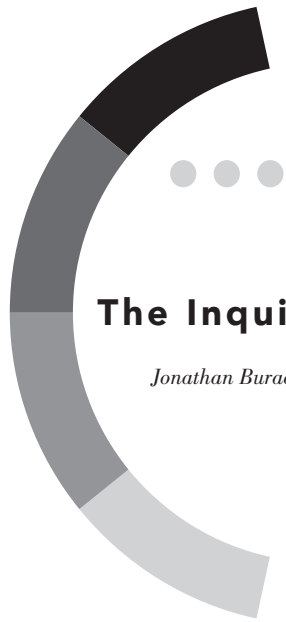


Classical Age



The Inquiry Arc in U.S. History

Jonathan Burack

Ashoka of Ancient India

MindSparks®

CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

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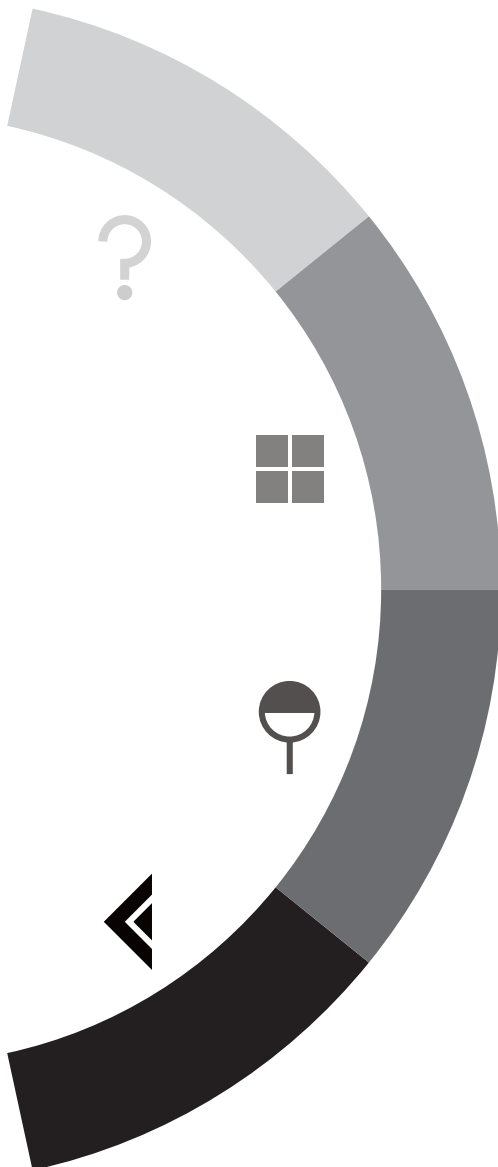
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C3 Framework

This book is based primarily on the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards. This C3 Framework is an effective tool offering guidance and support for rigorous student learning. The assignments encourage students to be active participants in learning and to explore the parts of history that they find most compelling. Central to the C3 Framework and our use of it is its Inquiry Arc—a set of four interrelated dimensions of informed inquiry in social studies. The lessons in this book are based on all four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc. While the C3 Framework analyzes each of the four dimensions separately, they are not entirely separable in practice—they each interact in dynamic ways. As a result, the lessons combine some or all of the dimensions in various ways.



Four Dimensions of the Inquiry Arc

1 Developing compelling and supporting questions and planning inquiries

Questions shape social studies inquiries, giving them broader meaning and motivating students to master content and engage actively in the learning process.

2 Applying disciplinary concepts and tools

These are the concepts and central ideas needed to address the compelling and supporting questions students pose. The C3 Framework stresses four subject fields: history, civics, economics, and geography. Each lesson addresses all of these disciplines.

3 Evaluating sources and using evidence

The purpose of using primary and secondary sources as evidence is to support claims and counterclaims. By assessing the validity and usefulness of sources, including those that conflict with one another, students are able to construct evidence-based explanations and arguments.

4 Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

While this may take the form of individual essays and other writing assignments, these lessons stress other kinds of individual and collaborative forms of communication, including debates, policy analyses, video productions, diary entries, and interviews. Meaningful forms of individual or collaborative civic action are also incorporated into each lessons.

How to Use This Book

This book offers you the chance to implement the entire C3 Inquiry Arc in brief, carefully structured lessons on important topics in world history. Each lesson is driven by a central compelling question, and disciplinary supporting questions are provided. Each lesson asks students to apply understandings from all of the C3 disciplines—history, civics, economics, and geography—and each lesson includes individual and group tasks in an integrated way.

Each lesson also includes an introductory essay, detailed teaching instructions, a set of primary sources, and the handouts needed to implement the lesson's assignments. Rubrics for student evaluation and sources for further study are also provided. The teaching instructions suggest a time frame for completion of each lesson, but the assessments can easily be adapted to fit into any lesson plan.

Each lesson also is aligned with several C3 Framework standards and Common Core State Standards. The College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Literacy emphasize the reading and information texts, making these lessons ideal for integration into English Language Arts instruction.



C3 Disciplines



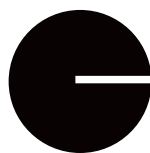
History



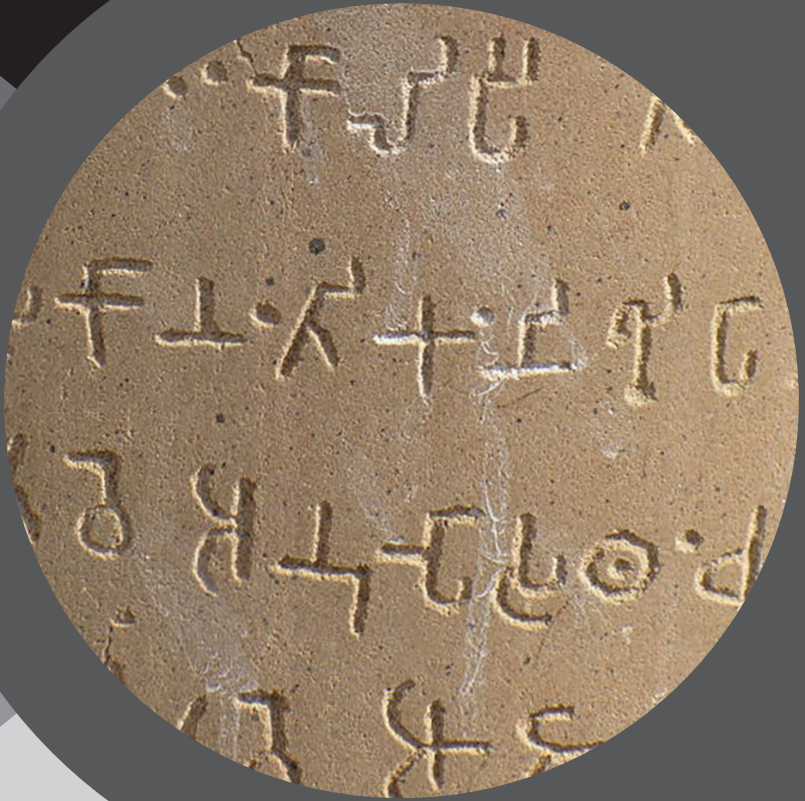
Civics



Economics



Geography



Ashoka of Ancient India

A Heartless Warrior or a Sorrowful Buddhist King?

Overview

Introduction

Ashoka, the third ruler of India's powerful Mauryan Empire, ruled over nearly all of what is now India from 268 to 232 BCE. A few years after coming to power, he conquered a kingdom called Kalinga. It was apparently a very bloody war. At some point soon after, he embraced Buddhism. He then promoted tolerance and peacefulness through a series of edicts inscribed on rocks and stone pillars found across India. The edicts were in a script that fell out of use a few centuries later. For many centuries, no one knew what they meant. No one even knew they were all from one ruler. They were only translated and understood once again in the early 1800s. Today, scholars still argue about their true intent. Specifically, they ask, was Ashoka really a benevolent Buddhist reformer or an ambitious and still determined empire builder? This lesson will focus on that compelling question. Students will work with ten sources. Most of them are Ashoka's own words from his edicts. These sources form the core content for tasks that will help students answer the lesson's compelling question.

Objectives

Students will work individually and in small groups to respond in a meaningful way to a compelling question about Ashoka. They will apply discipline-specific background knowledge, use scaffolding, and engage in instructional activities to interpret primary and secondary sources before presenting their ideas to the class.

C3 Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **D1.4.6-8.** Explain how the relationship between supporting questions and compelling questions is mutually reinforcing.
- ◆ **D1.5.6-8.** Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources.
- ◆ **D2.His.5.6-8.** Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- ◆ **D2.His.11.6-8.** Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.
- ◆ **D2.His.12.6-8.** Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.
- ◆ **D2.His.16.6-8.** Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.
- ◆ **D2.Civ.8.6-8.** Analyze ideas and principles contained in the founding documents of the United States, and explain how they influence the social and political system.
- ◆ **D2.Eco.7.6-8.** Analyze the role of innovation and entrepreneurship in a market economy.
- ◆ **D2.Geo.5.6-8.** Analyze the combinations of cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar to and different from other places.
- ◆ **D2.Geo.6.6-8.** Explain how the physical and human characteristics of places and regions are connected to human identities and cultures.
- ◆ **D3.1.6-8.** Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- ◆ **D3.2.6-8.** Evaluate the credibility of a source by determining its relevance and intended use.

- ◆ **D3.3.6-8.** Identify evidence that draws information from multiple sources to support claims, noting evidentiary limitations.
- ◆ **D3.4.6-8.** Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both.
- ◆ **D4.1.6-8.** Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging the strengths and limitations of the arguments.
- ◆ **D4.3.6-8.** Present adaptations of arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., internet, social media, and digital documentary).
- ◆ **D4.6.6-8.** Draw on multiple disciplinary lenses to analyze how a specific problem can manifest itself at local, regional, and global levels over time, identifying its characteristics and causes, and the challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address the problem.

Common Core Anchor Standards Addressed by This Lesson

- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1.** Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2.** Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6.** Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9.** Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7.** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- ◆ **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1.** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Teaching Instructions

Compelling Question

Was Ashoka a heartless warrior or a sorrowful Buddhist king?

Preparation

Provide all students with a copy of the Introductory Essay. Assign this reading as homework. In addition, assign all relevant parts of your course textbook or other basic reading material. Remind students to keep the compelling question for the lesson in mind as they read.



Asking Questions about Ashoka

This part of the task stresses Dimensions 1 and 2 of the C3 Framework

Day One

1. Briefly discuss the Introductory Essay in class and address any initial questions students may have.
2. Distribute the How to Analyze a Primary Source handout. Review each suggestion with the class, and remind students to refer to the handout as they read the primary and secondary sources in this lesson.
3. Divide the class into four small groups. Each group will focus its work on one of the four basic disciplines identified in Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework—history, civics, geography, or economics. As they work, the groups should keep in mind the lesson’s overall compelling question. However, for Day One and Day Two, each group will work mainly with a second compelling question—one related specifically to its assigned discipline.
4. Provide each group with one copy of its discipline-specific Assignment Sheet. Give each student a copy of all the primary and secondary sources for this lesson. Each group may share a source packet, if necessary.
5. Have students complete the Day One section of their Assignment Sheets. The objective for Day One is for groups to read three sources, and then formulate one supporting question about each of those sources. The supporting questions should be recorded in the spaces provided on the Assignment Sheet.



Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Evaluating Sources and Evidence

This part of the task stresses Dimensions 2 and 3 of the C3 Framework

Day Two

6. Students will return to their previously assigned groups and formulate a claim addressing their group’s compelling question. After reading the remaining seven sources, they will select one that supports their claim.

7. Using the evidence gathered from primary and secondary sources, each group will then prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation about Ashoka from the group's disciplinary perspective. The presentation can be in the form of an oral report, a debate among group members, a PowerPoint, or a related type of presentation. Allow time for students to prepare by discussing and debating topics among themselves.

Day Three

8. Each group will deliver its presentation. Allow time for class discussion following each presentation, and for a final effort to answer the central compelling question for the lesson.



Communicating Results and Taking Action

This part of the task stresses Dimension 4 of the C3 Framework

Students will complete a final project that expresses an understanding of the topic and responds clearly to the lesson's central compelling question. The project may be completed in groups, but students should be evaluated individually.

Distribute the Communicating Results and Taking Action handout, and decide whether you will assign the projects or allow students to form groups and choose tasks on their own. Set a reasonable deadline. Students should review the Ashoka Rubric so they can understand how their performance will be evaluated. The projects are summarized below.

Communicating Results

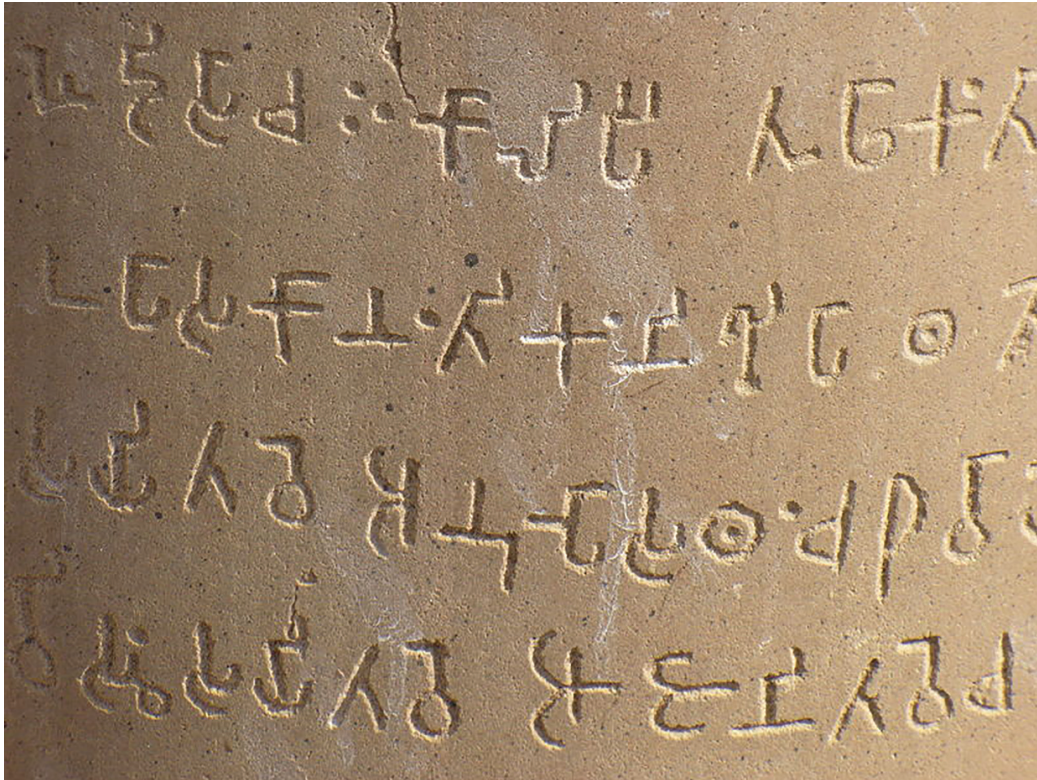
- ◆ Ask the History Group for this lesson to report on its views about Ashoka's concept of *Dhamma* and that concept's connection with Buddhist teachings. Then ask each student to use Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 in a brief essay answering this question: "Did Ashoka wish to convert all India to Buddhist beliefs?"
- ◆ Ask students to pretend they lived in Kalinga during the war that Ashoka fought there in the eighth year of his rule. They should then imagine that someone from another part of India has sent them the 13th Major Rock Edict (Primary Source 3.9). As a resident in Kalinga, they will already have read the 2nd Separate Edict (Primary Source 3.10). Students will then write letters back describing what they remember of the Kalinga war and explaining their reactions now that they have read both edicts mentioned here.
- ◆ Ask students to pretend they are advisers to Ashoka. It is toward the end of his reign, after most of his edicts have been displayed. Using Primary Sources 3.2 and 3.3, and Secondary Source 3.1, have each student write to Ashoka to ask him to clarify why he placed the various kinds of edicts where they are located. Ask him for suggestions as to where any new ones ought to go. Then have students pretend to be Ashoka and write a letter responding to the first one.

Taking Action

- ◆ India won its independence from Great Britain in 1947. One of the leaders of the drive for independence was Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru then became India's first prime minister. He had the Ashoka Chakra placed on the new Indian flag. The Ashoka Chakra (or the *dharmachakra*) is a 24-spoked wheel often found on Ashoka's rock edicts. Separate students into small groups. Ask each group to learn more about India's flag and the varying views people in India have about it and about Ashoka. Give each group time to do this research online. Then have groups report on what they learn and what this shows about India's attitudes today toward Ashoka and his teachings.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, use social media to share the results of these small group reports. Ask those contacted in this way to comment on India and Ashoka. Make some effort to respond to their questions and comments.

Introductory Essay

Ashoka's Messages to His People



Ashoka was unusual because of the messages he had inscribed on rocks and pillars throughout his vast realm.

Ancient Egyptian pharaohs often built huge statues or monuments to themselves. Some left inscriptions celebrating their rule carved on buildings, statues, or pillars. Other powerful rulers in Mesopotamia did the same. These usually depict brave and powerful rulers who ruthlessly conquered all who resisted them. The aim is to impress and instill fear in subjects and enemies alike.

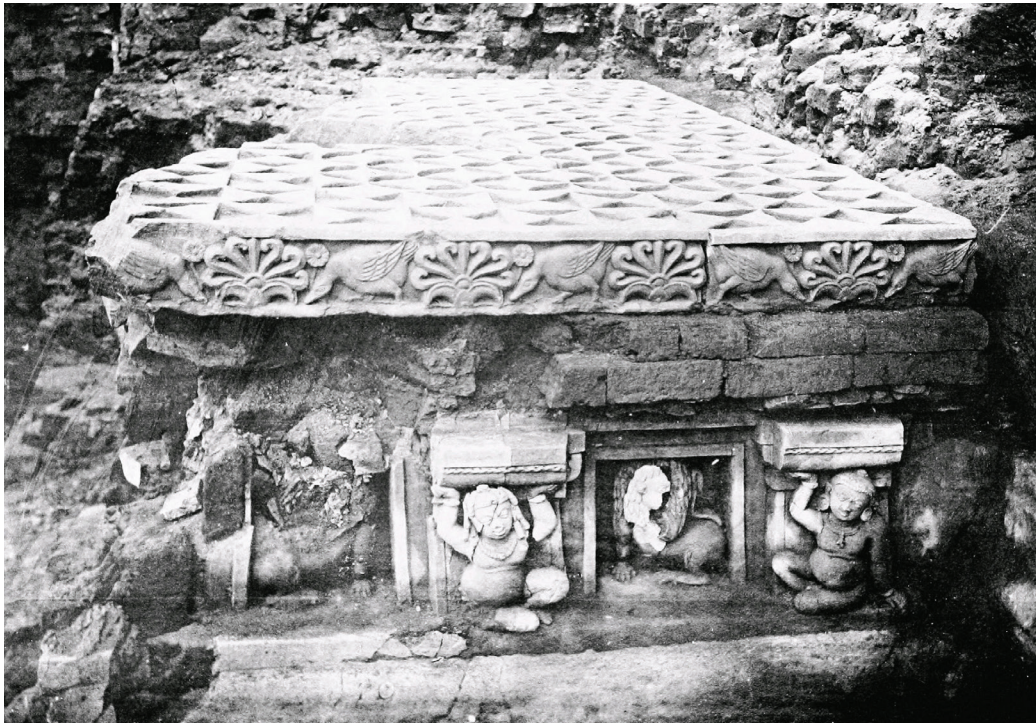
There was one exception to this rule—Ashoka. Ashoka was the third ruler of the powerful Mauryan Empire that survived in India from 322 to 187 BCE. Ashoka ruled over nearly all of what is now India from 268 to 232 BCE.

We know Ashoka was unusual because of the messages he had inscribed on rocks and pillars throughout his vast realm. These edicts were often placed along roads likely to be well traveled. They were clearly meant for a larger public to see. In these edicts Ashoka referred

to himself as “Beloved-of-the-gods, the king Piyadassi.” (*Piyadassi* means “he who regards all with kindness.”) The inscriptions do not celebrate Ashoka’s conquests or his awesome power. Instead they are a call to his people to show obedience to fathers and mothers, to practice tolerance and respect for the elderly, and to show kindness to the poor, to slaves, and to servants.

The main religion in India at the time was Hinduism. Sometime during his reign, Ashoka appears to have converted to Buddhism. Buddhism was still a young system of beliefs at that time. Buddhists shared many Hindu ideas and beliefs, but they differed in placing greater emphasis on a process by which each individual on his own could reach a full spiritual awakening. As a result, Buddhists saw less need for a priesthood like the Hindu priests, the Brahmins. This created some tensions between the two groups. Other sects such as Jainism were also spreading at the time in India.

Was Ashoka hoping to convert his entire empire to Buddhism? Both Buddhists and Hindus used the term *Dhamma*, or *Dharma*, for the more enlightened way they hoped to teach people. Ashoka also used this term in almost all of his rock and pillar edicts. However, he rarely used it in any strictly Buddhist manner. Ashoka did call for nonviolence and for a greater respect for all life, including animal life. Many of his appeals do seem to reflect a strong Buddhist pacifism. For him, however, *Dhamma* usually meant a call for kindness and tolerance among all religious sects and social groups.



Ashoka had this diamond throne built at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhi Gaya, at the location where the Buddha reached enlightenment.

Image Sources: Diamond throne at Mahabodhi, 1892, photograph, public domain.
Inscription in Brahmi on the pillar of Sarnath, 2009, photograph, public domain.

For the first years of his rule, Ashoka seems to have acted forcefully to expand his empire and put down revolts against it. He was especially concerned about his southern and northwestern borders. The last war he fought was in conquering Kalinga on the southeastern coast. Supposedly, the loss of life in that contest was terrible. We know this mainly because Ashoka himself described it in detail in his 13th Major Rock Edict. He described it to express his deep remorse for it and his determination to follow the ways of peace from then on.

It seems that he did just that for the rest of his long rule. Buddhist accounts of his reign stress the violence of his early rule and explain his turn away from it as due to his conversion at that point to Buddhist teachings. However, these chronicles often exaggerate; they have a clear desire to depict Ashoka's change of heart as a result of his adherence to Buddhism. Not all historians are convinced the story is as simple as these chronicles or Ashoka's accounts make it seem.

After all, Ashoka did not restore Kalinga's independence. Nor does he seem to have done much to help the 150,000 people he says the war displaced. His edicts sound a very warm and peaceful note. Yet some see in them also an implied threat if people do not accept his benevolent rule. After his final conquests, Ashoka found himself with a huge empire to rule. It was also a highly diverse mixture of geographic regions and cultural and religious groups. A broad social ethic of tolerance might well be just what Ashoka needed. What better, less costly way to hold this empire together? So was he a dedicated Buddhist reformer? Was he a shrewd imperial ruler? Or was he both? These are not easy questions to answer. Apart from the edicts themselves, no written accounts by or about Ashoka from the time when he lived have survived. As a result, the primary sources in this lesson are mainly Ashoka's own words. These sources should help you discuss and debate the questions raised here.



History Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

Ashoka

Your group's task is to explore history issues related to Ashoka. A disciplinary compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow the steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Was Ashoka's concept of *Dhamma* a way to convert his people to Buddhism, or did he have other goals in mind? Explain your answer.

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, and 3.7.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

Buddhism began in northern India and Nepal. Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, grew up in luxury there in the sixth century BCE. According to Buddhist tradition, he was shocked by the suffering he saw everywhere. He gave up his comforts and went on a spiritual journey to try to learn how to achieve enlightenment. In time, he discovered what he called a Middle Way. It was a "middle way" between selfish pleasure-seeking and extreme self-denial. At its heart were the Four Noble Truths: (1) Human suffering is unavoidable, (2) Suffering is caused by a craving for impermanent things, (3) Suffering ends when the individual stops all craving and attachment to things, and (4) The way to do this is to follow a Noble Eightfold Path of practices. In time, an elaborate set of Buddhist rituals and institutions such as monasteries developed.

Buddhism's overall focus was on the individual. It sought the individual's liberation from craving. Buddhists shared many Hindu ideas, such as the belief in reincarnation. However, Buddhists did not share Hindu notions

of society divided into castes, with Brahmin priests as the highest and most important of these castes.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, chose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.4

Primary Source 3.5

Primary Source 3.7

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Was Ashoka's concept of *Dhamma* a way to convert his people to Buddhism, or did he have other goals in mind? Explain your answer.

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



GROUP MEMBERS:

Ashoka

Your group's task is to explore the civics issues related to Ashoka. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary and secondary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Did Ashoka feel true remorse over Kalinga, or was his change of heart just another way to strengthen his authoritarian hold over his empire? Explain your answer.

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.9 and 3.10, and Secondary Source 3.1.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

In his eighth year as ruler, Ashoka conquered Kalinga. Kalinga was a kingdom on the eastern coast of India. According to Ashoka's own account, this bloody war caused one hundred thousand deaths. After it, almost all of India was under Ashoka's control. Peace and commercial prosperity prevailed for Ashoka's remaining 28 years in power.

In his 13th Rock Edict, Ashoka expresses remorse for what happened to Kalinga. That edict was inscribed on rocks in many places throughout Ashoka's kingdom. However, it was not displayed near Kalinga itself. Some historians say that was out of respect for those who had suffered there so tragically. They say, Ashoka placed two other edicts near Kalinga instead. These urged Mauryan officials to treat the people of Kalinga with respect and kindness.

Other historians take a less positive view of all this. First, they point out that the 13th Rock Edict did not reject violence entirely. They say the

edict may actually have been a way to boast to others around the empire by showing how destructive Ashoka's forces had been. The edicts placed near Kalinga sought to calm and reassure a defeated group. However, some see an implied threat in them. For example, as in Ashoka's statement that the people of the area "should understand that the king will forgive them as far as they can be forgiven."

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, chose one supporting question for each source and record those questions here.

Secondary Source 3.1

Primary Source 3.9

Primary Source 3.10

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Did Ashoka feel true remorse over Kalinga, or was his change of heart just another way to strengthen his authoritarian hold over his empire? Explain your answer.

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



Economics Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

Ashoka

Your group's task is to explore the economics issues related to Ashoka. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Could Ashoka's edicts and philosophy have been meant to help the Mauryan Empire's economy? Why or why not?

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.4, 3.8, and 3.10.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

By the fifth century BCE, the fertile plain along the Ganges River was growing in wealth. Population was rising. Land was being cleared for agriculture. Trade along the river was uniting the region. This became the heartland of the Mauryan Empire. As wealth increased, governments could tax more and more of it. This helped them support powerful armies with horses, chariots, and elephants.

As the empire expanded to the south, its leaders wanted those less-developed areas to add to its wealth. Some of Ashoka's edicts suggest this was also a goal of his. He speaks of improving highways to make them easier for merchants and others to use. Moreover, his conversion to Buddhism could have an economic aspect. Buddhists did not fully support the Hindu caste system. That system divided society into four broad *varnas*, or groups. Those groups were *Brahmins* (priests), *Kshatriyas* (warriors, rulers), *Vaishyas* (farmers, herders, merchants), and *Sudras* (laborers, servants). For Buddhists, however, all individuals of any

caste could end the cycle of death and rebirth (*samsara*) and achieve enlightenment (*nirvana*). In Ashoka's empire, the growing merchant class, *Vaishyas*, may have found Buddhist teachings especially to their liking. These teachings encouraged all segments of society to do their best regardless of caste background or family status.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the primary sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, chose one supporting question for each primary source and record those questions here.

Primary Source 3.4

Primary Source 3.8

Primary Source 3.10

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Could Ashoka's edicts and philosophy have been meant to help the Mauryan Empire's economy? Why or why not?

State your group's claim here:

7. From the remaining seven sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group's discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group's presentation.



Geography Group

GROUP MEMBERS:

Ashoka

Your group's task is to explore geography issues related to Ashoka. A compelling question is provided, and you will work from there to develop and answer supporting questions based on primary sources. Follow these steps to complete the task.

Day One

1. Review the concept of compelling and supporting questions with your instructor. Briefly, compelling questions focus on meaningful and enduring problems. They ask us to deal with major issues and important ideas. Supporting questions are those that help us to answer a compelling question.
2. As a group, briefly discuss the following compelling question:

Does the geographical location of Ashoka's edicts show that his major concern was to unify his vast empire? Explain your answer.

3. Read and discuss Primary Sources 3.7 and 3.8, and Secondary Source 3.1.
4. Read and discuss the following background information. Use the information to help complete the handout.

The Mauryan Empire ruled in India from 322 to 187 BCE. It arose out of the state of Magadha at the eastern end of the Ganges River. Its heartland was the fertile plain through which the Ganges River runs. During Ashoka's rule, the empire controlled parts of what are today Pakistan, Iran, and Afghanistan in the northwest. It extended along the Himalayas to what is today Assam in northeastern India. It came to include most of the rest of India except for some remote rugged forest and mountainous areas in the far south.

The Mauryan Empire was still young when Ashoka came to power. The great challenge facing Mauryan rulers was to unify a vast region of diverse religious, economic, and cultural groups. The northwest was a region open to intruders from the complex societies of Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean region. The Greeks led by Alexander the Great conquered lands in this northwest region around this time. To the south, forest peoples were less of a threat, but they were still hard to control in the rugged terrain

they occupied. Holding these lands together and unifying them was a huge challenge. In fact, Ashoka's efforts were not successful for long. The Mauryan Empire only lasted about another fifty years after his death.

5. Each group member should develop some supporting questions about the sources your group has been asked to discuss. Use the background information above to help you think about these questions. Develop supporting questions that will help answer your group's compelling question. As a group, chose one supporting question for each source and record those questions here.

Secondary Source 3.1

Primary Source 3.7

Primary Source 3.8

Day Two

6. As a group, make a claim about your compelling question. The claim should be one you can support with evidence from your assigned sources. This claim is your evidence-based answer to your group's own compelling question. Here is that question again:

Does the geographical location of Ashoka's edicts show that his major concern was to unify his vast empire? Explain your answer.

State your group’s claim here:

7. From the remaining seven primary sources for this lesson, choose one additional source that your group believes can help support or clarify its claim. The source may also be one that challenges this claim in a way that seems important. In the space below, list the source your group chose and briefly state why you chose it.

Source:

Reason for choosing this source:

8. Prepare a brief (five- to ten-minute) presentation. Summarize the sources you have used. Discuss the supporting questions you developed. Explain your answer to your group’s discipline-based compelling question. Use the space below for notes or to create an outline of your group’s presentation.

How to Analyze a Primary Source

For this lesson, you will be studying several primary source documents. This handout offers suggestions for how best to read and analyze historical primary sources. Studying such sources is challenging. They were created in a different time and place. Their language and use of certain key terms often differ from those of ours. They assume things we might not accept. They arise out of historical circumstances and settings that differ greatly from our own times. To use such sources as evidence, you need to apply some special historical thinking skills and habits. Here are some guidelines to help you do this.

◆ *Question the source.*

No primary source was written with you and your interests in mind, so you need to be clear about what you are looking for when you examine a source. You need to stay in charge of the investigation. Act like a detective, and ask questions. Above all, keep your own most important compelling questions in mind as you read and think about a source.

◆ *Consider the source's origins.*

This is often simply called “sourcing.” It means asking who created the source, when and where the source was created, and why. If you know the source’s purpose, you will be more likely to see how it is shaped by its creator’s point of view. Among other things, sourcing can also help you decide how reliable or typical a source might be.

◆ *Contextualize the source.*

“Context” here means the broader historical setting for the source. Sources are always a part of a larger historical context. You need to consider how this context helps clarify the meaning of the source. You also need to decide which context is most important. Sources might be understood best in connection with a local context or a recent event. Alternatively, they might be understood better within a national or international context, or as part of a long-term trend in society at large. Your guiding questions should help you decide which context is most important.

◆ *Corroborate the source.*

This means you must think about your source in relation to other sources. Does the source agree with or support those other sources, or does it seem to be at odds with the other sources? Might there be additional sources, which have not been provided to you, that could support or conflict with your source?

◆ *Above all, read the source carefully.*

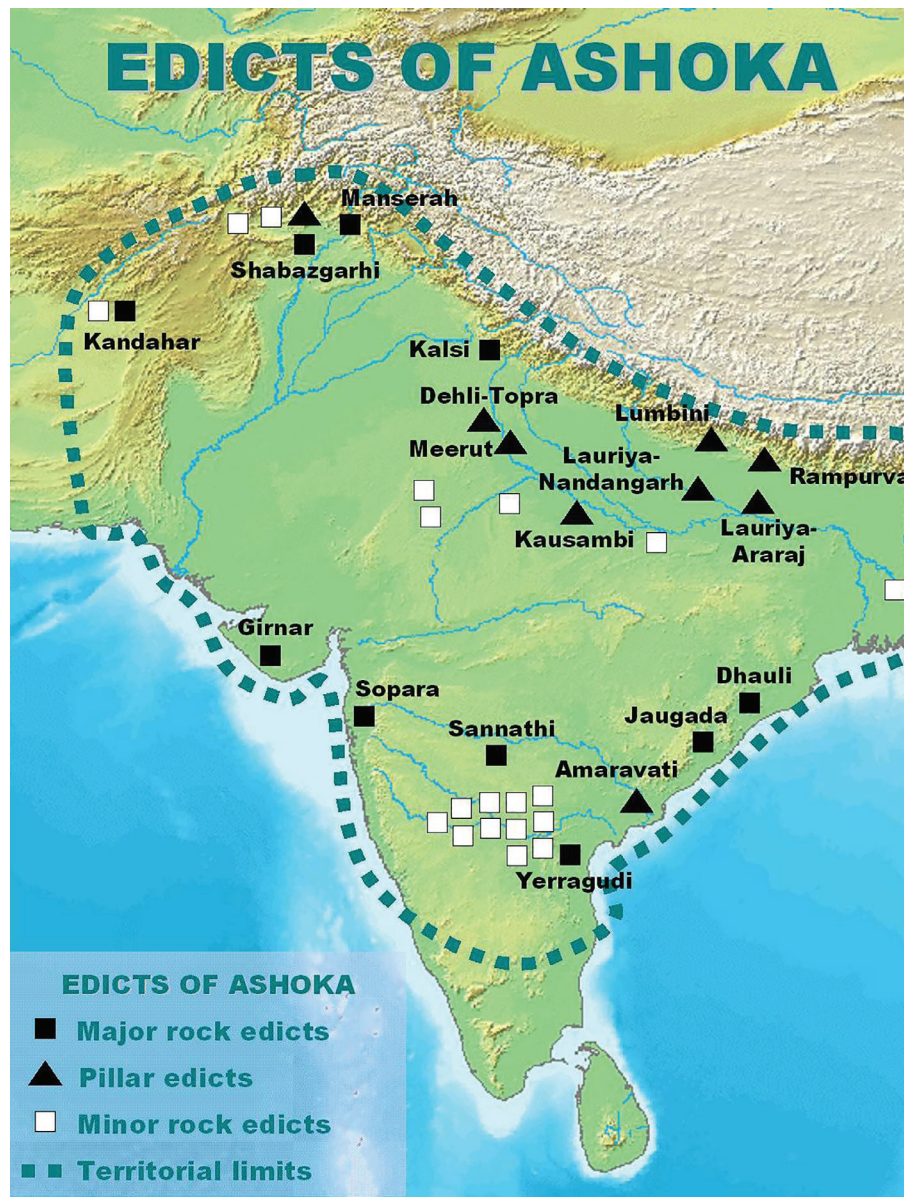
Look at language closely. Pay attention to images, emotional language, metaphors, and other literary devices. Think about what is implied, not merely what is stated or claimed in so many words. Think about what is left out as well as what is included. Make inferences based on your close reading. This will help you get more out of your source than even the source’s creator might have seen in it.

SECONDARY SOURCE ▶

3.I

Ashoka's Rock Edicts and Pillars

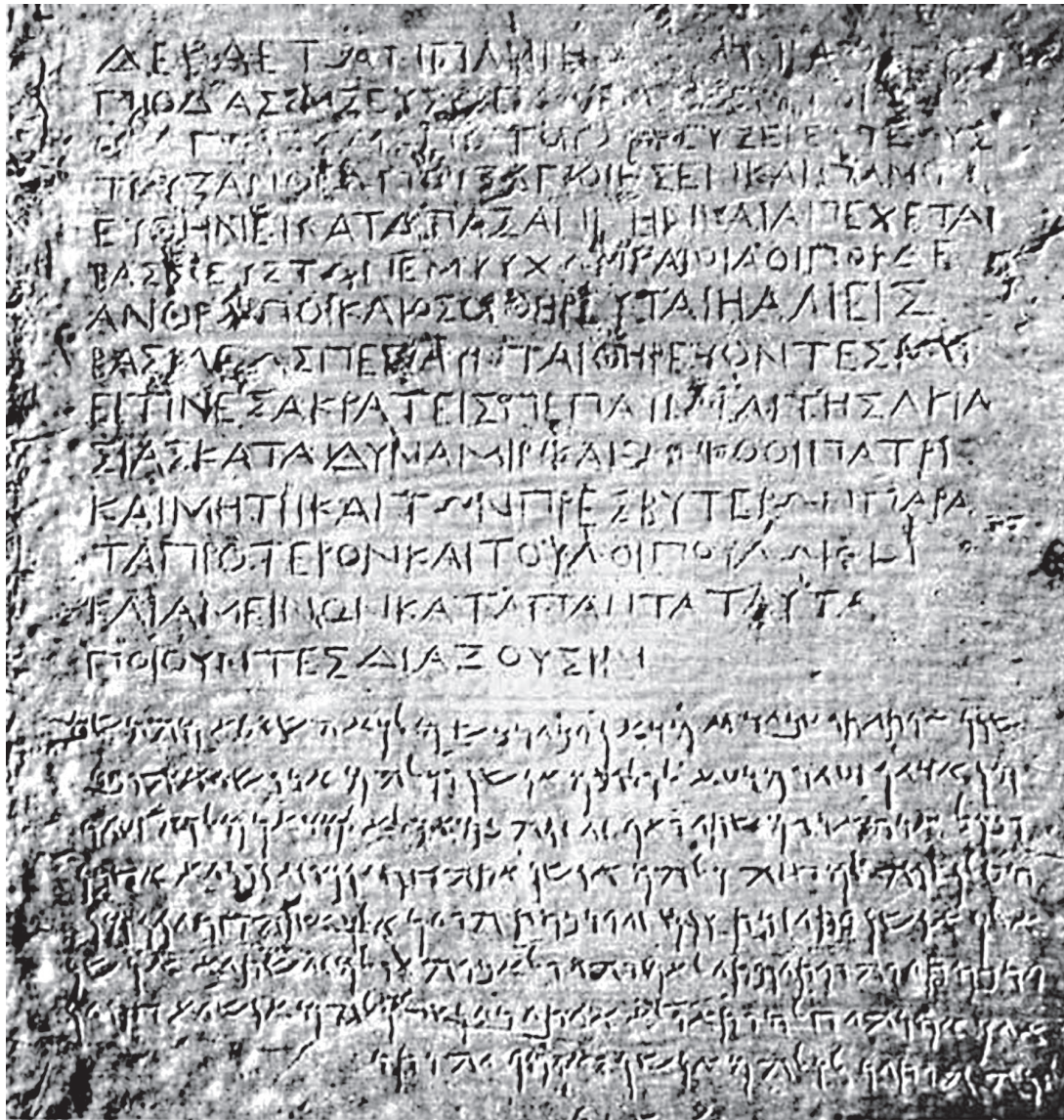
This map shows where many of the major rock edicts and pillars of Ashoka are located. It makes clear that many of the locations are in areas along the edges of the vast Mauryan Empire. This could indicate a desire to communicate with people not yet fully a part of Mauryan society and culture. The one exception to this pattern has to do with the pillars. These are located in the heart of Mauryan society along the Ganges River. They are also near many of the sites connected with the life of Buddha.



Original Document Source: PHGCOM, *Edicts of Ashoka*, 2007, CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.

The Bilingual Kandahar Rock Edict

Most of Ashoka's rock edicts were written in the Prakrit language using either a Brahmi or Kharosthi script. Educated Indians at the time would have been able to read these scripts. In the northwest, where Alexander the Great had conquered, Greek was in use, along with Aramaic. As a result, some edicts there are in those languages. This photo is of the bilingual rock edict of Kandahar with its inscription in both Greek and Aramaic.



Original Document Source: Bilingual (Greek and Aramaic) inscriptions by King Ashoka at Kandahar, photograph, public domain via [wikimedia Commons](#).

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

3.3

Ashoka's Pillar in Vaishali

Late in his reign, Ashoka had his edicts inscribed on polished stone pillars in the Gangetic plain. Many were near the Mauryan Empire's capital city of Pataliputra. Others marked spots central in the life of the Buddha. This is the Ashoka pillar at Vaishali, Bihar, India. According to Buddhist teachings, Buddha delivered his last sermon at Vaishali before his death.



Original Document Source: Bpilgrim, *Ashoka Pillar at Vaishali, Bihar, India*, 2007, photograph, CC BY-SA 2.5 via Wikimedia Commons.

In this edict, Ashoka defines the concept of *Dhamma*, or *Dharma*. It is a term central to Hinduism, Buddhism, and other Indian religions. In those religions it has many complex meanings. The term was also central to all of Ashoka's edicts. Usually, Ashoka's use of the term is broad and practical. He mainly stresses the need for social cooperation among all classes and castes.

Original Document

There is no gift comparable to the gift of *Dhamma*, the praise of *Dhamma*, the sharing of *Dhamma*, fellowship in *Dhamma*. And this is—good behaviour towards slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father, generosity towards friends, acquaintances, and relatives and towards *śramanas* [other sects] and brahmans, and abstention from killing living beings. Father, son, brother, master, friend, acquaintance, relative, and neighbour should say, “this is good, this we should do.”

Adapted Version

There is no gift like the gift of *Dhamma*, the praise of *Dhamma*, the sharing of *Dhamma*, fellowship in *Dhamma*. *Dhamma* is good behavior toward slaves and servants. It is obedience to mother and father. It is generosity toward friends, acquaintances, and relatives and toward *śramaṇas* [other sects] and *brahmins* [Hindu priests]. It is the refusal to kill living beings. Father, son, brother, master, friend, acquaintance, relative, and neighbor should say, “This is good, this we should do.”

Ashoka Addresses the Buddhist Monks of Bhabra

In some edicts, Ashoka does seem to be a dedicated Buddhist. He stressed the need for a full understanding of Buddhist teachings and a careful attention to Buddhist sermons and other texts. The edicts in which he does this are ones directed specifically at Buddhist communities. For example, his rock edict at Bhabra, where a major Buddhist *sangha* (monastic community) was located in northern India. This passage is from that edict. In it, "Upatissa" is one of Buddha's disciples and "Rāhula" is one of his sons.

Original Document

Sirs, whatever was spoken by the Lord Buddha was well spoken. And Sirs, allow me to tell you what I believe contributes to the long survival of the Buddhist *Dhamma*. These sermons on *Dhamma*, Sirs—the Excellence of the Discipline, the Lineage of the Noble One, the Future Fears, the Verses of the Sage, the *Sutra* of Silence, the Questions of Upatissa, and the Admonition spoken by the Lord Buddha to Rahula on the subject of false speech—these sermons on the *Dhamma*, Sirs, I desire that many monks and nuns should hear frequently and meditate upon. . . .

Adapted Version

Sirs, whatever was spoken by the Lord Buddha was well spoken. Let me tell you what I believe contributes to the long survival of the Buddhist *Dhamma*. There are certain sermons on *Dhamma* that I want monks and nuns to hear and meditate on often. These sermons are the following: The Excellence of the Discipline; the Lineage of the Noble One; the Future Fears; the Verses of the Sage; the Sutra of Silence; the Questions of Upatissa; and the Admonition spoken by the Lord Buddha to Rāhula on the subject of false speech.

Original Document Source: Ashoka, "Bhabra Inscription," in *Aśoka and the Decline of the Maurays*, trans. Romila Thaper (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997), 261.

Other edicts seem to show Ashoka's desire to spread Buddhist teachings. For example, in some edicts he appears determined to protect all animal life. This passage is a part of the 1st Major Rock Edict. In it, as in many of his edicts, he calls himself *Piyadassi*. This means "he who regards all with kindness."

Original Document

Formerly in the kitchens of the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, many hundreds of thousands of living animals were killed daily for meat. But now, at the time of writing this inscription on *Dhamma*, only three animals are killed, two peacocks and a deer, and the deer not invariably. Even these three animals will not be killed in future.

Above all Ashoka seemed to want to promote a spirit of harmony and cooperation throughout his empire. Did he favor Buddhism over other sects and religions in his effort to achieve this harmony? In some edicts, he may seem to. In most others, he simply stresses the need for greater tolerance among all sects. That is the theme in this passage from his 12th Major Rock Edict.

Original Document

The Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, honours all sects and both ascetics and laymen, with gifts and various forms of recognition. But the Beloved of the Gods does not consider gifts or honour to be as important as the advancement of the essential doctrine of all sects. This progress of the essential doctrine takes many forms, but its basis is the control of one's speech, so as not to extoll one's own sect or disparage another's on unsuitable occasions, or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. On each occasion one should honor another man's sect, for by doing so one increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man; while by doing otherwise one diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's. Again, whosoever honours his own sect or disparages that of another man, wholly out of devotion to his own, with a view to showing it in a favourable light, harms his own sect even more seriously. Therefore, concord is to be commanded, so that men may hear one another's principles and obey them.

Adapted Version

The Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, honors all sects. He honors both ascetics and laymen with gifts and various forms of recognition. But gifts or honor are not as important as teaching the essential doctrine of all sects. This essential doctrine takes many forms. Yet its basis is to speak carefully so as not to praise one's own sect or criticize another's unsuitably. Or at least to do so only mildly on certain occasions. One should almost always honor another man's sect, for this increases the influence of one's own sect and benefits that of the other man as well. Doing otherwise both diminishes the influence of one's own sect and harms the other man's sect. Again, whoever insults another man's sect in order to show his own in a favorable light, harms his own sect even more seriously. Therefore, concord is demanded so that men may hear one another's principles and obey them.

Original Document Source: Ashoka, "The 12th Major Rock Edict," in *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, trans. Romila Thapar (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997), 255.

Ashoka's reforms also included efforts to improve trade and the economic and social welfare of his people. In the 7th Pillar Edict, Ashoka listed some of these useful works. He also speaks of an entire organization of "officers of *Dhamma*" to help him implement such changes. A *kos* is a measure of distance—about 1.91 miles.

Original Document

Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: On the roads I have had banyan trees planted, which will give shade to beasts and men, I have had mango-groves planted and I have had wells dug and rest houses built at every eight *kos*. And I have had many watering places made everywhere for the use of beasts and men. But this benefit is important, and indeed the world has enjoyed attention in many ways from former kings as well as from me. But I have done these things in order that my people might conform to *Dhamma*.

Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: My officers of *Dhamma* are busy in many matters of public benefit, they are busy among members of all sects, both ascetics and householders. I have appointed some to concern themselves with the Buddhist Order, with brahmans and *Ājīvikas* . . . , with the Jains . . . , and with various sects. There are many categories of officers with a variety of duties, but my officers of *Dhamma* are busy with the affairs of these and other sects. . . .

The advancement of *Dhamma* amongst men has been achieved through two means, legislation and persuasion. But of these two, legislation has been less effective, and persuasion more so. I have proclaimed through legislation for instance that certain species of animals are not to be killed, and other such ideas. But men have increased their adherence to *Dhamma* by being persuaded not to injure living beings and not to take life.

Adapted Version

On the roads I have had banyan trees planted. They will give shade to beasts and men. I have had mango-groves planted. And I have had wells dug and rest houses built at every fifteen miles. I have had many watering places made everywhere for the use of beasts and men. This benefit is important. Indeed the world has enjoyed attention in many ways from former kings as well as from me. But I have done these things for one key reason—so that my people might conform to *Dhamma*.

CONTINUED

Thus speaks the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi: My officers of *Dhamma* are busy in many matters of public benefit. They work with members of all sects, both ascetics and householders. Some concern themselves with the Buddhist Order. Some with brahmans. Some with Ajivikas or with the Jainas . . . and with various sects. There are many categories of officers with a variety of duties, but my officers of *Dhamma* are busy with the affairs of these and other sects.

The advancement of *Dhamma* has been achieved through two means, legislation and persuasion. But of these two, legislation has been less effective. Persuasion has been more effective. For example, I have announced laws against killing certain species of animals, and other such ideas. But men have followed *Dhamma* by being persuaded not to injure living beings and not to take life.

This may be the most important of all of Ashoka's edicts if the goal is to understand more about him and his objectives. In this edict, he relates his remorse about the destruction he caused in his war against Kalinga. That war seems to have taken place in the eighth year of his rule around 260 BCE. The edict deals with many things. It provides some idea of the way the Mauryan Empire dealt with various societies on its northwestern and southern borders.

Original Document

When he had been consecrated eight years the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, conquered Kalinga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported, a hundred thousand were killed and many times that number perished. Afterwards, now that Kalinga was annexed, the Beloved of the Gods very earnestly practiced *Dhamma*, desired *Dhamma*, and taught *Dhamma*. On conquering Kalinga the Beloved of the Gods felt remorse, for, when an independent country is conquered the slaughter, death, and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the Beloved of the Gods, and weighs heavily on his mind. What is even more deplorable to the Beloved of the Gods, is that those who dwell there, whether brahmans, *śramaṇas*, or those of other sects, or householders who show obedience to their superiors, obedience to mother and father, obedience to their teachers and behave well and devotedly towards their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, relatives, slaves, and servants—all suffer violence, murder, and separation from their loved ones. Even those who are fortunate to have escaped, and whose love is undiminished, suffer from the misfortunes of their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and relatives. This participation of all men in suffering, weighs heavily on the mind of the Beloved of the Gods. Except among the Greeks, there is no land where the religious orders of brahmanas and *śramaṇas* are not to be found, and there is no land anywhere where men do not support one sect or another. Today if a hundredth or a thousandth part of those people who were killed or died or were deported when Kalinga was annexed were to suffer similarly, it would weigh heavily on the mind of the Beloved of the Gods.

The Beloved of the Gods believes that one who does wrong should be forgiven as far as it is possible to forgive him. And the Beloved of the Gods conciliates the forest tribes of his empire, but he warns them that he has power even in his remorse, and he asks them to repent, lest they be killed. For the Beloved of the Gods wishes that all beings should be unharmed, self-controlled, calm in mind, and gentle.

CONTINUED

The Beloved of the Gods considers victory by *Dhamma* to be the foremost victory. And moreover the Beloved of the Gods has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of six hundred *yojanas* [i.e., about 1,500 miles], where reigns the Greek king named Antiochus, and beyond the realm of that Antiochus in the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, and Alexander; and in the south over the Colas and Pandyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise here in the imperial territories . . . , everywhere the people follow the Beloved of the Gods' instructions in *Dhamma*. Even where the envoys of the Beloved of the Gods have not gone, people hear of his conduct according to *Dhamma*, his precepts and his instruction in *Dhamma*, and they follow *Dhamma* and will continue to follow it.

What is obtained by this is victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by *Dhamma*—yet it is but a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its results which pertains to the next world.

This inscription of *Dhamma* has been engraved so that any sons or great grandsons that I may have should not think of gaining new conquests, and in whatever victories they may gain should be satisfied with patience and light punishment. They should only consider conquest by *Dhamma* to be a true conquest, and delight in *Dhamma* should be their whole delight, for this is of value in both this world and the next.

Adapted Version

After ruling for eight years, the Beloved of the Gods, the king Piyadassi, conquered Kalinga. A hundred and fifty thousand people were deported. A hundred thousand were killed, and many times that number perished. After Kalinga was annexed, I very earnestly practiced *Dhamma*, desired *Dhamma*, and taught *Dhamma*. On conquering Kalinga, I felt remorse. When an independent country is conquered, the slaughter, death, and deportation are extremely upsetting to me. It weighs heavily on my mind. Even more deplorable is that those who dwell there suffer. They suffer whether they are brahmans, sramanas, or members of other sects. They suffer even if they are householders who show obedience to their superiors, to mother and father, to their teachers. They suffer even if they behave well and devotedly toward their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, relatives, slaves, and servants. All of them suffer violence, murder, and separation from

CONTINUED

their loved ones. This is true even of those lucky enough to have escaped, and whose love is undiminished by war. They suffer from the misfortunes of their friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and relatives. This suffering weighs heavily on my mind. Except among the Greeks, there is no land where the religious orders of brahmanas and sramanas are not to be found. And there is no land anywhere where men do not support one sect or another. Today if even a tiny number of those people killed or deported when Kalinga was annexed were to suffer similarly, it would weigh heavily on my mind.

One who does wrong should be forgiven as far as it is possible to forgive him. And I do deal moderately with the forest tribes of my empire. But I warn them that I have power even in my remorse. I ask them to repent, lest they be killed. For I wish that all beings should be unharmed, self-controlled, calm in mind, and gentle.

The greatest victory is the victory by *Dhamma*. Moreover the Beloved of the Gods has gained this victory on all his frontiers to a distance of 1,500 miles. For example, to the land where the Greek king Antiochus rules. Even beyond there to the lands of the four kings named Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas, and Alexander. In the south, over the Colas and Pandyas as far as Ceylon. Likewise in our own imperial territories, everywhere the people follow my instructions in *Dhamma*. Even where my envoys have not gone, people hear of my conduct, precepts, and instruction in *Dhamma*, and they follow *Dhamma* and will continue to follow it.

This results in victory everywhere, and everywhere victory is pleasant. This pleasure has been obtained through victory by *Dhamma*. Yet it is but a slight pleasure, for the Beloved of the Gods only looks upon that as important in its influence on the next world.

This inscription is engraved so that any sons or great grandsons that I may have should not think of gaining new conquests. And in whatever victories they may gain, they should be satisfied with patience and light punishment. They should see the only true conquest as conquest by *Dhamma*. Delight in *Dhamma* should be their whole delight, for this is of value in both this world and the next.

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

3.10

Message for the Defeated People of Kalinga

The 13th Major Rock Edict appeared in several places around the Mauryan Empire. Oddly, the one place it did not appear was near Kalinga itself. Instead Ashoka had the two Separate Edicts inscribed in locations next to Kalinga. The two edicts are directed at Ashoka's own officials. He urged these officials to work to win the affection of the people of the area. Was this a sign of Ashoka's deep humanitarian feelings, or was it simply an effort to calm and win over a defeated group? Were these two edicts friendly? Did they also imply a threat of some sort? This passage is the main portion of the 2nd Separate Edict.

Original Document

All men are my children and just as I desire for my children that they should obtain welfare and happiness both in this world and the next, the same do I desire for all men. If the unconquered peoples on my borders ask what is my will, they should be made to understand that this is my will with regard to them—"the king desires that they should have no trouble on his account, should trust in him, and should have in their dealings with him only happiness and no sorrow. They should understand that the king will forgive them as far as they can be forgiven, and that through him they should follow *Dhamma* and gain this world and the next."

For this purpose I instruct you, that having done so I may discharge my debt to them, by making known to you my will, my resolve and my firm promise. By these actions, my work will advance, and they will be reassured and will realize that the king is like a father, and that he feels for them as for himself, for they are like his own children to him. My couriers and special officers will be in contact with you, instructing you and making known to you my will, my resolve, and my firm promise. For you are able to give the frontier people confidence, welfare, and happiness in this world and the next. Doing this you will reach heaven and help me discharge my debt to my people.

Adapted Version

All men are my children. And just as I want my children to obtain welfare and happiness in both this world and the next, I want the same for all men. If the unconquered peoples on my borders ask what I wish, they should be made to understand that this is what I wish with regard to them: The king desires that they should have no trouble on his account. They should trust him. In dealing with him, they should have only happiness and no sorrow. They should know that the king will forgive them as far as they can be forgiven. They should see that through him they should follow *Dhamma* and gain this world and the next.

CONTINUED

PRIMARY SOURCE ►

3.10

MESSAGE FOR THE DEFEATED PEOPLE OF KALINGA CONTINUED

For this purpose I instruct you, my officials. In making known to you my will and firm promise, I am doing what I owe to these frontier people. By these actions, my work will advance. They will be reassured and will realize that the king is like a father. They will see that he feels for them as for himself, for they are like his own children to him. My couriers and special officers will be in contact with you, instructing you and making known to you my will, my resolve, and my firm promise. For you are able to give the frontier people confidence, welfare, and happiness in this world and the next. Doing this you will reach heaven and help me discharge my debt to my people.

Original Document Source: Ashoka, "2nd Separate Edict," in *Aśoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*, trans. Romila Thapar (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997), 258.

Communicating Results and Taking Action

Communicating Results

- ◆ The History Group will report on its views about Ashoka's concept of *Dhamma* and that concept's connection with Buddhist teachings. Then use Primary Sources 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 in a brief essay answering this question: "Did Ashoka wish to convert all India to Buddhist beliefs?"
- ◆ Pretend you lived in Kalinga during the war that Ashoka fought there in the eighth year of his rule. Then imagine that someone from another part of India has sent you the 13th Major Rock Edict (Primary Source 3.9). As a resident in Kalinga, you will already have read the 2nd Separate Edict (Primary Source 3.10). Write a letter describing what you remember of the Kalinga war and explaining your reactions now that you have read both edicts mentioned here.
- ◆ Pretend you are advisers to Ashoka. It is toward the end of his reign, after most of his edicts have been displayed. Using Primary Sources 3.2 and 3.3, and Secondary Source 3.1, write to Ashoka to ask him to clarify why he placed the various kinds of edicts where they are located. Ask him for suggestions as to where any new ones ought to go. Then pretend to be Ashoka and write a letter responding to the first one.

Taking Action

- ◆ India won its independence from Great Britain in 1947. One of the leaders of the drive for independence was Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru then became India's first prime minister. He had the Ashoka Chakra placed on the new Indian flag. The Ashoka Chakra (or the *dharma-chakra*) is a 24-spoked wheel often found on Ashoka's rock edicts. Working in a small group, learn more about India's flag and the varying views people in India have about it and about Ashoka. Then report on what your group has learned and what this shows about India's attitudes today toward Ashoka and his teachings.
- ◆ Based on the work in the previous assignment, use social media to share the results of these small group reports. Ask those contacted in this way to comment on India and Ashoka. Make some effort to respond to their questions and comments.

Ashoka of Ancient India Rubric

Criteria	Unacceptable	Developing	Proficient	Excellent
Focus	Tries to respond to task instructions but lacks clear focus on a central idea or thesis	Addresses the task instructions adequately but focus on a central idea or thesis is uneven	Responds to the task instructions appropriately and convincingly; has a consistent focus on a central idea or thesis	Responds to all task instructions convincingly; has a clear and strong focus on a well-developed central idea or thesis
Research	Refers to some sources but fails to connect these in a way that is relevant to the instructions	Refers to relevant sources well but does not always connect these clearly to the task instructions	Refers to relevant sources accurately and usually connects these to the task instructions and a central idea	Refers to relevant sources accurately and in great detail and connects these clearly to the task instructions and a central idea
Development/Use of Evidence	Uses some details and evidence from sources but does not make clear the relevance to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources generally but not always in support of a clear focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources in a way that effectively supports a focus relevant to the task purpose or instructions	Uses details and evidence from sources along with clear explanations demonstrating deep understanding of the task purpose or instructions
Content	Refers to disciplinary content without clearly understanding it or while using it in an irrelevant or inaccurate manner	Refers to disciplinary content with some understanding but not always with a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Accurately uses disciplinary content and demonstrates a clear idea of its relation to the overall task	Uses disciplinary content effectively and explains thoroughly and in depth its relation to the overall task
Conventions	Demonstrates only limited control of standard English conventions, with many errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates some command of standard English conventions, with limited errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates adequate command of standard English conventions, with few errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and other conventions	Demonstrates a well-developed command of standard English conventions, with few errors and a use of language appropriate to the audience and the purpose of the task

Primary and Secondary Source Bibliography

- 3.1: PHGCOM. *Edicts of Ashoka*. 2007. CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons.
- 3.2: Bilingual (Greek and Aramaic) inscriptions by King Ashoka at Kandahar. Photograph. Public domain.
- 3.3: Bpilgrim. *Ashoka Pillar at Vaishali, Bihar, India*. 2007. Photograph. CC BY-SA 2.5 via Wikimedia Commons.
- 3.4: Thapar, Romila, trans. *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*. Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- 3.5: Thapar, Romila, trans. *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*. Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997.
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- 3.9: Thapar, Romila, trans. *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas*. Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1997.
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Sources for Further Study

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