

# Vocabulary

## Vocabulary

*Study the vocabulary words and definitions below.*

**benevolent** ..... desiring to do good to others;  
kindhearted

**bureaucracy** ..... a system of managing government  
through departments run by appointed  
officials

**caste** ..... an unchangeable social group into  
which a person is born

**convert** ..... to adopt a different system or belief

**decipher** ..... to decode or interpret

**devout** ..... deeply religious

**domesticate** ..... to adapt the behavior of an animal to the  
advantage of humans; to tame

**dynasty** ..... ruling family

**feudalism** ..... a system in which people owed loyalty  
to the wealthy landowners in exchange  
for protection

**filial piety** ..... respect for one's parents

**loess** ..... fine windblown yellow soil

**monsoon** ..... seasonal wind that is dry in one season  
and brings heavy rainfall in the other

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**oracle bone** ..... bone used by Shang dynasty priests to predict the future

**philosophy** ..... any system of ideas based on values of an individual or culture concerning the source and nature of human knowledge

**polytheistic** ..... believing in many gods

**Sanskrit** ..... classical language of the Hindu peoples of India; the oldest literary language of the Indo-European family of languages

**subcontinent** ..... large area of land smaller than a continent