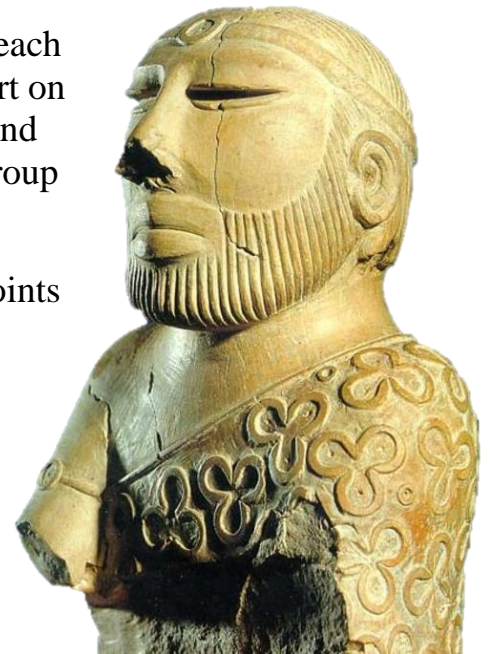


What Happened to the Harrappans?

Thanks for downloading this Students of History lesson! There are a few different ways to use this lesson in your class based on what you feel is best for your students.

Lesson Options

1. Students complete the reading, chart, and short answer individually for homework or an in-class assignment.
2. Students break into five groups. Cut up the theories and give each group a different theory. Each group member reads the theory and then they name it on their chart using the corresponding number, and write down three key elements of each theory. They then return the readings to the folder and pass the folder to the next group. Repeat this step until the students have completed the chart for all four theories.
3. Similar to Option 2, except students are in groups of 5 with each student having a different theory. They complete the first part on their own, then each group member shares their key points and the group discusses the validity as a group and comes to a group conclusion about which is the most valid.
4. The teacher should then discuss the theories and their key points with the students.
5. Lastly, students create their theory about what happened to the Harappans using evidence they have gathered from the four readings. They can either combine various elements from all of them to create a new theory, or argue in favor of one. This is written on the essay sheet.



Name _____

What Happened to the Harappans?

The following chart corresponds to the five theories you will be reading. For each theory create a name and list three key points to that theory. Then use your background knowledge to assess the validity of each theory.

Theory Name	Key points of the theory	Validity Assessment
Theory 1	<u>a.</u> <u>b.</u> <u>c.</u>	
Theory 2	<u>a.</u> <u>b.</u> <u>c.</u>	
Theory 3	<u>a.</u> <u>b.</u> <u>c.</u>	
Theory 4	<u>a.</u> <u>b.</u> <u>c.</u>	
Theory 5	<u>a.</u> <u>b.</u> <u>c.</u>	

Theories on the Harappans

Theory 1

There is archaeological evidence that shows a possible massacre. Skeletons of both men and women have been found scattered about the streets. They were found on the same stratum which indicates they died at the same time. Some of the skeletons were incomplete, while two had cranial damage. There were other indications of a quick exit by the people of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. One of the Aryan Gods, Indra, was bloodthirsty and is often referred to as the destroyer of forts.

Theory 2

The Harappans were known for their seals. The seals, which were used to imprint images in clay, most often had pictures of an animal with pictograms from an unknown written language. The most common animals found on the seals are unicorns and bulls, but there are also other animals. Some of the other animals include the monkey, the rhino, the elephant, and the hippopotamus. All of these creatures commonly live in forested, jungle habitats with plenty of water. Today the Indus River Valley is mostly arid plains or desert. This shows us that there was a change in the climate at some point in history.

Theory 3

The Indus River was a wildly changing one. It would change its course quite regularly during the time of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. A change in the course of the river could have disastrous effects on any city that was located on its banks. This is the case for most of the cities in the Harappan Age. In fact the city of Harappa was destroyed and rebuilt five times, while Mohenjo-Daro was rebuilt six times.

Theory 4

The Harappans were an *agrarian* society, meaning they grew crops in fields and lived in one place. They had a highly advanced sewer system and running water in each home. They were also able to build an irrigation system to bring water from the Indus River to their fields. In order to support a larger population they needed larger fields and so they would cut down trees to enlarge the amount of arable land. Over time, the Harappans fields were exhausted of minerals and nutrients, and the irrigation system left a salty residue on their fields. This limited the ability of the Harappans to grow crops.

Theory 5

In 1964, an American scientist George Dales, looked at skeletons believed to have been massacred. He found evidence that many of them had been buried years after the others died, after the ground level had risen. There are also no signs of extensive burning, no bodies of armored warriors, and no significant amount of weapons. The raised Citadel, shows no sign of a last stand.