



VI. SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. Write a few lines on the Iron Pillar located at Mehrauli, Delhi.

Ans:

- The Iron Pillar located at Mehrauli, Delhi was made about 1500 years ago.
- It is made of iron. Its height is 7.2 m and its weight is over 3 tones.
- It was probably built during the Gupta dynasty.
- It is amazing that the pillar has not rusted in all these years.
- The pillar is a remarkable example of the skill of Indian crafts people.
- The pillar is famous all over the world.

2. How were stupas and temples built? [V. Imp.]

Ans: Building stupas and temples was not an ordinary job. It needed huge wealth which only kings or queens could afford. There were several stages in building a stupa or a temple. Firstly, good quality stone had to be found, quarried and transported to the place that was often carefully selected for the new building. Secondly, these rough blocks of stone had to be shaped and covered into pillars, and panels for walls, floors and ceilings. Thirdly, these had to be placed in precisely the right position. Kings and queens spend money from their treasury to pay the crafts persons.

3. What are the main features of Ajantapaintings? [V. Imp.]

Ans:

- The paintings of Ajanta are world famous. Ajanta is a place where several caves were hollowed out of the hills over centuries.
- Most of these were Buddhist monasteries while some of them were decorated with paintings.
- The caves are dark inside and therefore most of these paintings were done in the light of torches.
- The colours are vivid even after 1500 years.
- These colours were made of plants and minerals.

4. Write in brief about Kalidasa's Meghaduta. [Imp.]

Ans: Kalidasa's Meghaduta is a best-known poem. It is one of his best literary creation. It is in Sanskrit. It was written during the Gupta reign. There is a description of monsoon in this famous book. The monsoon cloud is imagined to be a messenger between lovers who are separated from one another. The poet beautifully describes the breeze that will carry the cloud northwards. It is a cool breeze. It blows with fragrance of the earth. It is delightful, swollen by the cloud's showers. Elephants inhale it deeply. It causes the wild figs to ripen. It blows gently with the cloud. This description is very sensuous and appealing. It creates a real picture of the cloud and the breeze. Kalidasa was really a poet at par.

5. What are Puranas? Mention some of their features.

Ans: The term Purana literary means old. The Puranans are collections of old Hindu religions stories. Here are some of their features:

- They contain stories about gods and goddesses such as
- Vishnu, Shiva, Durga or Parvati.
- They also contain details on how these deities were to be worshipped.
- There are accounts as well about the creation of the world and about kings.
- Puranas unlike Vedas could be read and heard by everybody including women and Shudras

6. Describe the contribution of Aryabhatta to Science. [V. Imp.]

Ans: The name of Aryabhatta emerged during this period. He became famous as a mathematician and astronomer. He wrote a book in Sanskrit known as the Aryabhatiyam. He stated that day and night were caused by the rotation of the earth on its axis, even though it seems as if the sun is rising and setting every day. He developed a scientific explanation for eclipses as well. He also found a way of calculating the circumference of a circle, which is nearly as accurate as the formula we use today.

VII. LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

1. What are stupas? Mention some of their striking features.

Ans: Stupas are Buddhist religious buildings made of brick and stone. There are several kinds of stupas.

- Some are round and tall while some are big and small. Here are some striking features of stupas.
- There is a small box, known as a relic casket, placed at the centre or heart of the stupa. The box contains bodily remains of the Buddha or his followers, or things they used, as well as precious stones and coins.
- This box was covered with earth. Later, a layer of mud brick or baked brick was added on top. And then, the dome like structure was sometimes covered with carved stone slabs.
- A path called the pradakshina patha was laid around the stupa. This was surrounded with railings. Entrance to the path was through gateways.
- Devotees walked around the stupa in a clockwise direction, as a mark of devotion.

2. Describe the earliest Hindu temples.

Ans: Some Hindu temples were also built during this period. The deities worshipped in these shrines were Vishnu, Shiva and Durga. The most important part of the temples was the garbhagriha, which was a room where the image of the chief deity was placed. It was at this place that priests performed religious rituals and devotees offered worship to the deity. The garbhagriha had a tower known as the shikhara built on its top. This marked the place as a sacred one. Building shikharas require careful planning. Most temples also had a mandapa. This was a hall like structure meant for the common people to assemble. Mahabalipuram and Aihole in south India were famous for their temples. These were stone temples. The monolithic temples of Mahabalipuram were very beautiful. Each of these temples was carved out of a huge, single piece of stone. It is therefore they are known as monoliths. The Durga temple at Aihole was built about 1400 years ago.

3. Describe the two Sanskrit epics the Mahabharata and Ramayana. Or Why are the epics like Mahabharata and Ramayana so popular even today?

Ans. The Mahabharata and Ramayana are the most popular of the epics and other religious books of the Hindus. They are also famous among the followers of other religion. The causes for their popularity are almost the same. The story of the Mahabharata tells family drama followed by a great war between the two groups of the same family, the Kauravas and Pandavas. Here, we learn how

are fights for the right cause. The Pandavas are dethroned and banished diplomatically by their cousin Duryodhana. They are always subjected to humiliation and injustice. Finally, they are put in a great battle to get their own right. In the Mahabharata we know how much tolerance one should have, how one can fight for a justified cause, how we should respect our elders, etc. There are so many teachings of ideal life in it. The Gita, which constitute a part of the Mahabharata is in itself considered as a great epic. It unfolds all the mysteries of life, the life before and the life after.

In the same way the Ramayana, written in the most popular language of the time, teaches us the high ideals of life. Rama, the most prominent character, shows how man should follow the ideals of life. He possesses all the virtues of a highly idealistic and realistic human being. He follows the system in a humble way. He fights for the justice and his right. This story is told in a very realistic way. It seems to be the story of a common man. So, it has a great appeal in our society till today.

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