**Lesson 9: India – Heritage and Culture**

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

* **categorise** the heritage and culture of India into architecture, literature, painting, music, dance, religion and so on.
* **express** respect towards the heritage and culture of India.
* **display** tolerance, acceptance and mutual respect for the diversity that exists in our country.

**ARCHITECTURE**

During **Harappan times (Ancient Period)**, baked bricks were used to construct houses. Later, **Buddhist and temple architecture** introduced fine sculptures to the buildings. They also used spaces like caves and materials such as large rocks for construction. In the **Medieval Period**, domes or semi-circular roofs over buildings became a **trademark** of Indo-Islamic architecture. Architecture in the **Modern Period** combined the older architectural traditions with British influences.

* **Ancient Period:** Sanchi Stupa, Madhya Pradesh
* **Medieval Period:** Dome over the Humayun’s Tomb, Delhi
* **Modern Period:** Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai, showing British influence

**LITERATURE**

Our literary heritage combines both religious and non-religious literature. Religious books are about religion, whereas stories, poems and dramas constitute non-religious literature. **The Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata and the Puranas** are some religious texts. Literature in India evolved in different languages such as **Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Dravidian, Persian, Arabic, Urdu, Hindi** and so on. Literary knowledge was also passed on in the form of oral traditions, in which stories, folk tales and songs were passed on from one generation to the other through word of mouth.

**LANGUAGES**

There are numerous languages and dialects spoken through the length and breadth of our country. A dialect is the way of speaking a language **restricted** to a particular area or a particular group. Each state in India has a different language, and within the states various dialects are spoken differing from region to region. The **Constitution of India recognises 22 scheduled languages**. Some of these are Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam and Manipuri.

**PAINTING**

Thousands of years ago, the cave dwellers in India painted on cave walls to express themselves. Later, during the **Medieval Period**, fine miniature paintings were painted. These paintings are much smaller than normal paintings, but are highly detailed. In the **Modern Period** of Indian history, many other painting styles were developed. Some of the well-known painters of the period are **Raja Ravi Varma, Abanindranath Tagore and Amrita Shergil**.

* **Ancient cave paintings at Bhimbetka**
* **A Mughal miniature painting**
* **A painting by Amrita Shergil**

**MUSIC**

Hindustani and Carnatic music are the main forms of classical music in India. Instruments such as **tabla, sitar, flute and sarod** are used while playing classical music. India also has a rich tradition of regional music that includes tribal and folk music. Folk music is played while celebrating the harvest or major events in life such as birth and marriage. Some forms of regional music are **Lotia** of Rajasthan, **Rasiya Geet** of Uttar Pradesh, **Mando** of Goa and **Ammanai** of Tamil Nadu.

**DANCES**

Classical dances of India follow the laws of dance laid down in an ancient book called the **Natya Shastra**. The seven major classical dance styles of India are:

* **Bharatanatyam** from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka
* **Kathakali**, a classical dance-drama form from Kerala
* **Manipuri** from Manipur
* **Kathak** from Uttar Pradesh
* **Odissi** from Odisha
* **Kuchipudi** from Andhra Pradesh
* **Sattriya** from Assam

Other than these, we have many folk dances from different parts of the country. Folk dances usually celebrate **happenings** in daily life, the turn of the season and the harvest. Some of them are **Giddha** and **Bhangra** from Punjab, **Garba** and **Dandiya Ras** from Gujarat, **Ghoomar** and **Nautanki** from Rajasthan and so on.

**UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA**

The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** adopted an international treaty called the **Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage** in 1972. It seeks to protect and preserve cultural and natural heritage around the world that is considered to have an **outstanding value to humanity**. India has **40 UNESCO World Heritage sites as on August 2021**, of which 32 are cultural, 7 are natural and 1 is both a cultural and natural site (**Khangchendzonga National Park**).

Examples shown:

* **Kaziranga National Park**, Assam: world’s largest population of one-horned rhinoceros. Tigers, elephants, deer and thousands of birds are also found here.
* **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus**, Mumbai: formerly Victoria Terminus Station, designed by the British architect F.W. Stevens. It took over ten years to build, starting in 1878.
* **Ajanta Caves**, Maharashtra: contain paintings and sculptures related to the Buddha.
* **Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, Nilgiri Mountain Railway, Kalka-Shimla Railway**: Mountain Railways of India.
* **Hill Fort of Chittorgarh**
* **Amber Fort in Jaipur**
* Churches and convents of Goa reflect the Portuguese rule.
* **Basilica of Bom Jesus**

**RELIGIONS**

* **Hinduism**: No single founder. Holy books: Vedas, Bhagavad Gita. Festivals: Holi, Ratha Yatra, Dussehra, Diwali.
* **Zoroastrianism**: Founder – Zoroaster. Holy book: Zend-Avesta. Festival: Navroz.
* **Jainism**: Mahavira was the 24th tirthankara. Holy book: Agamas.
* **Buddhism**: Founder – Gautama Buddha. Holy book: Tripitaka. Festival: Buddha Jayanti.
* **Christianity**: Based on teachings of Jesus Christ. Holy book: Bible. Festivals: Christmas, Easter.
* **Islam**: Founder – Prophet Mohammad. Holy book: Quran. Festivals: Eid ul-Fitr, Eid ul-Adha.
* **Sikhism**: Based on teachings of Guru Nanak. Holy book: Guru Granth Sahib. Festivals: Gurpurab.

**EXERCISES**

**I. Match the following**

1. Kathakali — c. Kerala
2. Odissi — e. Odisha
3. Bharatanatyam — e. Tamil Nadu
4. Kathak — a. Uttar Pradesh
5. Kuchipudi — b. Andhra Pradesh

**II. Name the following**

1. A religion founded by the Buddha – Buddhism
2. A religious book of the Christians – Bible
3. Guru Nanak founded this religion – Sikhism
4. An ancient religion of India – Zoroastrianism
5. The Holy book of Jainism – Agamas

**III. Think It Over! (HOTS)**  
List the different components of culture (language, music, etc.), draw a table listing them and write 1–2 lines on each in your notebook.

**ACTIVITY CORNER**

**Class Photography Club:**  
Form a photography club, click photos of:

* Historical sites
* Scenery during vacation
* Things that make you happy
* Self-portraits and portraits of interesting people

**Talent Show:**  
Organise a talent show on **gender equality** using traditional art forms like music, dance and painting. The best performance with a strong message can be presented to the whole school.