

Chapter- 1

# When, Where and How

**STUDY NOTES**

When we live in a society, we become used to the world around us. We begin to take that world for granted. We forget that life was not always the way we see it. History can take us into these pasts.

What can we know about the past?

There are several things we can know about our past such as:

- What people used to eat, the type of clothes they used to wear, the houses in which they lived.
- How were the lives of hunters, herders, farmers, rulers, merchants, priests, crafts persons, artists, musicians, and scientists
- The games children used to play, the stories they have heard, the songs they sang.

**History is the systematic study of past events.** It is constructed on the basis of the study of the available material remains and records. People who study the past are known as **historians**. Historians study the past with the help of many written and unwritten sources.

**Timeline:** A timeline is one way of depicting events of the past. They are useful tools for the study of history.

**Needs of learning History:-**

- It teaches to carefully examine and question facts before accepting them as the truth.
- It helps to learn from the mistakes and educates us for better decision making.
- History instils the sense of identity while answering origin of humans.
- Helps in better understanding of present. Ex-While learning about India’s Independence, we learn to develop respect for our freedom fighters and value freedom.
- It develops historical values like tolerance, open-mind and build cultural identity.

History is divided into two periods :-

<u>Prehistory</u>	<u>History</u>
It is the study of events that happened before humans learnt to write.	It is a written account of events of the past.

- Sources for the study of Prehistory:-
- Archaeology
- Archaeological sites
- Artefacts

- Sources for the study of History:-
- Manuscripts
- Inscriptions
- Coins and seals
- Monuments

**Time and Dates in history** – How to tell the dates of significant events.

The years are counted from the date to the birth of Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity. All dates before the birth of Christ are counted backwards and usually have the letters BC (Before Christ) added on.

Counting of the years:

- **BC (Before Christ)**
- **2. AD (Anno Domini)**
- **3. BCE (Before the common era)**
- **4. CE (Common era)**
- **5. CIRCA or CA (Unknown date of an event)**

Dates have been constructed on the basis of some events and terminologies. Dates or time in history is generally indicated by B.C and A.D.

B.C. stands for 'Before Christ'. It refers to the period before the birth of Christ. Thus when we say 700 B.C., it would mean 700 years before the birth of Christ. Years in B.C. are counted backwards. Hence 700 B.C. comes earlier than 600 B.C.

A.D. stands for 'Anno Domini' which means 'in the year of our Lord'. Thus 800 A.D. means 800 years after the birth of Christ.

Sometimes B.C.E. is written instead of B.C., which means 'before the common era' and in the place of A.D., sometimes, C.E. is written, which means 'common era'.

The term circa is used when the date of an event is not surely known and is assumed on the basis of existing records and events.

Other terms like:-

**1: Decade (period of 10 years)**

**2: Century (period of 100 years)**

**3: Millennium (period of 1000 years)**

**Naming Centuries:-**

Example- The years from 1100CE to 1199CE fall in the 12<sup>th</sup> CENTURY

1947- India got independence- 20<sup>th</sup> century (1900-1999)

If someone's year of birth is 2004 then it falls in 21<sup>st</sup> Century (2000-2099)

1446CE- 15<sup>th</sup> Century CE (1400-1499ce)

**Then Geographical Framework :-**

The geography of a land often has a powerful impact on its history.

It influenced the location of early settlements around the world.

All the early civilisations like Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus and China were located in and around river valleys. It explains about:-

- Holistic image of India (Harmonious adjustment of physical and cultural environment)
  - Coexistence
- **The Himalayas**: High ranges of Himalayas stretch across the north of India. They act as barrier against invading force. People like traders, travellers and invaders have travelled in and out of India through low lying points called passes.
  - **The Oceans and seas**: protection to peninsular India, long coastline with its natural ports and harbour has also encouraged trade with Rome, Mesopotamia, Egypt and South-East Asia. South Kingdoms were able to develop strong navies.
  - **The Northern Plains**: lying between the Indus and the Ganga rivers is a fertile land, increases growth of agriculture, establishment of powerful kingdoms and empires like the Mauryas and the Guptas
  - **The Deccan Plateau**: The Satpura and the Vindhya mountain ranges separates Deccan Plateau from Northern India. This isolation enabled the growth of regional kingdoms like the Cholas, the Chalukyas and the Rastrakutas.

**Sources for the study of history :-**

- ➔ Main source of information for Prehistory is Archaeology.
- ➔ **Archaeology** is the study of the remains of human life in the past.
- ➔ An **archaeologist** is a person who studies the remains of buildings made of stone and brick, paintings and sculpture. They also explore and excavate to find tools, weapons, pots, pans, ornaments and coins (**human-made objects found at archaeological sites are called artefacts**). They also look for bones of animals, birds, and fish to find out what people ate in the past.
- ➔ History is studied from written sources such as Manuscripts, inscriptions, monuments, coins and seals.
- ➔ Archaeology did not help us to know more about the ordinary people in the past because they did not keep records of what they did. Whereas, kings used to keep the records of their victories and the battles they fought.

**Manuscripts**- Hand written documents are called **manuscripts**. They were written on stone or clay tablets. In India, these were written in Sanskrit, Prakrit or Pali and Tamil in South India on dried palm leaves, or on the specially prepared bark of a tree known as the birch, which grows

in the Himalayas and thinly beaten copper plates.

In Middle East and Europe people wrote on **Parchment (dried skin of goats and sheep)**

1: Inscriptions (Decipherment, Epigraphy)

**Inscriptions-They** are writings engraved on hard surfaces like rocks, pillars, stones or metal and the walls of temples, palaces, forts etc. In the past, kings wanted their orders inscribed so that people could see, read and obey them; they used inscriptions for this purpose. There are other kinds of inscriptions as well, where men and women (including kings and queens) recorded what they did. For example, records of victories in battle.

- **Decipherment**- The process of reading and understanding the scripts used in inscriptions.
- **Epigraphy**- The study of inscriptions.

Example- The edicts of Emperor Asoka carved into caves, iron pillars and rocks.

### Coins

- Issued by the ruler of a country to enable people to buy goods and services.
- Name of the king and the year in which the coin was issued were engraved on the coins.
- Other engraving includes Battle scenes, faces of kings and queens or scenes from the life of the ruler.
- **Numismatics**- The study of coins.

**Seals**- contains inscription, ex- Indus Valley Civilisation seals showing animals and figures of Gods (early form of Shiva), figure of a yogi -Pasupati, the lord of animals.

### Written sources are of three types :-

Religious Literature	Secular Literature	Traveller's Accounts
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**Religious Literature**- The Vedas, the Ramayana and the Tripitakas

**Secular Literature**- writings on subjects other than religion, like poliics, grammar, medicine and law. Ex- Harshacharita by Banabhatta for insight into the social, economic and political conditions during the reign of Harsha. And the Arthashastra by Kautilya insight into government treatise, economic policy and military strategy.

**Traveller's Accounts**- Xuanzang (Hieun Tsang) visited India during the rule of Harsha (7<sup>th</sup> Century). He described about Central and South Asia. Megasthenes, a Greek ambassador to the court of the Mauryan king Chandragupta, wrote \about Mauryan rule in his book Indika.

### Reasons Why People Travelled in the Past:-

- To search for better sources of livelihood.

- To escape from natural disasters such as floods, droughts etc.
- To conquer other lands.
- Merchants and travellers travelled for trading purposes.
- Religious teachers travelled in order to spread their religion.
- To discover new lands and places.

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