

1

Let's Know the History



In your curriculum of standard 6th we will know about an interesting subject of social science. Social sciences give us information about social world of man like, Geography, Economics, Social conditions and institutions, political activities and organizations. Subjects other than history introduce us with social life of present time. While history gives us information about past of human society, with the help of which we know our present. Is it possible for us to know about social life of present time without having knowledge of past? How was man's life when he had not started using fire? Imagine how must have been life of people without agriculture, roads, transportation, houses etc. History gives us information regarding all such aspects. History takes us to a different world of past. It gives us information about customs and traditions, beliefs, diet and dress of people of different generations. We feel as if we are wandering in some other world.

You must be thinking, why should we study about human society of the past. History is not only related with matters of past, but also acts as a riddle with current system. What were our ancestors? Where did they live? What did they eat? History gives us information about many such matters. It informs us about changes that have occurred in human life.

Tools And Resources to know History

Chintan read in a newspaper 'A 4000 years old city has been discovered in Kutch of Gujarat.' He was surprised. How can we know that, this city is 4000 years old, who might have built it and how? What was the diet of the people there? What type of clothes they must have been wearing?

Activity

- Find out Narmada river in map of India. Thousands of years back man lived on the banks of Narmada.

How can we know history?

We have different tools to know history.

(I) Tadpatra and Bhojpatra (Palm leaves and Birch Bark) : In the ancient time man used palm leaves and birch bark for writing, what we call manuscript today. Tadpatra means manuscripts written on leaves of palm leaves. Bhojpatra means manuscripts written on birch bark which is found in the Himalayas. With the help of manuscripts written on palm leaves and bark of birch we get information about their language and life style. Many such manuscripts have been found. Manuscripts written on palm leaves and bark of birch give us information about man of ancient India.





1.1 Birch Bark and Palm Leaves

Such manuscripts have been preserved in temples and monasteries. They have texts in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and Tamil. Even poems, dramas, stories and Epics were also written on Tadpatra and Bhojpatra. They have also been preserved in the form of books. They give us knowledge about customs and traditions, social beliefs, lifestyle of kings, science, education, medicines, animals etc.

(II) Inscriptions : Articles which are carved on the metals and stone are called stone inscriptions. We can know about history from stone inscriptions. Many times inscriptions were done on metal also. Kings used to converse with people by carving his orders and commands on these rocks. Many kings and queen have inscribed information about their kingdom, victories, religion and culture on these stones. Stone inscriptions of Ashoka are very famous. Records and inscriptions written on these are long lasting.



1.2 Stone inscription of Ashok's time Junagadh

(III) Copper Plate (Tamrapatra) : The text which is engraved on copper sheet is called Tadpatra. Many kings have engraved information about their administration and donations on tadpatra. Such tadpatras have been found in Gujarat in large number. They give us information about name, religion, administration and donation. Such tamrapatras have been preserved in Hemchandra library in Patan (North Gujarat), L.D. Institute of Indology, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad, B. J. Learning and Research Studies, Vidhyabhawan, Ahmedabad, Shri Mahavir Jain Aradhna Kendra, Koba (Gandhinagar).

Coins : Coins are also an important source to know about history. We get information about name of king, his religion, culture and time from these coins. Panchmark coins of 5th B.C. have been found in India, which is the oldest coin. Other than this gold, silver and copper coins of Greek kings, Mauryan age, Gupta age, have been found. They give us information about their social, religious, economic and political structure of that state.



1.3 Coins

Panchmark Coins : The coins created by pressing metal pieces in the mould are called 'Panchmark coins.'



1.4 Panchmark Coins

Students studying history - Archeologists, Historians and Travellers

History means information given by archeologists about past of human society, on the basis of research. They go to ancient places and dig out the houses, coins, bricks, stones, implements, sample of food, bones of man and animals etc. and study them and make us aware about culture of man of that time.

Man has been wandering from one place to another since ancient times. Many travellers have visited other countries to note life of people there. From the travel details of such travellers, we get information about the history and culture of a country. It includes travellers like, Megasthenes, Plini, Fa-hi-yan, Hiuen Tsang.

The researches of archeologists and historians give us glimpse of great civilization, which flourished in the North-West region on the banks of river Indus. In India, many cities existed more than 4500 years ago. In the same way, it can also be known that many cities developed on the banks of river Ganga and nearby area, about 2500 years ago.

All these tools give us information about customs, food, attire, technology and culture of people of that time. By exploring many cities and villages, they have given us information regarding cotton, barley, wheat. Besides this they have also given us information about animals of that time.

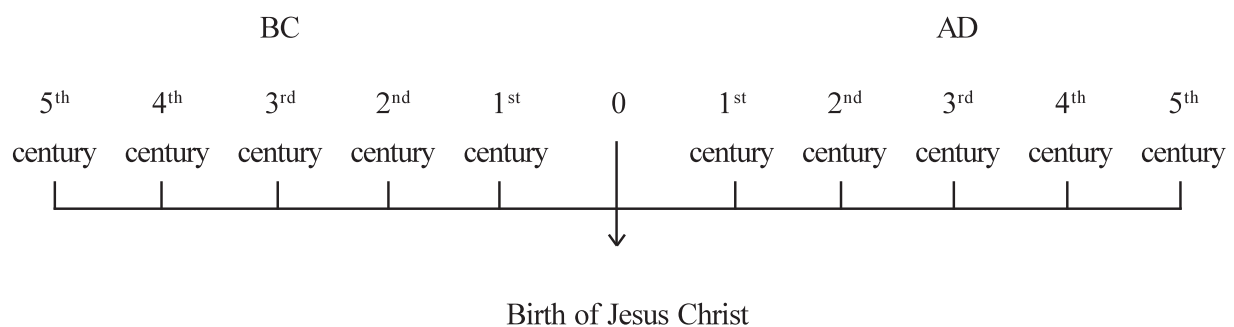
Archeologists are the scholars, who study about past. They categorize the tools found, do researches, collect data from manuscripts, documents, archives and then scribe them in a rigorous way. Archeologist and historians bring past to life.

Name of the Land : We know our country by two names : India and Bharat. The word India is derived from Indus, which is called Sindhu in Sanskrit. People of ancient Iran and Greece were familiar with the Indus river. They came into contact with this region 2600 years ago. The Iranians called the Indus river Hindos and the people of Greece called Indus. They knew the East bank of the river as India. We know about the name 'Bharat' from Rigveda. A group of people



named Bharat came to settle in North-western India. It is from their name, that our country came to be known as 'Bharat'. This group is also mentioned in the early work of Sanskrit, i.e. Rigveda.

Date-line : Time is very important in history. Events can be written along with time and place. We can relate time with date, month and year, such as July 20, 2018, Friday. As per it, time is associated with birth of Jesus Christ. Birth of Jesus Christ, founder of Christianity has been associated with date-line. We call it Anno Domini (A.D.) which means years after birth of Jesus Christ. E.g. 2000 A.D. means, 2000 years after birth of Jesus Christ. Similarly B.C. (Before Christ) means, years before birth of Jesus Christ e.g. 2000 B.C. means 2000 years before birth of Jesus Christ.



Date-Line showing A.D. and B.C.

often is written as CE instead of A.D and BCE is written instead of B.C.

CE means Common Era. while,

BCE means Before Common Era

As Christianity is associated with most nations of the world, we use the same date-line in India as in many nations.

In many cases the word BP is also used, which means before present.

Know this

BC - Before Christ

AD - Anno Domini - Both are Greek words. Which means in the year of God.' E.g. 2018 AD

Stone Inscription : An inscription carved on stone

Birch Bark : Thin inner layer of tree named birch, on which ancient texts were written.

Ask your teacher about other sources of history like, archives, historians, travellers.



Exercises

1. Choose the correct alternative and write correct answer :

- (1) In the ancient time man used to write on which thing ?
(A) Cloth (B) Paper
(C) Inner bark of tree (D) Leather
- (2) Which of the following is not a source to know history ?
(A) Record (B) Copper plate (C) Birch bark (D) Vehicle
- (3) Which of the following writings last longer ?
(A) Record (B) Writings on paper
(C) Writings on clothes (D) Writings on leaves of trees

2. Answer the following questions in short :

- (1) Explain the meaning of B.C.
(2) Explain the meaning of A.D.
(3) Which is the oldest coin of India ?
(4) Which are the sources to know history ?

3. Answer the following questions by matching 'A' with correct information given in 'B'

A

- (1) Record
(2) Bhojpatra
(3) Tamrapatra
(4) B.C.
(5) A.D.

B

- (a) Before birth of Christ
(b) Anno domini
(c) bark of a birch tree
(d) text engraved on copper plate
(e) text engraved on stone or metal

