

Lesson at a Glance

- In the Indian subcontinent, **use of iron** began about 3000 years ago. It developed more and more 2500 years ago. Axes and the iron ploughshare became popular.
- **New tools** and the **system of transplantation** increased production, and irrigation also came into use.
- In the Tamil region, there existed three kinds of people—the large landowners, the ordinary ploughmen and the landless labourers (including slaves).
- In northern India, the village headman, independent farmers, workers, etc. lived in villages.
- The **Jatakas** were stories that were composed presumably by ordinary people and written down and preserved by Buddhist monks.
- These tales give light on the life of people in these times.
- Ring wells (rows of pots, or ceramic rings arranged one on top of the other) have been found in several cities. They were probably used as toilets or drains and garbage dumps.
- Accounts of sailors and travellers depict life in early cities. The account of an unknown Greek sailor tells about Bharuch.
- Archaeologists have found several coins belonging to this period. Designs were punched onto the metal to prepare them.
- **Mathura**, an important settlement for more than 2500 years. It was located at the crossroads of two important travel and trade routes. It became the capital of the **Kushanas** about 2000 years ago. It was also a religious centre.
- Archaeologists have also found evidence for crafts, like the extremely fine pottery called Northern Black Polished Ware. There were famous cloth centres at Varanasi and Madurai. Crafts persons and merchants formed associations called '**shrenis**', that helped them in their work.
- Between 2200 and 1900 years ago, Arikamedu was a coastal settlement.

■ TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED ■

Let's Recall

Q. 1. Fill in the blanks:

- was a word used for large landowners in Tamil.
- The 'gramabhojaka' often got his land cultivated by the
- Ploughmen were known as in Tamil.
- Most 'grihapatis' were landowners.

Ans. (a) 'Vellalar' (b) slaves and workers
(c) 'uzhavar' (d) smaller.

Q. 2. Describe the functions of the 'gramabhojaka'. Why do you think he was powerful?

Ans. The 'gramabhojaka' was the largest landowner. He had slaves and he hired workers to cultivate the land. He was powerful since the king entrusted him with the important job of collecting taxes from the villagers. His other functions were those of a policeman and judge.

Q. 3. List the crafts persons who would have been present in both villages and cities.

Ans. Craftsman like the carpenters, weavers, potters, etc. were presumably present in both villages and cities.

Q. 4. Choose the correct answer:

- (a) Ring wells were used for:
- bathing
 - washing clothes
 - irrigation
 - drainage.

(b) Punch marked coins were made of:

- Silver
- gold
- tin
- ivory.

(c) Mathura was an important:

- village
- port
- religious centre
- forested area.

(d) 'Shrenis' were associations of:

- rulers
- crafts persons
- farmers
- herders.

Ans. (a) 4. drainage

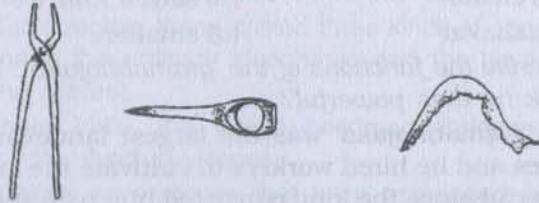
(b) 1. silver

- (c) 3. religious centre
(d) 2. crafts persons.

Let's Discuss

Q. 5. Which of the iron tools shown on page 87 (of the NCERT textbook) would have been important for agriculture? What would the other tools have been used for?

Ans. The iron tools shown on page 87 are: sickle, tongs, and axe. The ones that would have been used for agriculture were—sickle and axe.



Iron tools (i) Tongs (ii) Axe (iii) Sickle

Tongs would have been used to hold things without actually touching them.

Q. 6. Compare the drainage system in your locality with that of the cities mentioned in the lesson. What similarities and differences do you notice?

Ans. The drainage system in our localities is well-planned. The same system was adopted in the times mentioned in the lesson. Both the systems are found to be similar in many ways. The only difference that we find in the modern and the past systems is that the past system was made of mud, bricks and thatch. They could not survive for long. They were not well-maintained, but today we have well-maintained and developed drainage system. It is made of solid materials. It lasts long.

Let's Do

Q. 7. If you have seen crafts persons at work, describe in a short paragraph what they do.

[**Hint.** How do they get the raw materials, what kind of equipment do they use, how do they work, what happens to the finished product.]

Ans. I have seen crafts persons like weavers, blacksmiths, goldsmiths in villages and cities. Weavers are mostly seen in villages. I saw them running their spinning wheel or handmill. First they collect the cotton balls, they weave thread and then they weave clothes. After that they sell it in the market.

Q. 8. List the functions performed by men and women who live in your city and village. In what ways are these similar to those performed by people who lived in Mathura? In what ways are they different?

Ans. In the city I live, I see men and women working to feed their families. Mostly men work in offices and other establishments. Women also work in offices these days. In a city like Mathura, people worked to provide food items to the city-folks because it was located at the intersection of two major trade and travel routes. Life of people of our cities and that in Mathura was in no way much different.

