

Introducing Hinduism
Self Test Questions
Chapters 1 - 6

Chapter 1

1. Who are the Āryans?
2. When was the Indus Valley Civilization discovered?
3. Which people in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent still speak a Dravidian language?
4. When did the “Golden Age” of Hinduism occur, and why was it given this title?
5. When did the term “Hindu” develop as a religious designation, and what was the reason for its development?
6. Hindus consider this river, which flows through the northern part of India, to be a living goddess.
7. Name two important Indus Valley Civilization cities.
8. Explain the difference between Sanskrit and “Sanskritization.”
9. What are the Vedas?
10. In what year did India achieve Independence?

Chapter 2

1. What is the oldest collection of Vedic hymns in praise of various deities?
2. What is Soma?
3. What were the priests called who performed the central elements of Vedic rituals?
4. Who is Dyaus-pitr?
5. What is ṛta?
6. What is yajña?
7. Describe the aśvamedha.
8. The site of which ritual is a reconstruction of the cosmos itself?
9. List the primary and secondary appendages (aṅga) to the Vedas.
10. What are the three most highly regarded classical texts of āyurveda?

Chapter 3

1. What are the four main yugas?
2. Define dharma.
3. What is the pralaya?
4. Who is the god that can bring forth a new creation through his contemplation?
5. What is a lunar day known as?
6. Which deity is worshiped during the Hindu festival of Navarātra?
7. What is the Puruṣa-Sūkta?
8. What is the Tri-loka, when did it emerge, and how did it evolve over time?
9. Explain the concepts of bhukti and mukti.
10. What is the Sanskrit term for one who is liberated in life?

Chapter 4

1. The concept of dharma developed in relationship to which Vedic concept?
2. This genre of literature first articulated prescriptions concerning one's behavior.
3. Which category of literature do the Laws of Manu belong to, Śruti or smṛti?
4. Define jātis.
5. What is the Sanskrit term for family lineage?
6. What is another name for the "Untouchables"?
7. Define mahābrāhmaṇa.
8. List the three terms that Havik Brahmins use to designate categories of pure and polluted.
9. Define Rāhu and Ketu.
10. Name two popular Hindu festivals that occur in autumn.

Chapter 5

1. What is the Sanskrit term for life-cycle rites?
2. Describe the yajñopavita.
3. What are the four life-stages prescribed by orthodox Hinduism?
4. Can men from the twice-born classes take on wives from lower classes?
5. Define Śrāddha.
6. List the four goals deemed worthy of pursuit by orthodox Hindus.
7. What are the eight categories of marriage provided by Manu?
8. Nowadays, this term is used to designate any kind of teacher.
9. This is viewed as the regulator of the two goals kāma and artha.
10. Define saubhagya.

Chapter 6

1. What are learned men of India are called?
2. This was one of the earliest Aramaic scripts.
3. Which script developed into Devanāgarī?
4. This term signifies vernacular non-Sanskrit languages.
5. Why did Vedic Sanskrit yield to Classical Sanskrit?
6. How many people are now said to be able to speak Sanskrit?
7. Name the oldest extant Sanskrit grammar.
8. How are the Sanskrit Dentals produced?
9. What is the Mahābhāṣya and who wrote it?
10. Define pranava, and name a text in which it is discussed.