India’s Cultural Roots

Standard difficulty · 20 questions · 40 marks · Time: 37 minutes

Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: ____ / 40

Write full answers in Sections B and C. Answers are on the last page — try every question first!

Section A — Choose the correct answer — 8 × 1 = 8 marks

1. Knowledge passed down by speaking and memory, not writing, is called:
   (a) film tradition **(b)** internet tradition
   (c) printed tradition **(d)** oral tradition

2. The capital of the mahajanapada of Avanti was:
   (a) Ujjayini **(b)** Champa **(c)** Ahichchhatra **(d)** Vaishali

3. The bronze figure of a dancing girl from Mohenjo-daro belongs to which field of knowledge?
   (a) mathematics **(b)** medicine **(c)** astronomy **(d)** metalwork

4. What is the word for a song passed down among the people of a region?
   (a) folk song **(b)** oral tradition **(c)** mahajanapada **(d)** script

5. The ancient centre of learning at Nalanda is in present-day:
   (a) Assam **(b)** Bihar **(c)** Kerala **(d)** Tamil Nadu

6. Which of these was a mahajanapada (a large kingdom of ancient India)?
   (a) Dholavira **(b)** Mohenjo-daro **(c)** Anga **(d)** Lothal

7. A palm-leaf manuscript has 23 leaves, with 9 lines written on each leaf. How many lines does it have?
   (a) 207 lines **(b)** 198 lines **(c)** 32 lines **(d)** 230 lines

8. A manuscript was copied in 832 CE and found again in a library in 1823 CE. How many years apart are these?
   (a) 991 years **(b)** 1,091 years **(c)** 981 years **(d)** 2,655 years

Section B — Short answer — 8 × 2 = 16 marks

9. What is an oral tradition?

10. Write the word: (a) a song passed down among the people of a region (b) knowledge passed down by speaking and memory

11. Name the capital of each mahajanapada: (a) Vajji (b) Gandhara

12. To which field of knowledge does each belong? (a) the bronze figure of a dancing girl from Mohenjo-daro (b) Sushruta's writings on surgery

13. Explain each term: (a) Brahmi (b) inscription

14. Where is each ancient centre of learning today? (a) Vallabhi (b) Kanchipuram

15. A scribe copies 60 lines of a manuscript by hand each day. The manuscript has 300 lines. How many days will the copy take?

16. An ancient centre of learning had 46 teachers, each with 12 students. How many students studied there?

Section C — Longer answers — 4 × 4 = 16 marks

17. How did knowledge pass from one generation to the next before books were common?

18. Match each with its capital: (a) Vatsa (b) Vajji (c) Magadha. Choose from: Rajagriha; Vaishali; Kaushambi.

19. Match each with its field of knowledge: (a) Sushruta's writings on surgery (b) the Iron Pillar of Delhi, which has hardly rusted (c) the idea of zero as a number. Choose from: medicine; metalwork; mathematics.

20. Long ago, a student learned 13 lines of a long poem by heart each day. (a) How many lines would the student learn in 6 weeks? (b) The poem has 650 lines. How many days would it take to learn all of it? (c) Why did people pass on knowledge by memory before writing was common?

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Answer key

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Q	Answer	Working
1	(d) oral tradition	—
2	(a) Ujjayini	—
3	(d) metalwork	—
4	(a) folk song	—
5	(b) Bihar	—
6	(c) Anga	—
7	(a) 207 lines	23 × 9 = 207
8	(a) 991 years	1823 − 832 = 991
9	Knowledge, stories and songs passed from older people to younger ones by speaking and memory.	—
10	(a) folk song (b) oral tradition	—
11	(a) Vaishali (b) Taxila	—
12	(a) metalwork (b) medicine	—
13	(a) an old script from which many Indian scripts grew (b) writing carved on stone or metal	—
14	(a) Gujarat (b) Tamil Nadu	—
15	5 days	300 ÷ 60 = 5
16	552 students	46 × 12 = 552
17	Teachers recited and students repeated until they knew it by heart; later, texts were copied by hand on palm leaves and birch bark, and important orders were carved on stone.	—
18	(a) Kaushambi (b) Vaishali (c) Rajagriha	—
19	(a) medicine (b) metalwork (c) mathematics	—
20	(a) 546 lines (b) 50 days (c) Writing materials were rare and costly, so knowledge was kept alive by learning it by heart and repeating it.	13 × 7 × 6; 650 ÷ 13

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