



Chapter 1

When, Where and How

Learning Objectives

- To understand the specific nature of the discipline
- To understand why we study History
- To understand the significance of time in the study of History
- To learn about the significance of Geography in the study of History
- To understand and identify the different sources that are used to reconstruct History

Set Sail

Time present and time past
 Are both perhaps present in time future
 And time future contained in time past.

—T.S. Elliot

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Now read through the chapter and at the end reconsider your opinion.

What is History?

History is the study of past events set in a **chronological** order. It deals with what people did and how they lived in the past. It also informs us about the economy, occupations, clothing and eating habits of our ancestors. History explains how the past events have affected our lives.

In History, we study about early societies, how societies and cultures have evolved over time. History is the account of human race from the earliest period to the present day. History helps us

to understand change and how the society we live in came into being.

The word 'history' has been **derived** from the Latin word *historia*. It means narration of the past events.

Info Capsule

Herodotus is regarded as the 'Father of History'. He was the first historian.

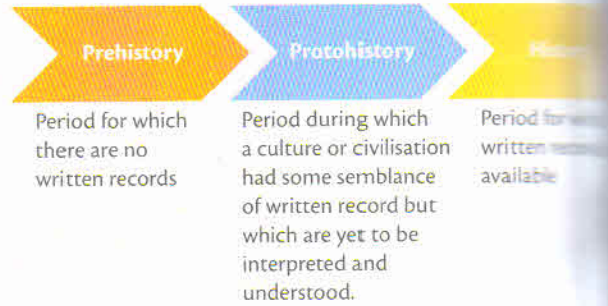


Vocab Help

Chronological: arranged in order in which events happened;
Derive: to come from or be developed from something

The scholars who help us to reconstruct the stories of the past are called historians. The events of the past are like **tessellating** pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Historians methodically study the clues and then put together the pieces to reconstruct a past event or era. Thus the role of historians is very crucial in the study of History. They first collect information from the sources, sort them, study them, analyse them and then put them together to recreate the past.

Classification of History



Importance of Studying the Past

The study of our past will help us:

- To understand people and societies better. Study of History helps us to understand why certain cultures and societies have survived till today and why others have vanished.
- To survive difficult times. Study of historical figures who **endured** adversity inspires us.
- To know our own roots. Study of History gives us information about who our ancestors were.
- To develop an objective **perspective**. Knowledge of History helps in interpreting data and information objectively.

Task 1

Look at this picture. How have things changed since the time shown in this photograph? Together with your friend, find as many differences as you can between this picture and today's streets. Write the differences in your notebook.

Picture Talk



Time and Dates

Historians have divided the past into three broad time periods to make the study more convenient: Prehistory, Protohistory, and History.

Vocab Help

Tessellating: connecting together in a pattern with no space in between; **Endure**: to suffer something difficult; **Perspective**: way we think or see things; **Semblance**: a situation which is similar to what is wanted or expected, but is not exactly as hoped.

Dating the Events of History

You have just read that History is the study of past events set in a chronological order. It is necessary to arrange past events in their order of occurrence in time. Since there is no agreement on when time began, historians adopted a convention of recording dates in terms of when they occurred before or after the beginning of the year of the birth of Jesus Christ. So, the years before Jesus' birth was assigned as 'year one'. The years before year one are known as Before Christ (BC) and the years after that are known as Anno Domini or AD, which in Latin means 'In the year of our Lord'. In recent years, the terms BC and AD are often replaced with Before Common Era (BCE) and Common Era (CE). We use the term **chronology** (in short) when the date of an event is not known for sure.

We often talk about events having occurred in different centuries. How do we name the centuries? A century is 100 years. Therefore, the years between year 1 to year 100 is referred to as 1st century. Similarly, you count every subsequent hundred years as the next century. For instance, the years from 1900 to 1999 come under twentieth century. Therefore, we say that India became independent in the twentieth century, though the year was 1947.



Applying Geography to Interpret the Past

An understanding of Geography is essential for a good understanding of History.

Geography is helpful in understanding the location of settlements, the movement of people and the creation of states.

Why did the earliest cities flourish near the banks of rivers? Answering such a question requires a geographic approach to the study of History. Early cities flourished near the banks of rivers because the early inhabitants of the river valley civilisations depended heavily on farming. Their close proximity to the river provided them easy access to water that was needed for the crops. In addition, in the absence of roads, rivers were often the only means of transportation in ancient times.

The monsoon was another geographical phenomenon which shaped India's history. In ancient times, when irrigation techniques were not known, agriculture was primarily rain fed. In the first century CE, when the direction of monsoon was discovered, traders sailed along with the south-west monsoon from West Asia and the Mediterranean Sea region and reached India and South East Asia. Thus the discovery of monsoon **enabled** our ancestors to carry out trade and establish cultural relationships with countries in West Asia and along the Mediterranean Sea.

Geography also tells us that India has a long coastline with many harbours and natural ports. These harbours and ports helped our ancestors to trade with people of distant places like Rome, Mesopotamia, Egypt and South Asia.

Geography also tells us how the mountain passes in the Himalayan range made it possible for people from Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia to enter India. These people were either invaders or **immigrants**. The passes also helped in trade between India and Central Asia, and West Asia during the ancient times. The seas and the mountains acted as natural **frontiers**.

We must study the past from both **spatial** and chronological points of view to develop a greater understanding of past events.

Vocab Help

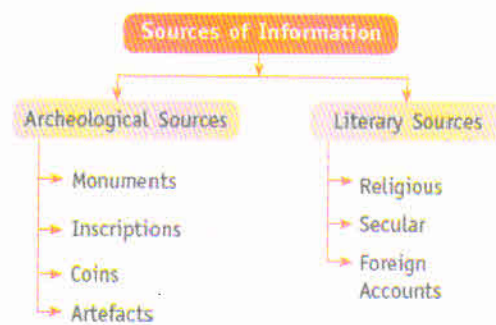
Enable: made it possible; **Immigrant:** someone who comes to live in a different country; **Frontier:** border; **Spatial:** relating to, occupying, or having the character of space

Timeline

To make it easier for us to remember the dates, historians use a tool called a timeline. A timeline is a way of displaying a list of events in chronological order.

Sources of History

How do we study the past? Historians use various sources to reconstruct the past. By piecing together the sources of the past, historians can form an impression of a historical event. The sources of History are broadly divided into two categories:



Gold coins of Gupta King Samudragupta

Archaeological Sources

Archaeological sources include buildings, houses, pottery, seals, coins, monuments, writings and paintings on stones or walls, tools, jewellery, bones, leftovers, pieces of metals and other artefacts. The study of the past by examining these material remains is called archaeology. The people who study these remains are known as archaeologists. Occasionally these sources are buried under the ground and can be recovered by digging up the ground. This process of digging is called excavation. Archaeological sources are particularly useful in the study of prehistoric cultures since prehistory is concerned with periods for which there are no written records. The plant and animal remains indicate the climatic conditions and vegetation that existed at that time. The study of the bones of animals excavated help historians to understand the pattern of animal domestication of a particular period.

Task 2

Imagine it is the year 2200. An archaeologist is excavating the area of your neighbourhood. What would you expect the archaeologist to find? What are the objects you think will survive until that time? List them out and categorise them as archaeological or literary.

Time Travel

Monuments: Monuments are old buildings or other old structures which are important for their historic connection or legacy.

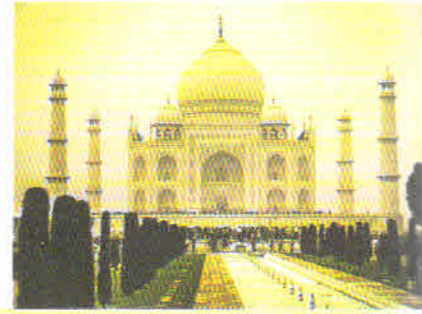
Info Capsule

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) was established in 1861 during the British rule in India.

Monuments include temples, mosques, tombs, churches, cemeteries, forts, palaces, step-wells and rock-cut caves. Monuments could also be any building of the past as well as ancient mounds and sites which represent the remains of ancient habitation. Monuments reveal to us the architectural innovations of our ancestors. They provide us with information about the political, social, cultural and religious lives

of the people of the times in which they were built. For example, the Taj Mahal is a monument that tells us about the affluent conditions that prevailed during the Mughal times. It also throws light on the artistic sensibilities prevalent during the reign of the Mughal Emperor, Shah Jahan's reign.

Inscriptions: Inscriptions are writings on temple walls, stones or pillars, wooden tablets, bricks and images.



Taj Mahal: The Taj Mahal is a white marble mausoleum located in Agra, India. It was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan, in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal.

Info Capsule

The Harappan inscriptions have not yet been deciphered.

Some of the inscriptions convey royal orders and decisions. For instance, the Ashoka inscriptions throw light on the social, religious and administrative conditions of the time. The



Pillar edict of Ashoka: The Mauryan Emperor, Ashoka, erected a series of edicts based on the teachings of Lord Buddha. He used them for governance.

Vocab Help

Mausoleum: a building in which bodies of dead people are buried

Info Capsule

The study of the old writing systems found on the inscriptions and other old records is called palaeography.

Global Connect

Inscriptions of ancient times were written in many scripts and languages. The Egyptians developed one of the earliest scripts in history, called **hieroglyphs**. Hieroglyph involved pictographic representation of objects. Each object denoted a letter of the alphabet. For example, a feet denoted the letter B, while the lion stood for the letter L. The historians gradually deciphered their script and read their inscriptions.



of inscriptions is known as epigraphy. These writings can also be found on metal plates like copper plates. Inscriptions inform us about the life and reign of the kings. Some inscriptions are also **eulogies** which highlight the achievements of the kings. For instance, the Allahabad Inscription of Samudragupta informs us about Samudragupta's military conquests. Inscriptions were written for various other purposes too. Can you think of other purposes for which inscriptions were engraved?

Coins: Coins from the past shed light on different aspects of life as it existed then. The study of coins is called numismatics. Hoards of coins have been discovered from different parts of the country. The coins discovered were made of various metals like copper, bronze, gold and silver. Some of the earliest coins have symbols punched on them. The later coins depict the images of kings, and gods and goddesses. These coins also mention the names of the kings and the dates of their reign. Thus, coins help historians

to reconstruct the unknown history of several ruling dynasties. The religious symbols and legends on the coins throw light on the art and religion of the time. The coins mainly reflect the economic conditions of the times they belong to. They also tell us about trade, technology and commerce. For example, many Indian coins have been unearthed from the ruins in Rome and many Roman coins have been found at various ancient ports of India.



The Frome Hoard, a pot-bellied jar containing 52,503 Roman coins, was discovered at Somerset, England.

Artefacts: Artefacts are old pieces of things or belongings of people. They include pottery, jewellery, toys, seals, pieces of cloth and other remains which the people used during the course of their lives. These again tell us a lot about the social, cultural and economic life of the people. A vast hoard of artefacts including jewellery, seals, pottery, terracotta toys and bronze images was unearthed from the Indus Valley. This discovery helped archaeologists and historians to conclude that there existed a well-developed urban civilisation in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent during the Bronze Age, which we know as the Indus Valley Civilisation.



Vocab Help

Eulogies: written high praises of a historical personality, usually a king.

Task 3

This is a painting from the walls of Ajanta caves dating back to c. 450-500 CE. Note the seated person and those serving him.

- What are the figures in the painting doing?
- What does it say about the society in those times?
- Why do you think the colours of the painting are still so vivid even after so many centuries?

Picture Talk



Literary Sources

Literary sources comprise all types of texts written on various materials. Our ancestors wrote on birch bark or palm leaves, known as bhojpatras. At times, text was written on sheep leather and wooden tablets. Literary sources inform us about the political, social, economic, religious and cultural life of our ancestors. They include religious writings, accounts of travellers, epics, poems, etc.

Literary sources can be broadly divided into three categories:

- Religious Literature
- Secular Literature
- Foreign Accounts

Religious Literature: Most of the manuscripts are religious in **nature**. Notable religious literature are the Vedas, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Bible and the Quran. They throw considerable light on the social and economic conditions of the periods during which they were written.

Secular Literature: Besides religious literature, there also exists a vast body of secular literature. These books usually prescribe the duties to be performed by people of different segments of society. They set out rules and regulations which held the society together. An example of secular literature is Kautilya's *Arthashastra*.

We also have the works of Kalidasa, Sanskrit poet, Bhasa and Banabhatta. These works reflect the conditions of the times when they were written.

Foreign Accounts: Greek, Roman, Chinese and other travellers came to India and they left behind accounts of things that they saw. We know about Alexander's invasion on the basis of Greek accounts. Then, we have the *Indica* by Megasthenes, who was an ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya. It gives us valuable information about the Mauryan administration, social and economic activities of the period. Buddhist travellers to India, Fa-Hsien and Hiuen Tsang have also left accounts which describe the prevailing social, religious and economic conditions in India during their visit.

I Learnt

- History is the study of past events set in a chronological order.
- History has been classified into three time periods:
 - Prehistory: No written records available
 - Protohistory: Some form of written records exist but are yet to be deciphered
 - History: Written records available
- Historians are the people who reconstruct History by studying the evidences of the past.
- The sources of History are divided into two categories: archaeological and literary.
- People who study material remains of the past are known as archaeologists.
- Archaeological sources include monuments, coins, artefacts and inscriptions
- Literary sources are divided into three categories: religious, secular and foreign accounts.

Vocab Help

Nature: type; **Account:** a written or spoken description of an event

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HOLY TRINITY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

Social Studies

Grade VI

Lesson 1 When, where and how

I. Answer the following questions very briefly.

(1 mark)

1. Which year is regarded as YEAR ONE?

Ans:- The year of Jesus's birth is regarded as YEAR ONE.

2. What is the full- form of CE?

Ans:- Common Era is the full-form of CE.

3. What helped the seafarers from West Asia find their way to India?

Ans:- The direction of monsoon helped the seafarers from West Asia find their way to India.

4. What kind of a source are rock –cut caves?

Ans:- Monuments

5. Name two Buddhist pilgrims who left behind travel accounts.

Ans:- Fa-hsien and Hsuan Tsang are the two Buddhist pilgrims who left behind travel accounts.

6. On what basis do we date historical events?

Ans:- In the order of occurrence.

II. Answer the following questions briefly.

(2 marks)

1. Define the term epigraphy.

Ans:- The study of inscriptions is known as epigraphy.

2. What is the difference between prehistory and History?

Ans:- Pre- History is the period for which we have no written record. History refers to the period for which written records are available.

3. What is archaeology?

Ans:- The study of past by examining the old material remains is called archaeology.

4. What are inscriptions? Why are they a reliable source of information?

Ans:- Inscriptions are writings on seals, temple walls, stone, wooden tablets etc. They are a reliable source of information because they were written at the time of the rule of the particular monarch and are found within his territory.

5. Why is archaeology an important source of information of prehistory?

Ans:- finding no written records, we have to rely on the archaeological finds to construct the history of Pre-history.

6. What is numismatics? What information does this source furnish about the past?

Ans:- Study of coins is numismatics. It throws light on dates, kings, religious practices, culture, level of economic development achieved etc.

7. Do paintings help us in reconstructing the past? How do paintings help us to understand the past?

Ans:- Painting give us an idea of how things were in a particular period or era as the paintings depict life as it existed then.

III. Answer the following question in detail.

(3 marks)

1. Why should we study History?

Ans:-

- a. Helps us understand our past better-how societies and cultures evolved.
- b. Helps us to know who were our ancestors.
- c. Gives us inspiration to survive challenging times.
- d. Develops an objective perspective.

2. How has the geography of India shaped its History?

Ans:- Geography greatly shaped the history of India in the following way:

- a. Earliest towns developed on banks of mighty rivers.
- b. Explorers were able to find the way to India by the direction of the monsoons.
- c. The long coastline of India helped to develop international trade.
- d. Passes in the Himalayan range helped traders and pilgrims from Central Asia to come to India.
- e. The mountains and rivers acted as natural frontiers and guarded the country.