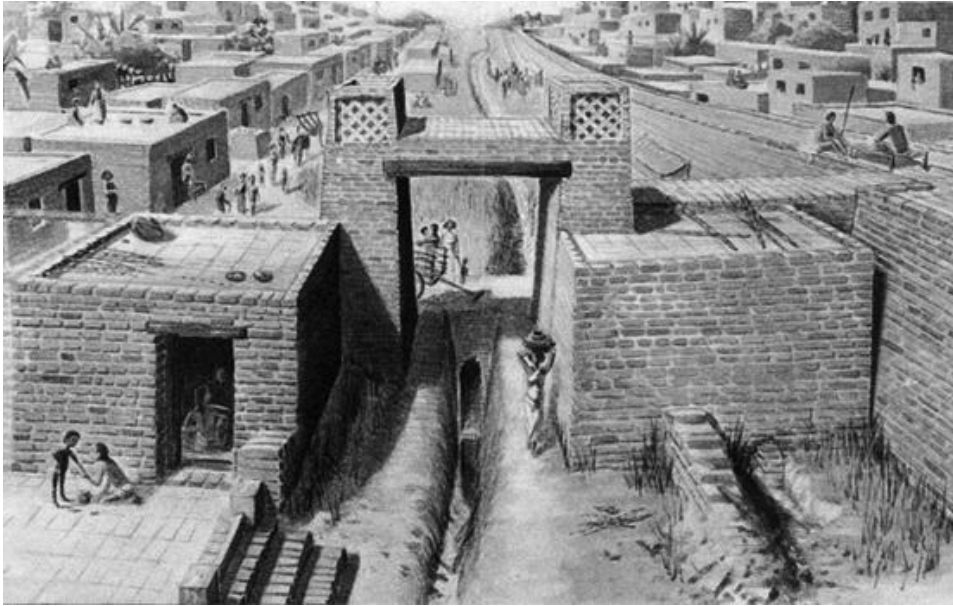
The ruins of the towns of Indus Valley civilization show signs of remarkable town planning and excellent sanitation system. The towns were usually divided into two parts—citadel, which was constructed on an elevated place and was fortified, and the remaining town. The citadel was built on top of a mound of bricks almost 12 meters high. A large staircase ran up the side of this mound.



Citadel mound at Mohenjodaro

Several large buildings and structures on the citadel mound suggest that this area may have been used for public gatherings, religious activities, or important administrative activities. Small buildings which were probably homes do exist on the citadel mound; however, they are not common.

The houses inhabited by the common people followed grid system. The streets used to run from North to South and East to West, intersecting each other at right angles. The drainage system was very impressive. Every house had its own courtyard and bathroom. Drains from bathroom were connected to street drains. The street drains were equipped with manholes. Perhaps, no other civilization gave so much attention to health and cleanliness as Harappan did.



Town planning

There were no stone built houses in the Indus cities. Most of the houses were built of burnt bricks. Unburnt sun-dried bricks were also used in those portions of the houses where the chances of contamination through the water were least. The bricks used to be of the same size. The staircases of big buildings were solid and the rooftops were flat.

Some of the major structures which were found in this civilization are “Great Bath” in Mohenjodaro and “Granary” at Harappa.

Great Bath

The “Great Bath” is a public water tank. The tank measures approximately 12 meters North–South and 7 meters wide, with a maximum depth of 2.4 meters. Two wide staircases lead down into the tank from the North to the South.

The floor of the tank is water tight due to finely fitted bricks and use of gypsum plaster on the edges of bricks. To make the tank even more water tight, a thick layer of bitumen (natural tar) was laid along the sides of the tank and presumably also beneath the floor. Two large doors lead into the complex from the South and other access was from the North and East. A series of rooms are located along the Eastern edge of the building and in one room there is a well that may have supplied some of the water needed to fill the tank. Rainwater also may have been collected for these purposes, but no inlet drains have been found.

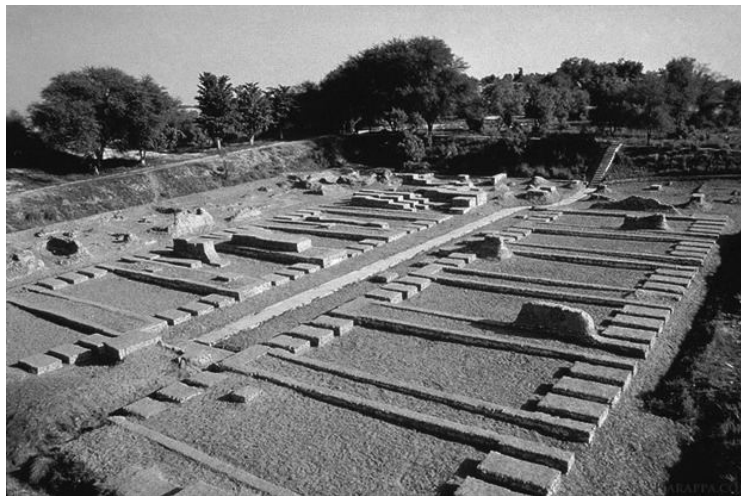
Most scholars agree that this tank would have been used for special religious functions, where water was used to purify and confer the well-being on the bathers.



The Great Bath, Mohenjodaro

Granary

There are evidences of great granary at Harappa. There were two room apartments with a common courtyard which was attached to the granary. The workers or slaves used to live in these apartments who threshed the grains and preserved the grains in the granary. The remains of wheat and barley have been found in these working floors.



Granary, Harappa

Agriculture

Agriculture is believed to be the main occupation of the Indus Valley people. The discovery of granary lends support to this belief. Most of the agriculture took place during winter. The Indus Valley people produced wheat, barley, rai, peas, sesamum, mustard, rice, and cotton. The Indus Valley people were the earliest people to produce cotton. The Greeks called it Sindon (derived from Sindh) because cotton was first produced in this area.

The important crops cultivated were wheat and barley. The evidence of wheat and barley has been found at Mohenjodaro. In the early times, the region of Indus Valley possessed high natural vegetation. The ruins show no signs of canal irrigation. Iron was discovered around 1000 BC and thus, people of this region used wooden plough.

The houses were constructed at a slightly raised platform, as compared to the streets. The raised houses may be an indication of regular floods in rainy season. Thus, agriculture was severely hampered during summers.

Domestication of Animals

Although the Harappans practiced agriculture, animals were kept on a large scale. Dogs, cats, oxen, buffaloes, goats, sheep, elephants, and pigs were domesticated. The humped bull was favorite among Harappans. Asses and camels were used to carry loads.

Earlier, it was believed that horses were not tamed by the Indus Valley people but later on the bones and skeletons of horses were found in some regions of the civilization. This made the historians believe that perhaps at the later stage of the civilization, horses were domesticated. The existence of wild animals like rhinoceros, tiger, and bison has also been confirmed.

Trade

Indus Valley civilization was a trading society. Instead of metal money, they followed barter system. Traders had their own seals. They used a uniform script, and standard weights and measures.

There is evidence that the Harappans carried trade within India as well as outside Indian subcontinent. Trade links have been found up till Mesopotamia and Turkey. The Mesopotamian records refer to Indus region as Meluha.

The Harappan cities did not possess the necessary raw material for the commodities they produced and hence depended upon important metals and nonmetals imported from distant places.

Main exports were agricultural products and finished products, such as cotton goods, carnelian beads, pottery, shell, and bone inlays.

Weights and Measures

Numerous articles which were used as weights have been found. The weights were in multiples of 16, such as 16, 32, 48, 64, 160, 320, and 640.

The Harappans also followed measurement system. The length of foot was 13.2 inches and of cubit was 18 inches or 44 cm. Several sticks with measure marks, including one made of bronze, have been discovered.

Religious Practices

There is no evidence of temple or any other religious structure except the Great Bath and the fire altars at Kalibangan and Lothal.

On the basis of the material remains, it can be deduced that religious practices of Harappan people had many features of the later Hinduism, such as worship of the Mother Goddess, Pashupati Siva, animal worship, tree worship, etc.

A terracotta figure of Mother Goddess has been found at Harappa. A plant is shown growing out of the womb of a woman. The figure represents the goddess of earth.



Terracotta figure of Mother Goddess

The male deity has been depicted with two horns, sitting in a cross-legged position (sitting posture of a yogi). He is surrounded by four wild animals, an elephant, a tiger, a rhinoceros, and a buffalo, and beneath his feet appear two deers. This deity appears similar to Siva of later Hinduism.



Pashupati seal

Moreover, phallic worship was an important element of Harappan culture. Numerous cylindrical cone-shaped stones were found which shows that people worshipped lingam—a symbol of lord Shiva.

There is evidence to prove that people of the Indus Valley civilization also worshipped trees and animals. On one seal, picture of a deity is represented in the midst of the branches of the peepal tree. Peepal tree is worshipped even to this day.

Animals were also worshipped. The most important of them is the humped bull. The inhabitants of the Indus region thus worshipped gods in the form of trees, animals, and human beings.

Burial Practices

Cemeteries at various sites have proven particular burial practices of the Harappans with slight variations. For instance, three types of practices have been found at Mohenjodaro:

1. Complete burials (burial of the whole body along with the grave goods)
2. Partial burials (burial of some bones after the exposure of the body to wild beasts and birds)
3. Postcremation burials

Another type of burial has been found at Lothal, a pair of skeletons, one male and one female in each case, buried in a single grave. Bodies were placed in the North–South direction, with the head pointing to the North.

Technology

The Harappan civilization is a Bronze Age civilization. Apart from stone tools and implements, people were well acquainted with the use of bronze.

Objects of gold were common. Silver was used for the first time in the Indus civilization and was relatively more common than gold. Arsenic, lead, antimony, and nickel were also used by the Harappan people.

Bronze implements at mass scale have been found, such as axes, chisels, knives, spearheads, etc. The Harappans also practiced boat making.

Seals and Terracotta Figures

Seal is a piece of material with an individual design stamped onto it. Seals are accurate in their size and design. About 2000 seals have been found; these seals range in size from 1 cm to 5 cm. While most of the seals were square-shaped, rectangular and circular seals were also found. Two main types of seals are seen—first, square with an image and inscription; second, rectangular with an inscription only.

Steatite (in nature of soft mineral) was the most common material used to make seal. Other materials used include agate, chert, copper, and clay. Seals made of gold, silver, and ivory were also found.

Most seals have inscriptions in a pictographic script written from left to right. But in some cases the script is written from right to left as well. Seals were primarily used for commercial purpose and might have been used as amulets or for educational purpose.

Terracotta figurines have also been reported from various sites. Figurines made of fire-baked clay are called terracotta which were either used as toys or objects of worship. Terracotta was used mainly by the common people.

Polity and Society

There is no clear idea about the political organization of the Harappans. There is no sign of any central authority. The total absence of internal wars speaks volumes about the peaceful administration of the Indus state.

Sculpture

Two main sculptures that were extracted from the ruins of Indus Valley are—(i) priest in limestone and (ii) a statue of a “Dancing Girl” in bronze. These sculptures exhibit the level of expertise that the artists of Harappan civilization had achieved in making sculptures.



Sculpture of a priest



Dancing girl found at Mohenjodaro

The red sandstone figure of a male torso is another specimen of rock sculpture.



Male torso found at Harappa

Pottery

Harappans were great potters as well. The potteries made by the Harappans can be classified into four types—(i) plain pottery, (ii) painted pottery (which is also known as red and black pottery), (iii) polychrome pottery (very rare), and (iv) perforated pottery. The purpose of different types of pottery was as follows:

- Plain pottery was used for household purpose, mainly for storage of grains and water.
- Miniature vessels were used for decorative purpose.

- Perforated pottery (large hole in the bottom and small holes across the sides of the vessel) might have been used for straining liquor.

Dressing style

Men and women wore clothes of wool and cotton. Men wore robes which left one shoulder bare. Women wore a short skirt that reached up to the knee and it was held by a girdle—a string of beads. Upper classes wore garments with elaborate designs.

Hairstyles

The hair styles of the women were often elaborate, and pigtails were also popular, as in present-day India. Men and women alike had long hair. Men wore beard and moustaches.

Fashion

Bronze mirrors were common. Females at Mohenjodaro used collyrium (eye shadow), face-paint, and other cosmetics. Chanhudaro provides evidence of lipsticks. Bronze razors of various types were used by males.

Ornaments

Harappan people loved ornaments. Both men and women wore ornaments like necklaces, fillets (a band or ribbon worn for binding the hair), armlets, and finger rings. Girdles (belt), earrings, and anklets were worn only by women. Beads made from cornelian, amethyst, quartz, and steatite were produced at a large scale from the factories at Lothal and Chanhudaro. Amulets have been found in large numbers. Probably, the Harappans believed in ghosts and evil forces.



Ornaments used by Indus Valley civilization people

Amusements

Children played with toys made of terracotta. Children also played with marbels made out of jasper and chert. Music and dance were popular. Hunting and fishing were common activities. On a few seals, hunting of wild rhino and antelope is shown. Dice was used in gambling.

Harappan Script

No regular documents on stone or baked clay have been found, but seals found do indicate that the Harappans did have a language of their own. Some of the historians are of the view that the scripts found on the seals resemble the script of the ancient people living in Mesopotamia. It is believed that the same kind of script was used in Egypt and other countries of Western Asia. People used a phonetic script but in the late Harappan period, the script evolved itself toward an alphabetic pattern.

However, the Harappan script still remains to be deciphered and continues to be a puzzle for the historians. The history and the richness of this civilization will remain a mystery until the script is interpreted.



Script on a seal

Decline of Harappan Culture

Harappan civilization came to a sudden end. The exact reason for collapse of this civilization is not known; however, various reasons are hypothesized behind collapse of this civilization:

- Floods may have resulted in collapse of Indus Valley civilization. Earlier, civilization emerged near water bodies. As a result, large floods could have possibly wiped out Indus Valley civilization.
- Geographically, the region occupied by the Harappan civilization was prone to earthquakes. Repeated earthquakes can be a reason behind decline of the Indus civilization.
- We know that Harappans were traders and not warriors. Thus, the people of the civilization were not prepared for an invasion. The emphasis was on prosperity through economic development. However, unburied skeletal remains were found in Mohenjodaro. Such remains are signs of an aggressive invasion. Aryan invasion may be reason behind the decline of Indus Valley civilization.
- Other possible reasons behind end of this civilization may be drought and spread of disease.

Difference Between Harappan and other West Asian cultures

Harappan culture	Mesopotamian culture
The towns were well planned.	The towns were haphazardly planned.
Had a well-maintained drainage system.	Not much preference was given to sanitation.
Rectangular house with brick-lined bathrooms.	No particular shape for the houses.
Did not have a particular language. Mostly resembled West Asian culture.	Had their own language which was same throughout.

List of important sites of Indus Valley civilization

Site	District	Province/ State	Country	Excavations/findings
Banawali	Fatehabad district	Haryana	India	Barley, terracotta figure of plough, saw two cultural phases, pre-Harappan and Harappan, similar to that of Kalibangan
Chanhudaro	Nawabshah district	Sindh	Pakistan	Bead-making factory, use of lipstick, only Indus site without a citadel
Dholavira	Kutch district	Gujarat	India	Figure of chariot tied to a pair of bullocks and driven by a nude human, water harvesting and number of reservoirs, use of rocks for constructions, all the three phases of the Harappan culture
Harappa	Sahiwal district	Punjab	Pakistan	Granaries, coffin burial, lot of artifacts, first town which was excavated and studied in detail
Kalibangan (literally meaning black bangles)	Hanumangarh district	Rajasthan	India	Baked/burnt bangles, fire altars, Shiva lingam, small circular pits containing large urns and accompanied by pottery, bones of camel

Site	District	Province/ State	Country	Excavations/findings
Lothal	Ahmedabad district	Gujarat	India	Bead-making factory, dockyard, button seal, fire altars, painted jar, earliest cultivation of rice (1800 BC)
Mehrgarh		Balochistan	Pakistan	Earliest agricultural community
Mohenjodaro	Larkana District	Sindh	Pakistan	Great Bath, Great granary, Bronze dancing girl, Bearded man, terracotta toys, Bull seal, Pashupati seal, three cylindrical seals of the Mesopotamian type, a piece of woven cloth, largest site covers 500 hectares.
Surkotada	Kutch district	Gujarat	India	Bones of a horse (only site)
Sutkagendor		Balochistan	Pakistan	Coastal city like Surkotada
Rakhigarhi	Hissar district	Haryana	India	All the three phases of the Harappan culture, second largest site, with an area of 250 hectares

Practice Questions

- Which one of the following animals was **not** represented on the seals and/or terracotta art of the Harappan culture?
 - Cow
 - Elephant
 - Rhinoceros
 - Tiger
- The earliest evidence of silver in India is found in the
 - Harappan culture
 - Palaeolithic culture
 - Vedic civilization
 - None of the above
- The Indus or the Harappan culture is
 - Neolithic culture
 - Palaeolithic culture
 - Chalcolithic culture
 - Post-Chalcolithic culture

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>4. Which one of the following archaeologists initially discovered the Mohanjedaro site of the Indus Valley civilization?</p> <p>(a) Sujohu Marshall
(b) Daya Ram Sahni
(c) Rakhal Das Banerjee
(d) Sir Mortimer Wheeler</p> | <p>5. The Harappa site showing evidence of two cultural phases. Harappan and pre-Harappan, is</p> <p>(a) Lothal
(b) Mohenjodaro
(c) Chanhudaro
(d) Banawali</p> |
|--|---|

PERFECTING PAST PRELIMS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1. Regarding the Indus Valley civilization, consider the following statements:
(2011)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was predominantly a secular civilization and the religious element, though present, did not dominate the scene. 2. During this period, cotton was used for manufacturing textiles in India. <p>Which of the statements given above is/are correct?</p> <p>(a) 1 only
(b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2
(d) Neither 1 nor 2</p> <p>2. Which of the following characterizes/characterize the people of Indus civilization?
(2013)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. They possessed great palaces and temples. 2. They worshipped both male and female deities. 3. They employed horse-drawn chariots in warfare. <p>Select the correct statement/ statements using the codes given below:</p> | <p>(a) 1 and 2 only
(b) 2 only
(c) 1, 2, and 3
(d) None of the statements given above are correct.</p> <p>3. With reference to the difference between the culture of Rigveda Aryans and Indus Valley people, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2017)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rigvedic Aryans used the coat of mail and helmet in warfare, whereas the people of Indus Valley civilization did not leave any evidence of using them. 2. Rigvedic Aryans knew gold, silver, and copper, whereas Indus Valley people knew only copper and iron. 3. Rigvedic Aryans had domesticated the horse, whereas there is no evidence of Indus Valley people having been aware of this animal. <p>Select the correct answer using the code given below:</p> <p>(a) 1 only
(b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2, and 3</p> |
|--|--|



ANSWER KEYS

Practice Questions

1. (a)	2. (a)	3. (c)	4. (c)	5. (d)
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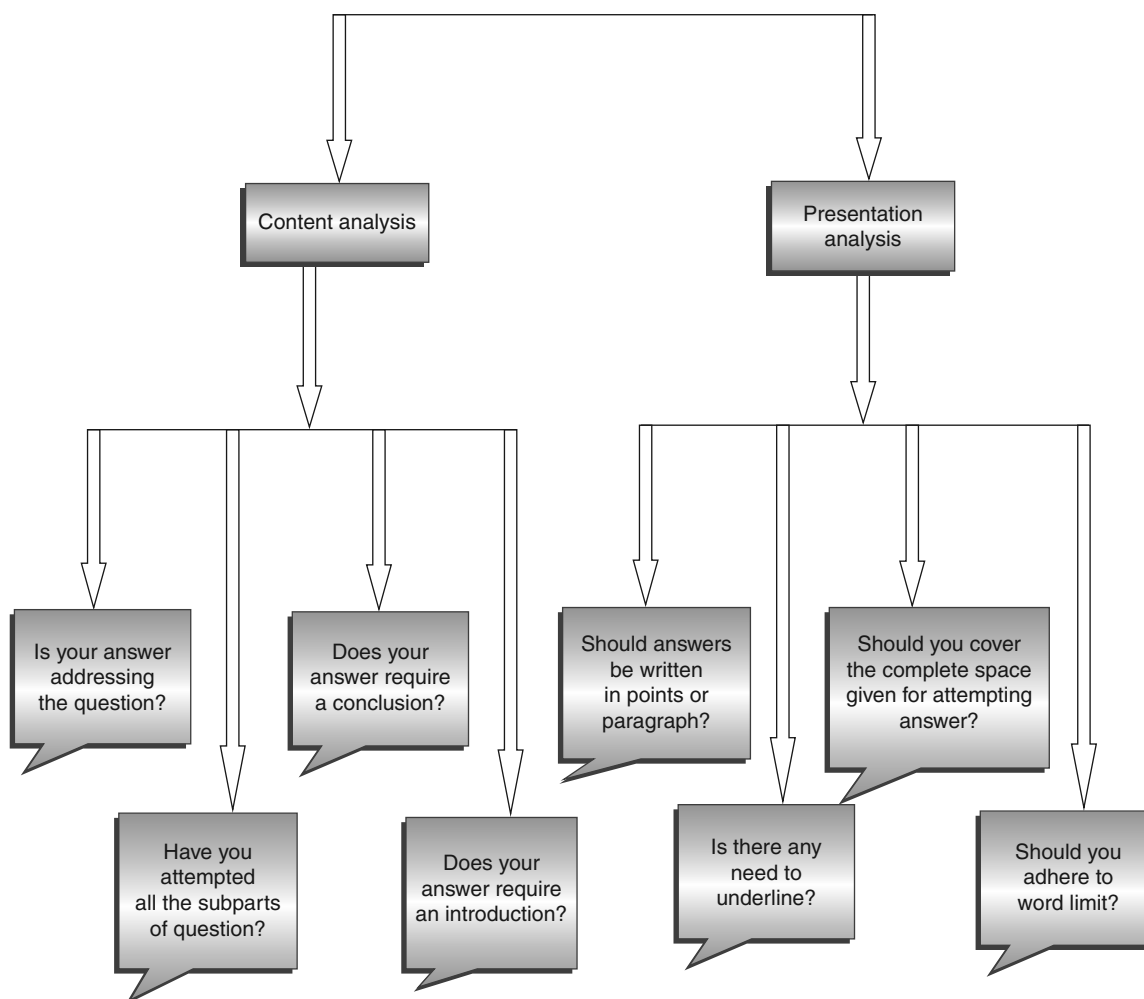
Perfecting Past Prelims

1. (c)	2. (b)	3. (a)		
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Solutions for
PRACTICE
QUESTIONS AND
PERFECTING PAST
PRELIMS

INTRODUCTION
TO WRITING
ANSWERS FOR
MAINS

A good answer is based on the following aspects



PREVIOUS YEARS'
QUESTIONS
(MAINS) WITH
SOLUTIONS

1. Though not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India, the Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness. Comment. (2013)

Sol.

Analysis of Question	
Comment	Express an opinion or reaction
Number of sub-parts	Two Part I: Sangam literature is not very useful from the point of view of a connected political history of South India Part II: The Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable vividness
Mode of presentation	Mix of paragraph and point form
Importance of conclusion	Not necessary

Three Sangams were held between 3rd century BC and 3rd century AD. The work of the first two Sangams was completely lost. However, the literature compiled in the last Sangam survived and provides insights into the polity, society, and economy of South India.

Information about connected political history

Sangam literature is not very useful from the point of view of connected political history on account of the following factors:

- The Sangam accounts on polity are not reliable because the authors were patronized by the ruling class. Thus, these accounts could be deeply exaggerated and inaccurate.
- Archaeological sources are unavailable to verify some aspects of the literature. For instance, no archaeological sources are available for settlements mentioned in the literature.
- The Sangam literature belongs to a particular period. Thus, the political history of prior and later period is not available in such details.

Information about Society and economy

Sangam literature portrays the social and economic conditions of its time with remarkable details because the popular theme of writing was love and valor. Such themes are covered in larger context of social and economic life. The writings describe about the social structure, religion, occupations, norms, rituals, standard of living, etc., in minute details.

2. Discuss the Tandava dance as recorded in the early Indian inscriptions. (2013)

Sol.

Analysis of Question	
Discuss	Write about the topic in detail, taking into account different issues or ideas.
Number of sub-parts	One part
Mode of presentation	Point form
Importance of conclusion	Not required