

## Very Short Answer Questions

### Q.1. Why is Gupta Age known as the golden age?

**Ans.** The period between 320–540 AD was known as Gupta Age. It was also called the golden age of Indian history when rapid development took place in the field of art, architecture, literature, philosophy, trade, science and agriculture.

### Q.2. Who were the early Gupta ruler?

**Ans.** Sri Gupta was the first known ancestor of the Guptas and the founder of the Gupta empire. He was succeeded by Ghatotkacha. Ghatotkacha was succeeded by his son Chandra Gupta I who probably ascended the throne in AD 320. He was the real founder and the first powerful king of the Gupta empire.

### Q.3. How was Metallurgy developed under Gupta empire?

**Ans.** The science of metallurgy, chemistry and physics also flourished under Gupta empire. The famous Mehrauli pillar stands as a silent witness to proclaim the excellent skill in working metals of the metallurgists of the Gupta Age.

### Q.4. Write a note on trade of Chalukyas.

**Ans.** Chalukyas had good trade relations with Arabia, Iran and South-east Asia and areas near the Red-Sea ports. Pulakeshin II had good trade ties with Persia (Iran).

### Q.5. Write a note on religion of Chalukyas.

**Ans.** The Chalukya kings followed Hinduism. Vishnu and Shiva were their famous gods. However, they remained tolerant towards other religions as both Buddhism and Jainism continued to flourish.

## Short Answer Questions

### Q.1. How did the Gupta empire emerge?

**Ans.** After the downfall of the Mauryas, many new empires emerged. Satavahanas and Kushanas emerged as new kingdoms. However, by the middle of third century AD, both these kingdoms also declined. In the third century AD, a new powerful kingdom emerged. It was the Gupta dynasty which emerged in Magadha. Their rule lasted for over 200 years.

### Q.2. What was the contribution of Aryabhata?

**Ans.** Among the notable astronomers and mathematicians of the Gupta age, Aryabhata stands out as the most important. A few of his works Aryabhatiyam, Dasagitikasura and Aryashtasala have come down to us. He was the first to treat mathematics as a distinct subject.

### Q.3. How were paintings developed under Gupta Age?

**Ans.** The art of painting reached its height of glory and splendour during the Gupta age. The most celebrated examples were the paintings in the Buddhist caves in Ajanta and Bagh Caves at Gwalior. On the walls of these caves were painted scenes of the life of the Buddha. There were also charming and delicate scenes of home and palace life, sports, festivities and processions.

### Q.4. How did Guptas decline?

**Ans.** Chandragupta II was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta. During his reign, the Gupta empire suffered severe blows due to the attacks of powerful enemy states. He had to put a tough fight for the preservation of the empire. Skandagupta was the last great king of the Gupta dynasty who succeeded to the throne in AD 455. After his death, the power of imperial Gupta empire began to decline considerably and ultimately collapsed completely in the middle of the sixth century AD.

### Q.5. Write a note on Chalukyas.

**Ans.** The Chalukya empire extended from South of Vindhya till river Krishna. Vatapi was their capital. Pulakeshin II was the most powerful king of this dynasty. He defeated king Harsha in the north and Mahendravarman, the Pallava king in the south. His kingdom extended from Arabian Sea to Bay of Bengal, from the Narmada river to the Palar river. However, later he was defeated by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman. The Rashtrakutas of Deccan destroyed the power of Chalukyas in totality.

### Q.6. Write a note on art and architecture under Chalukyas.

**Ans.** The capital city of Vatapi saw the construction of a number of temples of Shiva and Vishnu. The murals at Ajanta help us to know about this period, dress and lifestyle.

They even encouraged sculptures at Ellora. The Ajanta and Ellora caves near Aurangabad in Maharashtra are still famous tourist attractions.

**Q.7. Who were the Pallavas?**

**Ans.** Far deep in the South arose the Kingdom of Pallavas which ruled from 6th– 8th century AD. Kanchi or Kanjeevaram was their capital. The Pallavas fought many battles against Pandyas and Chalukyas. Mahendravarman I was one of the greatest Pallava rulers. He was succeeded by his son Narasimhavarman I who conquered many parts of Sri Lanka. After his death, Pallava rule declined due to frequent wars and weak successors.

## Long Answer Questions

### Q.1. Describe the sources of knowing about the Guptas.

**Ans.** Clear evidences and historical sources have been found for knowing about the Guptas. These include archaeological and literary sources. **Archaeological** Archaeological sources of Guptas include the rock-cut temples of Ajanta and brick temples in Devgarh, Kanpur and Jhansi. Further, pillar inscription at Allahabad about Samudragupta by his court poet Harisena, are rich sources of Gupta Heritage. **Coins and Literary Sources** Coins of Gupta Age, made of gold and silver, have been found with images of gods and goddesses or kings like Samudragupta. Further, the accounts of travellers like Fa Xian help in enriching us about the Gupta Age. The famous poet Kalidasa's work such as Raghuvamsa, Meghaduta and Abhijnana Shakuntalam belong to this age. The famous collection of fables called Panchatantra also belongs to this age.

### Q.2. Write a short note on Samudragupta.

**Ans.** Under Samudragupta, the Gupta empire was firmly established and attained the supremacy equal to what the Mauryans had exercised before. The Allahabad pillar inscription describes the conquest and glory of Samudragupta. By the end of his reign, his empire included almost the whole of northern India (except West Punjab, Kashmir, Sindh, Western Rajputana and Gujarat).

### Q.3. Give an account of slavery in India under Gupta Age.

**Ans.** Slavery was prevalent during the Gupta times but not in so rigid form as it was in Greece and Rome. The contemporary literary works give description of numerous categories of slaves like prisoners of war, slave debtors, losergamblers, female slaves, etc. Slavery in India, however, was not life long and liberty could be regained.

### Q.4. Describe the trade under the Gupta Age.

**Ans.** India had brisk trade relations with the foreign countries on the west by way of the Persian Gulf and Red Sea as well as the land routes converging on Palmyra and Petra. The conquest of the maritime province of Saurashtra and ports on the Arabian Sea poured into India for the first time, the wealth of Roman empire through Kalyani, Broach and Kambay. Tamralipti was the principal port for trade with China, Ceylon, Java and Sumatra.

### Q.5. Write a note on religion under Guptas.

**Ans.** The Gupta period was an age of blossoming of Hindu religion in its thousand petals and myriad scents. The Puranas were recast in their present form during this age. Brahmanism became supreme and was patronised by the Gupta rulers. Hinduism became state religion. As idol worship became popular, the Gupta rulers got erected many temples of Hindu gods such as Shiva, Vishnu, Sun, Kartikeya, etc. Donations were also made for the maintenance of temples.

**Q.6. Give an account of rise of Harshavardhan.**

**Ans.** With the decline of Gupta empire, many small kingdoms came to power. One such powerful kingdom was Vardhana dynasty led by Harshavardhana. At the height of his glory, his kingdom spanned Punjab, Bengal, Orissa and the entire Indo-Gangetic plain on the north of Narmada river. After his accession, he merged the two kingdoms of Thaneshwar and Kannauj and shifted his capital to Kannauj. Harshavardhana had tried to cross the region across River Narmada but was defeated by the Chalukyan king, Pulakeshin II. He wrote three plays Ratnavali, Priyadarsika and Nagananda.

**Q.7. Give an account of religion of Harshavardhan.**

**Ans.** Harsha was a follower of Shiva in his early years. Later he embraced Buddhism. However, he was tolerant towards all religions. He called two great assemblies to discuss Buddhism. During his rule, the Nalanda University came up as an important centre of learning. Harsha's death in 647 AD marked the end of all successful attempts to restore political unity in North India.

**Q.8. Describe an account of life of ordinary people of this age.**

**Ans.** We can know about the lives of ordinary people from plays and other accounts. Kalidasa, known for his plays, depicted life in the king's court through the chosen medium. An interesting trait about these plays is that the king and brahmins mostly speak Sanskrit, while women and men other than the king and brahmins use Prakrit. The Chinese pilgrim Fa Xian, also wrote the plight of those treated as untouchables by the high and mighty. They were expected to live on the outskirts of the city.

**Q.9. On an outline map of India, mark the extent of the Gupta Empire.**

**Ans.**



**Q.10. On an outline map of India, mark the extent of Pallavas and Chalukyas.**

**Ans.**



## **Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)**

### **Q.1. How was medical science developed under the Gupta age?**

**Ans.** Medical sciences were also widely studied under the Gupta age. The Indian surgeons were well versed in the art of dissection, plastic surgery, veterinary surgery and even in such specialised branches of surgery as that of eye, ear and nose. The great medical writer of this period was Vagbhata. He wrote Astangasangraha which is a systematic summary of Charaka and Shruta. Palakapya wrote Hastyaayurveda, a treatise on the diseases peculiar to elephants and their treatment.

### **Q.2. Give development regarding sculpture under Gupta Age.**

**Ans.** Sculpture undoubtedly reached a high level of excellence during the Gupta age. The sculptures dealt with Buddhist subjects as well as Buddha, and Bodhisattvas have been discovered largely at Mathura and Sarnath (Benaras). The most famous of the Buddha sculptures of this period is the seated Buddha turning the wheel of law or preaching his first sermon. It is justly regarded as the finest in the whole of India. The standing Buddha in the Mathura museum and the colossal copper statue of Buddha 7½ feet high from Sultanganj are the other leading examples of the Gupta sculpture.

### **Q.3. Give an account of assemblies in South.**

**Ans.** The inscriptions of the Pallavas describe a number of local assemblies. It included the sabha which was an assembly of brahmin landowners. This assembly functioned with the help of sub-committees, which looked after irrigation, agricultural operations, etc. The Ur was a village assembly found in areas, where the landowners were not brahmins. And the nagaram was an organisation of merchants. Perhaps these assemblies were controlled by rich and powerful landowners and merchants.