



BGS Vijnatham School

Step: V

Revision Worksheet-3

Lesson 13 and 14

Q1. Read the extract carefully and answer the following questions given below.

The East India Company (EIC), established in 1600 by a group of London merchants under a royal charter from Queen Elizabeth I, initially focused on lucrative trade in spices, silk, cotton, indigo dye, tea, and later opium with the East Indies and India. Granted a monopoly on English trade east of the Cape of Good Hope, it built trading posts (factories) in Surat, Madras, Bombay, and Calcutta, evolving from a commercial enterprise into a quasi-sovereign power by the mid-18th century through military conquests like the pivotal Battle of Plassey in 1757, which defeated the Nawab of Bengal and brought vast revenues under its control. At its peak, the EIC commanded a private army larger than Britain's own, administered justice, collected taxes, minted coins, and suppressed rivals like the French East India Company, effectively ruling large swathes of the Indian subcontinent. Its ruthless exploitation—through high taxation, forced opium cultivation in India for export to China, and famines like the Bengal Famine of 1770—sparked widespread resentment, culminating in the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Following the uprising, the British government passed the Government of India Act 1858, dissolving the EIC and transferring its administrative powers to the Crown, marking the birth of the British Raj.

1. In 1600, what was the primary motivation behind the English merchants who formed the East India Company?

2. What was the main strategic purpose of establishing fortified "factories" such as Surat and Madras in the 17th century?

3. Which event in 1757 is widely seen as a turning point, marking the East India Company's shift from a trading concern to a territorial power in India?

4. What did the East India Company initially trade?

5. What rebellion ended EIC dominance?

6. What act dissolved the EIC in 1858?

Q2. Read the extract carefully and answer the following questions given below.

King Ashoka, also known as Ashoka the Great (c. 304–232 BCE), was the third emperor of the Mauryan Empire, succeeding his father Bindusara and ruling from the capital Pataliputra (modern Patna) over a vast territory spanning most of the Indian subcontinent, from present-day Afghanistan to Bangladesh. Renowned for his early military prowess, he aggressively expanded the empire through conquests, but the devastating Kalinga War (c. 261–260 BCE)—which resulted in over 100,000 deaths and widespread misery—profoundly changed him, leading to deep remorse and his conversion to Buddhism under the influence of a monk named Upagupta. Embracing non-violence (ahimsa), Ashoka propagated "Dhamma," a practical ethical code emphasizing tolerance, respect for all religions, compassion for the poor and animals, environmental conservation, and moral governance, which he disseminated via 30+ inscribed rock and pillar edicts in Prakrit using Brahmi script—the earliest deciphered Indian writing. He constructed thousands of stupas and viharas, sent missionaries to Sri Lanka, Southeast Asia, and the Hellenistic world, appointed "Dhamma Mahamatras" to oversee welfare and justice, and hosted the Third Buddhist Council to purify the faith. Ashoka's reign marked a shift from imperial aggression to benevolent rule, influencing Buddhism's global spread and earning him enduring fame as an ideal chakravartin (universal ruler), though his empire fragmented after his death around 232 BCE.

1. What officials did Ashoka appoint for welfare?

2. How did Ashoka spread his ideals?

3. Where did Ashoka send Buddhist missionaries?

4. Who influenced Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism?

5. Who preceded Ashoka as emperor, and where was the capital?

6. What were King Ashoka's full name and lifespan?
