Main Ideas
1. The geography of India includes high mountains, great rivers and heavy seasonal rain.
2. Harappan civilization developed along the Indus River.
3. The Aryan migration to India changed the region’s civilization.

Key Terms and People
subcontinent  a large landmass smaller than a continent
monsoon  seasonal wind patterns that cause wet and dry seasons
Sanskrit  ancient India’s most influential language

Section Summary
Geography of India
India is home to one of the world’s earliest civilizations. India is so huge it’s called a subcontinent, which is a large landmass that is smaller than a continent. A subcontinent is usually separated from a continent by physical features, such as mountains. The world’s highest mountains, the Himalayas, are in India. India also has a vast desert, many fertile plains, and rugged plateaus. The Indus River, which flows from the Himalayas and is located mainly in present-day Pakistan, is the cradle of ancient Indian civilization. As in Egypt and Kush, the flooding river created fertile plains where people first settled. India’s hot and humid climate is heavily influenced by monsoons, wind patterns that cause wet and dry seasons.

Harappan Civilization
India’s first civilization was the Harappan civilization, which developed along the Indus River valley. Named after the ancient city of Harappa, archaeologists believe Harappans thrived between 2300 and 1700 BC. In fact, most information about Harappans comes from the ruins of Harappa and
another major city, Mohenjo Daro. Each city was well planned and built in the shadow of a fortress that could easily oversee the city streets.

The cities were very advanced. Most houses had indoor plumbing. The Harappans developed beautiful artisan crafts and a system of weights and measures. They also developed India’s first writing system, but scholars have not been able to read it. Because of this, we know little for sure about the Harappan government, though it is thought that there were kings, who might have been thought of as gods. It’s also unclear why the Harappan civilization crumbled.

ARYAN MIGRATIONS
Originally nomads from Central Asia, the Aryans had moved into the Indus and Ganges River valleys by 1200 BC. Unlike the Harappans, they had no central government and they did not build planned cities. Aryans lived in small communities, each run by a local leader, or raja.

The Aryans spoke Sanskrit and developed a rich tradition of poems and hymns, but they did not have a writing system. Instead, their works survived from generation to generation by word of mouth. The lasting influence of these early written works made Sanskrit the most important language of ancient India. Much of what we know about the early Aryans comes to us through Sanskrit works.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITY
Critical Thinking: Drawing Inferences Write a short essay explaining what you think might have happened to the Harappan civilization.

Why was it an advantage for the streets of Mohenjo Daro and Harappa to be viewed from a fortress?

Why do we know so little about the Harappans?

The early Aryans had a rich and expressive language, but they did not write. How did they preserve their poems and their history without writing?
DIRECTIONS  Write a word or phrase that has the same meaning as the term given.

1. monsoon _________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

2. Sanskrit _________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

3. subcontinent _____________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

DIRECTIONS  Read each sentence and fill in the blank with the word in the word pair that best completes the sentence.

4. The ________________________ civilization was India’s first civilization. 
   (Aryan/Harappan)

5. Ancient writings known as the _________________________ include poems, hymns, myths, and rituals that have taught us a great deal about Aryan society. 
   (Vedas/Sanskrit)

6. The ______________________, which are located in northern India, are the highest mountains in the world. (raja/Himalayas)

7. The leader of each village was given the title of _______________________. 
   (Vedas/raja)

8. The ________________________ migrated into India from regions to the northwest. (Aryans/Harappan civilization)

9. ________________________ was the language of the _______________________. 
   (Vedas/Sanskrit); (Aryans/Harappan civilization)

10. A ______________________ is usually separated from the rest of the continent by physical features, such as mountains. (monsoon/subcontinent)

11. In the summer ______________________ winds blow into India from the ocean, bringing heavy rains that can cause terrible floods. (monsoon/subcontinent)
Ancient India

SECTION 1
Summary
(First Page) Students should circle Himalayas; the monsoons cause wet and dry seasons.
(Second Page) Possible answer—Guards could detect invaders or trouble in the streets; we cannot read their writings; their works were passed down by word of mouth.

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should support the theories presented about the decline of Harappan civilization.

Words or Phrases
Answers will vary. Sample answers:
1. seasonal wind patterns
2. ancient Indian language
3. large landmass that is smaller than a continent

Fill in the Blank
4. Harappan
5. Vedas
6. Himalayas
7. raja
8. Aryans
9. Sanskrit; Aryans
10. subcontinent
11. monsoon

SECTION 2
Summary
(First Page) (1) Brahmins, (2) Kshatriyas, (3) Vaisyas, (4) Sudras; his or her birth
(Second Page) rituals, sacrifices, and thoughts of religious scholars; atman; a person’s actions in life

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should note that nonviolent protests have proved popular in part because they do not provoke anger or retaliation from those in power.

True/False
1. T
2. F; The caste system divided Indian society into groups based on rank, wealth, and occupation.
3. F; Jainism is based on four major principles: Injure no life, tell the truth, do not steal, and own no property.
4. T
5. T
6. T
7. T
8. F; Sikhism is based on the teachings of a man named Guru Nanak.
9. F; Hindus believe that a person’s ultimate goal should be to reunite their soul with Brahman, the universal spirit.

SECTION 3
Summary
(First Page) He traveled India to find the cause of pain and suffering; wanting what one does not have, wanting to keep what one has, not wanting what one has but dislikes
(Second Page) Four Noble Truths; possible answers—Buddhism does not involve animal sacrifice, Buddhism challenges the authority of Brahmins, Buddhism teaches that individuals can reach salvation alone, Buddhism opposes the caste system; possible answers—Nepal, Sri Lanka, China, Japan, Korea

Challenge Activity
Answers will vary. Student essays should reflect an understanding of the motivations and teachings of the Buddha.

Sentences
Answers will vary. Sample answers:
1. If people can overcome their desire and ignorance, they can reach nirvana.
2. Siddhartha used fasting and meditation to free his mind from daily concerns.
3. The king sent Buddhist missionaries to spread their religious beliefs.
4. Buddha is the term that means “Enlightened One.”