

Overview ---- Exam I

1. Origin of the word "Hindu"?
 - **Sindu**
2. How would you define "Hinduism"?
 - **Way of life; how they think, live, pray, worship, perform rituals, and follow customs**
3. How does one become "Hindu"?
 - **One must be born Hindu**
4. What is "Varna"?
 - **Skin color**
5. What is the meaning of the word "Veda"? Give the name of four Vedas and describe their contents.
 - **Knowledge; Rig-Veda (praise of Gods)**
 - **Yajur-Veda (how to perform rituals)**
 - **Sama-Veda (appropriate music to be chanted)**
 - **Atharva-Veda (spells against demons and protection from sickness and snakes)**
6. How many hymns are there in Rig-Veda?
 - **1028**
7. Why cow is considered sacred?
 - **Because it sustains you; can't kill living things; it's your mother**
 - **Professor's cow: Nandi**
8. What is Ahimsa?
 - **Respect for life**
9. What is the meaning of the word "Upanishad"? How many Upanishads are there?
 - **"Sit under a tree with Guru, Swami, and Sashu"**
 - **128**
10. Who are the following Gods and what are their functions:
 - **Indra: god of Rain; live in Himalaya; like Greek God Zeus**
 - **Agni: god of Fire; most cherished/loved by female; every ritual and sacrifice is completed by Agni**
 - **Brahman: highest god; eternal and infinite; never die, changing; creator**
 - **Vishnu: preserver**
 - **Shiva: destroyer**
 - **Rudra: god of wind; his son is Marut (storms)**
 - **Lakhshmi: female goddess; goddess of prosperity, intelligence; lotus goddess**
 - **Varuna: natural power and order**
 - **Soma: god of Drink**

11. Describe four castes and their functions.
- **Brahmin:** Priestly class, religious authority
 - **Chaitrya:** Rulers & kings, defend country
 - **Vaishya:** tradesmen & farmers, serve people
 - **Shudras:** manual laborers, also include:
 - Parayas (untouchable)
 - Chandlas (illegitimate children)
12. What is Trimurti?
- **Three gods; Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva**
13. What are the following:
- Karma: **doing good deeds without expecting rewards**
 - Dharma: **physical and moral order created by Brahman**
 - Atman: **eternal (with Brahman)**
 - Moksha: **highest goal of life; becoming one with Brahman**
 - Nirvana: **blow your mind**
 - Yoga: **union with God**
14. Describe three yogas:
- Karma Yoga: **doing good deeds without expecting rewards**
 - Jhana Yoga: **knowing Brahman as different from Maya**
 - Bhakti Yoga: **concentration only on Brahman, becoming indifferent to life**
15. Meaning of the word “Bhagvat Gita”?
- **Songs of God**
16. Who is Arjuna? Who is Krishna?
- Arjuna: **prince (Chatriya caste) from family of Pandavas**
 - Krishna: **reincarnation of Vishnu**
17. How many chapters are there in Bhagvat Gita? What is Mahabhartta?
- **18 chapters; largest epic ever written**

BUDDHISM

18. How does one become Buddhist?
- **The Three Jewels: I take refuge in Buddha, Dharma, Sanga**
 - **The Eightfold Path (Middle Path): right understanding, intention, speech, action, work, effort, meditation, and contemplation (joining Sanga: monkish life)**
19. When was Buddha born and which caste?
- **Born in 560 B.C. in the second caste (chatriyas) in Nepal**
20. How did Buddha die?
- **Food poisoning at 80**
21. Describe two legends regarding his birth?
- **1. Buddha walked seven steps when he was born symbolizing birth was his seventh and final birth**
 - **2. Mother saw dream of white elephant walking into her womb; decided Buddha would become a great king or great teacher**

22. Describe Four Noble Truths:
- **1. Life / existing is suffering**
 - **2. Suffering is caused by desire**
 - **3. Desire must be overcome**
 - **4. Desire is overcome by joining monastic life**
23. What is the literal meaning of the word "nirvana"?
- **Emptiness; blow your mind**
24. What are the main differences between Hinduism and Buddhism?
- **Hinduism has too many gods, too many rituals, too much focus on castes, too much emphasis of sacrifices**
25. What are the common elements between Hinduism and Buddhism?
- **Karma**
 - **Reincarnation**
 - **Ahimsa**
 - **Nirvana (moksha)**
26. What is "Pitaka" and why they are called "Pitakas"?
- **Basket containing teachings of Buddha**
27. Describe the main contents of three "Pitakas":
- **Sutta Pitaka: says of Buddha**
 - **Vinaya Pitaka: describes the rules and regulations from monastic life**
 - **Abhidhamma Pitaka: contains metaphysical and philosophical doctrines**
28. Give the names of three Buddhist sects:
- **Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajryana**
29. Describe the main difference between the Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism:
- **Hinayana (smaller vehicle): (Theravada) Nirvana by joining Sanga (monastic order)**
 - **Mahayana (greater vehicle): Not need Sanga order for Nirvana; helping others in Sanga**
30. How would you describe Vajrayana Buddhism?
- **Diamond Vehicle; employs esoteric practices such as chants and rituals to gain supernatural powers, found blending with Tibetan Buddhism and believes that Lamas are incarnations of the previous Lamas**
31. What is the goal of Hindu life and what is the goal of Buddhist life?
- **Hindu: achieve Moksha; one with Brahman**
 - **Buddhist: achieve Nirvana**