The people of Southern Asia have formed important civilizations and created religions that have spread throughout the region and the world.
Southern Asia: Place and Times

SECTION 1
Physical Geography

SECTION 2
Ancient India

SECTION 3
Ancient Crossroads
Section 1

Physical Geography

Southern Asia’s geography affects how the region’s people live.
The Variety of Southern Asia

The Nations of South Asia

- Greater South Asia includes Afghanistan, Maldives, Sri Lanka
- South Asian subcontinent: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan
- **Subcontinent**—large landmass that is part of a continent
  - but is geographically separate from rest of continent
- India is subcontinent’s largest nation, world’s second most populous
Geographic Regions of South Asia

The Northern Mountain Rim

- Hindu Kush Mountains in west; Himalayas in east cross India, Nepal
  - Mount Everest is world’s tallest peak—five and a half miles high
- Karakoram Range lies in middle
- Ranges block off subcontinent; passes allow travel, invasions
  - Khyber Pass connects Pakistan, Afghanistan
- Rough terrain is dangerous, hard to farm; few people live in area

Continued . . .
The Northern Plains

- **Northern Plains** lie between Himalayas, southern India
  - Ganges River flows from Himalayas to Bangladesh, Bay of Bengal
  - Indus River flows through Pakistan to Arabian Sea
  - at seas, form large *deltas*—triangular soil deposits at river mouth

*continued Geographic Regions of South Asia*
The Northern Plains

- Ganges carries rich sediment—minerals, debris from river bottom
- When plains flood, sediment deposits make area fertile for farming
  - Northern Plains is densely populated due to rich soil
- Bangladesh has 130 million people in area the size of Wisconsin
- Indus River valley was once also fertile, densely populated
  - today is mostly desert, sparsely populated

continued Geographic Regions of South Asia
The Deccan Plateau
- Large **Deccan Plateau** of southern India has mineral deposits, forests
- Eastern and Western Ghats mountains border plateau
- Coastal plains between Ghats and oceans have fertile soil, water
- Plateau is less populated than Northern Plains

**Sri Lanka and the Maldives**
- Sri Lanka is mountainous, rainy island off southern tip of India
- Maldives are 400 miles of 1,200 low coral islands called atolls
Regions and Nations of Southeast Asia

Mainland Southeast Asia
• Mainland lies on Indochinese, Malay peninsulas
• Nations: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia (part)
• Mekong River drains densely populated, rice-producing region
  - from Plateau of Tibet, through Laos, Cambodia, to South China Sea
Islands of Southeast Asia

- Nations include Borneo (of which Malaysia owns part), Singapore
  - also Indonesian, Philippine *archipelagoes*—groups of islands
- Densely populated Indonesia is region’s largest country
  - made up of 17,000 tropical islands; over 6,000 are inhabited
- Philippines includes 7,100 islands; 800 inhabited
- Around half the people of both Indonesia, Philippines are farmers
Climate and Monsoons

The Monsoon Cycle

• **Monsoon**—seasonal wind blowing over north Indian Ocean
  - brings moisture, heavy rains from southwest from April–October
  - blows dry from northeast from November–February

• Rains fall in South Asia, June–October; in Southeast, April–September

Depending on Rain

• Farmers plan planting, harvest around monsoon rains
  - too much rain floods, ruins crops, destroys property
Section 2

Ancient India

The people of ancient India established social and cultural practices that became widespread throughout the region.
The Indus River Valley Civilization

The Harappan Civilization

• Develops in Indus River valley from 2500 B.C. to 1700 B.C.
• Mostly in Pakistan area, from Delhi, India, to Kabul, Afghanistan
• Major cities are Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro - Mohenjo-Daro has public buildings, irrigation canals
• Civilization ends perhaps due to climate change or Aryan conquest
The Aryan Influence on South Asia

A New People, a New Civilization

- **Aryans** come to South Asia from Russia around 1700 B.C.
- Are nomadic herders who speak **Sanskrit** language

New Technology

- Discover iron ore in Ganges around 1000 B.C.
- Iron plows improve rice growing; Aryans settle into towns
- Iron weapons enable them to rule northern India
Hinduism—A Way of Life

The Vedas
- Hinduism, based on Aryan practices, develops in ancient India
- Aryan priests chant hymns to gods; written down, hymns become Vedas
  - Vedas—Books of Knowledge on prayers, hymns, rituals, philosophy

Karma and Reincarnation
- Karma—a person’s actions determine what happens after death
- Reincarnation—after death, soul is repeatedly reborn into new bodies
  - status in present life is determined by behavior in past life

Continued . . .
The Caste System

- **Caste**—inherited social class that determines job, marriage, friends
  - based on Aryan tribal system, belief that people are not equal
- Four main classes: priest, warrior/prince, merchant/farmer, laborer
  - untouchables are beneath the four classes, are shunned
- Today there are thousands of castes, subcastes
  - government is trying to reduce caste influence on society
The Maurya and Gupta Dynasties

The Mauryan Empire
• First Indian empire founded by Aryan descendents (324–185 B.C.)
  - Emperor Ashoka unifies government; builds stone palaces, monuments

The Golden Age and the Gupta Dynasty
• Gupta rule is golden age of science, art, literature (A.D. 320–500)
• Both Hinduism, Buddhism are practiced, inspire artists, architects

Continued . . .
The Maurya and Gupta Dynasties

continued

Literature
- Gupta’s Sanskrit literature includes poet-playwright Kalidasa
  - his fifth-century plays teach moral principles

Mathematics
- Gupta develop concept of zero and design today’s numerals
  - learned by Europeans from Islamic civilizations, so called *Arabic*
Section 3

Ancient Crossroads

The culture of ancient Southeast Asia was heavily influenced by traders and travelers from China, India, and other countries.
SECTION

3 Ancient Crossroads

Crossroads of Culture

Early History
• Ancient Indian, Chinese come to crossroads of Southeast Asia
  - crossroads—place where people, goods, ideas come together
• Skills develop in Southeast Asia first, before China or India
  - making bronze tools; growing yams, rice; sailing
  - some of the earliest agriculture develops 15,000–10,000 B.C.

Continued . . .
Trade and Travel
- Central position makes Southeast Asia trade crossroads
  - center of South Pacific, Indian Ocean sea trade routes
- Region’s goods, ideas reach India, China, Southwest Asia, Africa
  - rice, tea, timber, spices, gold, religion, agriculture, art

Influence of India
- Indian traders arrive around A.D. 100
- Region adopts Indian Hinduism, Buddhism, art, architecture
Buddhism in Southeast Asia

The Signs of the Buddha

• **Buddhism** founded in India in 500 B.C. by **Siddhartha Gautama**
  - a warrior-prince, he leaves his family, wealth
  - wanders in self-denial, seeks causes of human suffering
• Gains enlightenment—religious awakening—through meditation
  - believes he knows reasons for suffering, how to escape it
• People call him the Buddha—the Enlightened One

*Continued...*
Buddhist Teachings

• Follows Hinduism’s karma, reincarnation; rejects its castes, priests

• **Four Noble Truths:**
  - life is pain
  - suffering is from desiring things
  - seek to be free of desire, pain; achieve nirvana—happiness, peace
  - Middle Way—Eightfold Path is guide to escaping suffering
continued Buddhism in Southeast Asia

Buddhist Teachings

- **Eightfold Path’s** guidelines include:
  - right understanding, purpose, speech, conduct
  - right means of livelihood, effort, awareness, meditation
The Spread of Buddhism

- After Buddha’s death, followers spread the faith to:
  - south India, Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia
  - Tibet, central Asia, China, Korea, Japan
- Today, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam are major in India
Indian Influence in Southeast Asia

Empire of the Khmer

• Khmer people establish Hindu kingdom in Cambodia in A.D. 500s
  - build huge Hindu temple complex of Angkor Wat
• Kingdom spreads through Southeast Asia
  - Khmer retreat to Phnom Penh when Buddhism replaces Hinduism in area
• Indonesian Buddhist temple of Borobudur built in 500s
• Buddhism spreads to Myanmar, inspires Pagan kingdom in 1000s