Teacher Overview: What led to the Gupta Golden Age? How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India, other regions, and later periods in history?

Unit Essential Question(s): How did classical civilizations gain, consolidate, maintain and lose their power? | Link to Unit

Supporting Question(s):
- What led to the Gupta Golden Age? How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India, other regions, and later periods in history?

Objective(s):
- Contextualize the Gupta Golden Age.
- Explain the impact of the Gupta Golden Age on India, other regions, and later periods in history.

Alignment to State Standards

1. NYS Social Studies Framework:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Idea</th>
<th>Conceptual Understandings</th>
<th>Content Specifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.3 CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS: EXPANSION, ACHIEVEMENT, DECLINE: Classical civilizations in Eurasia and Mesoamerica employed a variety of methods to expand and maintain control over vast territories. They developed lasting cultural achievements. Both internal and external forces led to the eventual decline of these empires.(Standards: 2, 3, 5; Themes: MOV, TCC, GEO, GOV, CIV)</td>
<td>9.3c A period of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievements can be designated as a Golden Age.</td>
<td>Students will examine the achievements of Greece, Gupta, Han Dynasty, Maya, and Rome to determine if the civilizations experienced a Golden Age.</td>
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Social Studies Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NYS Social Studies Practices</th>
<th>New Visions Student Social Studies Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gathering, Using and Interpreting Evidence (A2, A5, A6, A7)</td>
<td>Contextualize The act of describing the geographic, economic, political, and historical circumstances of an event on a local, regional, and global scale.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chronological Reasoning and Causation (B1, B3)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparison and Contextualization (C1, C3, C5, C6)</td>
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</table>
Categorize
The act of placing similar events, people, or places into groups and identifying what they have in common.

Connect Cause and Effect
The act of identifying and explaining the long and short term causes and effects of a historical event.

**Common Core State Standards**
Depending on how you structure your lesson, you may address different standards. Below, are the standards that we believe are most important for this lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Writing</th>
<th>Speaking and Listening</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key Ideas and Details:</strong>&lt;br&gt;CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.</td>
<td><strong>Text Types &amp; Purposes:</strong>&lt;br&gt;CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.</td>
<td><strong>Comprehension and Collaboration:</strong>&lt;br&gt;CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Craft and Structure:</strong>&lt;br&gt;CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.</td>
<td></td>
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**UNIT 3 | Classical Civilizations | SQ 11 What led to the Gupta Golden Age? How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India, other regions, and later periods in history?**
Objective:

What led to the Gupta Golden Age? How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India, other regions, and later periods in history?

Contextualize the Gupta Golden Age. Explain the impact of the Gupta Golden Age on India, other regions and later periods in history.

Introduction

Historians refer to certain time periods of some civilizations as **golden ages**.

Let's break down the definition...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>period</strong>- span of time</th>
<th><strong>wealth</strong>- a large amount of money</th>
<th><strong>prosperity</strong>- success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What other time <strong>periods</strong> have you learned about?</td>
<td>What effects might <strong>wealth</strong> have on a civilization?</td>
<td>Describe the characteristics that a <strong>prosperous</strong> civilization might have.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Golden ages** are **periods** of great **wealth**, **prosperity**, **stability**, and **cultural** and **scientific achievement**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>stability</strong>- consistency</th>
<th><strong>culture</strong>- relating to language, ideas, inventions, and art</th>
<th><strong>scientific achievement</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the characteristics that a <strong>stable</strong> civilization might have.</td>
<td>Given what <strong>culture</strong> means, give an examples of what might count as a <strong>cultural achievement</strong>.</td>
<td>Identify one <strong>scientific achievement</strong> that you learned about in history class this year.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Why Golden Ages are Important to Historians

During Golden Ages, a lot of new ideas and innovations are produced in visual arts, architecture, literature, philosophy, and science and technology in a relatively short period of time in one geographic area, but these new ideas and ways of doing things do not stay in one place for long. They are carried to other civilizations through cultural diffusion and passed down to new generations through the process of collective learning.

Golden Ages move human intellectual and technological life ahead by leaps and bounds. These spurts of growth in our collective ability to understand the world around us, express it through art, and invent new ways of doing things have been important in getting the human race to where it is today.

The Gupta Golden Age Museum Walk

Categorize

Contextualize

Connect

Cause and Effect

A lot of the artifacts that appear in museums come from the golden ages of civilizations.

In this activity, you will visit exhibits on the Gupta Golden Age. As you learn about the Gupta Empire, fill out the appropriate row in the Golden Ages of Classical Civilizations Graphic Organizer.
Exhibit A: The Gupta Empire (320-550 CE)

The Gupta Empire ruled parts of India from 320-550 CE. Chandragupta II was one of the most powerful emperors of the Gupta empire. His rule spanned from 375 to 415 C.E. when the Gupta empire was at its height, often referred to as the Golden Age of India. He attained success by pursuing both favorable military alliances and an aggressive expansionist policy. Chandragupta II controlled a vast empire, from the mouth of the Ganges to the mouth of the Indus River and from today's North Pakistan south to the mouth of the Narmada.

In addition to military prowess, Chandragupta II elevated culture, art, mathematics, philosophy, religion, and astronomy during his reign.

Source: Adapted from “Chandragupta II” New World Encyclopedia.
http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Chandragupta_II

Exhibit B: Trade, Prosperity, and Wealth

Standardized Money
Golden Ages require a lot of wealth. For artists and scientists to devote themselves to their work, they need someone to pay them for it so they can focus on their scholarly pursuits. Usually wealthy families or governments provide this support.

The government funded many of the innovations during the Gupta Dynasty. The government regulated and taxed trade and earned money from the mines and land it owned. As evidence of the Gupta government’s control and support for trade in the economy, archaeologists have unearthed many coins created by the Gupta government. The coins show that the Gupta had the technology and power to mass-produce them, and the power needed to get merchants to use them. This also made it possible for the government to more easily tax business.

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Exhibit C: Trade, Prosperity, and Wealth

On Trade Routes Between Rome and China
The Gupta ruled the largest and most prosperous empire in India, but in the first centuries CE it was not the most powerful in the world. To the west, Rome ruled the area around the Mediterranean Sea, and to the east, the Han Dynasty controlled China. The stability that the Roman, Han, and Gupta Empires brought to Asia spurred trade on the Silk Roads. This greatly benefited all three empires and the areas in between. Wealth and ideas passed along the trade network providing the money and ideas necessary for Golden Ages.

Classical Civilizations ca. 400 CE

Source: Adapted from http://www.timemaps.com/history/world-200ad
Exhibit D: Trade, Prosperity, and Wealth

Visual Arts and Architecture: Gupta Cave Shrines
Most of the examples we have of Gupta sculpture and architecture were inspired by Hinduism and Buddhism. The most well preserved and impressive of these examples are reliefs carved out of caves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Udayagiri Caves</th>
<th>Ajanta Caves</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The image below is of a sculpture carved out of a cave wall of the Hindu god Vishnu in a boar-headed incarnation. It is roughly 23 feet tall and 13 feet wide.</td>
<td>The Ajanta Caves are covered in carvings and paintings that depict the lives of the Buddha.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Exhibit E: Literature
Some sources state that Chandragupta II supported literature and science in his empire directly by providing for a circle of scholars known as the *Nine Gems* in his court. A writer named *Kalidasa* stood as the greatest among them. He authored numerous pieces of literature, poems and plays, earning him the title of “the Shakespeare of India.”

Source: Adapted from [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Chandragupta_II](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Chandragupta_II)

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### Exhibit F: Mathematics

Watch an excerpt of “Ancient India's Contributions to the World” (7:37 - 10:33) and read the text below on other achievements in mathematics and made by Gupta scholars then answer the questions that follow.

Scholars during the Gupta period, made important **advances in mathematics** including:

- a close approximation of the value of \( \pi \)
- advances in **trigonometry**
- the use of **negative numbers**
- the use of **decimal points**

### Exhibit G: Science and Technology

#### Stepwell Architecture

Watch an excerpt of “Ancient India's Contributions to the World” (23:16 - 26:38) about stepwells.

![Stepwell in Abhaneri, India](https://example.com/stepwell)

#### Metallurgy and the Iron Pillar of Delhi

Indian metal workers were known for their expertise in ancient times. Their swords used by their soldiers were admired by other armies for their strength and the officers carried metal bows. In Delhi, there is an iron pillar from the Gupta era that stands 23 ft tall. It is over 1,500 years old but has very little rust or wear.

![Iron Pillar of Delhi](https://example.com/iron_pillar)
SQ 11: What led to the Gupta Golden Age? How did the Gupta Golden Age impact India, other regions, and later periods in history?

Directions: Based on what you have learned about the Gupta Golden Age, complete the prompts below.

FA 1. Contextualize the Gupta Golden Age by completing the following tasks:
   - Identify when and where the golden age took place
   - Describe the factors that led to the golden age

FA 2. Explain the impact of the Gupta Golden Age on India, other regions, and later periods in history by completing the following tasks:
   - Identify two innovations developed during the golden age
   - Describe the effects of those innovations on India, other regions and/or later periods in history