

World History

Mesopotamian Civilisation

- It is the oldest civilisation of the world. Mesopotamia is the land between rivers Tigris and Euphrates.
- Mesopotamians were the first to use potter's **wheel** and to make glass. They were the first to evolve a proper system of writing called **Cuneiform**. Cuneiform script was deciphered by Henry Rawlinson.
- Mesopotamians discovered **sexagimal system** of counting (based on sixties), Pythagoras theorem and the length of day and night.

Chinese Civilisation

- The earliest civilisation was by the Shang (Chou) dynasty, followed by the Qin and Han dynasty.
- In 3rd century BC, the ruler of Chin dynasty built the Great Wall.
- Chinese script was pictographic and their calendar was a combination of solar-lunar calendar.
- Silk became the chief item of export during the Han dynasty.

- Their two major religions were Taoism and Confucianism. They invented water clock, abacus and umbrella.

Iranian Civilisation

- This civilisation developed in around 6th century BC by the Achaemenid Empire under its first ruler, Cyrus. His capital was at Pasargadae. His successors were Darius I and Darius III.
- The Achaemenids introduced the use of gold and silver coins. Their main religion was Zoroastrianism founded by Zarathustra or Zoroaster. Their official language was Aramaic.

Greek Civilisation

- This civilisation developed around 800 BC, when the small villages clustered to form city-states.
- They worshipped Zeus (Sky God), Poseidon (Sea God), Apollo (Sun God), Athena (Goddess of Victory) etc.
- In the Battle of Marathon (490 BC), Greeks defeated King Darius I. Alexander was the greatest Greek ruler.
- The Olympic Games originated in Greece. *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are among the best epics of the world written by Homer.

Roman Civilisation

- Italy was the centre of the civilisation. The city of Rome was founded by Romulus in 1000 BC on the bank of river Tiber.
- The war between Carthage and Rome is known as Punic War (264 BC to 146 BC).
- Julius Caesar one of the generals murdered, Pompey, another general and occupied the throne. He was attached to the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Caesar was succeeded by Octavian and Diocletian.
- Romans worshipped the planets. They developed the Latin language. Lucretius, Seneca, Cicero and Marus were the famous Roman philosophers and Horace and Virgil were the poets. Tacitus and Pliny were the historians.
- They invented the concrete for constructing buildings.

Renaissance

- The Renaissance or “Revival of learning” started in the AD 16th century in Italy.
- The fall of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 led to the dispersal of scholars throughout Italy. Renaissance led to the revival of classical learning, art, architecture and Humanism.
- Renaissance writers include Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio and Machiavelli.
- Renaissance painters—Leonardo da Vinci (The Last Supper and Mona Lisa), Michelangelo (The Last Judgement and the Fall of Man), Raphael (Madona).
- The movement helped in the development of printing press.

Reformation (16th Century)

- This movement was started in Germany by Martin Luther by publicly protesting the sale of letters of Indulgence.
- It was a revolt against **Roman Catholic Church**. As a result, Western Europe was split between Roman Catholic and Protestant countries.

Glorious Revolution of England (1688)

- This revolution started against the policies of King **James II**. He tried to secure freedom of worship for Catholics. This united the Whigs and Tories of Anglican Church against him and they invited William of Orange to occupy English throne.
- James II threw the great seal into the river Thames and fled to France. The event is known as Glorious or Bloodless Revolution.
- It ended the despotic rule of the Stuarts, established the modern budgetary system and the Bill of Rights (1689) was passed that settled down the problem of succession.

Industrial Revolution

- It began in Britain in AD 1750 with the invention of Spinning Jenny by Hargreaves, Water frame by Richard Arkwright (1769), Mule by Samuel Crompton (1779), Power loom by Edmund Cartwright (1785) and Steam engine by James Watt (1769).
- This fastened the production of cloth and better quality yarn were produced. The economic progress also affected the culture and society of the people.

American Revolution

- George Washington, the first President of America was the pioneer of the revolution.
- **Boston Tea Party** (1773) A group of citizens of Boston dumped the crates of tea, loaded on a ship of East India Company into the sea. This was because of the problem on tea tax.
- On 4th July, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was issued by Thomas Jefferson.
- The war ended with the Treaty of Paris in AD 1783.
- **Benjamin Franklin** established the American Philosophical Society. Americans were the first to have a written Constitution.

French Revolution

- The revolution initiated on 5th May, 1789 during the reign of Louis XIV.
- The immediate cause of the revolution was the extravagant expenditure and inefficiency by Louis

XV and Louis XVI. Other causes were social inequality, heavy taxation, etc.

- Montesquieu, Voltaire and Rousseau were the French writers and thinkers of the period.
- **Liberty, Equality and Fraternity** were the ideals that emerged from the revolution.

World War I

- World War I began on 28th July, 1914 and ended on 11th November, 1918. The war began due to the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria.
- There were two sides involved in the war. The Triple Entente (also known as the Allies) includes Britain, France, Ireland and Russia. The central powers were Germany and Austria-Hungary.
- Italy joined the war from the side of Triple Entente. They declared war on Austria-Hungary in May 1915 and Germany in August, 1916.
- America joined the war on 6th April, 1917 because a German submarine had sunk a British passenger ship, Lusitania, that killed 1,195 passengers out of which 128 were American citizens.

Ending of World War I

- Both the sides were actively involved in the war. In 1918, the German citizens began striking and demonstrating against the war.
- German Emperor Kaiser Wilhelm II stepped down on 9th November, 1918. The leaders of both sides of the war met at France and peace armistice was signed on 11th November, 1918.

Outcome of World War I

A League of Nations (predecessor of UN) was also formed to prevent future wars. But the League of Nations could not stop Germany, Italy and Japan from expanding their powers.

World War II

- World War II was a battle between two groups of countries: the 'Allies' and the 'Axis'.
- The major Allied powers were Britain, France, Russia, China and the United States. The major Axis powers were Germany, Italy and Japan.

Ending of World War II

- After the humiliation faced by Germany during World War I, Adolf Hitler together with the Nazi Party decided to make Germany a world power.
- To gain more land and power, on 1st September, 1939, German troops invaded Poland. After Hitler refused to stop invasion, Britain and France declared war on Germany.
- Around the same time when Germany fought for power in Europe, Japan wanted to control Asia and the Pacific. In 1937, (before World War II) Japan attacked China, bringing two nations into years of conflict.
- The US did not join the war until 1941, when Japan attacked the US (at naval base at Pearl Harbour, Hawaii). On 8th December, 1941, the US declared war on Japan in turn.
- Allied armies invaded Germany in 1945, forcing Germans to surrender. After nuclear attacks on Japan's major cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan also surrendered to Allied forces the same year.
- In this manner, World War II came to an end.

Practice Exercise

1. River Tigris and Euphrates are associated with
 - (a) Mesopotamian civilisation
 - (b) Chinese civilisation
 - (c) Iranian civilisation
 - (d) Roman civilisation
2. Which dynasty built the Great Wall of China ?
 - (a) Chou dynasty
 - (b) Chin dynasty
 - (c) Han dynasty
 - (d) Lodhi dynasty
3. Which civilisation's main religion was Zoroastrianism ?
 - (a) Iranian civilisation
 - (b) Chinese civilisation
 - (c) Greek civilisation
 - (d) Roman civilisation
4. Battle of Marathon was fought by Greeks in which year?
 - (a) 800 BC
 - (b) 490 BC
 - (c) 525 BC
 - (d) 480 BC
5. Punic War was fought between Carthage and
 - (a) Chinese
 - (b) Iranian
 - (c) Greek
 - (d) Rome
6. Which of the statement(s) is/are correct ?
 - I. Glorious Revolution started against the Policies of King James II.
 - II. Whigs and Tories of Anglican Church united against him.
 - III. James II fled to Italy.
 - (a) Only I
 - (b) I and II
 - (c) I and III
 - (d) All of the above
7. Choose the incorrect option.
 - (a) Spinning Jenny : Hargreaves
 - (b) Water Frame : Richard Arkwright
 - (c) Mule : Samuel Crompton
 - (d) Power Loom : James Watt
8. Which country was the first to have a written Constitution?
 - (a) England
 - (b) America
 - (c) France
 - (d) Italy
9. Liberty, Equality and Fraternity emerged from which revolution?
 - (a) French revolution
 - (b) American revolution
 - (c) Industrial revolution
 - (d) Revolution of England
10. Which country made the first declaration of World War I?
 - (a) Germany
 - (b) Serbia
 - (c) Russia
 - (d) Austria -Hungary
11. What was the name of the first civilian ship to be sunk by German Submarine?
 - (a) Lusitania
 - (b) Hocesatonie
 - (c) Titanic
 - (d) Maine
12. On what date the United States declare war on Germany?
 - (a) 7th December, 1914
 - (b) 6th April, 1917
 - (c) 29th January, 1918
 - (d) 4th November, 1917
13. The formal peace treaty with Germany was signed
 - (a) under the Arc de Trimphe in Paris
 - (b) on a ship sailing in neutral waters
 - (c) at Versailles
 - (d) in Italy
14. Renaissance or 'Revival of learning' started in 16th century in which country?
 - (a) Rome
 - (b) Greek
 - (c) Italy
 - (d) China

- 15.** Which event is generally considered to be the first belligerent act of World War II ?
 (a) Germany's attack on Russia
 (b) Germany's attack on Britain
 (c) Germany's attack on Poland
 (d) Germany's occupation of Austria
- 16.** Which two countries were the first to declare war on Germany?
 (a) Italy and Greece
 (b) Britain and France
 (c) Norway and Denmark
 (d) The United States and the USSR
- 17.** Which was the first Western European country that Germany invaded?
 (a) France (b) Norway
 (c) Switzerland (d) Poland
- 18.** When did US join World War II ?
 (a) December, 1941
 (b) June, 1940
 (c) November, 1941
 (d) January, 1942
- 19.** Which activity led to surrender of Japan ?
 (a) Allied army invasion of Germany
 (b) Nuclear attack on Japan's major cities
 (c) Surrender of Germans
 (d) Japan attack on Pearl Harbour
- 20.** Cold war lasted for how many years?
 (a) 40 years
 (b) 45 years
 (c) 35 years
 (d) 38 years

Answers

1	(a)	2	(b)	3	(a)	4	(b)	5	(d)	6	(b)	7	(d)	8	(b)	9	(a)	10	(d)
11	(a)	12	(b)	13	(c)	14	(c)	15	(c)	16	(b)	17	(d)	18	(a)	19	(b)	20	(b)