

Honors Literature – World History

TASK: Read the following text carefully, making all appropriate notations. Identify SOAPStone, DIDLS, PERSIAN, and other information as evidence of your research and analysis of the piece of literature. Answer the related questions on notebook paper or on this document. You may use this information for any written essay on the piece. See the text at the very bottom of these notes.

TASK: Comprehension Questions

1. In what ways does this poem convey the Aryan's delight in warfare?
2. What does it tell us about the way they fought their battles and their attitudes toward the herd animals that were so central to their culture?
3. How does it convey the Aryan's ideals of manliness, heroism, and loyalty, and what does it say about their attitudes toward death?

DOCUMENT

Aryan Poetry in Praise of a War Horse

The following early Vedic hymn exalts in the power of a great Aryan war horse.

Rushing to glory, to the capture of herds,
Swooping down as a hungry falcon,
Eager to be first, he darts amid the ranks of the chariots
Happy as a bridegroom making a garland,
Spurning the dust and champing at the bit.
And the victorious steed and faithful,
His body obedient to his driver in battle,
Speeding on through the melee,
Stirs up the dust to fall on his brows.

And at his deep neigh, like the thunder of heaven,
The foemen tremble in fear,
For he fights against thousands, and none can resist him,
So terrible is his charge.

QUESTIONS In what ways does this poem convey the Aryans' delight in warfare? What does it tell us about the way they fought their battles and their attitudes toward the herd animals that were so central to their culture? How does it convey the Aryans' ideals of manliness, heroism, and loyalty, and what does it say about their attitudes toward death?