BBC The Story of India: Part I, the Beginning

Directions: Answer the questions below pertaining to the early history of India.

1. What is meant by the statement “mother India” when it comes to India’s first people?

2. How are modern day Brahmins preserving ancient Indian history event today?

3. Why is oral traditions so important to the contemporary Brahmins? What is done following their sacred recital to preserve their history?

4. How is modern science, such as the use of DNA, helpful in tracing human migrations?

5. Discuss the findings of scientists such as Dr. Pitchappan from Kamaraj. What does his scientific research reveal about early India and the rest of the world?

6. What was India’s first deity? What is a continuity between early pre-historic religion and today?

7. What current country could indeed be heirs to one of the first civilizations out of India?
8. What were the geographic boundaries of the ancient civilization of the Indus? What was its population? (in numbers)
9. Explain what reasons modern day historians believe the Indus civilization may have failed? What are they using to gather evidence of their assertions?

10. What is so important about the ancient Sanskrit language?

11. Who is William Jones? What were some of his findings concerning written language?

12. What is so special about the drink Soma (Somme) as mentioned in the sacred Rig-Veda text?

13. Where do historians now believe that the first Aryan (permanent) peoples of India migrated from? What time period did this occur?

14. What early religion were the migrating Aryan people exposed that may have influenced the writings of the Rig-Veda.

15. Explain the significance of the finding at the Bactra-Margiana complex in Turkmenistan (the location with the carts)? What was this location used for in the times of the Aryan people?