

HISTORY · CHAPTER 2

Kings, Farmers and Towns — Early States and Economies

A 1-page guide for parents · 90-second read.

EXPECTED MARKS

7-8 out of 10 on this chapter's questions.
Below 5 means key facts (centres, dates, sources) are not memorised.

TIME TO MASTER**10-12 hrs****HELPLINE****70330 05444****WHAT THIS CHAPTER IS, IN PLAIN ENGLISH**

Your child is learning how EARLY STATES, KINGDOMS and TOWNS grew in ancient India between roughly 600 BCE and 600 CE. The chapter covers the sixteen Mahajanapadas, the rise of Magadha, the great Mauryan Empire (Chandragupta and Asoka), Asoka's idea of 'dhamma' (ethical conduct, NOT a religion), later kings like the Kushanas and Satavahanas, changes in farming and the countryside, the growth of towns, trade and coins, and — importantly — HOW historians read ancient inscriptions and why those inscriptions don't tell us everything. It is one of the most heavily-tested chapters in Class 12 History; the 8-mark question on Mauryan administration is near-annual.

5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CHILD

- What were the five major political centres of the Mauryan Empire?
- What was Asoka's 'dhamma', and why is it NOT the same as Buddhism?
- How did James Prinsep help us read ancient Indian inscriptions?
- How did notions of kingship change with the Kushanas and Satavahanas?
- What are the limitations of using inscriptions to write history?

WEAK-SPOT INDICATORS

- Thinks Asoka's inscriptions use the name 'Asoka' (they use Devanampiya/Piyadassi).
- Says dhamma = Buddhism (it was a broad ethical code).
- Cannot name the five Mauryan political centres.
- Confuses the Arthashastra (Kautilya) with Megasthenes' Indica.
- Cannot give the limits of inscriptional evidence.

WHEN TO WORRY — AND WHAT TO DO

Class 12 History rewards SPECIFICS — names, dates, the five centres, the right source for each fact. Vague memorisation fails. A daily 15-minute fact-drill for 3 weeks is the proven fix.

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