Answer the following questions from the reading – World Religions

1. Is there a single founder of the Hindu religion? ____________

2. Hinduism is based on interpretations of what series of prayers and hymns? ____________
   What group introduced these to the Indus people? ____________

3. What is the goal of Hinduism? ____________________________________.

4. In order to make the right choices in life, Hindus refer to the advise written in the __________________________, created by Hindu teachers.

5. The soul of the individual is called ____________ while the universal soul is known as ____________.

6. Why do Hindus believe in Reincarnation? ____________________________

7. What determines how many lives a Hindu needs to live in order to join the universal soul? ____________

8. The universal soul called BRAHMAN is seen with three different personalities, ____________ the creator, ____________ the protector and ____________ the destroyer.

9. Hinduism is unique to other religions in that Hindus are free to choose ____________________________.

10. Who was the founder of Jainism? ____________________________

11. What is the basic belief of all Jainists? ____________________________

12. The founder of Buddhism was ____________________________

13. Why did Siddhartha’s father not let him out of the palace walls? ____________________________

14. In what ways did Siddhartha try to find truth and wisdom? ____________________________

15. The word Buddha means ____________________________
16 Do you agree with the FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS? Why or Why not?

17 The ultimate goal for Buddhists is to reach ______________ or the perfect place in which they are released from ______________ and ______________.

18 The Hebrew people were originally from which Sumerian city-state? __________

19 The founder of the Hebrew people and Judaism was ________________________.

20 Judaism was a religion that was different from other early religions and philosophies because it was monotheistic in that it believed in a ______________ god.

21 What was the name of the Hebrew God? ________________

22 Because the Hebrews believed their god was not limited geographically, how would this cause problems for them with other groups? ________________________________

23 What Hebrew leader freed them from bondage in Egypt and delivered to them the Ten Commandments, which became the laws by which they had to live? __________

24 What was the covenant between the Jews and God? ________________________________

25 Jewish religious teachers were called ________________________

26 The founder of Zoroastrianism was ________________________.

27 Zoroaster believed there were two spiritual armies fighting over peoples ________.

28 The gods of these two armies are ________________ the god of truth and light and ________________ the god of evil and darkness.

29 How was Zoroastrianism different from traditional Mesopotamian religions? ________

30 Zoroaster’s ideas are written in a holy book called the ________________________

31 Confucius’ real name was ________________ which means ________________.

32 Confucius believed what would be restored to China if its society was organized around Five Basic Relationships? ________________________

33 In your opinion, which is the most important of the Five Relationships taught in Confucianism? ________________________ Why?
34 What is filial piety? ____________________________
Is this an idea that is stressed today? _____ Why do think this?

35 Confucius' writings and ideas are compiled in a books known as the ____________

36 Who was the founder of Taoism (Daoism) ____________________________

37 Lao tzu believed in the "natural order" and believed that in seeking order and harmony in society we need to observe nature because nothing in nature strives for ____________, _______ and ____________.

38 Tao means _____________________________. What is this? ____________________________
______________________________________.

39 The Holy Book of Taoism is the ____________________________

40 Legalists believe what was needed to restore order in society? ____________________________
______________________________________.

41 How did Legalists want ideas to be controlled? ____________________________
______________________________________.

42 With Legalism, do you think people had any say in what went on with their government, or had a say in their government? ______________

43 Shinto means ____________________________

44 Shinto basic beliefs are based on respect for ____________________________
______________________________________.

45 Shinto spirits were called _______________ and they were located ____________________________.
World Religions

**Hinduism** - Hinduism is a collection of religious beliefs that developed slowly over a long period of time. It is a religion that can not trace its origins back to a single founder or set of ideas, rather its ideas are based on interpretations of the **Vedas**. The Vedas are hymns, prayers and myths that were brought to the Indus people by the Indo-European tribe known as the ARYANS. Written in Sanskrit (an early form of English) it was incorporated into the daily lives of the Indus people. The ideas of both groups became intermingled and resulted in the worship of thousands of gods.

Hindus share a common world view, they see religion as a way of liberating the soul from the illusions, disappointments and mistakes of everyday existence. The goal of all Hindus is to achieve liberation from desires and suffering - this is reaching **MOKSHA**, or a state of perfect understanding of all things. In order to get to that point Hindus read and follow the advice written in the **UPANISHADS** by teachers of the Vedas. Basically it is advise on how to reach Moksha. Hindus refer to the individual human soul as **Atman**. The goal of all human souls is to reach become part of **Brahman** - the universal soul. This cannot come during a single lifetime because of the mistakes people make so Hindus believe in **reincarnation** - the transmigration of souls. The individual soul is reborn again and again until the soul reaches perfect understanding. How many live that need to be lived depended on the person’s **Karma** or good and bad deeds. This determines the next life specific circumstances such as what caste to be born in, state of health, wealth or poverty.

Hinduism has constantly changed over the centuries. The universal soul (Brahman) is even seen with three different personalities: **Brahma** the creator, **Vishnu** the protector and **Shiva** the destroyer. Hindus today are free to choose who they worship and the path in which they reach Moksha.

**Jainism** - The founder of Jainism was **Mahavira**, he believed that everything in the universe had a soul and so should not be harmed. Jainists follow a strict path of non-violence including the sweeping of ants off pathways and using masks so as to not accidentally swallow a flying bug. Even their jobs require non violent acts so most Jainists are in trade occupations so as to serve others.

**Buddhism** - About 530 BC a young man named **Siddhartha Gautama** challenged the ideas of the Brahmin priests. He said even the lowest person could gain enough wisdom in one lifetime to escape the cycle of death and rebirth. Gautama was born into a royal family and raised without seeing any human pain , suffering or death. It was prophesized that he would either be a great king for the northern Indus people or a great religious leader for the entire world. His father was determined to have him be a king so Gautama was not allowed to see outside the palace walls into the nearby village. At age 29 he was married with one child when he left the palace walls and saw human life for real and he came to the conclusion that every living thing will experience old age, sickness and death and that only a religious life could offer salvation.

Gautama decided to leave his life of luxury and find enlightenment to these problems of humans. For six years he wandered trying to find wisdom. He used harsh discipline on
himself (beatings), starvation and other suffering. At last he found the truth after more than 40 days straight of meditation, eating only a single grain of rice and a cup of water daily. When he found this truth he became Buddha - The Enlightened One.

He began to teach about his findings and they started with the Four Noble Truths.

1. Everything in life is full of suffering and sorrow
2. The cause of all of this suffering is people's self-centered cravings and desires. Humans seek pleasure that will not last but a short time, thus leads to more suffering
3. The way to end all pain is to end all desires
4. People can overcome their desires and attain enlightenment by following the Eightfold Path

The eightfold path is a stair case and a person must master one step at a time. They are right knowledge, right purpose, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right mindfulness and right meditation. Once a person has mastered all eight steps he/she can reach Nirvana (the perfect place) and be released from pain and selfishness.

Judaism - one of the earliest religions is that of Judaism, which began as the Hebrew religion. Around 2000 BC a group of travelers left the Sumerian city-state of UR and went west to the area of Palestine on the Mediterranean coast. One of these people was a man named Abraham. His ideas on life and what guides people form the basic ideas of Judaism. The early Jews prayed to a single god, (monotheism) this god was the creator and ruler of all things. The Jews thought that this god Yahweh was not limited to any particular geographical setting so where ever they went they would worship him and not any local gods. This would cause many problems for the Jews in later years.

After migrating to Egypt around 1650 BC the Hebrew people were enslaved. Around 1200 BC the Hebrews in Egypt were freed under the leadership of MOSES. Moses goal was to free his people then find a place or land of their own to live in peace. Moses gave his people the TEN COMMANDMENTS, the laws that became the basis for Judaism. The early Jews believed these laws formed a Covenant, or promise between god and the Jewish people. God promised to protect the Jews and they promised to honor the commandments.

The covenant was based on the idea that God is just, not arbitrary as in the other early religions. The ten commandments also demanded a high standard of moral conduct from humans. This emphasis on justice, morality and an individual relationship with God set Judaism apart and its form of monotheism has been modified to say ethical monotheism. The Jewish religion developed under religious teachers known as prophets who believed they were messengers sent to reveal God's will to the Jews.

Zoroastrianism - Around 600 BC, when Persia dominated the Fertile Crescent a man named Zoroaster watched the area suffer from war, conquest and famine. He began to teach about the fight between good and evil in humans and in the world.

Zoroaster believed there were two spiritual armies fighting each person's soul. One army led by Ahura-Mazda (the god of truth and light); the other army led by Ahriman (the god of evil and darkness). Zoroaster taught that at the end of time all souls would be judged according to the side they had chosen. Followers of Ahura-Mazda would be lifted into paradise. Followers of Ahriman would suffer forever in a fiery pit.
Zoroaster’s beliefs were very different from traditional Mesopotamian religions in that there was a good place and bad place after death and that a person’s own choice controlled his or her fate. Zoroaster’s writings are called the *Avesta* and are the Holy books of Zoroastrianism.

**Confucianism** - This is more of a philosophy that dominates a person’s life rather than a religion that does the same. Confucius’ real name was K’ung Fu-Tzu (Master Kung). He believed that social order and good government could be restored (in China) if society was organized around five basic relationships:
1. ruler to subject
2. father to son
3. husband to wife
4. older brother to younger brother
5. friend to friend

Confucius believed a code of conduct should regulate each of these relationships. Rulers should be kind and virtuous while subjects should be law abiding and loyal. Confucius also stressed that children should practice *filial piety*, or respect for their parents and elders. Only the people who have lived, erred and learned should be given the respect of those who do not know the errors of their ways. Experience means everything, it can teach anything, it hides nothing. You don’t know the history, thoughts, actions or ideas of others and the older one is the more experience he/she has to share. Confucius’ writings and ideas were compiled in the books called *The Analects*.

**Taoism** - (Daoism) Founded by the Chinese thinker Lao Tzu who believed the *natural order* was important. He said that if you seek order and harmony, go to the hills and sit by a stream, observe the clouds, feel the wind, listen to nature. The idea is to realize that nothing in nature strives for fame, power or even wisdom. Lao Tzu believed all things in nature move without effort because they follow the TAO - (the way). “The Way” is the universal force that guides all things.

Of all the things in nature only humans fail to follow TAO. We argue and question right and wrong, good manners and bad. Lao Tzu believed these arguments are always pointless, really what does one win? Taoism dominated China’s people thought and actions, China actually retreated from the rest of the world to ponder its own ideas and how to make things better to live closer to nature. In its search for the understanding and knowledge of nature China made great advancements in science, alchemy, astronomy and medicine. Lao Tzu’s ideas are written in the *Tao Te Ching* (The Way of Virtue).

**Legalism** - This is a third Chinese philosophy about how to live and the government’s involvement in human lives. Legalists believe that a highly efficient and powerful government was the key to restoring social order. They believed that rulers should provide rich rewards for people who carried out their duties well and punish severely all those who disobey or are disobedient.

In practice Legalists stressed punishments more than rewards (anyone outside their territory without a travel pass should have their nose or ears chopped off). Legalists believed in controlling the ideas as well as actions, burn books or writings that may
Say bad things about leaders and rulers of their lands. After all it was for the rulers to lead and the people to follow. Chinese leaders soon took up this philosophy and still today China suffers from lack of rights for the people.

**Shintoism** - Early Japanese people were separated into clans, each clan worshiped its own nature gods and goddesses. The clans varied customs and beliefs eventually to form Japan’s earliest religion called *Shinto* (way of the gods).

Shinto has no complex rituals or philosophy, instead it is based on respect for the forces of nature and on the worship of ancestors. Shinto worshipers believed in *Kami* or the divine spirits that dwell in nature. Any unusual or especially beautiful tree, rock, waterfall or mountain was considered the home of a Kami.