

HISTORY · Y4–Y6

The Indus Valley Civilisation

Knowledge Organiser — Y4–Y6

Key facts

1

When and where

Flourished approximately 2600–1900 BC along the Indus River (present-day Pakistan and north-west India). Contemporary with ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia.

2

Major cities

Mohenjo-daro and Harappa are the best-excavated cities. Each had populations of 30,000–40,000 — larger than most contemporary Egyptian or Mesopotamian cities.

3

Urban planning

Streets were laid out in a grid pattern. Most remarkable feature: a sophisticated drainage and sewage system — residents had private bathrooms connected to covered drains.

4

The Great Bath

A large, watertight public bath at Mohenjo-daro — possibly used for ritual bathing. One of the world's earliest public water structures.

5

Writing

The Indus script has over 400 symbols and appears on thousands of seals and artifacts. It has NOT yet been deciphered — one of archaeology's great unsolved mysteries.

6

Trade

Traded extensively with Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). Exported: cotton cloth, timber, carnelian beads. Imported: metals and semi-precious stones.



Mystery of the decline

What happened around 1900 BC

- Around 1900 BC, the great Indus cities were gradually abandoned.
- THEORIES for the decline:
 - 1. Climate change: the monsoon shifted, causing drought and crop failure
 - 2. River changes: the Ghaggar-Hakra river dried up
 - 3. Migration of Aryan peoples from Central Asia
 - 4. Epidemic disease
- WHAT WE KNOW: there is no evidence of war or conquest — no weapons, no bodies of battle victims.
- The decline appears gradual, not sudden.
- No one knows for certain — this is what makes it fascinating.

