

## “the vedic era & the religions of south asia”

1. Read pg. 57, mid-59-61 in your textbook and the reading “The Caste System”, and answer the following questions in your notebook:
  - A. From where did the Indo-Europeans come? How did they spread their language?
  - B. How were the people of the Indus Valley differ from the Aryans who conquered them? [Create a small chart to these differences].
  - C. Why are the Vedas of religious importance to many Indians? Why are they important to historians?
  - D. Create a hierarchical diagram/chart that shows the four major castes [*varnas*], the groups in society who belong to each caste, and their caste obligations.
  - E. Who were the Untouchables? Where do they fit into the caste structure?
  - F. What is a *jati*? How can a particular *jati* achieve a high place in the social hierarchy?
  - G. What is caste “dharma?”
  - H. Why does the caste system still exist in modern-day urban centers?
  - I. What is the *Mahabharata*? How does reading it add to our knowledge of this early Vedic Age?
2. Read the article entitled “Hinduism” and answer the following questions in your notebook:
  - A. What are some of the major beliefs shared by all Hindus?
  - B. How is the Hindu concept of God similar to that of the Judeo-Christian-Muslim tradition? How is it different?
  - C. How is the Hindu explanation of the universe different from the biblical story?
  - D. Explain the following terms: *dharma*, *karma*, *atman*.
  - E. In Hinduism, how are the ideas of *karma*, reincarnation, and *moksha* connected?
  - F. How might the belief in reincarnation provide a form of social control?
  - G. What was the goal of the yogi during his meditations? What experience would he have if successful?
  - H. Identify the FOUR stages of life and the obligations of a Hindu during each stage.
  - I. How are the Hindu gods and goddesses portrayed? Who are the two most popular?
3. Taking the information obtained from your reading and viewing of the film in class on Hinduism, fill out the “religions of the world” chart on Hinduism for a grade **[20 points]**. Make sure that you are thorough and include BULLETED, DETAILED information for each section of the chart. Also, no chart will be accepted by me if it is incomplete or sloppy and you will receive a grade of **0/20!!!**
4. Read pp. 64 - 66 in your textbook and answer the following questions in your notebook:
  - A. How was Siddhartha Gautama raised by his father?
  - B. Why was Gautama uncomfortable with his situation? What made him leave the comfort of his early life?
  - C. How did Gautama hope to achieve enlightenment?
  - D. Identify the Four Noble Truths.
  - E. What was the ultimate goal of a Buddhist? Identify the steps necessary to achieve this goal.
  - F. How was the Buddhist path to enlightenment different from the Hindu path?
  - G. Why didn't Buddhism become the major religion of the Indian subcontinent?
5. Taking the information obtained from your reading and in class discussion on/analysis of Buddhism, fill out the “religions of the world” chart on Buddhism for a grade **[20 points]**. Make sure that you are thorough and include BULLETED, DETAILED information for each section of the chart. Also, no chart will be accepted by me if it is incomplete or sloppy and you will receive a grade of **0/20!!!**