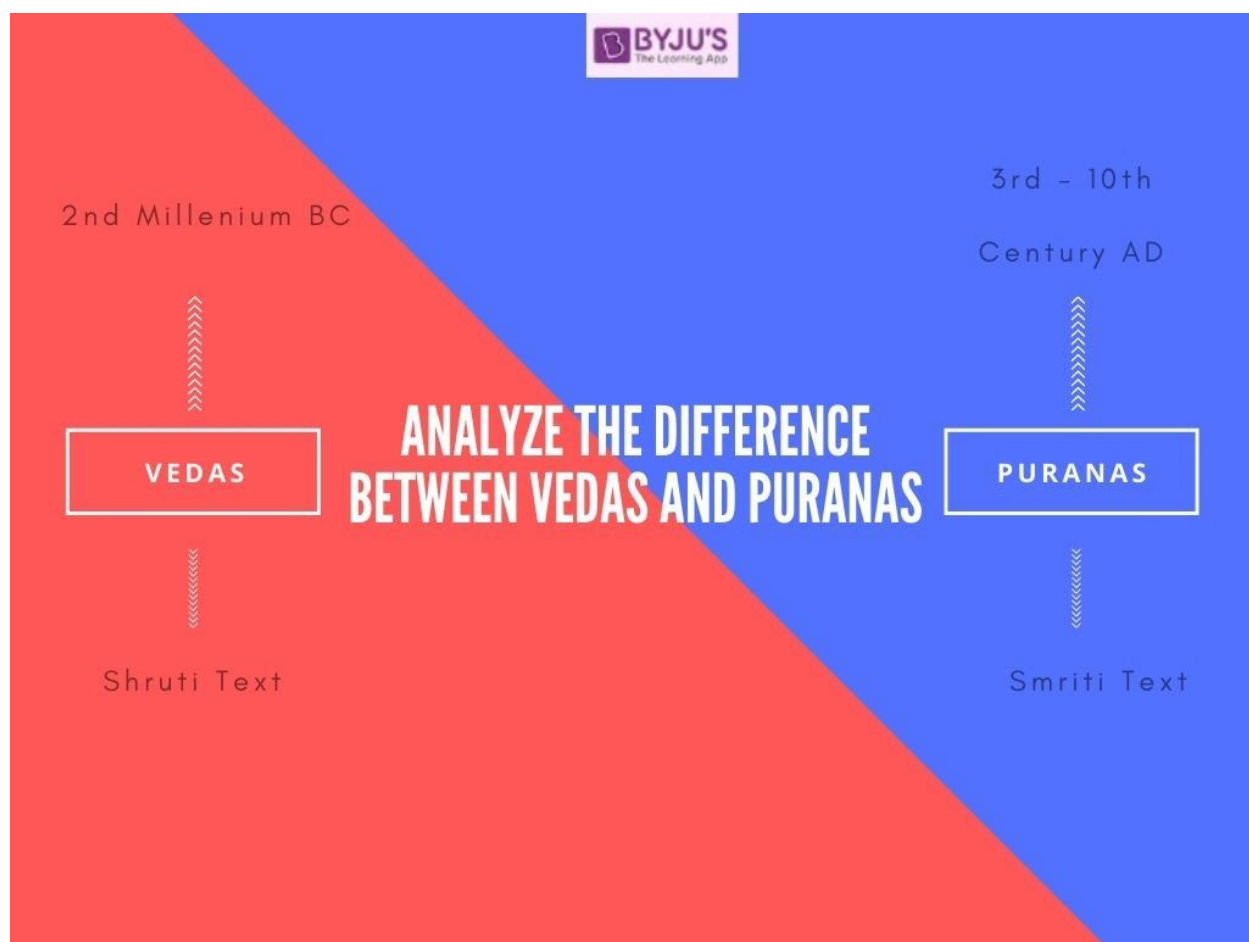


Difference Between Vedas and Puranas

Vedas and Puranas are important texts that define Indian culture at its finest. Yet there are certain fundamental differences between them.

The Vedas are a large body of religious texts composed in Vedic Sanskrit and are widely regarded as the oldest scriptures of Hinduism.

The Puranas are a vast collection of Indian literature that cover a wide range of topics, such as legends and traditional folklore.



This article will further highlight the differences between Vedas and Puranas within the context of the IAS Exam.

Differences between Vedas and Puranas

| Vedas | Puranas |
|---|--|
| <p>There are four types of Vedas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Rig Veda ● The Yajur Veda ● The Sama Veda ● The Atharva Veda | <p>There is 1 <i>Maha Purana</i>, 17 <i>Mukhya Purana</i> (Major Puranas), 18 <i>Upa Puranas</i> (Minor Puranas) with over 400,00 verses</p> |
| <p>Each Veda has four subdivisions. They consist of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Samhitas which speak about mantras and benedictions, ● The Aranyakas which is a text on rituals, ceremonies and symbolic-sacrifices, ● The Brahmanas which are commentaries on rituals and ceremonies, ● The Upanishads which discuss meditation, philosophy and spiritual knowledge). ● Some scholars add a fifth category – the Upasanas (worship) | <p>The literature of the Puranas is vast and converse a diversified range of topics that include but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cosmology ● Genealogy ● Medicine ● Astronomy ● Gods and Goddesses ● Grammar ● Demigods ● Heroes ● Sages |
| <p>Vedas are considered as Shruti which distinguishes it from other scriptures. Shruti means “that which is heard” in Sanskrit and is used to describe the most authoritative and religious texts in Hinduism</p> | <p>The Puranas are considered Smriti texts (meaning “that which is remembered”). Smriti texts do not have the authority of Shruti scriptures but they are still held in equal regard</p> |
| <p>The Vedas were orally transmitted since the 2nd Millenium BC. The Rig Veda was composed in its written form around 1500 BC - 1200 BC. The Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas were composed around</p> | <p>The first versions of the Puranas were likely to be composed between 3rd - 10th Century AD.</p> |

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| 1200 BC - 900 BC. | |
| Traditionally, Veda Vyasa is regarded as the compiler of the Vedas. | The 18 <i>Upa Puranas</i> had their origins in the work of Lomaharshana (a disciple of Ved Vyasa) and his three students - the <i>Mulasamhita</i> . |