

Histories of Burma: Multiple Perspectives, Volume 1

Introduction

There are many histories of Burma. Every person from Burma, or who has been involved in Burma, has a perspective on events. Many published histories - all over the world - look at only one perspective, which provides one point of view to historical events, people and situations.

In this module, we try to show many different perspectives. However, we are aware that not all points of view can be represented. Firstly, there are as many perspectives as there are people. Secondly, it is very difficult to get source material, especially from pre-colonial times. If there are things in this module you or your students disagree with or feel are not represented, that's OK.

Encourage students to talk about why those points of view may have been left out. Then write and tell us so that we can try to include them in the future.

Introduction to Historians' Skills

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to differentiate among various purposes for studying history
- to determine the purposes of this module
- to reflect on previous methods of studying history and to compare it to the new method reflected in this module
- to identify the reasons that there are multiple perspectives on history
- to reflect on their own identity and biases
- to practice recognising bias in historical documents
- to differentiate among facts, beliefs and theories
- to practise finding evidence for a theory in a historical document
- to make inferences and differentiate between what a text states directly and implies indirectly
- to identify how historical documents connect causes and effects
- to use documents to identify continuity and change in history

Key Concepts:

multiple perspectives; bias; stereotype; generalisation; fact; belief; theory; evidence; primary source; secondary source; inference; cause and effect; continuity and change.

Note:

This section will probably be one of the most difficult for students, since they will be introduced to a new way of studying history. Take your time and make sure that students understand each section before moving on to the next one. You may also wish to stop and return to some activities in this section after you move forward in the book, if students need to be reminded about the key concepts listed above.

1. How and why do we study history?

Reasoning

Note:

Emphasise to students that any answers they choose are fine. The purpose of these questions is to help them reflect on their past studies of history.

1. You can read each of the statements out loud and ask students to raise their hands if they ranked it number 1, 2, or 3. You can keep count on the board of the most popular answers.
2. This question may be difficult for students to answer. If they have trouble, you may wish to move on to question 3 and come back to this one afterwards.
3. If students' reasons for studying history are the same as the purposes of the history classes they've taken in the past, challenge them to consider why they don't think the other purposes listed above are practical or important. If they do think their own purposes in studying history are different from the ones of the history classes they've taken in the past, ask them why their purposes might be different from those of their teachers/schools.

2. How do we approach history differently in this module?

Students read the text.

Draw students' attention to the citation, and show them the **Sourcebook**.

Go over the **B** and **T** abbreviations and point out the biography and timeline sections.

You may wish to stop and discuss this module's approach to history. If it is very different from what they are used to, ask them to keep an open mind as they try out this new way of studying history.

You may also want to help students understand how nationalism, accuracy, certainty about the past, empathy and reconciliation, critical thinking, and open-mindedness are connected to purposes A-F on Page 3.

Comprehension

Make sure students understand the difference between **Comprehension** questions, which have correct/incorrect answers, and **Reasoning** questions, which do not.

Note:

You may also wish to pause and discuss how the word "Burmese" is used in this module by asking students how they understand this word. They may come to see it differently over the course of this module.

Students practise looking up references in the **Sourcebook**. They then answer the questions that follow.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b
2. d
3. a

Reasoning

1. Encourage students to think of arguments both for and against these statements.

Possible answer: This could mean that those with power in society are able to write history to make themselves look good. For example, since the British won the Anglo-Burmese wars, they may have focused on the results of the war that were positive for them (building a bigger empire) rather than on the results of the war that were negative for others (many Burmese soldiers died, and the Konbaung kingdom fell). Gen. Khin Nyunt might agree that the British did this in their time, but he would not agree that the SPDC did that. Students may notice that people without power in society don't usually have the chance to put their perspectives in history books.

3. How can you identify multiple perspectives?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a

Reasoning

1. **Possible answers:** These depend on the students. If students are confused by the idea of an “imaginary friend,” just ask them to think of someone who is different from them in every way. As a teacher, you could draw the table on the board and fill out some of the categories from your own perspective. This may work as a good example.
2. **Possible answers:** If the student prefers democracy and their imaginary friend prefers military dictatorship, their friend might be glad that the army still has power after the 2010 election.
3. Whichever top three characteristics students pick as most important to their identity, challenge them to think about why the others are less important. Also ask students to notice patterns in the class. If most people find ethnicity important and age not important, what does that tell them about what parts of identity their community emphasises most?

4. How can you understand your own biases?

Note:

The woman on the page is Kachin, and the images above her represent the different biases she may or may not have. They include (from left to right) Religion - Christianity, Nationalism - The KIA - Kachin Independence Army, The KIA flag, Geography - A map of Kachin State, Community - two Kachin women in traditional dress.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. a. stereotype
b. generalisation
c. bias
d. neutral statement

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They may be more likely to believe a young man stole from an old woman, for instance.

Note:

Encourage students to be honest as they do this exercise, but recognise that these discussions can be difficult, especially if students come from different backgrounds and may be revealing biases about groups of which other students are members. Remind them that having biases is normal, and that it is not only them as individuals that have biases, but their entire societies that may have trained them to have these biases.

2. They may have learned that they were biased, whereas they had never considered themselves biased before. If students say they learned nothing about their biases, you may wish to return to this question after completing several Themes and see if their answers have changed.
3. Students may agree that all historians are biased, or they may feel some are totally unbiased. They might trust Maung Htin Aung's theories because he is open about his bias, or they might distrust his theories because they think he will only include good things about Burma and Burmans.

5. How can you find biases in a text?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b, a, d, c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Government newspapers may be biased towards the government.
Exiled Burmese media groups may be biased towards pro-democracy parties or organisations.

6. Practice finding bias

Students find and read all of the documents listed on the page.

Draw their attention to the maps section of the **Sourcebook**, which may be new to them.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. D10: for the Konbaung Kingdom
2. D11: for the British Empire

Note:

Go over the answers to the exercise above before proceeding on to the chart below.

3.

	British "White strangers"	Burmese "Lord of the Golden Palace"
What do they do or how are they described?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fastened a quarrel - took palace and Prome - petitioned king - spent vast sums of money - were in distress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - permitted strangers to advance to Yandabo - pious, showed regard for life - showed clemency and generosity
Are they portrayed as positive, negative, or neutral?	Negative and neutral	positive
Is there bias for or against them?	against	for

4.

	British "Government of India"	Burmese "Court of Ava"
What do they do or how are they described?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - forced into war - faced difficulties - signed peace advantageous to government of India - proud of winning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - obdurate - stubborn foe - signed humiliating and inglorious treaty
Are they portrayed as positive, negative, or neutral?	positive	negative
Is there bias for or against them?	for	against

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may be surprised that D10 did not portray the British more negatively.
2. Students may find it easier to identify with the perspective in D10 because they are from Burma, not Britain.

7. Facts, beliefs, and theories

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. D10 - fact
- b. D10 - belief
- c. D11 - belief
- d. D11 - theory, because we need evidence to know whether India (the British) or the Konbaung kingdom benefitted more from the Treaty.
- e. D10 - theory

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Because authors had different information, or because they want people to believe their theories to make their own side look good.
2. Students may accept either theory more based on histories they have read before or based on whether they trust the Burmese or British author more.

8. Primary sources: Finding evidence for a theory

Comprehension

Answers:

1.
 - a. primary
 - b. secondary
 - c. secondary
 - d. primary
 - e. both - primary because it's from that time period; secondary because it was written by someone who didn't directly experience the war.
2.
 - a. False
 - b. True
 - c. True
 - d. Not stated
3.
 - a. Supporting evidence: Burmese cannot interfere in Assam and Manipur; Burmese cede some provinces to British; Burmese have to pay 10,000,000 rupees; Burmese can't tax British ships anymore.
Discrediting evidence: There will be perpetual peace and friendship; there will be a commercial treaty of advantage to both sides.
 - b. Discrediting evidence: Money was to pay back British for what they spent in the war; no evidence that British had run out of money or were in distress.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. D9 includes more evidence for D11's theory than D10's theory, but that doesn't mean D10's theory can't be supported in other ways—for instance D9 admits that the war was very expensive for the British.

9. Making inferences: The differences between stated and implied

Comprehension

Answers:

1. from top to bottom:
 - a. stated
 - b. stated
 - c. implied
 - d. stated
 - e. implied
 - f. stated
2. e.
3. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. The author of D10 wanted to spread message e because the Konbaung court was embarrassed to have lost a war. The author of D11 wanted to spread message d to show the British Empire's power to other opponents.
2. D10 could be called propaganda because it does not include the British perspective that the British won the war, and D11 could be called propaganda because it does not include the Burmese perspective that the Burmese were more powerful than the British. Today, most historians agree that the British won the war, so they might be less likely to see D11 as propaganda because it contains facts they believe are correct.

10. How can you analyse theories about cause and effect?

Comprehension

Answers:

1.

Causes	Effects
1.	d. (D10)
2.	a. (D11)
3.	b. (D11)
4.	c. (D10)

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may or may not find these plausible, depending on their prior knowledge. All contain biases—for instance, the British idea that the Burmese were stubborn while the British work hard.
2.
 - a. Because the Treaty of Yandabo required it, the Burmese King gave the British some money.
 - b. Because the Burmese King did not have the power and resources to stop the British, the Burmese King did not stop the British advance to Yandabo.

11. How can you assess continuity and change?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. b.
3. a.
4.
 1. b.
 2. c.
 3. c.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. The Burmese rulers continued to claim that they were more powerful than the British, but they changed from claiming that the British were helpless to claiming that they were threatening.
2. The Burmese rulers realised that the British had more resources and weapons than they did.

Review

Note:

Each Theme concludes with a review; questions that help students reflect on what they learned in the unit. If you wish, you may use them as a test to see if students have understood the concepts and facts covered in this Theme. These questions require a mix of comprehension and reasoning.

1. Answers:

- a. theory
 - b. changes
 - c. multiple perspectives
 - d. belief
 - e. evidence
 - f. continuity
 - g. cause
 - h. fact
 - i. effect
 - j. generalisation
 - k. inference
 - l. stereotype
 - m. identity
 - n. secondary source
 - o. primary source
2. Students may be more aware that history contains multiple perspectives and not just one truth; they may be more aware of their own biases and the biases of historians. They may still believe the same facts about history nonetheless.
 3. Use students' answers to know which concepts or skills they should practice more.
 4. Students may be concerned they will not be able to understand all the documents. You can assure them that you will help them understand the documents. They may feel that studying history this way is not "real history." Let them know that it is OK if they want to study the Reference Materials to feel like they are learning more facts. They can also go back to studying history in a traditional way after they complete this module—but ask them to keep an open mind for the time being. They may be looking forward to learning about many different perspectives, to reading primary source documents and thinking critically about them.

Theme 1: Rights and Responsibilities of Governments and Citizens

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to investigate the concept of a social contract
- to analyse the social contract between kings and their subjects in ancient times
- to assess laws passed by the British in the colonial era
- to analyse the reasons that Burmese nationalists were not satisfied with the British social contract
- to determine the reasons that Burmese nationalists rebelled against Japanese occupation
- to evaluate the socialist social contract that the BSPP government created
- to distinguish the pro-democracy movement's idea of the social contract
- to examine the social contract in the 2008 Constitution
- to apply their understanding of the social contract to the systems of monarchy, colonialism, occupation, socialist dictatorship, democracy, and "discipline flourishing democracy."

Key concepts:

social contract; rights; responsibilities

1. What has been the “social contract” between the rulers and the ruled?

Comprehension

Answers:

- b.

Reasoning

Students work in groups to complete this exercise, then write their answers in a table on the board. If students have difficulty, suggest some answers from the table below to get them started.

Possible answers:

-

Government's rights	Government's responsibilities	People's rights	People's responsibilities
Collect taxes	Provide security	Freedom of speech	Pay taxes
Form an army	Maintain roads	Freedom of movement	Follow laws
Make agreements with other countries	Provide education	Right to work	Don't hurt other citizens
Put criminals in prison	Provide health care	Right to own property	Work to help the country
Manage the country's resources	Listen to people's desires	Freedom of religion	Vote in elections

- Students may give similar answers about some things, for instance, that the government should provide security. However, 1000 years ago they might not have had the same ideas about freedom of speech or religion, because those ideas have become more popular in the past several hundred years. Also, they might not have thought voting in elections was important if they did not have a democratic system.

2. Ancient times: What responsibilities did kings have?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. 3
b. 10
c. 9
d. 4

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Maybe yes, because they were not the people actually doing the killing in the wars. Maybe no, because war could be considered persecuting people or being oppressive.

3. Ancient times: What rights did kings have?

Comprehension

Answers:

- d.

2. Possible answers:

King: "If the people agree to give me some of what they produce, I will protect them and not take too much."

People: "If the king agrees to leave us enough food to survive, we will give him some of what we produce."

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Yes, because you would have enough to survive. No, because you might want to keep everything you produced for your family instead of giving it to the king.

4. Ancient times: What happened when rulers did not fulfil their responsibilities?

Comprehension

Answers:

- Answers may vary - some duties are similar to each other. If the action matches the duty, it is fine.

What Prince Maung Myo did	Which duty he did not fulfil
Made his subjects cut firewood	(10) not to be oppressive
Took people's bullocks	(3) be generous
Made love to virgin daughters	(2) observe the precepts
Prevented people from marrying without his permission	(8) not to persecute the people
Propitiated evil spirits	(6) adopt a moderate lifestyle

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

- They could have rebelled on their own, or tried to kill Maung Myo, or run away to another place. But maybe they wanted to stay in their homes but have a better ruler. They might not have had the weapons or resources to fight Maung Myo by themselves.
- In 2010-2011, people in many countries in the Middle East tried to get rid of their rulers. They succeeded in getting rid of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, Zine El Abedine Ben Ali in Tunisia and Muammar Gaddafi in Libya, but they have not succeeded (in July 2013) in getting rid of Bashar al-Asad in Syria. In each of these cases, people protested in the streets.

5. Colonial era: What laws did the British make?

Comprehension

Possible answers:

- 6.1.g: *if a British official tells him to, the headman has to give food, supplies, and transportation to British soldiers and police in his area in exchange for some money*
6.1.h: if a British official tells him to, the headman has to get villagers to help build roads
6.1.i: the headman has to collect taxes
9.1: the people have to help the headman or police
11.1: people who visit a village have to tell the headman that they are there

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Agree with the Burmese because they had to give up the freedom of moving from place to place and they had to do whatever the headman asked.
Or: Agree with the British, because without these laws, criminals could come and go from villages and the government could not build roads or do other projects for the people's benefit.
- Students may be biased for the villagers because they have experienced government laws that they feel are too strict. They may be biased for or against the British because of what they have learned in past history classes.

6. Democracy: Is it possible for the people to have too much power?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because just as the majority of people agree on something doesn't mean it's right or a good idea. Maybe no, because people with the best qualifications might be corrupt and only working for themselves instead of doing what's best for everyone.

2. There was a depression in the 1930s and people in Burma became poor. U Thant might have worried that if Burma became a democracy, the government could not manage this kind of economic crisis well.

Note:

Remind students to look back at the timeline when completing these questions.

3. During the 1950s, ethnic and political groups were rebelling against the parliamentary government. Some Burmese people might have been starting to question whether or not democracy was the best system, just as U Thant had done in the 1930s.

7. The Anti-Fascist Organisation: What rights did it want from the Japanese rulers?

Comprehension

Answers:

- 1.

Freedom	Violation
1. Freedom of Religion	b.
2. Freedom of Speech	a.
3. Economic Freedom	d.
4. Freedom of Organisation	c.

5. a, b, d, e, f

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because the people were experiencing suffering and needed to find some way to end it. Maybe no, because killing collaborators and guerrilla warfare are extremist strategies.

You could read out each strategy, and have students stand up if they would be willing to use that strategy, then ask them to explain their reasons.

8. The Revolutionary Council and Socialist Ideology: How did they explain citizens' rights and governments' responsibilities?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c. (The document does not mention any of the other freedoms, but it does say that the people should not have anxiety about food or shelter.)
2. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Yes, because survival needs are the most basic things people are concerned about. No, because besides survival needs people also want freedom of speech, freedom to own companies, etc.

9. Pro-democracy leaders: What responsibilities and rights do they give to government and citizens?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. a.

Reasoning

1. Ask students to reflect on their experiences if they have lived in an environment where there was a lot of corruption, or where governments ruled by force.

10. The 2008 Constitution: What are the rights and responsibilities of government and citizens?

Comprehension

You could divide students into three groups and give each group 1, 2, and 3.

Answers:

1. 6b: make sure groups in the country feel unified
6c: keep Burma independent
6d: start a kind of democracy
6e: have a free and fair society
6f: make sure the army participates in government

2. Chapter VIII, 354:

354a: freedom of speech

354b: freedom of assembly

354c: freedom to form groups

354d: freedom from discrimination

3. Chapter I, 40c: there is an emergency that threatens the union

Chapter VIII, 381: a foreign army invades or if there is a rebellion or urgent situation

Chapter VIII, 382: they change the laws that guaranteed citizens' rights in an emergency

Review

1. Possible answers:

	Government's responsibility	People's rights
D2	To follow the 5 precepts	To be free from oppression
D6	To keep the country peaceful	To be able to keep what they need to survive
D4	To fulfil the Ten Duties of kings	To keep their property for themselves
D17	To keep law and order	To have a village headman
D30	To rule in the people's interests	To contribute the most qualified people to rule
D36	To treat people fairly	To criticise the government
D39	To respect freedom of organisation	To practise whatever religion they choose
D62	To provide for citizens' basic needs	To be free from discrimination
D74	To make fair laws	The rights in the UN Declaration of Human Rights
D91	To keep the country united	To protest peacefully (unless there is an emergency/rebellion)

2. Students order the groups according to who they agreed with most.

3. Possible answers:

monarchy: kings protect people and not oppress them; people give some things they produce to the kings.

colonialism: rulers keep law and order; people contribute labour and taxes to the rulers' government.

military occupation: government controls people's lives; people help the government in every way.

socialist dictatorship: government provides for people's basic needs and controls the economy; people contribute their labour for the good of everyone.

democracy: government guarantees people's rights and makes fair laws; people follow the laws and protest if the government doesn't give them rights.

Note :

It might be hard for students to understand at first that they should describe how the system is supposed to function. For instance, the answers above for military occupation are not what the AFO wanted; they were protesting this system because they did not like that social contract.

4. **Possible answers:** Maybe it is still appropriate for rulers to be tolerant and not to oppress people. However, the 5 precepts are specific to Buddhism, and not everyone in Burma is Buddhist. Also, there is nothing about respecting specific rights.

5. You could assign groups of students to argue for each of the eras below.

Ancient times: if kings didn't follow their Ten Duties, people would be oppressed, like in D4. Also, they had to give up some of what they produced to the king.

Colonial era: the British made strict laws and did not let the Burmese rule themselves.

Japanese occupation: The Japanese controlled everyday life and did not follow Burmese customs. Life was hard economically.

BSPP era: People did not have many rights.

SPDC/SLORC era: The government did not make or enforce fair laws, and people had to fight for their rights.

6. Students could answer this question in the form of an essay.

Theme 2: Women and Men Throughout History

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to identify continuities and changes in gender roles over time, from ancient times to the colonial era to the era of military rule
- to differentiate between the effects of biological sex and gender roles
- to identify examples of sexism and equality among men and women
- to evaluate women's participation in politics and the limitations on their participation
- to contrast women's role as fighters and as victims in war
- to determine why women's choices about marriage have been controversial
- to contrast Burmese women's perspectives inside the country and in exile

Key concepts:

biological sex; gender; sexism

Note:

Students, especially male students, might not think this unit is important at first. Let them know that because women are often left out of history books, they have a special opportunity now to learn about women in Burma's history. Although Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is an important female leader, she is not included in this Theme because students probably know about her already, and she is included in other parts of the module.

1. How have ideas about gender affected history?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 2
b. 1
c. 3
2. b

Reasoning

1. You could divide the class into two teams, with males trying to come up with the names of women in history, and females trying to come up with the names of men in history. Have a race to see who can complete the task first. The girls will probably be able to come up with the names of ten men very quickly, whereas the boys might not be able to come up with ten women. This shows how much more women usually know about men in history than vice versa.
2. Students will probably realise that it is easier to come up with the names of ten men because men are more famous and because women's gender roles may keep them from being involved in politics.
3. **Possible answers:**
Women face some common issues because of their biological sex, such as nutrition and reproductive rights. They face some issues because of gender roles, such as discrimination, lack of educational opportunity, and economic inequalities with men.
4. Students could write their answers in the form of a short essay, and then share them with a classmate of the opposite sex.

2. What were gender roles in the past?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. male
- b. male
- c. female
- d. female
- e. male

Reasoning

Read out each skill and have students raise their hands to indicate if they have that skill or not. Tally the responses on the board.

Explain that the skills that many women/men still have today are continuities in gender roles, whereas skills that not many women/men have today show changes in gender roles.

3. Ancient kingdoms: What were women's roles in politics?

Comprehension

Answers:

- d

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Maybe yes, because she would become rich, and the King wanted to please her by joining her culture. Maybe no, because she wanted to stay in her homeland or maybe she was in love with someone else but had to marry Tabinshwehti because he was king.

- It would be very difficult unless she left behind a diary. This shows how men usually leave the historical records in ancient times, and so it is difficult to know much about women's perspectives.

- It gave them power because they could influence their husbands (for instance, to adopt their language and culture). It took away their power because they were just like objects to be traded by men.

4. Anglo-Burmese Wars: How did women participate?

Comprehension

Answers:

- d

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Snodgrass' description may fit their stereotype if they have heard about Shan female warriors; they may note that women serve in ethnic armies today. Or his description might surprise them if they thought only men fought in the Anglo-Burmese wars.

5. Colonial era: Why did marriage become a political issue?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b
2. c

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Yes, because people would still be concerned about the purity of the race. No, because people tend to criticise men's decisions about marriage less than women's.
2. They may have raised it if the British men gave them money and resources and supported their children. They may have lowered their status if Burmese people saw them as traitors or opportunists.
3. Yes, because they are concerned about their society and the effects on women and families. No, because women have the right to make their own choices without pressure from men.

6. Women's rights in the colonial era: How did they compare to other women in the region?

Comprehension

Answers:

- fact
 - theory; this could be supported by evidence
 - belief, because it is about what should happen
 - fact
 - theory
- b, c, e

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- They faced pressure about who to marry. Buddhist women faced some spiritual discrimination as they could not go to the highest level of pagodas.
- Maybe she wanted to make Burma seem modern so that foreigners would respect the country and Britain would give it independence.
- Saudi Arabian women have lower status than Burmese women because it is illegal for them to drive cars. Women may have higher status in countries like Indonesia or the Philippines because there has already been a female head of state there.

7. The anti-colonial struggle: How did women participate?

Comprehension

Answers:

- They refused to wear British products; for example, they crushed their combs.
 - They defied police by refusing to leave meetings; for example, Daw May refused to leave.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- They fit gender roles because they are concerned with the decorations they use in their hair. They break out of gender roles because they stand up to the police who attack them.

8. Colonial Era Fashion: How did it show changing gender roles?

Comprehension

Answers:

1.

	Older women	Younger women
shoes	sandals	High heels
hair	bun	short hair
clothes	traditional shirt and <i>htamein</i>	jacket with buttons
accessories	umbrella	dog, purse and cigarette

2. a

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Some dress traditionally because they are more comfortable, cannot afford new fashions, or don't have time to worry about clothing. Some dress in new fashions to be creative and show their tastes, or because they are more comfortable. Maybe they want to be modern and fit in.
2. Probably more concerned with girls because they think girls who dress traditionally and modestly will not get into trouble with boys. Maybe it is a bias because there is not equal focus on boys and girls.
3. Maybe he is sympathetic to the older woman and wanted to show the young woman's new fashions were silly. Maybe he was sympathetic to the younger woman, and he was trying to show that the new style is better than the old woman's traditional clothes.

9. Buddhism: What is the position of women?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c

Reasoning

Possible Answers

1. In Buddhism, some people believe women have to be reborn as men before becoming enlightened. Women cannot go to the top levels of pagodas. Contact with women's clothing can reduce a man's spiritual power.

In Christianity, women cannot hold certain high positions (like the Pope, in Catholicism).

In Islam, some women cover their hair with scarves, while men do not.

2. Answers will vary. Be sure to have students differentiate between what Mi Mi Khaing believes, what most Burmese people believe, and what they personally believe.

10. Women politicians: How would Burma be different if they ruled?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe agree, because most leaders are men and there are many conflicts now. Maybe disagree, because maybe neither men nor women can solve these difficult conflicts. For instance, although Naw Zipporah Sein is General Secretary of the KNU, the civil war has not ended.

11. Female political prisoners: What difficulties have they faced?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. D.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. One problem specific to being a woman is that she may have felt more guilty about being separated from her children because women's gender role usually includes taking care of them. However, men might also suffer when they are separated from their children. Both men and women prisoners had to deal with health problems, poor nutrition and cold.
2. Women prisoners might not have access to sanitary supplies. Male prisoners might be beaten more harshly because of the gender stereotype that women cannot or should not bear as much physical pain.

12. Government-supported women's organisations: What positions do they take?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Zipporah Sein is likely to think that the MWAF report is incorrect about the insecurities and problems being the dissident groups' fault, and that the report should question the role of the SPDC is causing these problems.
2. Zipporah Sein and MAAF both think that women are unsafe and vulnerable because of the war. However the MAAF blames dissident groups such as the KNU for this, whereas Zipporah probably considers the government more to blame.
3. The women in MAAF probably have not experienced the abuses of the SPDC the way women in the war zone, where Zipporah Sein is based, have. MAAF women might be afraid to criticise the government or they might genuinely support it.
4. Answers will vary.

Review

1. Students choose examples from the documents of gender role change. They also cite the document and section the example is from.

Point out to students that the documents include contradictory information about women's roles—for instance, that they were involved in politics, and that their role in politics was limited.

Both of these things can be true for different women at different times—not all women experience the same things.

Possible answers:

Stayed the same: D36: women participated in politics (anti-colonial struggle); D84: women participated in politics (went to prison because of opposition to SPDC)

Stayed the same: D7: women's role did not include politics; D92: women don't usually have political power

Changed: D5: Men sometimes adopted the customs of their wives; D27, D34:: people worried that women would adopt the customs of their husbands

Changed: D11: Women participated in war; D92: women were seen as the victims of war

2. Possible answers:

Sexism: D27, D34: Male cartoonists and journalists imply that women are not competent to choose their husbands

Equality: D29: Daw Mya Sein participates in Burma Roundtable Conference and speaks about women's rights.

Equality: D11: Women fight in Anglo-Burmese war alongside men

3. You could have male and female students pair up with each other to discuss this question.
4. Students could respond in the form of an essay.

Theme 3: Generational Divides

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to identify continuities and changes in youth and elders' relationships from ancient times into the colonial era into the era of military rule
- to investigate how traditions of respect for elders began in ancient times
- to contrast how youth and elders have used strategies for political change
- to assess how youth have been indoctrinated with ideologies
- to distinguish the different kinds of power that youth and elders have
- to analyse the impact of the generational divide today

Key concepts:

generational divide; youth; elder; life cycle; indoctrination

Note:

If your students are young, they may be biased toward the young people described in this Theme. Try to help them sympathise with elders as well. On the other hand, they may be very uncomfortable criticising elders. If so, help them understand that they can disagree with elders respectfully.

1. How have youth and elders competed for power?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.
2. a. Life cycle
b. Generational divide
c. Indoctrination

Reasoning

1. You could brainstorm several issues, then divide students into groups of “youth” and “elders” to debate them.

Possible answers:

Answers will vary. For instance, on the issue of refugee resettlement, elders may oppose it because they want to stay near the place they've lived their whole lives, whereas youth may want to resettle in a third country in order to take advantage of work or educational opportunities.

2. You could break students into groups to define each of these three terms, including when they begin and end. It is OK if their definitions do not agree—for instance, if one group says youth is 0-30 years and another group say that middle age does not begin until 40. This just shows that these terms are difficult to define. For instance, if 88 generation students never had a chance to finish their education, does that mean they are still “youth” even if they are now over 40 years old?

2. Ancient times: How did traditions of respecting elders begin?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe students admire him because he showed respect for his father, or maybe they think he should have used the wealth for himself because his father already had many pagodas and Buddha statues.

2. Today children may work so that they can support their parents financially; take care of them when they are in poor health; and follow their parents' wishes about who they should marry, where they should live, and what job they should have.

3. The 1920 Student movement: How did students become a political force in the colonial era?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe Burmese elders' opposition because the students respected and trusted them more than the British. Maybe the British, because the British made decisions and laws.

2. Because the students were not accepting the Rangoon University that the British had started, and the British may have thought they were foolish to turn down any education and impatient to get a national university. The boycott may have confirmed the British ideas that students were hot-headed fools because they were taking a risk in boycotting Rangoon University. Or the boycott may have impressed the British because they saw that the students could organise themselves successfully.
3. Maybe yes, because youth have less to lose (no job yet, no family to support yet) and because they have less experience with the negative consequences that come from risky or extremist strategies. However, elders may use risky extremist strategies more if their experience has given them the confidence to know when to use these strategies.

4. Anti-colonial struggle: How did youth and elders' strategies differ?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because young people tend to have new ideas. For example some youth in NLD have wanted a stronger leadership role since most leaders are over 70. Maybe no, because they might respect the elders' wisdom.

5. Lanzin Youth: How were students indoctrinated in the BSPP era?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because if all your friends participated you might want to fit in with them. As a youth, you might not understand the government's purpose. Maybe not, if you thought independently.
2. Burmese government may be trying to indoctrinate Burmese youth to support their idea of a unified country. They use the education system and other propaganda. They may succeed with some youth, but others may resist them either openly or secretly. Armed resistance groups may also try to indoctrinate students to join their armies or support ethnic nationalism. They also use education and propaganda. They may be more successful than the Burmese government because if ethnic minority youth feel their culture and people are being endangered or marginalised they will believe that they must fight back.

6. The U Thant affair: How did students protest the BSPP?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. (d. is also possible)
2. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Because she remembered U Thant from his younger days and respected him, and she opposed the changes the BSPP government had made. She had seen many kinds of government - colonial, parliamentary, and now BSPP, so she had a perspective that the students did not. She may have remembered participating in student movements in her youth.
2. Maybe they were united in their opposition to the BSPP government and the way it handled the U Thant affair. The students were protesting peacefully and maybe elders could support this more easily than more violent protests.
3. Maybe his memory is reliable because this was one of the most important and memorable experiences of his life. But maybe his bias for the students and against the BSPP caused him to remember the students as more peaceful and unified than they actually were.

7. 1988 protests: How did youth become involved?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
c.
2. a. Because in the final line Aung Gyi pleads for Ne Win “not to cover up” implying that it is a possibility.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe because he used to be involved in the government so people paid attention when he started to criticise it. Maybe because his letters included details about how children were killed.
2. Answers will vary. You could discuss this issue as a class and then try to reach a consensus on what age is appropriate.

8. 1988 protests: How did youth and elders try to bridge the generational divide?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. 1
b. 3
c. 2

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Maybe because those politicians had not solved the country's problems in the past, or because they might not have new ideas. Students may have been right not to trust them because veteran politicians might have been opportunistic. Or maybe they should have trusted them and united behind them.
- Maybe it is possible if elders and youth have common interests. Maybe it is impossible because youth and elders will have different priorities and strategies. The 1988 demonstrations were not successful in ending military rule, perhaps because the protesters could not unite across the issues that divided them, like age.

9. 1988 protests: What strategies did youths use to oppose the military regime?

Comprehension

Answers:

- b.
- d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- He might have thought they were opportunistic or that their ideas weren't good. Older politicians may have been surprised and upset that he and other students did not support them.
- Maybe sad, because it shows how many students will sacrifice their lives for the movement. Maybe inspiring, because it shows young people's commitment to their causes.
- Maybe he would not say today that he might "do something" to (physically hurt) military leaders if he met them. More recently, he started movements such as the White Campaign and Open Heart Campaign, which encouraged people to express their unhappiness peacefully and tell the government openly what they wanted.

10. Jungle revolution: How did students become fighters and politicians?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe overconfident, because they don't have the experience to know their weaknesses. This might have caused them to overestimate their ability to defeat the military regime. But maybe some youth lack confidence and faith in themselves, and that could weaken their movement as well.
2. These journalists might have strengthened the movements for change because they made people around the world aware of Burma's situation and provided a way for Burmese people to communicate with each other. They may also have been biased against the government and influenced their readers to be biased as well.

11. Resettled refugees: How will the next generation of Burmese people born in exile be different from their parents?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b, d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe Karen, if the children are older and were already familiar with their ethnicity before moving. Maybe Burmese because that is the country they came from or identify with internationally. Maybe Irish because that will be their new nationality and the country where they grew up.
2. Young people may be able to preserve their ethnic identity in exile because they can communicate in their own language with others across the world using these technologies. On the other hand, these technologies may change what it means to be Burmese or from some other ethnic group, because young people cannot physically do things together such as learn traditional dances or crafts.

Review

Answers:

1. D24: Ko Ba U criticised elders for not supporting the students.

D32: youth challenged their elders by wearing new fashions.

D73: Ko Min Ko Naing does not support any of the elder leaders.

D86: Students honoured their elder U Thant by trying to give him a funeral.

2. Some ages of famous leaders: Aung San Suu Kyi was born in 1945; Thein Sein was born in 1945; Naw Zipporah Sein was born in 1955; Than Shwe was born in 1933; Hkun Tun Oo was born in 1943.

D24: Youth should lead, because they are willing to take risks to get what they want.

D69: Elders should lead, because young people may be hurt or killed.

D79: Youth should lead, because they are honest and direct.

D99: Elders should lead, because youth are inexperienced and need guidance.

3. D24: Students were willing to challenge the British openly, which helped them to get what they wanted. But they were not willing to compromise like the elders were, which might have prevented them from getting respect from the British.

D73: Students were willing to try many strategies, which may have kept the movement alive, but may also have been disorganised. They did not automatically trust elders, which was a strength because the elders could not manipulate them, but a weakness because they could not easily unite behind one elder leader.

D99: Students were brave and willing to leave their homes, which was a strength. Students were overconfident and did not have experience in their new surroundings, which was a weakness.

4. D32: The elderly woman is shocked by the younger woman's clothing. This could prevent elders and youth from working together easily.

D36: The elders see the youth as people who will end up in jail. This created a divide in the movement.

D86: Elders supported and admired the students in the U Thant protest. This helped the movement.

D69: Brig.-Gen. Aung Gyi saw young people as innocent victims. This recognition of youths' sacrifices could help elders and youths work together.

D71: Daw Suu Kyi saw youth as honest. This could build trust between youth and elders.

5. D79: Elders have more power as they control the education system and can indoctrinate youth. But youth have power too because they can accept or reject what they are taught.

D73: Youth got power and media attention and could decide whether or not to support older politicians. But elder politicians were respected more and seen as the leaders who would run the country.

6. Answers will vary. You could have students write their answer in the form of an essay.

Theme 4: Class Divisions, Economic Ideologies, and the Rural-Urban Divide

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to assess how class divisions have changed from ancient times to the present
- to determine how economic conditions caused people to oppose the government at different times
- to analyse the obstacles to economic development that have occurred
- to compare the systems of capitalism, communism and socialism
- to recognise the effects of economic globalisation
- to compare and contrast the differences in opportunity between rural and urban areas throughout history

Key Concepts:

socioeconomic status/class; wealth; income; status; class mobility; income inequality; capitalism; communism; socialism; economic globalisation

Note:

This Theme contains more challenging concepts than the earlier ones. If students are not familiar with the Key Concepts already, you might want to discuss them before starting this Theme.

1. How has socioeconomic status affected people's opportunities?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. economic globalisation
b. socio-economic status
c. class mobility
d. communism
e. socialism
f. rural-urban divide
g. capitalism
h. income inequality
2. a.

Reasoning

1. Students can work in groups to describe the classes, including what jobs they have, what kind of houses they live in, and what kind of education they have.
2. You can divide students into groups based on their choice and have the three groups debate each other about which system is best.
3. Rural students may have access to steady or reliable work in farming but their choices for other work are limited. Urban students may have more professional or international opportunities but they may face far more competition from other people. You could pair up students from different parts of the country and have them tell each other about their experiences growing up.
4. If students have trouble answering this question, ask them what their parents' and grandparents' jobs were. Do they expect to have the same jobs as their parents and grandparents, or different jobs? If they want a better job than their parents had, will this be easy or difficult to achieve?
5. If students have trouble answering, ask them about who are the richest and the poorest people in their communities. How much difference is there between the amounts of money that those two groups have? To understand the causes of income inequality, ask students how the rich people got their money and how the poor people got theirs. Why do the rich people get so much more? Why do the poor people earn so little? To help students understand the effects of income inequality, you can ask them how their communities would be different if everyone had exactly the same amount of money. How is that different from the current situation?

2. Ancient kingdoms: What did different classes do?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. What they produced was probably not considered their property to give away. The people who owned these slaves would give some of what they produced to the king.
2. Maybe wealthy businesspeople did not mind giving some things to the king because they already had a lot. For ordinary people, giving things to the king might be more difficult. Local rulers might have wanted to give gifts to the king in order to build a good relationship with him and get more power for themselves.

3. Urbanisation and international trade: How did they affect people's lives in the 18th century?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. Rangoon: man behind cart may be wearing a white handkerchief to cover his head; person in black may be wearing a woollen cloth on their shoulders

Jungle village: none of the goods can be seen

Reasoning

Possible answers

1. Benefits: they could get some new goods from other countries
Negative effects: these new goods might be more expensive than what they could get before
2. Benefits: some new goods might reach them in their village
Negative effects: people in the city might buy new kinds of cloth from other countries instead of buying what they wove in the village

4. The 1300 Revolution: Why did workers protest capitalism in the colonial era?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. Workers were likely to support A because they said "Down with capitalism!"
b. Workers were likely to support B because they said "Down with imperialism!"
c. Workers would not support C because they wanted "no restricting laws."
d. Workers would not support D because they wanted a revolution, not slow change.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe it was helpful because then the workers could understand that the problem was not only their bosses, but the economic system that allowed their bosses to give them low wages. Maybe it was not helpful because it would be easier for the workers to get better wages from their bosses than to change the whole economic system.
2. Maybe the British because they own the oil legally. Maybe the Burmese people who live in the area because they should get the benefit of the resources near their homes. Maybe the workers, because they are the ones who work hard to get the oil. Maybe all Burmese people, because all of them should benefit from the resources in their country.

5. The Saya San rebellion: Why did peasants want land reform in the colonial era?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe it is easier to get angry at people because you can see their faces and identify them as responsible. The peasants might not understand the capitalist system that makes it possible for the Chettyars to own the land that they farm. Or maybe it is easier to get angry at a system, because then you don't have to blame specific people who might be your neighbours and friends.

2. Maybe farmers should always own their land because they are the ones who work hard to farm it. Maybe landlords should be allowed to own it because they had to pay money for it so it belongs to them.

6. Class divisions: How were they shown in the media in the colonial era?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. The younger woman's shoes and clothes may be more expensive than the older woman's shoes and clothes, because they look like they are made in a foreign country. The younger woman would have to pay for her cigarettes and food for her pet dog, so she must have some extra money besides what she needs to survive.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because the younger woman shows signs that she has more money. Maybe no, because he could have been trying to show the difference in their ages instead. Some people who wear fancy clothes don't have much money, but want to appear fashionable.
2. Lower class people might wear traditional clothing, clothing made in Burma, or inexpensive clothing from China. Upper class people can afford jewelry and clothes from abroad.

7. Indo-Burmese riots: How did socio-economic status play a role?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe he is biased toward upper-class Burmans, because he blames the workers for the riots.

Maybe he favoured the upper-class people because they were friends (U Set), whereas he may not have gotten to hear the workers' side of the story.

2. Maybe the Burman workers and upper-class Burmans because they shared a culture, language, and ethnic group. Maybe the Burman and Indian workers, because both groups were poor and had to do what the bosses said.

8. Communist revolutionaries: How did they want to help the poor?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b and c.
a. is not mentioned. d. is wrong because he says the government should take over businesses owned by foreigners.
e. is wrong since he says "repudiate" (refuse to accept) debt to the British.

Reasoning

Possible Answers

1. Positive: Peasants would own their land. A 40-hour work week would give workers more free time.

Negative: Breaking the treaty with the British might anger the British and start a war. Also they might not be able to get foreign goods.

9. Rural-urban divide: How were opportunities different in the city and countryside?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. true
b. false
c. true
d. true

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. No, people in urban areas did not have as much chance to farm, while people in rural areas did not have as much chance to work in manufacturing, transport, or service.
2. People in agriculture and factory work were probably lower class. Some people in commerce may have been lower class sellers in the market, while some could have been rich businesspeople. People in communication might be skilled workers from the middle class. Service workers might include middle class civil servants.
3. Have students who come from different parts of the country discuss what jobs were available in their hometowns. Answers will vary according to students' experiences.

10. The civil war: How did it affect the economy?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe the rural economy because it was closer to the fighting. Maybe the urban economy because the government was spending money sending soldiers to fight in the countryside so they could not spend money to help people in cities.
2. Maybe the communists thought that even if the poor people suffered during the civil war, they would suffer anyway under the capitalist system. Maybe they thought they could give a better life to the poor after they won the war.

11. The BSPP: How did it plan to build a socialist society?

Comprehension

Answers:

1.

Parliamentary democracy	Socialism
Some businesses are privately owned	All industries will be nationalized
Rich people exploit poor people	The government protects everyone
People must provide their own food and shelter	The government makes sure everyone has enough
People have private property	The citizens own property together

Reasoning

Possible Answers

1. Maybe yes, because if the government has power, they can create whatever kind of society they want. Maybe no, because people might resist this kind of system. They might not want to share everything with each other.

2. Benefits: Everyone has enough to eat. Workers can't be mistreated by bosses.

Negative effects: The government controls everything and if they are not good leaders they might make bad decisions that make the country poor.

12. Armed resistance groups: How do they get money?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe students agree with his reasons because selling the timber may bring money and resources to the area. Maybe they disagree, because once the trees are cut down, they are gone, and the environment will be damaged. The NDA-Kachin could do other things to develop the region, like build factories or schools.

2. Some groups may be involved in drug trafficking. Selling timber may be better because it does not cause people to become drug addicts. But it may be worse because it can harm the environment permanently.

3. Maybe they should do both because regardless of whether they get freedom, they will need money to survive. Maybe they should not do both, because they could become so focused on getting money that they forget about freedom.

4. Maybe the problems he describes (the government does not develop the area or build schools) happen throughout Burma. Maybe these problems are worse in rural areas.

13. Globalisation: How has it affected Burma's economy?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. China, India, Singapore
2. Japan, South Korea, US (exports only)
3. Malaysia, EU

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Positive: jobs may be available producing export goods. They can get goods from other countries.
Negative: Environmental damage.

Goods like natural gas, which locals need, are shipped to other countries.

2. Positive: Import/export businesses become rich. More luxury products available.

Negative: Environmental damage when natural resources are exported.

3. Yes, if they want the government to change and they think the sanctions will hurt the government.
No if they do not want to change the government or if they do not think sanctions will work.

14. 2007 demonstrations: What were the economic factors?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. 1. social/political 2. economic
3. political 4. political
2. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe economic, because the fuel price increase started them. Maybe political, because although first the protest was against government economic policy, there was desire to see regime change and other demands met (e.g. political freedoms, release of political prisoners)

15. The end of economic sanctions: What were the EU's concerns?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may say it was the right time to end economic sanctions because they were negatively affecting the people of Burma, or because ending the sanctions encouraged the Burmese government to democratise further. Or students may say that it was not the right time,

because not enough progress toward a truly democratic society had been made.

2. Students may think the EU's list was appropriate because it named several major problems that were occurring in Burma at the time the sanctions were ended. Or they may think the EU should not interfere with Burma's internal affairs. They may wish to add items such as problems with the 2008 Constitution, ongoing poverty, gender inequality, or a struggling education system to the list of concerns.

16. Global migration: How has it affected people's socio-economic status?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. They had to depend on NGOs for support; they used a buffalo to pull the plow (they were farmers and could not afford tractors), they did not have electricity, etc.

Review

Answers:

1. D6: In ancient times four classes had to give goods to the king. Today, people pay taxes to the government, sometimes more than they can afford.

D32: In the colonial era lower class people could not afford foreign luxury goods but middle or upper class people could. Today the situation is similar.

D37: In the colonial era upper class Burmans had British friends and did not approve of the Burman workers rioting against the Indians. Burman workers had to compete with workers from other countries. Today, workers of different groups may have conflicts among themselves if they compete for jobs.

D54: In the parliamentary era, there were many farmers and factory workers (lower class), some business people, and a small number of people in services. Today, there are still many lower class people farming and working in factories, and some very rich business people.

2. D31: Peasants angry with their landlords protested against the British government.

D35: Workers protested against the British.

D52: Communists opposed the government as it didn't help the poor.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe better - they can get an education more easily and find a better job.

Maybe worse - even if a doctor in Burma, their language skills might not allow them to do this in another country.

2. Maybe, if people send money to their poor relatives.

D89: Monks etc. opposed the government as they raised fuel prices.

3. D57: Civil war has hurt the economy.

D83: The government has not developed rural areas much.

D91: Some countries, e.g. US, will not trade with Burma for political reasons.

4. These documents can be used to support any of these answers.

5. Colonial era: Urban area - because more goods are available there and landlords won't take your land away.

Rural area: Because you can continue traditional life more easily.

Parliamentary era: Urban area - more easily get a service or communications job. You do not have to live in the middle of the civil war fighting.

Rural area - more opportunities to farm and feed yourself. In the city you might have to work in a crowded factory.

SLORC/SPDC era: Urban area - more access to goods from international trade. There might be more schools built by the government.

Rural area - You can work cutting timber for groups like the NDA-Kachin.

6. You can ask students to write their answer in the form of an essay.

Theme 5: Religion and Politics

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to differentiate secularism, religious pluralism, state-sponsored religion and theocracy, and to give examples of each from Burmese history
- to assess how religion has been used to support and oppose governments
- to analyse how religious differences have divided people and how they have overcome these divisions
- to recognise the forms of religious discrimination that have occurred in Burma

Key concepts:

secularism, religious pluralism, state-sponsored religion, theocracy, organised religion

Note:

This unit may be sensitive for students, especially if they come from different religious backgrounds. If you have religious minorities in your class, you may want to talk to them in advance and be sure they feel comfortable with this topic.

1. How have spiritual beliefs affected society?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 2
- b. 1
- c. 4
- d. 3

2. a, c, e

Reasoning

1. Students may disagree with the text. They may have different information and experiences from the author of this text. You could also have students complete this activity before reading the text, and see if their answers are the same or different from the text.

2. Possible answers:

secularism: advantages = no religion is favoured; disadvantages = government does not give any support to religion

religious pluralism: advantages = respect for everyone's religion; disadvantages = people who strongly believe in their religion may be disappointed

state-sponsored religion: advantages = one religion can get stronger; disadvantages = may be unfair to people of other religions

3. Students discuss their opinions in groups.

2. Animism: What did people believe before organised religion?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. For instance, worship of nats or other spirits is from animism. The tradition of building spirit houses is also from animism.
2. Maybe yes, because animists should be allowed to practise their religion freely. Maybe no, because animists might have wanted to convert to other religions when they found out about them.

3. Ancient kingdoms: How did Buddhism affect government?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. People who already believed in Buddhism or who admired the beautiful pagodas might want to support these kings. By going to war to get Buddhist statues or relics, they could also conquer territory and people.
2. Maybe yes, because the kings might not personally kill anyone in a war, so they wouldn't break the precept. Also, using slave labour might seem wrong today, but maybe it did not harm the slaves. On the other hand, maybe the kings were not good Buddhists, because through these wars many people would be harmed or killed.

4. Christian missionaries: How did they build relationships with Burmese people?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because they had religion in common, and the Burmese Christians might see the British as their benefactors. Maybe no, because although they may believe in Christianity they may remain opposed to the British. Burmese Christians may have closer relations with Westerners today, because Western missionaries often visit Burma.

5. The shoe question: Why Buddhists oppose British colonisers?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe they wanted to show the Burmese they were more powerful and did not have to respect the rules of Buddhism. They also may have wished to maintain or promote British cultural norms whilst in a different country. They may have achieved these goals, but Burmese Buddhists became so upset that they started opposing colonisation more, which went against the British goal.

6. 1947 Constitution: What did it say about religion?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. false
b. false
c. true
d. true

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe it means that the government will allow all religions, but will support Buddhism more. They might give more resources to Buddhist organisations than to other religious organisations because more citizens are Buddhist.
2. Maybe religious pluralism because there is supposed to be no discrimination. Maybe state-sponsored religion because Buddhism has a "special position."

7. Burmese Muslim Organisation: How did it work with other groups to get independence for Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. false
b. true
c. true
d. false

Reasoning

- Possible answers:** Maybe yes, because there is still discrimination against Burmese Muslims today. Maybe no, because those problems of discrimination may not be as bad as they were in U Razak's time.
- Answers will vary. This document shows that the Burman Muslim Organisation had an alliance with the AFPFL.

Note:

This may be a sensitive question. If there are Muslim students in your class, be careful that when other students are explaining their stereotypes, they do not offend Muslim classmates.

8. Civil war: Why did some Muslims rebel?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. b. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- BMO wanted to join with the AFPFL to achieve common goals and have a peaceful country. Mujahid Party thought they could only achieve their goals by armed rebellion.
- People in the BMO might not have experienced as much discrimination as the Muslims in Arakan state did. The BMO may have felt more empathy with the Burmese Buddhist majority as they considered themselves Burmese as well as Muslim. The Mujahid Party, being geographically and ethnically isolated from the Burmans, may have felt more politically marginalised. They may have cultivated more of a distinct political personality as a result. The BMO might not have thought that they would be successful in an armed rebellion, but that peaceful means could get them more respect.

9. Why did U Nu make Buddhism the state religion?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a, c, d, e

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may disagree that 85% of people are Buddhist. It is difficult to find accurate figures on this today. They may consider Chin and Kachin, who are mostly Christian, "major national minorities."
2. Maybe yes, because most people are Buddhist and it could be the state religion without discriminating against non-Buddhists. Maybe no, because having state-sponsored religion would discriminate against non-Buddhists even if that was not U Nu's intention.

10. BSPP: How did it view religion?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe they agree that it is harder for hungry people to be generous and good. Maybe they disagree, saying that a person with strong religious faith will always behave morally whether they are hungry or not.

11. The KNU-DKBA split: How has religion divided opposition groups?

Note:

This topic may be sensitive for some students. If you don't think they feel comfortable talking about it, you can skip this topic.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe it will be harder for political organisations to stay united if they have different religions—for instance, the DKBA and KNU split. However, sometimes people can get along despite religious differences. For instance, the Muslims and Buddhists in D42 got along well.

12. 2007 demonstrations: How did Buddhism inspire opposition to the SPDC?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a, b, d (*e* was a demand made by the monks, not a tactic they used during the protest.)

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Advantages: monks may have the respect of people and government; government might be less likely to attack monks; monks may know the people's struggles very well.

Disadvantages: some people may think monks should not be involved in worldly things; monks might be harmed if they get involved in politics.

13. The SPDC: How did it support Buddhism?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c. The other points are all included, but this one is the most important.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. So that Buddhists would support the government. So that people would think Gen. Than Shwe is a good Buddhist with good karma who must also be a good leader.

Review

1. Possible answers:

Prince Rajakumar: state-sponsored religion, because he as a leader supported Buddhism; or theocracy, because he seemed to see his father, the king, as a spiritual leader.

U Nu: State-sponsored religion because he made Buddhism the state religion; Religious pluralism because he opposed discrimination.

Mujahid Party: Religious pluralism, because they wanted freedom to practise their religion just as Buddhists had.

U Razak: Religious pluralism, because he wanted to work together with people of other religions.

BSPP: Secularism, because they did not want to support any particular religion and did not value religion much.

Bo Mya: Religious pluralism, because he wanted Karen Buddhists and Christians to stay in the KNU.

Than Shwe: State-sponsored religion, because he as a leader supported Buddhism.

2. Possible answers:

U Razak: Don't rebel and be extreme. We can get religious rights by working together with the AFPFL.

Mujahid Party: Don't fool yourself. The Buddhists will never respect us until we fight for our rights.

U Nu: You don't understand that Burma always was and always will be a Buddhist country.

Mrs. Carson: You're wrong. I want to give people the chance to convert to Christianity if they choose.

Rajakumar: Good work supporting Buddhism. Did your slaves build that pagoda?

Than Shwe: No, we used forced labour. Honour to the Buddha!

BSPP: No use protesting the government using Buddhism. Ask for a socialist system; only that can feed the people.

ABMA: We can use Buddhist principles to make the government realise it is hurting people.

Note:

You could have pairs of students write dialogues and act them out for this exercise.

3. Possible answers:

Support the government: D21- some Burmese Christian converts started supporting the British government more; D66 - U Nu making Buddhism the state religion may have made some Buddhists support his government more.

Oppose the government: D89 - monks used Buddhist principles to show why the government was wrong; D36 - British didn't respect Buddhism and so Burmese people opposed their government; D50 - Mujahid rebelled because they felt their religious rights weren't respected.

4. Answers will vary. Students could work in groups to write a short paragraph that could be included in a constitution, then share their paragraphs with the class.

5. Answers will vary. Students could write their answers in the form of an essay.

Theme 6: Burma in the British Empire

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to compare different attitudes of Burmese people toward the British and British toward Burmese
- to investigate the social, political and economic causes and effects of British colonisation of Burma
- to determine the causes and effects of British divide and rule policy
- to identify biases in the writings of British and Burmese authors

Key Concepts:

colonialism; divide and rule policy; internalised colonialism; colonial nostalgia; neo-colonialism; anti-colonialism

Note:

In this Theme students will read some of the same documents from earlier themes. Tell them it is OK to read and re-read documents - they may notice different parts each time, and the questions about them are different for each activity.

1. How has colonialism affected Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. false
- b. false
- c. false
- d. false

2. a. 1
- b. 4
- c. 2
- d. 3
- e. 5

Reasoning

1. Possible answers:

Negative: Civil war among ethnic groups; depletion of natural resources

Positive: developments in health and education; development of trade and industries

2. Students may know people in both groups. Invite students to give examples of 'colonial nostalgia' or 'anti-colonial' attitudes from these people, if possible.
3. Students may notice that they or others in their community value Western education, popular music, or the English language, and this can be interpreted as internalised colonialism (or as a realistic sense of what they need to reach their goals).

2. How and why did the British establish control in Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 1
- b. 5
- c. 9
- d. 7
- e. 4
- f. 2
- g. 3

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. b and c because the British needed resources to maintain their large empire; e because they wanted to expand their empire

3. How did the British draw the boundaries between Burma and neighbouring countries?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. Yes.
3. Stayed about the same from M2 to M3, got much bigger in M5.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Some may feel Thai because your leader paid tribute to the Siamese king; may feel Burmese because in the past their leader paid tribute to Burmese king; may feel Shan if that is your ethnicity; may feel British because now British officials have come to include your area in the Empire.
2. Many different kingdoms existed in what is now Burma, led by different ethnic groups. Some students may feel that Burma existed nonetheless for thousands of years, while others may think it was created by British boundaries.

4. The Frontier Areas: Why did the British rule the Frontier Areas separately from Burma Proper?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. b.
3. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe surprised because they thought the British only ruled groups separately to prevent them from uniting, not because they did not want the responsibility of ruling them. There were many reasons why the British ruled the way they did, so other officials could have been trying to prevent ethnic groups from uniting even if Dufferin wasn't, or didn't admit that he was.
2. Ethnic groups in Frontier Areas were divided from each other and from those in Burma Proper. The British may have done this purposely to prevent ethnic groups from uniting against them, or they may have just been trying to rule in the way that was easiest for them and used the least amount of resources.

5. Ethnic minority independence: How did the British recognise this?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They developed their own political structures and were isolated from other ethnic groups.
2. British may have seen it as too small to be independent, or some Karenni people may have wanted to join the Union of Burma.

6. How did the British change the laws?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. The British thought Burmese were more likely to follow British laws if they were similar to the traditions they had before colonisation.

2. Difficulties: hard to force villagers to follow British laws.

Benefits: have power over villagers.

Reasons to cooperate: British will reward you.

Reasons to be anti-colonial: villagers may be upset with British laws.

7. How did the British develop Burma?

Comprehension

Answers

1.

	Jungle village	Rangoon
Transportation	walking	ox and horse carts
Clothing	all wear traditional shirts and longyis	Western suits; longyis and shirts; long robe
Industry	raising animals	telegraph and post office
Architecture	rattan and bamboo houses	large wooden office with stone wall

2. British clothing; clock; covered horse cart.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. May have liked convenience of new technologies.
May have preferred traditional way of life.
2. Yes, because living conditions might improve.
No, because their lives might be controlled more by the British.

8. How did missionaries support British rule?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Get to worship a “wonderful God”; get protection from British.
2. Sympathise with Thang Tsin because he should be free to follow whatever religion he chooses; sympathise with chief because he fears new and unknown things.
3. May have caused them to feel more separate from non-Christian Burmese people.

9. Divide and rule: How did the British use “divide and rule” policy to prolong their power?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe correct for some Shans who were afraid of wars with other ethnic groups; maybe incorrect for other Shans who wanted independence.
2. So the Shans would not try to get independence and the British could prolong their rule.

10. How did the British and Burmese negotiate cultural differences?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They may not have wanted to show their subjects, the Burmese, that they could make them do anything. The British may have been uncomfortable without shoes. Pagoda trustees may have feared the British would shut down the pagoda or take some other action if they could not wear shoes inside.
2. British people may have been offended or worried that the Burmese would start making demands. Burmese people may have been afraid of the British response, or may have felt glad that U Ba Gale was standing up for their traditions.

11. How did British ideas about different ethnic groups influence the jobs they gave them in their empire?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

2. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Yes, because they are raised in similar ways and share a culture; no, because even within one ethnic group, people can be very different. British belief in “national character” may have made people believe they were very similar to all the other people in their ethnic group, or made them believe what the British said about them (that they were “brave,” or “lazy,” etc.).
2. Made Burmans distrust these hill people and see them as loyal to the British; made hill people less likely to join Burman-led anti-colonial movements.

12. How did Burmese people see British and Burmese intermarriage?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. d.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. It seems like they were considered Burmese. Life may have been difficult because neither English nor Burmese fully accepted them, but they may have had some opportunities that full Burmese did not.
2. Students may believe these relationships should occur if people really cared for each other, but may also feel that the Burmese women were likely to be mistreated.

13. How did the arrival of people from Europe, India, and China create tension between “natives” and “foreigners”?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. They might feel bad because Burmese thought of them as foreigners when really they felt like natives.
2. More united, by their common resentment against foreigners.

14. How did British labour policies affect relations among Burmese and Indians in Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. a.
3. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Collis may have had a stereotype that Burman workers did not like to do physical labor. This seems untrue since they showed up to break the strike.
2. Could have increased resentment because Burmese wanted civil service jobs, or did not want to be ordered around by Indian prison guards.
3. Students will probably find it easier to sympathise with one side. Ask them to try to sympathise with the other side.

15. Why did the British change their policy on uniting the Frontier Areas with Burma Proper?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. d.

Reasoning

1. With anger, disappointment, or surprise.
2. Represents a change from Cochrane's determination to prolong British rule. WWII and the destruction in the UK may have made British want to take care of their own problems and make their empire smaller.

16. Why did some ethnic groups want to remain under British protection?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. They may not have wanted to promise an independent country if they could not give one. They may not have thought this issue was very important to them.
2. Some shared the KCO's attitude, some probably did not. Some Karens may now resent the British for not giving them their own country when they left Burma, but other Karens may have "colonial nostalgia." Attitudes might change depending on current political and economic relations with Britain and on different histories that become available, emphasising different perspectives on the British.

17. How did the treaties of independence prolong British influence?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. No, because Burma has its own government; yes, because Burma still had debts to Britain and British companies still operated in Burma.
2. After independence, Britain could exert control financially instead of politically—this is one kind of neo-colonialism.

18. How did the British interpretation of Burma's history influence Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. British historians may have misunderstood evidence because of language problems or because of their own cultural perspective. Students

may find D22 especially inaccurate and suspect Cochrane was not mistaken but trying to achieve a political goal. They may find D37 inaccurate in some ways but suspect that Collis was just misinformed.

2. They may be less biased against Burmese people than the British were, but they may not be able to see some things about their own society that an outsider could see, or they may not want to show their own society in a bad light.

Review (next page)

Answers:

1. D18: Bias for British, political goal of maintaining British rule; seems intended to serve political purposes.

D21: Bias for British, political purpose of strengthening empire's army, seems unconscious of bias.

D37: Bias for British, Indians, and educated Burmans; political goal of keeping peace in British empire; seems more conscious of his biases than other authors.

2. D13: Recognising independence of Western Karenni allowed Karennis to continue/develop their own political structures. Today, many Karenni people still want independence from Burma.

D16: Dividing Burma Proper from Frontier Areas caused these regions to develop unequally. Today there is civil war between the Burmese government and some groups such as Shans and Kachins.

D17: British attempted to prolong their rule by making ethnic groups fear war would happen after the British left; this may have led to inter-ethnic tensions. Today, there is still civil war.

D21: Missionaries encouraging people to convert to Christianity and the British protecting them have caused tension among groups who converted and those who didn't. Today many people are Christian, and there is tension between different religions in Burma.

D25: British idea that Kachin "national character" made them good soldiers; tension between those ethnic groups and others may have resulted. Today, some Kachins and other groups may still believe what the British said.

D37: British treating Indian and Chinese workers differently from Burmese caused riots among these groups. Today some Burmese people still see Indians and Chinese as competitors.

D40: British created a close relationship with Karens that made the Karen hope the British would give them an independent country. Today, some Karens still hope for their own country, or hope the British will help them get it.

D43: British decision to leave Burma quickly and let Burma Proper join the Frontier Areas caused some groups who wanted independence to end up in the Union of Burma. Today some of these groups are still fighting for autonomy.

Review (continued)

3.

D19-20	Burmese person in village: (negative) "The British haven't done anything for us! We've heard there are big buildings in Rangoon."	Burmese person in Rangoon: (negative) "I don't like these new foreign ways!" OR (positive) "The Telegraph Office is amazing. I wish I had money to send a telegram to my aunt in Mandalay."
D21	Christian convert Thang Tsin: (positive) "I'm so glad the British protect my right to be Christian."	Non-Christian village headman: (negative) "The British allow missionaries to destroy our traditions!"
D27	Mother in cartoon: (positive) "My daughter needs to go out and find another British husband to support the family!"	Daughter in cartoon: (negative) "British men betray Burmese women! We are nothing to them..."
D33	A Burmese person who couldn't find a job: (negative) "The British bring foreign workers who take all the jobs!"	Chinese person who came to Burma to work: (positive) "It is good to have a job opportunity."
D23	U Ba Gale: (negative) "The British are stepping on our traditions!"	Pagoda trustee: (negative) "We are just trying to keep the pagoda open, now everyone is angry at us because of what the British have done!"
D37	U Set: (negative) "The British have made Indians and Burmese hate each other!"	Collis: (positive) "Maybe we've made some mistakes, but overall we British have made Burma better."
D40	Dr. San C. Po: (positive) "The British protected the Karens from the Burmans and will surely give us our own country."	Burmese person who wants Karen state to be part of Burma: (negative) "The British Divide and Rule policy made the Karens hate us! Now it will be difficult to unite."
D80, D22	Gen. Khin Nyunt: (negative) "The British imperialists wrote our history all wrong!"	Cochrane: (positive) "I wrote a true history that shows all the good things the British have done for Burma."

4.

	Causes	Effects
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British believe they are superior, want respect from Burmese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> many foreign workers come to Burma Anglo-Burmese population grows conversion to Christianity ethnic and national groups become more aware of their differences
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British did not want other foreign countries to rule Burma British want to expand their empire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> end of Burmese monarchy fixed boundaries stricter laws separated Frontier Areas, Karenni state and Burma Proper
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> British want access to resources and trade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some Indians become wealthier than Burmese more industry and technology British have economic power even after independence

5. Answers will vary. Students may wish to answer this question in the form of an essay.

Theme 7: Burmese Unity and Ethnic Self-determination

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to evaluate the changing importance of ethnicity as a part of identity in Burma
- to investigate the relationships between ethnic groups in ancient times
- to determine how colonisation changed the importance of ethnicity
- to analyse the emergence of Burmese and other ethnic nationalist movements
- to identify the changing demands and attitudes of ethnic minority groups
- to contrast the political relationships among ethnic groups in Burma that have been tried out or proposed
- to develop their own definition of a nation, and of what it means to be “Burmese.”

Key concepts:

nationalism; nation; Burmanisation; autonomy and self-determination; ethnicity; extremism

Note:

The content of this Theme may be sensitive for students, especially if they come from different ethnic backgrounds. Let them know that it is OK to disagree, and that they can disagree without fighting, which is part of the module's goal of promoting a culture of reconciliation and democracy.

1. What have been the relationships among different ethnic groups in Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

- false
 - not stated - The text does not take a position on the controversial question of which group arrived first, but only says that various groups migrated to Burma at different times.
 - false - The text says ethnicity was not as important as it is today, but it does not say that it was not at all important. Remind students to look for word such as "at all" and "always" when deciding whether these statements are true or false.
 - false
 - true
 - false
 - false
 - false
 - true

Reasoning

- You may wish to read the options out loud and tally which answers students choose on the board in order to create a class definition of nation.
- Students may have difficulty completing this exercise, because whatever options they pick, they will probably start to realise that all the people in their "nation" (whether it is Burmese, Shan, Kachin, etc.) do not share all of these traits. Even if they cannot come up with a definition that satisfies them, the exercise has been a success, because the purpose is to challenge their ideas of what a nation is and give them an open mind to start off this Theme.
- Students' answers depend on their definition of "Burmese." You could have students work in groups to agree on answers, then tally groups' responses on the board. It is OK if students disagree or cannot decide. The purpose of the activity is not to decide for sure who is Burmese and who is not, but to get students to think about what their definition of Burmese is, and why.
- The text that starts this unit contains some claims that might be different from what students have read before. Remind them that it is OK to disagree with the authors of this module. Students' perception of the authors' bias will depend on their previous knowledge. It is probably a good idea to have students openly discuss their reaction to the text instead of denying that it is controversial.

2. Hill tribes and the plains people: What was their relationship in ancient times?

Comprehension

1. **Answer:** a.
2. You may have to ask students questions in order to help them fill this in, such as “Is Buddhism mentioned in D1? If not, what religion do people seem to practise?” and “Does D1 mention kingdoms or empires that the Karens founded? If not, how do you think they organised their community?” It is OK for students to use what they already know to complete this chart, too.

Answers:

Ethnic group	Ethnic groups including Burman, Shan, Mons and Arakanese	Ethnic groups including Karens, Kachins, and Chins
Living area	Lived in the plains or in river valleys	Lived in hills
Religion	Practised Buddhism	Practiced animism
Political organisation	Founded kingdoms and empires	Were organised into villages and families
Agriculture	Established permanent, irrigated rice fields and built cities around them	Grew some rice in the jungle but also moved from place to place.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Stay because you wouldn't want to move. Fight back in order to defend your way of life. Run away because you were afraid and didn't have the weapons to fight back.
c. is the most likely option because you might fear the king and might not have weapons to fight back. The proverb in D1 also supports this answer.
2. In the past, plains people may have tried to conquer hill people because they wanted their resources to make their kingdom stronger. Now, the Tatmadaw and KNU fight because the KNU wants autonomy for Karens and the Tatmadaw does not want to give it to them. Some might also say that now, the Tatmadaw attacks Karens because they are Karens, whereas in the past ethnic difference was not as important.
3. Karens would describe these kings as oppressors. Students' experiences and probably their ethnic background will influence which perspective is closer to their own. You can remind them of the saying “The winners write history” from the Historians' Skills unit to explain why the government textbooks show these kings as heroes.

3. Ethnic groups in ancient times: What were the relationships like between the different groups?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. a. Point out that the word “sometimes” is what makes this answer better than the others.

Reasoning

Possible Answer:

1. Because war seems like an “event,” whereas peace is not “news.” It may also help to support the ‘version’ of history that a particular group wishes to present.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. b.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Students may have changed their style if they move to another place (e.g. migrate from Burma to another country, or move from a village to the city) to fit in better or to avoid attracting attention.
2. Burman and Mon people intermixed and influenced each other; there might not have been a clear boundary between different ethnic groups.

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b, c - D6 discredits Theory A, and Theory D is actually a belief, not a theory.

Reasoning

1. Possible Answers:

He might say that King Zawswake was oppressing him, and that he did not want to be part of the Ava Kingdom. Or he might say that he had never been part of the Kingdom, and had always been independent.

2. Students may be surprised that Arakanese and Burman kingdoms were sometimes allies. They may not be surprised that Shan rulers rebelled against Burman kings. What surprises students, and what extra information they have, will depend on what history textbooks they have studied before. If students come from different backgrounds and have very different answers to this question you may ask them which textbooks they previously studied and what they said. If the information in their old textbooks contradicts what they learned in this module, it is fine for them to believe either source, or a little of both.

4. The beginnings of Burmese nationalism

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b, c, e, f
2. heretic, harshly, destroy, violate, degrade

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Could make them realise that they share some things in common that the British do not - Buddhism, loyalty to King Thibaw, traditions, genetic background. It might make the differences among them (social class, region, etc.) seem less important.
2. Maybe on the basis of Burmese nationalism, maybe based on ethnic nationalism such as Shan or Mon, maybe because local leaders wanted to keep their power and resources.

5. Nationalists and the Burmese nation: How did colonial era nationalists describe their country?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. e

2. c.

A is mentioned in the song, but is only part of the message. While the song may have had the effect of making ethnic minorities feel left out, there is not much evidence in the song that the authors had that purpose, so B is not right. It does not mention non-violent resistance, so D is not right.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Yes, if your dislike of the British was stronger than your dislike of Burmans who did not acknowledge your religion and language. If you were very offended by the Dobama Asiayone leaving out the Chin, you might not support them.
2. Burmese nationalism because authors may have thought non-Burmans would feel included in the song. Burman nationalism because the song does not mention characteristics of many non-Burman ethnic groups (speaking languages other than Burmese, practising religions other than Buddhism).
3. Students may believe that either word refers to the national group, or the ethnic group Burmans. You could also collect the different responses on the board for the whole class to see and comment on. Do any of the students share the same idea of what 'Bamar' and 'Myanmar' is? Are there any differences? If so, why?

6. Why did Karen nationalists want their own state?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 2
b. 1
c. 3

2.
 - a. fact
 - b. belief, because it cannot be proven whether they are “virtuous.”
 - c. theory, because you could support it with evidence about what happened during the war
 - d. belief, because “better” is a belief about goodness
 - e. fact
 - f. theory, because you could support it with evidence about how often Burmese people bought things from Karens versus how often they bought them from non-Karens.

3.
 - a. stereotype, because it is about the way all Karen people are. Remind students that a stereotype can be positive or negative.
 - b. generalisation, because it is about what always happened.
 - c. stereotype, because it implies that all those British people have these qualities.
 - d. neutral statement, because it says that you would expect them to live harmoniously, and does not say whether or not they have been able to do so.

Reasoning

1. You may wish to review the definition of extremism in section 1 of this Theme. Students’ perspective on which document is more extreme will depend on their background.

2. Might request a smaller state, so it would have been easier to convince the British to give it to you, or a larger one, to get more land for the Karen people.

7. The Panglong Agreement: Burmese unity and ethnic self-determination

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. b. You may wish to point out that many people believe A. was included in the Panglong Agreement, but it is actually in the 1947 Constitution.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. It could be a spirit that brings ethnic groups together on equal terms to help them reach goals that they share. You could ask students to respond to this question in a short essay.
2. Students may believe that all those ethnic groups were already represented by the delegations from the Frontier Areas and Burma Proper. Or they may believe those delegations had no right to speak for other ethnic groups. In order to bring out the contrast in these perspectives, you could divide students into groups (Burman, Shan, Mon, Wa, etc...) and ask them to make a statement on their feelings about the Panglong Agreement.

8. Aung San's vision: A nation of many ethnic groups

Comprehension

Answers:

1. e.
2. b.
3. c.
4. b. 3
c. 2
a. 1

Note:

You may wish to review the section on cause and effects in the Historians' Skills section.

Reasoning

1. Answers will vary. You may wish to tally answers on the board, and have the group of students who agree with each statement debate those who disagree.

2. Possible Answers:

1. KCO and Shan, Kachin and Chin would probably agree, and say their nations have those qualities; or they might disagree, and say that a nation had some other definition that fit them better.

2. KCO and Shan, Kachin and Chin would probably not agree because they would define themselves as a nation.

3. KCO would disagree because they are trying to get their own state already; Shan, Kachin and Kachin might agree, because they agreed to join the Union.

4. KCO probably wouldn't trust AFPFL to create a democracy in which they had the rights described above; Shan, Kachin, and Chin probably would believe this, as it is the basis of the Panglong Agreement.

9. The 1947 constitution: Balancing power between ethnic minority groups and central government?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. b.
3. a.

Reasoning

1. Possible Answers:

Because the KCO was asking for a large area (as in D40) and some people in the Union did not want to give all this territory; the question was difficult to solve so they put it off. This could have caused problems because Karen people did not know what to expect when Burma got independence.

2. Answers depend on students' ideas about "autonomy." You could write all the departments on the board and ask students to vote on which should belong to the federal and state governments.

10. How did U Nu describe the development of the Union of Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b. The other points are contained in the speech, but this one captures the main idea best.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. No, because in 1824 the Konbaung Kingdom was smaller than the area of Burma Proper and the Frontier Areas that the British eventually made into one country.

Yes, because the British dividing Frontier Areas, etc. from Burma Proper may have prevented ethnic groups from integrating.

2. He may have meant that he hoped everyone would agree and live in harmony. Or he may have meant that minority ethnic groups should not try to secede or pursue civil war.

11. Who has the law defined as a Burmese citizen?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. D51-yes; D68-no.
b. D51-no; D68-no.
c. D51-yes if parents and grandparents had lived in Burma; D68-no.
d. D51-no; D68-no.
e. D51-yes; D68-no.
f. D51-yes; D68-no.
g. D51-yes; D68-yes.
h. D51-no; D68-no

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- 1948 law may be more suitable if the aim is to include most people in Burma as citizens; 1982 law is suitable if the aim is to exclude many people in Burma from citizenship.
- Xenophobia may have increased; immigration may have increased; government did not want to give citizenship rights to some people living in Burma.
- Advantage of lenient system is that all people born in a country can have full citizenship rights and can work for the good of the country. Advantage of strict system is that country will not be overpopulated.

12. What was the Shan leaders' vision for a federal union?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. false
b. false
c. true
d. false

Reasoning

Possible answers

- Yes, because giving Shan state more rights could have prevented Shan rebellion and military takeover. No, because giving these rights could have weakened the central government.
- No, because Shans were not saying they wanted to secede, just that they wanted more rights. Yes, because if states controlled important ministries such as Defence and Foreign Affairs, federal government would not have much power left.

13. What were ethnic minority nationalists' attitudes toward Burmans?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Negative experiences with people from other ethnic groups, as well as one-sided versions of history that they learn in school and from their communities, may cause people to develop stereotypes and extremist attitudes. It may be possible to change these attitudes if people have more positive experiences with people from other ethnic groups that break down their stereotypes. But people may not have the opportunity to have these positive experiences during a war. You may want to assign students to write their response in a short essay.

14. The Manerplaw agreement: A vision for a federal union

Comprehension

Answers:

1. 1. b.
2. d.
3. c.
4. a.
2. b, e

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Yes, because all groups are guaranteed rights. Hard to find weaknesses, but it may not be easy to establish this kind of system because groups don't trust each other enough.
2. Seems to balance Burmese nationalism (the idea all ethnic groups should be part of one country) and ethnic minority nationalism (each group gets self-determination).

15. What have smaller ethnic groups asked for from the central government?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. a, c, d

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. 1. The government may accept because they don't gain much by prosecuting Wa leaders.
2. The government may reject because they want to make their own deals with Chinese companies.
3. The government may reject because they want to keep the right to use military force when they feel it is necessary.
4. The government may accept if they can find qualified Wa people to fill those positions, but they may reject if they fear the Wa workers will not be loyal to the SPDC.
5. The government will reject because they want the money from these resources.
6. The government may reject if they do not want to spend money this way, they may accept if they want to please the UWSA.
2. It may be harder to get the government to pay attention to their demands.

Note:

Students' beliefs about what is reasonable will vary. You may wish to assign half the class to represent the UWSA, and half to represent the government, and have them discuss the 6 points above.

3. Yes, because armed struggle groups can be integrated into the government's army. No, because armed struggle groups are not likely to agree to this plan.

16. Nationalism in exile: How have ethnic minority groups promoted this?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Different because Mahn Ba Zahn says that government, not Burmans, are the enemy. Similar because it describes the suffering of ethnic minority people. KNPP's message is more extremist. Students may prefer Mahn Ba Zahn's message if they don't like extreme nationalism, and may prefer the KNPP's message if they believe it shows the truth of the Karenni people's situation.

2. People are scattered and cannot celebrate in traditional ways. Children may not be able to learn their native language in school. People may become integrated into their new society instead of preserving their culture.

Review

1. **Answers:** D1: plains people and hill people had different cultures and ways of life, but plains people sometimes took hill people's resources in order to expand their kingdoms.

D5: You might be able to change your ethnicity by changing your language and other practices. Kingdoms made alliances across ethnic divisions.

D6: Ethnic minority groups sometimes had relations with Burman kingdoms and sometimes were separate.

D46: Ethnicity very important. Union between states containing people of different ethnicities. Idea that each ethnic group should have their own state. Responsibilities clearly divided between central and state governments with most important powers going to central government. Ethnic states could secede from Union under certain conditions.

2. In groups, students make a list of similarities and differences>
Make a class list on the board.

Answers:

Similarities: D15 and D49 both describe negative effects of British arrival. Both say that Burmese people already have unity and many things in common.

Differences: Thibaw uses more biased terms to describe the British, whereas U Nu doesn't want to hold a grudge. U Nu mentions problems among ethnic groups, Thibaw does not.

3. Answers will vary, but for instance, instead of saying "Burmese language - our language," the slogan could say, "We have many different languages." You could have groups come up with new songs/slogans and then perform them or read them for the class.
4. You could have students write their advice for Burma's leaders in the form of a letter from Gen. Aung San.

Answers continued on next page

Review (continued)

5. **Answers:** D40: KCO wanted Karen state separate from Union of Burma under British protection. Fear/dislike of Burmans.

D43: KNU wanted Karen state, was willing to revolt to get it. Frustration with Burmans and distrust of them.

D59: Shans wanted a federal system in which Shan state had more rights. Past frustration, but can work with Burmans.

D67: Want peace and co-existence among ethnic groups and an end to oppression of central government. Dislike of government, not Burmans.

D94: Want more power in their own state and more resources from the central government. Hoping for support and cooperation from Burmans.

D97: Wanting atrocities against them to stop. Anger at “Burman invaders.”

6. **Answers:** Panglong Agreement: promises autonomy to Shan, Kachin, and Chin states. Does not include other ethnic groups.

1947 Constitution: gives some powers to states and most important powers to central government. Does not create Karen state, but includes Karenni state. Says states may secede in 10 years.

Manerplaw Agreement: promises equal rights and autonomy for all ethnic groups without dominance by Burmans.

7. Students may at least understand that people define “Burmese” differently. They may be more sympathetic to ethnic minority demands if they were not familiar with them before. They may be more or less optimistic about the future of compromise among Burmans and other ethnic groups. Students could write their answer in an essay.

Theme 8: Military Politics

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to investigate the role of the military in Burma in ancient times
- to investigate how the British formed their army and the consequences it had
- to identify the problems that occurred during WWII between the military and civilians
- to determine the reasons that some ethnic groups formed armies
- to compare the reasons for the army takeovers of 1958, 1962 and 1988
- to consider the benefits of soldiers being loyal to the government or the people
- to assess some criticisms of the Burmese military within the past 30 years
- to analyse the role of the military in the current constitution

Key Concepts:

militarism; pacifism; expansionism; use of army domestically;
use of army defensively; use of army strategically

Note:

This Theme will prepare students for the next one on resistance. This Theme comes first so students can understand what some protestors were resisting.

1. The Army in society: What has been its role?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 2
- b. 1
- c. 6
- d. 5
- e. 3
- f. 4

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Expansionism: by ancient kingdoms to get more land, for instance, when Pagan took over Mon kingdom of Thaton.

Defensively: by Konbaung kingdom against the British during the Anglo-Burmese wars

Domestically: Against various groups rebelling against the government, against protestors.

You could divide students into groups and ask each group to come up with a few examples of how the army has been used in this way.

2. They may face different dangers. For instance, Costa Rica might not have many enemies. Israel might have many enemies attacking it.
3. Answers will vary. This topic might be sensitive for students because they might want to share stories of violence that the army committed. That is fine. Let students know that in this Theme they will learn more about why the soldiers would do such things (for instance, because they were recruited as children).

2. Ancient times: Why were armies important?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Probably exaggerated because the numbers are so large. Historians might exaggerate to make their kingdoms seem more powerful.
2. Based on what students learned from D5, they might say soldiers were forced to join.
3. Having a large army may have made other kingdoms respect you or fear you, so they would want to make an alliance.

3. Colonial Era: How did the British form their army?

Comprehension

Answer:

1. a. Answer d is also mentioned, but it is not Enriquez's main reason.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. It might have contained all ethnic groups in Burma Proper and the Frontier Areas. It might have had less resources because the British had a lot of money to develop their army. People from all parts of Burma might have trusted the army more if it contained people from their ethnic group, too.

4. World War II: Why were there conflicts between the BIA and Karen people?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. Students' answers will vary. Make sure students complete question 1 **before** reading the document. If they don't know much about this event, it is OK, they can write "not sure" for all of them.
2. a. True
b. False
c. False
d. True
e. True

Reasoning

1. Answers will vary. You may wish to have students vote on which ones are true or false. Remind them that they do not have to agree with Ba Maw.
2. **Possible Answers:**
Yes, because he may have taken some notes at the time, and the experiences are very memorable. No, because he could not have remembered exact quotations from his informants, so he might have made them up.
3. **Possible Answers:**
He is Burman so students might expect him to be biased for the BIA. His writing does show both Burman and Karen perspectives, but students may still feel it is biased in some way.

5. The assassination of General Aung San: What was the role of the military?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. not stated; this information is in the biographies and timeline, not the document
b. true
c. false
d. true
e. true

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. British administration: They might not have wanted Aung San to rule Burma because they thought other rulers would be easier for them to control after they left Burma.

U Nu and Ne Win: They might have wanted Aung San's position. U Nu ended up getting Aung San's position, and Ne Win later took control in a coup, so we know they were both interested in ruling the country.

6. The Burmese Military Oath: What should soldiers do?

Comprehension

Possible answers:

- a. Fight if the government declares war.
b. Praise former soldiers who have died.
c. Follow an order to move from one place to another.
d. Go into a dangerous battle to defend the country.

Reasoning

1. Possible answers:

For instance, if the government ordered soldiers to open fire on civilian protesters.

- Students may believe it is right because if soldiers did not follow orders, the army could not run smoothly. Or they may believe it is wrong, because soldiers should follow their own ideas of what is right and wrong. You could split the class into two teams and have them debate this point. You may wish to use a situation, possibly one from the previous exercise, to start the debate.

7. The Caretaker Government: Why did it take charge?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. 3
b. 2
c. 1

Note:

You can direct students back to the Historians' Skills section on inferences.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

- A possible dialogue:

Student 1: "The army should stay in control, or else the rebels will come back!"

Student 2: "No, it's not right for the army to run the government. I want to vote for my leaders."

Student 1: "A civilian government can't lead the country in the civil war..."

(and so on...)

You may wish to have pairs of students write their own dialogues and perform them for the class as an extension exercise.

8. The Karen National Union: Why did it begin armed struggle?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.
2. b.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. The national army uses more of its resources to fight the small armies inside the country instead of defending the country against outside threats.
2. Students may think it is a good idea because it is the only way that group will get what they need or want, like a state for themselves. Or they may think it is a bad idea because it causes civil war and they should only use peaceful means.

9. The 1962 Coup: Why did General Ne Win decide to use military power?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Students may think he had no choice. Or they may think he could have tried to negotiate peacefully with the rebel groups.
2. Students may believe this is a good attitude because the leader has to be tough and scare people who would destroy the country. Or they may believe it is bad because it makes the leader the enemy of some of the people.

10. 1988 Demonstrations: How did the Burmese military control the demonstrators?

Comprehension

1. Answers:

- a. theory, because it is about cause and effect; it could be supported by interviews with protestors.
 - b. fact
 - c. belief, because it is about what is right and wrong.
 - d. belief, because it is about what is good and bad.
2. Direct students back to the section of Historians' Skills on "finding bias in a text" if the students require a reminder of this before they begin.

Answers:

Gen. Ne Win	Neutral observer	Pro-democracy protestors
"acting against discipline"	Protesting against the government	Fighting for freedom from brutal tyrants
Army "exercises restraint"	relaxes their control	slows down their brutal killing temporarily
"mob disturbances"	demonstrations	showing the people's desire for freedom
Army "maintains control"	keeps tight hold on power	oppresses the people
Prome affair "became bolder"	protestors and government clash	the people gain strength
Government "intervenes"	government suppresses protests	government cracks down

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe they could agree on facts like the dates on which protests took place. Maybe they could not agree on things like the number of protestors killed.
2. No, because they might kill innocent people by accident. Yes, because otherwise there would be chaos.

11. 1988 Demonstrations: How did Daw Aung San Suu Kyi view the Burmese military?

Comprehension

Answers:

- a. stated
b. implied, because she says, "If the army comes to be hated by the people," but does not say that this is what happened.
c. not included
d. not included
e. stated

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

- Maybe she did not want to make the military leaders angry. Or maybe she did not feel she had enough evidence to say that the people hated the army. Students may agree with her decision because it would help with peaceful negotiation with the military. Or they may disagree because they might think she should say what she thinks even if it would make the military angry.
- Maybe yes, because they had sworn an oath of loyalty to the people as well as to the government and they could see the protestors were like themselves, their family, and friends. Maybe no, because they saw the protestors as enemies of the Union.

12. The SLORC: What were their reasons for the 1988 coup?

Comprehension

Answers:

- Defending the state
Restoring law and order and holding elections
Raising military capability
- Help a new government take power
Army will go back to barracks
Army will not take sides in election

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

- Maybe yes, because we should honour the army. Maybe no, because the name change erases the history of resistance movements.
- Elections were held, but the SLORC did not let the government that was elected take power. The army did not go back to the barracks (until 2010, when leaders resigned their positions in the military). Army did support some parties in the 1990 and 2010 elections. Students may believe Saw Maung believed his promises or they may think he was lying.

13. 2008 Constitution: What is the role of the Burmese military?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. b, c

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Maybe too much power because the military can declare emergency and then do what they want, and because so many representatives must be military. Maybe too little, because the army does not control the government completely.
2. Yes, because the army can help defend democracy. No, because democracies are ruled by the people, not the army.

14. Ceasefires: How did the Kachin National Organisation respond to the 2013 ceasefire?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.
2. b.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. The EU might say that the ceasefire was a meaningful first step showing the Burmese government's willingness to compromise. Or the EU might say that regardless of what the Burmese government wanted, ending sanctions was the right thing to do for the people of Burma.
2. Ceasefires may have broken down because the people did not support the leaders who made them, or because one or both parties did not really intend to follow them, or because the terms of the ceasefire were not realistic or did not solve the root cause of the conflict.

Review

1. Answers:

Militarist: for instance the 2008 Constitution gives many powers to the military and the current government is comprised of many former military personnel. Also, there have been two military coups (D61, D72) throughout Burma's history, and (in the past) the military occupied a position of pride in Burmese society as a symbol of nationalism and independence

Pacifist: in ancient times, as kingdoms sometimes made alliances not to fight (D5). Also, as a predominantly Buddhist country, non-violent ideals are promoted and shared throughout the community.

Somewhere in between: as Burma, arguably, shares many of the traits of the two previously mentioned examples.

2. Possible answers:

Defensive: D9, to fight against the British

Strategic: D5, to impress other kingdoms with their big armies

Domestic: D70, against protesters in 1988

Expansionist: D6, when the Konbaung Kingdom wanted to expand into Shan territory.

3. Answers will vary. Students can use D58, D70 and D90 to support their points.

4. Answers will vary. Have students work in groups to do this task.

5. Possible answers:

1958: to fight rebels

1962: to preserve the Union

1988: to prevent demonstrations from causing disturbances

6. a. We shall be loyal to the state and citizens. Loyalty to the state more than citizens (D58, D61)
- b. We shall be loyal to fallen Burmese military members. Maybe not, if as Daw Suu implies, the Burmese military is not carrying out Gen. Aung San's vision (D71)
- c. We shall carry out the orders and duties assigned from above. Maybe yes, because they do carry out orders to suppress protests. (D70)
- d. We pledge ourselves to sacrifice our life for our state, citizens, and Burmese military. Maybe yes, because Burmese military members were the victims of assassination (D47).

7. The **Burmese military's** purpose is to maintain stability of 'the Union of Burma', often through aggressive campaigns to suppress the perceived threat of ethnic armies. They also exist to be loyal to the government and to act in its interests.

The motives of **other armed groups** vary. Some wish for secession from the union and the formation of their own sovereign state. Others wish for greater autonomy within the Burmese federal system. Other groups have ambiguous or fluctuating aims. The strategy for these smaller armed groups vary, from outward displays of aggression to adopting more defensive tactics in order to maintain territory. Other groups (such as the Wa) build up their forces to such a size as to deter any larger attacks from the Burmese military.

8. You may wish to set this question as a short essay exercise, where students are free to communicate their thoughts in a more comprehensive and analytical way.

Theme 9: Resistance, Revolution and Reform

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to investigate how Burmese nationalists resisted the British through strikes, boycotts and riots
- to compare how Burmese nationalists tried to get independence through constitutional reform and through active resistance
- to identify the reason that ethnic minority groups started armed struggle and why they made ceasefires
- to analyse the reasons that alliances were made and how factionalism can break them down
- to compare strategies of non-violent protest, armed revolution and legal reform
- to determine why some groups have cooperated with the SPDC and others have not

Key concepts:

revolution; reform; passive/“everyday” resistance; active resistance; strike; boycott; demonstration; alliance; coup; non-violent resistance; factionalism; riot; ceasefire

Note:

In this Theme, students will re-read several documents they have read before. This will help them understand these important documents better. You can point out that students can get different information from a document each time they read it.

1. How have people struggled for political change?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 7
- b. 2
- c. 1
- d. 8
- e. 3
- f. 5
- g. 4
- h. 6
- i. 10
- j. 11
- k. 9

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Answers will vary. Keep a tally on the board of which strategies are most popular, and keep a record to remind students at the end of the unit. Ask students why their strategy matches their goals.

2. The University boycott: How did students resist British education?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. The British might not have listened if the students only asked for reform. Armed struggle might have caused the British to fight back and hurt the students. This strategy was non-violent but strong enough to convince the British to change their policy.

3. Legal reform of colonialism: What are the arguments against it?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may say Burmese culture values politeness and the monks should not become involved in politics. Or they may say that there was no need to be polite to the British, and that monks should get involved in politics.

4. Peasant riots: Why did they happen?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.
2. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They were upset to lose their land. They might have been xenophobic against the Chettyars.
2. Maybe yes, because rioting got the attention of the British and made them worried. Maybe no, because they were still in debt after the riot. They could have also had a non-violent demonstration.

5. The 1300 Revolution: Why did workers strike against the British?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 1.
b. 4.
c. 2.
d. 3.

Reasoning

1. Possible answers:

Slogans can be good because they inspire people, and some people might not be able to understand the details of complicated situations. For instance, “Withdraw Section 144” helped the protesters remember which British law they wanted to change. But slogans can also lead to extremism and prevent people from thinking critically about the details of a situation. For instance, “Death to Dr. Ba Maw!” is an extremist slogan that could lead to violence. Also, it does not explain what Dr. Ba Maw did wrong.

2. You can have students brainstorm topics (for example, ending forced labor or granting ethnic minorities autonomy) then divide students into groups to write slogans. Their classmates can critique their slogans.

6. The AFPFL: Why did it try to get independence through constitutional reform?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

1. Possible answers:

- A. He may not have wanted the people to suffer through another war.
- B. The Burmese were already using their resources to fight the Japanese and they needed help from the British.
- D. The British were probably more likely to help the AFPFL if they saw it as a peaceful organisation.

2. Possible answers:

Incorrect. There are still wars today.

3. Students might agree because he may have avoided suffering and killing involved in war, and because the Burmese did not have the resources to fight the British and Japanese at one time. Students might disagree if they think Burma could have gotten independence more quickly if they had fought the British and Japanese at the same time.

7. The AFO: What strategies did it use to resist the Japanese occupation?

Comprehension

Possible Answers:

1. a. Hide our bullocks, horses, carts, etc.
b. Draw up a Constitution for a free Burma.
c. Soldiers of the BDA must revolt.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Maybe yes, because a variety of strategies could be stronger working together. Maybe no, because trying to get legal reform at the same time as conducting violent revolution might be difficult.

8. The BCP: Why did it support communist revolution against the AFPFL government?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. A. He does not mention B or D. He mentions C, but it is not the reason why he wants to use violent revolution.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, if he had tried to reform the laws to support the communist economic policy he preferred. Maybe no, because he might be right that reform would not have been successful.

9. The KNU: Why did it pursue armed struggle instead of constitutional reform?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. b is not correct because that point is in the 1950 speech.
2. 2

3. Possible answers:

1. Do not give up.
2. Get all of Karen State.
3. Keep our weapons.
4. We want self-determination.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe the KYO's because they might have been successful in getting a smaller state. Maybe the KNU's, because the AFPFL might not have given the Karens any state at all even if they asked for a smaller one.
2. He decided the Karens would only get a state through armed struggle. It may have changed because he was not successful in negotiating with the Burmese government.
3. Maybe 2 because he wanted a large Karen state.

10. 1958 Peace Parley: How did Thakin Kodaw Hmaing try to end the civil war?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They might have had personal conflicts or been jealous of each other. They might have each wanted more power for themselves. They might have disagreed about political goals. Factionalism might be prevented if people promised to work together, or if the ordinary members of the groups could influence their leaders' decisions.
2. A situation in which all people get what they want. Maybe this is possible in some situations if people are willing to compromise. Maybe it is not realistic, because sometimes people's goals conflict.

11. Federalism: How did Shan leaders try to reform the constitution?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They may have chosen this strategy because they did not think a demonstration would cause the constitution to change, and they did not want to hurt anyone. They might have been more likely to choose armed revolution if they had known that Ne Win was about to carry out a coup.

12. The 1962 coup: Why did the Revolutionary Council take power by force?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Students may say yes if they believe there was no other way to prevent the country from breaking into pieces. Or they may say no, that Ne Win and the RC should have negotiated with the Shan leaders to try to find a political solution.

13. 1988 demonstrations: How did students try to get democracy?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. false
b. false
c. true
d. true
e. false

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because one leader with a lot of support could have been more effective than many leaders with a little support. Maybe no, because the dictatorship had many resources and maybe no leader could have defeated it.
2. Answers will vary. Ask students to give examples to support their answers. You could have students debate which strategy is best.

14. The Manerplaw Alliance: Why did pro-democracy and ethnic nationalist groups join forces?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe the groups' goals were not similar enough—for instance, ethnic minority groups wanted autonomy, but pro-democracy groups might not have wanted the central government to be strong so it could promote democracy.

15. The KIO: Why did it make a ceasefire with the military regime?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because violence and suffering of the Kachin people could be reduced. Maybe no, because the military regime might not have intended to give the Kachin people what they wanted.

16. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi: Why does she choose non-violent methods to get democracy?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. false
b. false
c. false
d. true

Reasoning

1. Answers will vary. You could ask students to vote on each point and keep a tally on the board, then have them debate each point.

17. 2007 anti-government demonstrations: How did the monks protest?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They could have used armed struggle, but that would have gone against their role as monks. They could have tried to get more help from outside Burma.

18. Cyclone Nargis: Why did NGOs inside Burma cooperate with the SPDC to provide humanitarian aid?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. b
b. a
c. c
d. d
2. b, c and d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, if that was the only way you could help the people. Maybe no, if you disagreed with the SPDC and did not want to make them stronger by working together with them.

19. NMSP Ceasefire: Has it helped Mons reach their goals?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. c.

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Maybe yes, because going back to armed struggle is not likely to work now, since it did not work in the past. Maybe no, because it has been a long time already and the ceasefire has not worked the way NMSP wanted it to. Maybe it is possible to be too patient because you let your opponents take advantage of you. Maybe patience is good, because if you change your strategy too often, it does not have time to work properly.

20. 2010 Election: How did democracy activists decide whether or not to participate?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. U Khin Maung Swe
b. U Win Tin
c. U Win Tin
d. U Khin Maung Swe

Reasoning

1. You could divide the class in half and have each half represent the followers of U Khin Maung Swe and U Win Tin.
2. They might think that because the USDP won most seats anyway, the NLD should not have registered. Or they might think it is good that the NDF has at least a few seats in Parliament. You could have students write their advice in the form of a letter to each politician and then read them to the class.
3. **Possible answers:**
Advantages of having one leader are that all people have one person to follow rather than many people who might disagree with each other. Advantages of having many people sharing power is that your opponents cannot damage the movement as easily by attacking only one person. Also more perspectives might bring better decisions.

20. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Nobel Acceptance Speech: How did Daw Suu evaluate the political changes since the 2010 election?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. a

Reasoning

Possible Answers:

1. Students may share Daw Suu's optimism because elected officials (including herself) have been allowed to take office, there is more space for public debate, or because Burmese people are using their rights to protest and debate. However, they may not share her optimism because (as of 2013) all political prisoners had not yet been released, ethnic and religious conflicts continued, and many people were still very poor.
2. People might need politicians to make appropriate laws in the first place. People might need freedom of speech, press, and protest in order to change laws.

Review

1. Answers:

Thakin Kodaw Hmaing: reformer

Saw Ba U Gyi: reformer, violent revolutionary

1300 strikers: violent revolutionaries

Thakin Thein Pe: non-violent revolutionary

U Win Tin: non-violent revolutionary, active resister

1930s peasants: active resister

AFO: reformers, passive resisters, violent revolutionaries

Nai Shwe Kyin: reformer, ceasefire group

ABMA: active resister

U Ottama: active resister

NMSP: violent revolutionary, ceasefire group

KIO: violent revolutionary, ceasefire group

Ko Ba U: reformer, active resister

Ko Min Ko Naing: non-violent revolutionary, passive resister, active resister

U Khin Maung Swe: reformer

Gen. Ne Win: violent revolutionary

Thakin Ba Tin: violent revolutionary

Shan State Steering Committee: reformer

2. You could divide students into pairs and have them act out these dialogues.

Possible Answers:

- a. Thakin Thein Pe: "Don't be so extremist. The British will give us independence if work within their legal system."

Thakin Ba Tin "Reforming the constitution will never change the imperialist, capitalist system—you should revolt against the British!"

- b. Thakin Kodaw Hmaing: "Please don't use armed struggle anymore, everyone is suffering!"

Saw Ba U Gyi: "You are naïve if you think we can find a win-win solution."

- c. U Ottama: "Don't just ask the government to change, demand it!"

The ABMA: "Chant metta for the British."

- d. Ko Ba U: "Boycott the military regime! Show them you are serious."

Ko Min Ko Naing: "Use more strategies to fight the British."

- e. Daw Suu: "You may reach your goals even by using non-violent means."

The oilfield workers: "You should inspire people with slogans."

- f. the Shan State Steering Committee: "You can change the system using legal reform."

U Ne Win: "If you really want to change the government, take power in a coup."

- g. Nai Hong Sa: "A ceasefire isn't going to get you what you want right away, be patient."

The KIO "Try to cooperate with other ethnic groups and the government."

- h. The people who signed the Manerplaw Agreement "Form an alliance of NGOs so you will be stronger."

The Nargis NGO workers: "Try working together with the military regime to help the people." OR "Don't bother working together with the military regime, they won't help you."

3. Answers will vary. Students may think getting outside support and funding is important.

Answers continued on next page

Review (continued)

4. Possible Answers:

British colonial government: a combination of passive and active resistance may have weakened the British government by disrupting the economy, which the British cared about.

Japanese occupation: violent revolution might have been appropriate because it was a military state that was not likely to grant legal reforms.

Parliamentary government: Trying to get legal reforms might have worked as it was a democratic government.

Military regime: Non-violent resistance might make it look bad in the international community, or armed struggle might be necessary.

5. Maybe there is no good solution because people are self-interested. Maybe they could learn to work together instead of breaking into different groups. Maybe stronger leaders are necessary, or grassroots organising.

6. Answers will vary. Students may have changed their views on what is the best strategy from the beginning of the Theme. You can remind them of the previous answers. They can write their answers in the form of an essay.

Theme 10: Burma in the World

Learning objectives in this unit:

- to analyse the reasons that Burma was geopolitically important in the colonial era, in WWII, during the Cold War, and today
- to assess which countries have affected Burma most and why
- to examine the causes and effects of Burma's changing relationships with other countries
- to compare and contrast the different foreign policies Burma has followed
- to compare and contrast the different foreign policies that other countries have had toward Burma

Key concepts:

constructive engagement; neutrality; geopolitics; isolationism; globalisation; foreign policy

Note:

If you have access to current news stories, you could supplement this Theme with stories about Burma and its foreign relations.

1. How have geopolitical factors affected Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. 3
- b. 1
- c. 4
- d. 2
- e. 5
- f. 6

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Trade with China and Thailand help the government make money. Poor relationship with Western governments caused the government to turn away foreign aid from them after Cyclone Nargis.

2. International trade before colonisation: How did it influence Burma's development?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. Students should draw the geographical details in as much detail as possible. This should include mountains, jungle, forests and (where possible) rivers. Students' maps showing the origin of different products should include the following:
 - China and the Malay coast - betel nuts, silk, nankeen, porcelain, tea
 - Bengal - sugar and muslins
 - Madras (India) - linen, coloured handkerchiefs
 - Isle of France (France) - pottery, muskets, looking glasses (mirrors), iron, brass, woolen cloths
 - England - the same items as from France and also drugs, spices, raisins, almonds, coffee
 - Persia and Arabia - other items (not specifically mentioned)
2. Irrawaddy and Mekong rivers; access to Indian Ocean.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe students will be surprised because they did not know there were Europeans in Burma before colonisation. Maybe they will not be surprised, because they have already learned a little about the different groups who lived in Burma in this or other history books.
2. Maybe muskets, because they could be used in wars that kingdoms used to expand their territory.

3. Burma's geopolitical position: How did it influence the British to colonise Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b.
2. d.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe they would have colonised anyway because they wanted the resources inside Burma. The French interest in Burma might have made them act more quickly.

4. Revolutions around the world: How did they influence Burmese nationalists?

Comprehension

Answer:

- a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- Struggles for democracy and human rights (for instance, in South Africa and the Czech Republic) have influenced pro-democracy activists in Burma. East Timor's struggle for self-determination has influenced some ethnic minority groups who want their own countries. Socialism and communism from Russia and China influenced some Burmese people to rebel against the government. On the other hand, Burmese Buddhism has spread over the world because many people from other countries have come to study Buddhism there. Also, Daw Suu's ideas about non-violent struggle have become popular in many Western countries.

5. Indian nationalism: How did it influence Burmese nationalism?

Comprehension

Answers:

- b, c, e

Reasoning

Possible answers:

- They could have united to put pressure on the British and gotten independence sooner. They could have learned from each other's mistakes and encouraged each other.

6. Japanese expansionism: How did it affect Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. d.
2. a.

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe it was a good decision because they needed British support to fight the Japanese. Maybe it was a bad decision because it brought Burma under British rule for several more years.

7. Communist China: What was its relationship to Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. b, d

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. They might have a dispute over the boundary between their countries. Conflicts over communist ideology. Disputes over trade.

8. The Cold War: Why did Burma join the non-aligned movement?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. and 2.
 - a. theory; Nehru agrees
 - b. fact; Nehru agrees
 - c. belief; Nehru agrees
 - d. belief; Nehru disagrees
 - e. belief; Nehru disagrees
 - f. fact; Nehru agrees

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe the Parliamentary Government agreed with Nehru's reasons. Maybe it was a good decision, because Burma did not have to make a promise to support either side and get involved in their conflict. Maybe it was not a good idea because neither side would protect Burma.
2. Maybe these tensions do affect Burma, because China and Russia supply it with many weapons and trade with it, while the US and EU do not trade as much or give it weapons. The US and EU are also concerned about the power of China, so they may try to influence Burma not to be China's ally. But maybe these tensions are not as important today because most of these countries do trade with each other at least a little, and their relationships are different than they were during the Cold War.

9. US anti-communist policies: How did they affect Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a - e (implied) - b - d - c

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Maybe yes, because you were angry that the US would make the civil war worse. Maybe no, if you felt that the US actions were not the most important factor, and you blamed the Burmese government or sympathised with the rebels.
2. Made it powerful because both sides US and China cared what Burma did and Burma could use this to get support from those countries. Made it powerless because Burma could not control the conflict that the US and China were fighting inside its own country.

10. Anti-Chinese riots: What were their causes and effects?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. short-term effect
b. background cause
c. background cause
d. immediate cause
e. short-term effect
f. short-term effect
g. long-term effect

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Because they wanted to know whether Burma would support communism/China in the Cold War.
2. They might have felt pride in their homeland. Wearing badges could be considered free speech because it showed their beliefs without hurting anyone. Or it could be considered not part of free speech, because it had the potential to cause violence.
3. Burmese people had stereotyped Chinese people. It is easy for xenophobia to turn into violence.

11. “External destructive elements”: Why does the SPDC criticise Western and exiled media?

Comprehension

Answers:

Note:

This section was written during a time of change in press and censorship in Myanmar. The examples and answers may no longer match the latest situation, but was true at the time of printing.

1. a. fact - probably correct, no reason to disbelieve it, although they do not say how many people attended or whether they did so by choice
b. theory - poorly supported
c. belief (implied) - probably not widely held judging by how many Burmese people listen to these stations
d. theory - poorly supported
e. belief (implied) - students may or may not think it is widely held, depending on their experiences

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. You would expect the SPDC to be biased against these organisations, which often criticise the SPDC. The SPDC may also be suspicious of the BBC as the state media of a former colonial power. They do display this expected bias.

Note :

*You can direct students back to the *Historians' Skills* section on bias if you wish.*

2. The criticisms may make relations worse because the SPDC is saying that what these news organisations say are lies.

12. International trade: How has Burma created economic and political alliances?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. increased
b. decreased
c. Singapore
d. Thailand
e. more

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. Trade with the US went down because of US sanctions on Burma. Trade with Thailand went up because of closer political relationship with Thailand.
2. More goods from Singapore are available in Burma, fewer goods from the US. Closer relations with Asian countries, less close relations with industrialised countries.

13. International humanitarian aid: How has it affected Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. b
b. c
c. a
d. d

Reasoning

1. Possible answers:

Benefits are that Burmese people get the food and medicine they need, especially in disasters. Drawbacks are that these international organisations' help may not be effective. It also might discourage Burmese people from helping themselves.

2. Answers will vary depending on students' experiences. You may wish to tally their responses on the board and then ask them how their experiences (as refugees, migrants, etc.) influenced their perspective.

14. Sanctions vs. constructive engagement: How have they affected Burma?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. a. continuity
b. change
c. continuity
d. change
e. change
f. continuity

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. The US could sell its products in Burma and buy Burmese products. The US could gain more influence over Burma to counter the influence of China.

2. Maybe it will be more successful because Burma's leaders will have more of a reason to do what the US wants so that they do not lose benefits from trade. Or maybe it will not be successful, because Burma's leaders will take the benefits from trade without making the changes that the US wants them to.
3. Maybe yes, because the US attacked Iraq to get rid of its leader, Saddam Hussein, and his regime, and that is a country with a lot of oil. Maybe not, because the US is already involved in many wars and might not want to become involved no matter what resources Burma had.

15. Refugee resettlement: How have Burmese people spread around the world?

Comprehension

Answers:

1. 1. a
2. d
3. c
4. e
5. b

Reasoning

Possible answers:

1. It may cause tension because these countries do not want the refugees to be there. Some people in those countries may have biases against the refugees from Burma. Or those countries might like to have the refugees because they are willing to work for low salaries.

2. Advantages: children who resettle can have a chance at a better education; adults have a chance to work; there might be better security, health care and opportunities. Disadvantages: life in the new country may be difficult; people may lose connection to their homeland and culture; all the qualified teachers and doctors may leave the camps to resettle and the refugees might suffer more.
3. Going places to study on scholarship; working on ships; doing business.

Review

1. Possible answers:

1. D8: near sea trade routes
D12: near land trade routes to China, between British and French empires
D39: between areas controlled by Britain and Japan in WWII
D60: the location of fighting between Chinese nationalists supported by the US and communists supported by China
D88: has goods that Asian countries want, and a market to sell their goods
D91: US wants to see political reform and wants trade with Burma

2. Possible answers:

- Britain: D8 (colonised Burma), D87 (produces media for Burmese people)
- China: D55 (had a close relationship with Burma), D56 (broke off friendly relations with Burma), D60 (Chinese nationalists and communists fought in Burma); D65 (funded rebel groups); D88 (trades with Burma)
- US: D60 (provided weapons), D66 (produces media for Burmese people), D91 (has constructive engagement policy)
- India: D37 (Indian nationalists influenced Burmese nationalists to get independence), D56 (Nehru's non-alignment policy was adopted by Burma)

3. Possible answers:

- neutral: good because Burma could try to avoid getting involved in conflicts; bad because Burma ended up being drawn into these conflicts anyway (for instance, between China and US)
- isolationist: good because Burmese people were protected from outside influences and preserved their culture; bad because Burmese people did not have much access to goods and ideas from outside.
- engaged: good because Burmese people have gotten more goods through trade; students may find this policy bad if they don't like the Burmese government and think that engagement helps it stay in power.
4. Students could start brainstorming in pairs and then discuss ideas in a class discussion. Keep track of their suggestions on the board and then have them vote on which ones they like best.
 5. Students may want these countries to trade with Burma or not trade with it, to give humanitarian aid or not give it. You could assign each student a country and ask them to put their requests in the form of a letter to that country, then have students read their letters to the class.
 6. Students may be more aware of how different countries have influenced Burma. They could write their responses in an essay.

