



Chapter 23

Pochampalli

Vani and Prasad live in a village called Mukhtapur. Their home is always filled with bundles of bright coloured threads. Their mother and father and everyone else in the family, are weavers. The weaving that they do is very beautiful and special.

Mukhtapur village is in the Pochampalli district of Andhra Pradesh. Most of the families in this district are weavers. That is why the special cloth that they weave is called Pochampalli.

The villagers have been doing this work since a long time. Vani and Prasad's parents learnt weaving from their elders.

For the teacher: Make the children aware that most traditional arts are learnt at home. There are many different handicrafts to be learnt like Pochampalli. You could discuss other traditional occupations like carpet weaving, toy making, *Itr* production, etc.



Process of making pochampalli sarees

Now Vani and Prasad also help their parents after coming back from school. This weaving requires hard work, and many different things have to be done before actually weaving.

From thread to Cloth

Father brings bundles of thread from Pochampalli city. Mother then puts these threads in boiling water to wash away the dirt and stains. Then everybody works to dye the thread with bright colours. These threads are then dried and rolled into bundles. These bundles are put onto looms and the cloth is woven. Silk cloth and silk sarees are woven from the silk thread. Cotton thread is used to weave cotton sarees, cloth, sheets, etc.

The loom has many needles. The size and number of the needles changes according to the design. The weavers weave the beautiful Pochampalli sarees in bright colours. Through their traditional craft they have made their region world famous.

A Craft in Danger

Great skill is needed to weave such special sarees. It also takes many days of hard labour. After all this, it is difficult to get a good price for these sarees. Silk is becoming expensive day-by-day. Big shopkeepers give very little money for the sarees, though they themselves sell them at very high price. That is why many weavers are giving up their family craft. Many are leaving their villages to work as labourers in big cities. We need to solve this problem by helping them get a better price. Otherwise, this precious craft will be lost forever.

Discuss

Vani and Prasad learnt this beautiful craft from their family members. When they grow up, do you think they will be able to teach their children the skills of this craft?

Write in your notebook

- Have you ever seen anybody weave something on a loom? What were they weaving and where?
- The threads of a saree are dyed. Do you know of any other thing that is dyed?
- If you visit Vani's village it seems as if the entire village is weaving sarees. Do you know of any other work which many people living in one place do?
- Do they make some article?
- Find out the process of making the article? What are the different steps?
- Do men and women do different kinds of work to make this article?
- Do children also contribute in making this article?

Find out and write

- Talk to an ironsmith, a carpenter and a potter about the nature of their work.

- Where did they learn to do their work?

- What else did they need to learn to be able to do this work?

○ Have they taught this work to anybody in their family, or to anyone else?

- The table below has a list of different kinds of work that people do. Do you know people who do such work? Write their names in the first column. In the next column write from whom have they learnt their work?

Kind of work	Name of people you know who do this work	Where did they learn this work from?
Cloth weaving	<i>Prasad and Vani's parents</i>	<i>From their elders</i>
Cooking		
Cycle repair		
Flying aeroplanes		
Sewing and embroidery		
Singing		
Making shoes		
Flying kites		
Farming		
Cutting hair		

For the teacher: There are many places like Pochampalli in India that are famous for making special things. These things have become famous by the name of the place where they are made, like – Kullu shawls, Madhubani paintings, Assam silk, Kashmiri embroidery, etc. Do you know any more examples? Discuss this in the class.