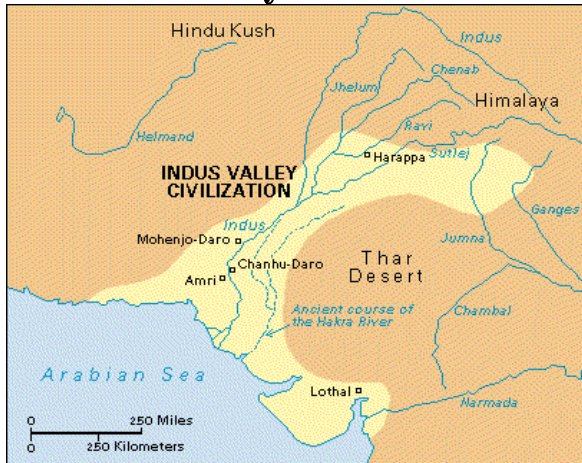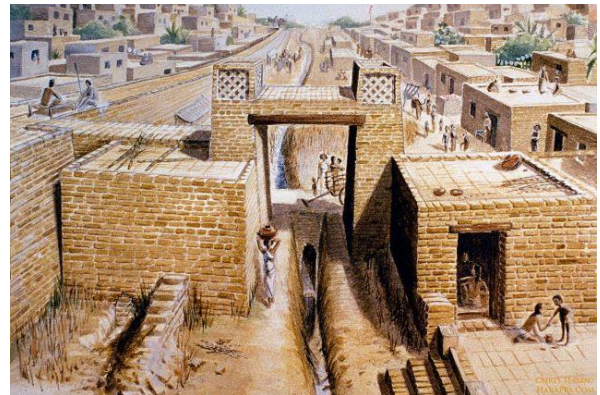# Ancient India
(Indus Valley; Harappan Civilization, 2,800 B.C. – 1,500 B.C.)

A Short History

The Indus Valley civilization is also called the **Harappan Civilization**. Harappa was actually a city that was located in the Indus River Valley in modern-day India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Remains of this civilization were only discovered in 1920 A.D. and much about it's history remains somewhat of a mystery. One of the main reasons for this, is that the writing system of the Harappans (the **Indus Script**) has not been able to be translated by historians. Moreover, they did not leave much behind, such as weapons, temples or artwork.

It is believed that the peak of this civilization was between 2,600 B.C. and 1,900 B.C. The civilization is known for its advanced **urban culture**. Their cities were well planned out. Some cities in the Indus Valley were home to 80,000 people. **Mohenjo-Daro** is one of the largest settlements in the Indus Valley civilization and one of the world's earliest major urban settlement. They had sophisticated drainage systems, water supply systems, and houses with multiple stories. However, most people lived in small farming villages in the rural areas. At the civilization's peak, it had a population of over 5 million.

Unlike other civilizations, such as the Ancient Egyptians and the Mesopotamians, the Harappans had very few large constructions. This is very unusual for an ancient civilization. For example, Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia built large temples and palaces. Some historians believe that the lack of large structures indicated that the Ancient Indians did not have kings and could have had a society where everyone was equal. All houses of the Harappans had access to water and had drainage systems. This indicates that they had a large middle-class society. Another difference is that only limited evidence of weapons and a military culture was found in the region.

The Harappans were very successful in measuring length, mass, and time. They were one of the first civilizations to develop **a system of weights and measures**. They also developed techniques to produce copper, bronze, lead, and tin.

The people of the Indus Valley Civilization believed in many gods. They had specific rituals and built statues to worship them. It is believed that the Indus people worshipped a **Mother Goddess** that symbolized fertility.

The Harappan Civilization began to decline around 1,500 B.C. Historians are not sure what triggered this event. Some people believe that a massive earthquake or drought destroyed their cities. Others believe that invaders forced Harappans to move to another place.

Learning Standard(s)

1. I can assess the significance of developments that make urban settlements (cities) efficient, functional, and therefore successful.
2. I can use imagination to create an urban settlement based on information that I researched and analyzed about Ancient India.

Essential Question

➔ **Why does planning make cities more efficient? How did the people of Ancient India accomplish this? What did they have that helped the cities function successfully?**

Activity

➔ You are an Ancient Indian architect and you have been asked to design another Indus Valley city. Based on your research on the essential question, you must decide what important resources, infrastructures, architecture, etc. are needed to create an efficient, well-functioning city.
  - **Efficient:** well-organized; not wasting time or resources
➔ **Draw, colour, and label the materials, infrastructures, and other architecture needed for an efficient city. Give your city a name!**
  - Read about the city of **Mohenjo-Daro** to help you with this activity. Check online resources for links.

Online Resources: go to www.madamedy.weebly.com; under "BC GRADE 7," hover over "Social Studies" then click on "**Ancient Civilizations Links**"

Name: _____

Ancient India Response Sheet

➔ **Essential Question:** Why does planning make cities more efficient? How did the people of Ancient India accomplish this? What did they have that helped the cities function successfully?

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An Efficient City Plan for:

Name