

Social Science

(History) (Chapter – 1) (Introduction: How, When and Where)
(Class – 8)

Let's imagine

Question:

Imagine that you are a historian wanting to find out about how agriculture changed in a remote tribal area after independence. List the different ways in which you would find information on this.

Answer:

First, I will take help from administrative records related to the agriculture in tribal areas.

Then, I will study the old records, notices and information related to the same.

Finally, I will collect the information from the documents produced by different researchers in country as well as outside the country.

Let's recall

Question 1:

State whether true or false:

(a) James Mill divided Indian history into three periods – Hindu, Muslim, Christian.

(b) Official documents help us understand what the people of the country think.

(c) The British thought surveys were important for effective administration.

Answer 1:

(a) James Mill divided Indian history into three periods – Hindu, Muslim, Christian. **True**

(b) Official documents help us understand what the people of the country think. **False**

(c) The British thought surveys were important for effective administration. **True**

Let's discuss

Question 2:

What is the problem with the periodisation of Indian history that James Mill offers?

Answer 2:

- Although Hinduism is the religion of most of the Indians but Muslims had been living in India from much earlier than beginning of the Islamic rule in India. Even during the peak of the Mughal Empire, there were many territories which were ruled by Hindu kings.
- James Mill divided history on the basis of religion of the rulers of the times. However, a variety of faiths existed simultaneously in these periods.
- Mill, through his periodization suggested that British rule could civilize India. He thought that British should conquer all the territories in India to ensure the enlightenment as if India was not capable of progress without British coordination.

Question 3:

Why did the British preserve official documents?

Answer 3:

Official records of the British administration serve as important source of history of this period. The British rulers believed that every instruction, plan, policy, decision, agreement, investigation should be clearly written up. This was necessary for proper study and debate about an issue. Hence, they carefully preserved all official records and created several archives for the purpose.

Question 4:

How will the information historians get from old newspapers be different from that found in police reports?

Answer 4:

A police report may give a version which was suited to the rulers of that time. A newspaper may project a different story. Projection in newspaper depends on the leaning of the newspaper towards a particular powerful group in the contemporary period.

*Let's do***Question 5:**

Can you think of examples of surveys in your world today? Think about how toy companies get information about what young people enjoy playing with or how the government finds out about the number of young people in school. What can a historian derive from such surveys?

Answer 5:

Yes, there are many examples of surveys in world today. The botanical, administrative and market surveys help to know about the needs and aspirations of the locality.

The government finds out about the information of employees through the records and reports of various authorities.