Classical India

321 BCE – 500 CE
Impact of Geography

- Indus and Ganges Rivers provided silt for early Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro
- Himalayan Mountains and Thar Desert offered protection
- Monsoons (shifting seasonal winds) brought rainfall for agriculture but could also cause flooding
  - Lack of monsoons led to drought and famine
Indian Trade

- Location allowed for profitable trade
  - Middle-men on Silk Roads between China and Rome
  - Trade with Africa and Arabia on Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf
- Trade helped spread Indian culture leading to cultural diffusion
- Trade contributed to banking systems developing in India
Mohenjo – Daro Plumbing

- Early Mohenjo- Daro civilization (2500 BCE) had advanced plumbing not found in other civilizations until the 19th century
  - Private bathrooms and toilets built with bricks and wood
  - Pipes connected to each home carried waste into an underground sewer
Mauryan Dynasty (321 – 231 BCE)
Emperor Asoka

- United Northern India
- Harsh rules
- Heavy taxes
- Controlling military and spies

Emperor Asoka (269 – 232 BCE)
- Expanded Indian Empire through violence
- Converted to Buddhism in 269 BCE
  - Granted religious tolerance
  - Supported non-violence
  - Fought for human rights
- Built roads, rest houses, and watering holes for easy traveling.

Emperor Asoka ruled 269 – 232 BCE
Gupta Dynasty (320 – 550 CE)

- Led Indian Golden Age
- Literature and Theater
  - Writing and Poetry Academies
  - Traveling troupe and drama acts
- Math
  - Modern numerals and decimals
  - Calculated Pi (3.14)
- Astronomy
  - Navigated using stars
  - Create a calendar
  - Observed eclipses to prove earth was round – 1000 years before Columbus
- Medicine
  - Classified 1000 diseases and 500 medical plants
  - Surgery and inoculations (shots)
Decline of Classical India

- Mauryan Dynasty experienced instability following death of Asoka
  - Central India - Kingdoms regained independence
  - Northern India - flooded with political refugees from Greece, Persia, and Central Asia
  - Southern India - war broke out among the three Tamil Kingdoms
- Gupta Dynasty lost power following death of Chandra Gupta II
  - Northern India invaded by Hunas (related to Huns) from Central Asia
  - India broken up into several small kingdoms