

Lesson 4 The Legacy of India

MAIN IDEAS

Belief Systems Hinduism and Buddhism are practiced in countries besides India and have also influenced people of other faiths.

Culture The artistic styles of ancient India influenced other cultures and continue to be used today.

Culture The decimal system, numerals, and the concept of the zero transformed the ability to do mathematical calculations.

India's Religious Legacy

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How did the religions of India affect other cultures?

Hinduism and Buddhism Today

- Today four out of five people in India are Hindus
 - Hindus also live in Nepal, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, other countries
 - one million Hindus live in United States
- Today less than one percent of Indians are Buddhists
 - but Buddhism is popular in Asia, Western Europe, United States

Hindu and Buddhist Influences

- **Mohandas Gandhi**—mid-1900s Indian leader
 - used *ahimsa* to fight against British rule
- His life inspired U.S. civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.
 - in 1950s, 1960s, led nonviolent protests for African-American rights
- Hindu and Buddhist influences continue today
 - yoga, meditation are popular with people of many different religions

REVIEW QUESTION

Which of India's original religions remains most popular in India?

India's Artistic Legacy

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How have the Indian arts influenced other cultures?

Literature, Art, and Architecture

- Indian arts have influenced the world
- Southeast Asians perform plays based on Sanskrit epic *Mahabharata*
- *Bhagavad Gita* has been translated and read around world
- Ancient artists' visual symbols for Buddha's holiness still used
- Indian influences in design of Cambodia's Hindu temple, Angkor Wat

REVIEW QUESTION

What types of Indian art have influenced other societies?

The Legacy of Indian Mathematics

ESSENTIAL QUESTION How does the mathematical knowledge of ancient India affect our lives today?

Hindu-Arabic Numerals

- Numerals we use—**Hindu-Arabic numerals**—came from India
 - numerals 1 to 9 are 2,000 years old; Arab traders took them to the West
- Indians developed decimal system, based on tens
 - each numeral is worth 10 times the numeral to its right
- Decimal system requires symbol for zero, to show empty places
 - zero used in India for 1,400 years

REVIEW QUESTION

How does the zero make the decimal system possible?

Lesson Summary

- Hinduism and Buddhism are major world religions.
- Indian literature and art shaped other cultures.
- Without the zero, the way we do mathematical calculations would be impossible.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Every day you use at least ten things that were invented in India. You can count on it!