

Hindu Religion Studies

Class Nine



NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND TEXTBOOK BOARD, BANGLADESH



কর্ণফুলী টানেল, চট্টগ্রাম

কর্ণফুলী টানেল কর্ণফুলী নদীর তলদেশ দিয়ে ৪ লেন বিশিষ্ট সড়ক টানেল। টানেলটি কর্ণফুলী নদীর দুই তীরের অঞ্চলকে সুড়ঙ্গ পথে যুক্ত করবে। এই টানেলে ঢাকা-চট্টগ্রাম-কক্ষবাজার মহাসড়ক যুক্ত হবে। টানেলের দৈর্ঘ্য ৩.৪৩ কিলোমিটার। এটিই বাংলাদেশের প্রথম সুড়ঙ্গ পথ। যোগাযোগ ব্যবস্থার সহজীকরণ, আধুনিকায়ন, শিল্প কারখানার বিকাশ সাধন এবং পর্যটন শিল্পের উন্নয়নের ফলে কর্ণফুলী টানেল বেকারত্ব দূরীকরণসহ দেশের অর্থনৈতিক উন্নয়নে ব্যাপক ভূমিকা রাখবে।

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Hindu Religion Studies

Class Nine

(Experimental Edition)

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Preface

In this ever-changing world, the concept of life and livelihood is changing every moment. This process of change has been accelerated due to the advancement of technology. There is no alternative to adapting to this fast changing world as technology is changing rapidly ever than before. In the era of fourth industrial revolution, the advancement of artificial intelligence has brought about drastic changes in our employment and lifestyles that will make the relationship among people more and more intimate. Various employment opportunities will be created in near future which we cannot even predict at this moment. We need to take preparation right now so that we can adapt ourselves to that coming future.

Although a huge economic development has taken place throughout the world, problems like climate change, air pollution, migrations and ethnic violence have become much more intense nowadays. The breakouts of pandemics like COVID 19 have crippled the normal lifestyle and economic growth of the world. Thus, different challenges as well as opportunities, have been added to our daily life.

Standing amid the array of challenges and potentials, sustainable and effective solutions are required to transform our large population into a resource. It entails global citizens with knowledge, skill, values, vision, positive attitude, sensitivity, adaptability, humanism and patriotism. Amidst all these, Bangladesh has graduated into a developing nation from the underdeveloped periphery and is continuously trying to achieve the desired goals in order to become a developed country by 2041. Education is one of the most crucial instruments to attain the goals. Hence, there is no alternative to the transformation of our education system. This transformation calls for developing an effective and updated curriculum.

Developing and updating the curriculum is a routine and important activity of National Curriculum and Textbook Board. The curriculum was last revised in 2012. Since then, more than a decade has elapsed. Therefore, there was a need for curriculum revision and development. With this view, various research and technical studies were conducted under NCTB from 2017 to 2019 to analyze the current state of education and identify the learning needs. Based on the researches and technical studies, a competency-based and seamless curriculum from K-12 has been developed to create a competent generation capable of surviving in the new world situation.

Under the framework of this competency based curriculum, this textbook has been prepared for the learners of Class Nine. The authentic experience-driven contents of this textbook were developed with a view to making learning comprehensible and enjoyable. This will connect the textbooks with various life related phenomenon and events that are constantly taking place around us. It is expected that, through this, learning will be much more insightful and lifelong.

In developing the textbooks, due importance has been given to all – irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion and caste while the needs of the disadvantaged and special children are taken into special considerations.

I would like to thank all who have put their best efforts in writing, editing, revising, illustrating and publishing the textbook.

If any errors or inconsistencies in this experimental version are found or if there is any suggestions for further improvement of this textbook, you are requested to let us know.

Professor Md. Farhadul Islam

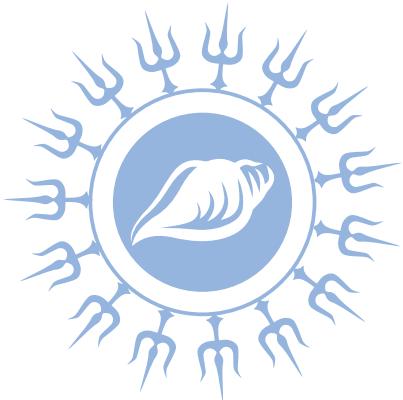
Chairman

National Curriculum and Textbook Board,
Bangladesh

Introduction

Dear Learner,

Welcome to this book for Class Nine.



This book offers you some new experiences through new activities. The book consists of how you can utilise these experiences in life and how to engage yourself in humanitarian work by learning about God's endless glory.

You will come to know about different aspects of Hindu Religion in Class Nine through joyful events like field trips, drawings, performing playlets, music, poems, etc. Here we have tried to tell you how to do various tasks through these events.

You have been informed of some basic aspects of Hindu Religion under different headings. You will find in the book many beautiful pictures, life stories of Avatars, gods and goddesses and also activities in the mode of play.

The subject matters of this book have been presented in a joyful way. If you read them attentively, you will gradually understand the basic concepts of Hindu Religion. In addition, you can ask any question coming to your mind to your teachers, parents/guardians or your friends.

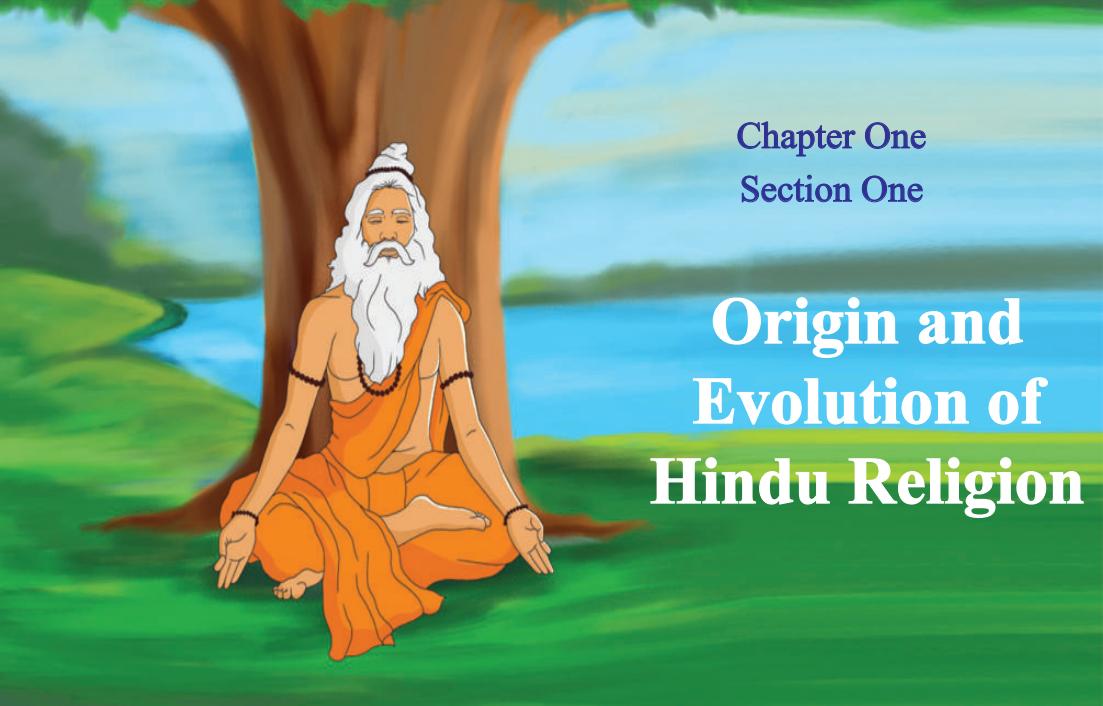
Lots of love and good wishes to you. Let us attain the competency of the Hindi Religion Studies for Class Nine through joy, activity and learning experience.

Hope that your learning of Hindi Religion Studies will be enjoyable.



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Chapter One
Section One

Origin and Evolution of Hindu Religion

Here we see a picture of a family tree. Look at the picture carefully.

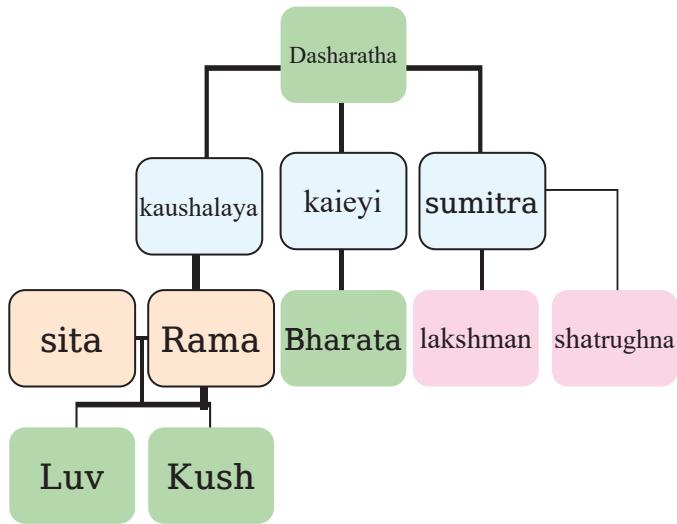


Figure 1.1: Family tree of Lord Rama

Now collect information from your family members and relatives and create your own ‘family tree’.

Table 1.1: My Family Tree

- At different stages of your family tree from your ancestors to the present day, the clothing of people, houses, and things used there have undergone many changes. Present these changes in groups or pairs by creating a timeline using poster paper or other medium. Summarise your information in the timeline below.

Table 1.2: My Ancestors

Great Grandfather	Great Grandmother
Grandfather	Grandmother

- Write down the most significant point you get from the timelines presented.

Table 1.3: Evolution of Human

Hindu Religion has also evolved just as the evolution that has taken place since the time of our ancestors to today's people. Let's learn about the origin and evolution of Hindu Religion.

Origin and Evolution of Hindu Religion

Almost every religion in this world has some pathfinders. However, the Hindu Religion basically has no pathfinder. None introduced this religion. This religion is so ancient that no other religion existed in this region during that time. Some call this religion 'Sanatana' because this religion has been being practised by the inhabitants of India for generations and from time immemorial. It is believed that Sanatana Dharma or Hindu Religion started five to seven thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ. This means that it is a seven to nine thousand year old religion. Almost all contemporary religions have disappeared. Those religions that have survived have very few adherents. On the other hand, there are almost 120 crore people in the world who are Hindu.

Sindhu, Vitasta, Irravati, Chandrabhaga, Shatadru, Bipasha, and Saraswati these seven riverine regions were called Saptasindhu during the ancient times. The present-day Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh, and some parts of Afghanistan were belong to this region. Here the Sanatana Dharma developed centering the Vedas. King Cyrus of Persia (now Iran) invaded the region in the 6th century BC. The Persians could not pronounce 'Saptasindhu' rather they would call it 'Hapta Hindu'. Since then the people of this region were called Hindu by the people of the outside world and their religion was called 'Hindu Religion'. Now, this one is the most popular name.

Hindu Religion is not only a religion but the holder and bearer of the great civilization and culture of this region also. This religion has been patronizing local culture and arts through various religious practices. Their food habits and respect for various flora and fauna are contributing to the conservation of the environment.

Being developed from this Saptasindhu basin, Hindu Religion once spread to Sumatra, Java. The most ancient and the largest Hindu temple 'Angkor Wat' still survives in Cambodia. Besides, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand have a lot of antiquities of Hindu civilization. Garuda, the Vahana (Vehicle) of Lord Vishnu, is the national emblem of Indonesia. There still exist a large number of Hindu communities in Indochina, Africa, and South America.

Foundation of Hindu Religion

The word 'Dharma' is derived from the root 'Dhri'. Dhri means to hold, what a person, thing, or object holds and does not allow him/her to be derailed from the path of humanity- is his religion. Maharshi Patanjali says in his 'Yogadarshan', the power that retains the quality of matter can be called 'Dharma'. The power inherent in human that

can elevate him/her to ‘divinity’ is his/her religion. There are philosophical differences between Hinduism and other religions. Hindu Religion can not be understood without understanding that difference.

No oath is required to get converted to Hindu Religion. This religion is based on free thinking. Hindu Religion gives people the freedom to think and express themselves freely. This religion does not claim to be the best and unique. Therefore, different types of doctrine coexist in this religion. Due to that fact, different religions developed almost without any hindrance in the Saptasindhу basin. Repecting the diversity of others is the teaching of Hindu Religion. Unity in diversity is the main goal of this religion. Because of this liberal strand, this religion has survived so many years. It has been reformed over the ages. Hindus have simply accepted it as ‘Yuga dharma’.

- Write down two such features of Hindu Religion that you like.

Table 1.4: About Hindu Religion

Vedas

Every religion has two parts - theology and worship. There are four stages of Hindu Religion. Manusamhita says,

বেদঃ স্মৃতিঃ সদাচারঃ স্বস্য চ প্রিয়মাত্মনঃ।

এতচ্ছতুবিধং প্রাহঃ সাক্ষাদ্ধ ধর্মস্য লক্ষণম্॥

(Manusamhita, 2/12)

It means- the Vedas, Smriti Shastra, Sadachara (morality), and Words of from conscience are the four absolute or common indications of religion. The nature of Hindu Religion can be understood only by following these four indications sequentially.

Vedas are the main scriptures of Hinduism. They are also considered one of the oldest texts of human civilization. Hinduism evolved based on the Vedas. Vedas are also called the ‘Shruti’ because the disciples used to listen to the gurus and imbibe. The knowledge and philosophy of the Vedas came to the world through sages. The sages did not consider themselves as the creators or writers of the vedas. Hence the Vedas are called ‘Apourusheya’ (not human made).

The great sage Krishnadwaipanaya Vyasadeva divided the entire Veda into four sections- Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda. Each Veda again has four parts- Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka, and Upanishada. There are mantras and hymns in Samhita. There is an explanation of the Samhita, which is Brahmana. The Aranyaka section contains a discussion of the esoteric theories of the Brahmana section. The Upanishada is a compilation of the theoretical judgements and analysis made by different scholars at different times. The Vedas have six disciplines, which are known as Vedangas - Shiksha (Phonetics), Kalpa (Rituals), Nirukta (Etymology), Vyakarana (Grammar), Chanda (Metrics), and Jyotish (Astronomy). These are the supporting books of studying the Vedas.

The position of Smriti is next to Shruti. Kalpa or Kalpasutra is one of the six disciplines of the Vedas. The Kalpasutra contains the rules of state, society, and family life. Subsequently, many scriptures have been written following them. These scriptures together are known as Smritishastras. For example, these are Manusamhita, Yajnavalkya Samhita, Parashara Samhita etc.

Besides, two epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, written by Valmiki and Vyasadeva respectively, are given special status in Hindu Religion. These two books discuss various theories and practices of Hinduism. Hence, both books are given the status of epics as well as scriptures. Besides, there are 18 Mahapuranas and 18 Upapuranas.

- Complete the table below by gathering information about the contents of the four parts of the Vedas.

Table 1.5: The Story of the Vedas

Parts of the Vedas	Content

Evolution and Classification of gods

Rigveda is the oldest scripture of Hindu Religion. In the Rigveda, the total number of gods is said to be thirty-three.

যে দেবাসো দিব্যেকাদশস্ত পৃথিব্যা মধ্যেকাদশস্ত।

যে অক্ষুক্ষিতা মহিনেকাদশস্ত তে দেবাসো যজ্ঞমিমং যুষঘনম।।

(Rigveda-1/139/11)

Meaning: There are eleven gods of the distant sky, eleven gods of the earth and eleven gods of space. They receive Yajna in self-glory. (Rigveda-1/139/11)

But these different gods and goddesses are essentially different manifestations of the same power or god. The ancient sages realized that. So, it is mentioned in the Rigveda:

‘মূর্ধাভূবো ভৱতি নক্ষমগ্নিস্তৎঃ সূর্য জায়তে প্র্যাতরুদ্যন।’ (Rigveda-10/88/6)

Meaning: Agni is the head of the earth at night and he rises as the sun in the morning.

It is stated in the first Mandala of the Rigveda: ‘একং সদ্বপ্রিৱা বহুধা বদন্তি।’ (Rigveda-1/164/46)

Meaning: The same one has been exposed in different identities.

In the Vedic period, Yajnas were organized by treating Agni as the messenger of the gods. Here, Habi (offerings including ghee, cake, and payesh) was offered to various gods. The sages used to propound all the activities of the universe as sacrifices. That is why, Rabindranath Tagore wrote, ‘জগতে আনন্দযজ্ঞে আমার নিমন্ত্রণ, ধন্য হলো ধন্য হলো মানব জীবন।’ (My invitation to the rejoicing of the universe, blessed is the human life.) During that time, the sages sought to gain self-knowledge besides appeasing the gods. They realized the presence of one God everywhere, instead of many gods. However, it is not possible for everyone to realize the concept of formless eternal Brahman. So they worshiped each god according to the various gunas (qualities) and karmas (actions) of God. The gods mentioned in the Vedas are called the Vedic gods.

Agni is mentioned in the Vedas as the god of the earth. He remains always in the earth. Usha is one of the Vedic goddesses. Goddess Usha ends the darkness of the night and begins the day with the rising of the new sun. In the Vedas, Indra is mentioned as the god of heaven. Indra is the manifestation of God's power of rain.

The names of many gods and goddesses who are worshipped today are not found in the Vedas. They are found in the Puranas (mythologies). The gods and goddesses described in the mythologies are known as mythological gods and goddesses. In the mythological era, it was stated of worshiping the gods and goddesses after making idols. At present, there has been much evolution in the form of many gods and goddesses. Again many new gods and goddesses are being worshipped now. The three main mythological gods are Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva or Maheswara.

As the forms of gods and goddesses were envisioned in mantras, idols are also being

made in the same form. In the mythological era, the idols of gods and goddesses were established in the temples. The established gods and goddesses are worshiped with Anjali and Bhogarti of flowers and leaves and ringing of conches, bells, and other musical instruments. Gods like Vishnu, Shiva, Lakshmi, Ganesh, Kali, etc. are worshiped daily. Gods like Durga, Kartik, and Saraswati, etc. are worshipped on special Tithis (dates). Of course, those gods and goddesses that are worshipped daily, many of them are also worshipped on special dates, like Vishnu, Ganesha, Shiva, and Lakshmi. The gods and goddesses who are worshipped from mundane belief are called mundane gods. Local mundane gods and goddesses like Manasha, Sheetala, Banabibi, Dakshin Roy, etc. are worshipped on special dates or times.



Figure 1.4: Banobibi

Fill in the following table with information regarding a mundane god/goddess of your area or known to you. Write the name of your mundane god/goddess in the table heading.

Table 1.5: Description of mundane god/goddess of my area

Story related to worshiping of the gods	The role of this worship for human welfare

Religious Symbols, their Significance and Worshiping Idol

Symbols are very important in Hindu Religion. We manifest formless Brahman through the symbol ‘Om’. Shivalinga is used as a symbol of Nirguna Brahma. The word Shiva means gracious and the word linga means symbol; for this reason the Shivalinga is a symbol of an auspicious universal god. Another meaning of Shiva is that in whom the world remains asleep after the cataclysm. It is mentioned ‘लयं याति इति निष्काम्’. That means Linga is where everything is dissolved. There are Tripundra or three white horizontal lines (tilakas) on the Lingam. This Tripundra is on Shiva’s forehead.

One of the oldest symbols of Hindu Religion is the Swastika symbol. The word Swastika in Sanskrit means welfare or well being. This is used as a symbol of welfare. Besides, it is also used as the combined symbol of our three main gods - Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, which are also the symbols of creation, equilibrium, and cataclysm.



Figure 1.5: Shiblego

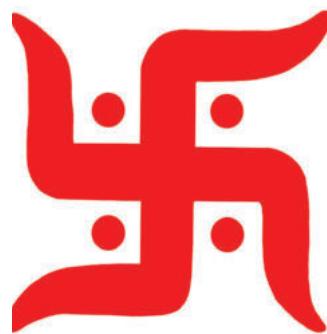


Figure 1.6: Shoskitka symbol

We worship gods as different representation of power of formless Brahman. These gods are also presented to us through various symbols. According to the mythology, the form given to the gods is called idol (Murthi or Pratima). The Hindu philosophy and its artistic sense are beautifully reflected in this idol.

There are three types of Murthis in ‘Shukranti’, a shastra written by Shukracharya.

Sattwik: In this type of idol the god sits in a Yogasana (yogic posture) with hands arranged in a mudra offering the desired object to the devotees.

Rajasik: The gods and goddesses are seated on their vahanas (vehicles) with weapons and ornamented bodies and hands arranged in a mudra offering the desired object to the devotees.

Tamasik: Here the gods and goddesses appear in a terrible appearance armed with weapons.

The idols of the gods and goddesses are made according to the description mentioned in the mythologies. Each god and goddess has his/her own impersonation. It describes the form, physical position, ornaments, vahanas, weapons, clothes, crafts, companions, and attendants etc. of the gods and goddesses. A Jyotirbalaya (a circle of devine light) is used in the idol to project the divinity on the gods and goddesses.

Every god and goddess has some vehicles (vahanas). These vahanas correspond to the power and vision of the gods and goddesses. For example, Swan is the vahana of Saraswati, because the swan can choose only the essence excluding the waste. A swan can drink only the milk that has been mixed with water. Ganesh's vahana is the rat. The tiny vahana allows the giant god Ganesha to see the subtlest objects. Thus Vishnu's vahana is garuda. Shiva's vahana is Taurus. Durga's vahana is lion. These vahanas are of special respect to the Hindus. In this way, Hindus show respect to the animals through the worship of gods and goddesses. It also contributes to the conservation of biodiversity.

Various objects in the hands of gods and goddesses are called Ayudhas (weapons). These weapons represent various mythological stories. Usually these weapons include book, kamandalu, conch, chakra, mace, lotus, shield, sword, plough, bow, arrow, axe, trident etc.

Extra organs of Hindu gods and goddesses also have some significance. For example, Durga symbolizes the invincibility of female power. Goddesses Durga's ten hands symbolize how mothers manage different duties and responsibilities of the family using only two hands. The use of symbols in this way is also evident in modern paintings.

- Complete the following table by discussing in groups/pairs.

Table 1.7: Impersonation of gods and goddesses

Name of gods and goddesses	The power of God which is manifested	Vahana (Vehicles)	Physical Characteristics	Ayudhas (Weapons)	Sattwik/ Rajasik/ Tamasic

External Characteristics of Religion

Manusamhita mentions ten special characteristics of religion.

धृतिः क्षमा दमोहस्तेयः

शोचमिन्द्रियमनिहः।

धीर्विद्या सत्यमक्रोधो

दशकं धर्मलक्ष्मणम् ॥ (Manusamhita, ६/९२)

Meaning: The ten special characteristics of religion are endurance, forgiveness, self control, not to steal or abduct, sanctity, controlling senses, wisdom, knowledge, truth and anger.

- Put a tick mark (✓) on the appropriate box in the following table individually after discussing the characteristics of religion in pairs/groups.

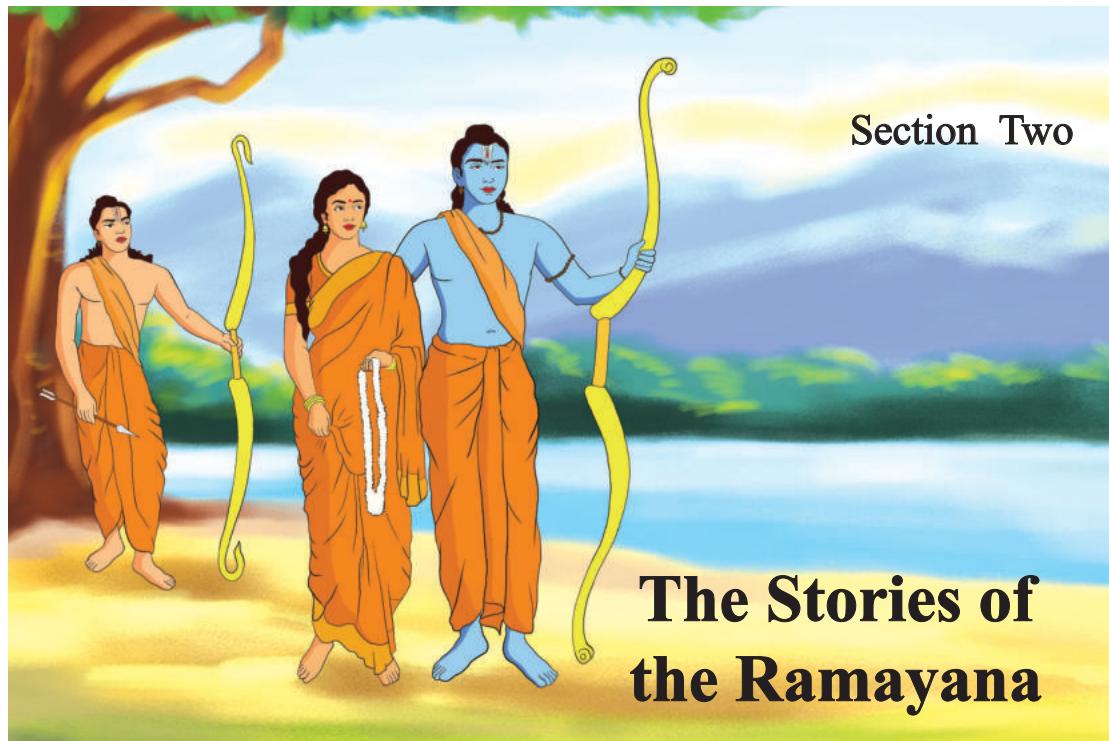
Table 1.8: My Religion

Characteristics of religion.	don't obey	try to obey	obey	I have something to say (comment)
Endurance				
Forgiveness				
Self control				
Not to steal				
Sanctity				
Controlling senses				
Wisdom				
Knowledge				
Truth				
Anger				

- Describe the evolution of Hinduism by presenting infographics (informative and aesthetic pictures, charts and text) posters in groups/pairs.

2. Write a paragraph on the positive aspects of Hindu Religion that you can practise in your life.

For an Elegant Life



Section Two

The Stories of the Ramayana

You have heard and read many stories of the Ramayana. Those stories of the Ramayana are as interesting as some of its wonderful characters.

List the name of some of the characters from the Ramayana you like most.

Table 1.9: Favourite Characters of the Ramayana

Discuss in pairs/groups and have a character chosen from everyone's list. Create a play with all the chosen characters and represent it.

Choose the most significant character from the drama you have seen. Write in the following table about what characteristics make this character remarkable to you.

Table 1.10: Important Characters of the Ramayana

Name and identity of the character	Remarkable Characteristics

The Ramayana

The Ramayana is an important scripture of Hindu Religion. Adikabi Valmiki is the author of it. Here are the entire life-stories of Ramachandra from his birth to death. Ramchandra's virtues such as righteousness, honesty, bravery, integrity, sacrifice, self-restraint, devotion, and love for subjects etc. are revealed in these stories. Various subplots are added to the main story.

The Ramayana is divided into seven chapters- AdiKanda, Ayodhyakanda, Aranyakanda, Kishkindhyakanda, Sundarakanda, Yuddhakanda, and Uttarakanda.

The chapters are again divided into a total of five hundred sargas or sections. These sargas contain more than twenty four thousand verses.

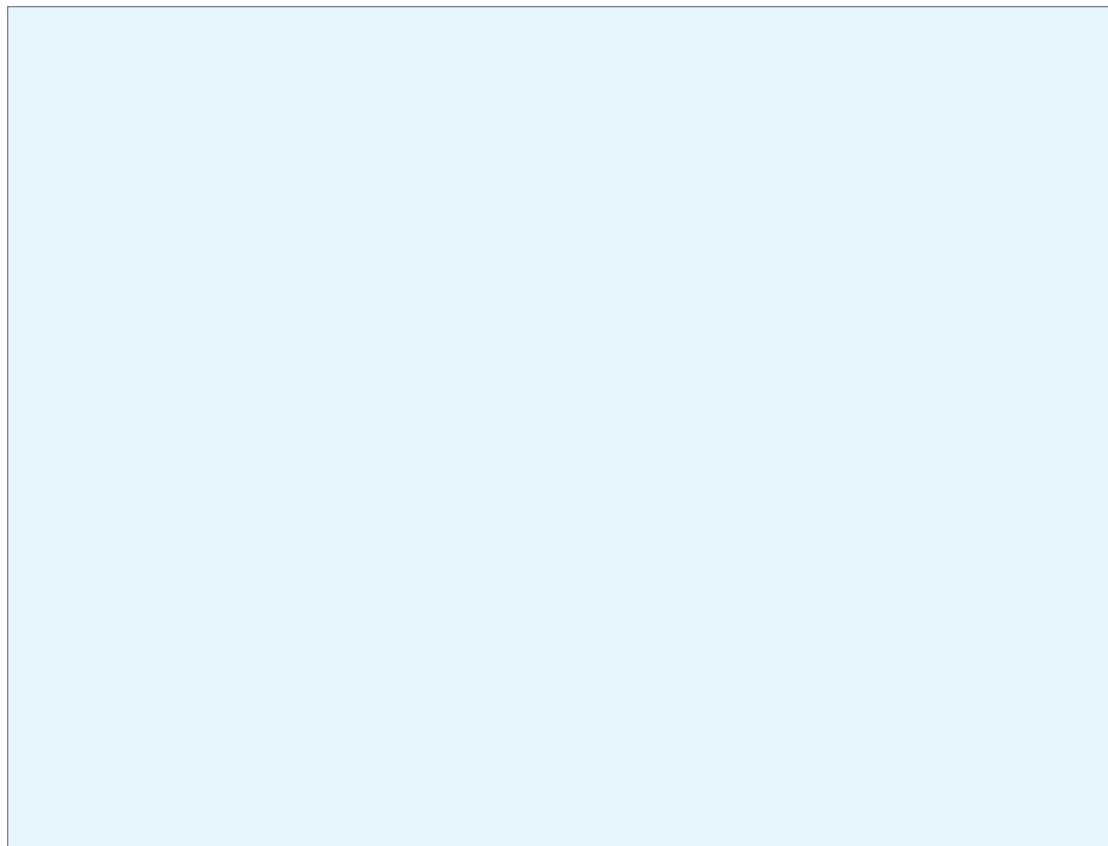
The content of the Ramayana is briefly presented here:

1. AdiKanda: In Treta Yuga there was a city called Ayodhya in Kosala. This city was comparable to Amaravati, the capital of heaven. None could conquer this city by warfare. Hence its name was Ayodhya. Dasharatha was the king of Ayodhya. His three queens were Kausalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra. Kausalya gave birth to Rama, Kaikeyi

gave birth to Bharata and Sumitra gave birth to Lakshmana and Shatrughna. They grew up with proper education.

- Draw a fictional picture of Ayodhya and give a title to the picture.

Table 1.11: A fictional picture of Ayodhya



Meanwhile, the Rakshasa (the demons) started making huge nuisance in Viswamitra Muni's Siddhashram. To get rid of them he brought Rama and Lakshmana to the Siddhashram. Rama killed demonic Tadka, her son Marich and also Subahu.

Then everyone came to Mithila. King Janaka of Mithila had a daughter named Sita. King Janak's desire was to marry Sita off to the one who could tie Guna (string) to the Har Dhanu (a bow named after Hara or Shiva) at his palace. At Viswamitra's command, Rama picked up the bow. He pulled the bow so forcefully that it broke into two parts. After that Sita got married to Rama. King Janak had two more daughters. Among them Urmila got married to Lakshmana and Shatrughna got married to Shrutkirti. King Janak's brother's daughter Mandavi was married off to Bharata.

On the way back to Ayodhya, Parashurama blocked Rama's way. Parashurama was a

devotee to Shiva. He thought that as Rama broke the bow of Shiva's name, he insulted Shiva. However, he calmed down by Rama's sweet rational words.

2. Ayodhyakanda:

In Ayodhya preparations for the coronation ceremony of Dasharatha's eldest son Ramchandra began. All the relatives, Munis, and the Sages joined the ceremony. Their joy knew no bounds. However, Rani Kaikeyi's servant Manthara was not happy. She went to Kaikeyi and said, "If Rama is the king, what will happen to her son Bharata? He would remain Rama's slave. When you took care of King Dasharatha, he wanted to give you two boons. Today is the chance to ask for that boons and make Bharata the king." At Manthara's suggestion Kaikeyi asked the king for the boons by saying,

এক বরে ভরতের দেহ সিংহাসন।
 আর বরে শ্রীরামের পাঠাও কানন॥
 চতুর্দশ বৎসর থাকুক রাম বনে।
 ততকাল ভরত বসুক সিংহাসনে ॥

Hearing this, the king lost consciousness. Meanwhile, Rama heard everything and decided to go into exile to fulfil his father's words. His wife Sita and younger brother Laskhmana also went with him. The people of Ayodhya bade them goodbye with tears in their eyes. King Dashratha died of shock for losing his son. Bharata met Rama in the forest and begged him to come back to Ayodhya. But he failed and returned with Rama's Paduka (shoes). He placed the paduka in the throne and started ruling the kingdom as the representative of Rama.

3. Aranyakanda:

During the exile Rama and Laskhmana killed Biradh Rakshasa. For this Sage Agastya gifted Rama many weapons. While staying in the Panchvati forest, Suparnakha, Ravana's sister, offered love to Rama and Lakshmana and was rejected. Lakshmana cut off Suparnakha's nose and ears. When the Rakshasas attacked Rama and Lakshmana, fourteen thousand and fourteen hundred Rakshasas got killed by Rama. To avenge his sister's insult, Ravana abducted Sita and took her to Lanka. When the bird Jatayu intervened, Ravana cut off his wings. Jatayu died after he had informed Rama and Lakshmana of Sita's abduction.

4. Kishkindhyakanda:

Rama and Lakshmana reached Rishyamukh Mountain in search of Sita. There they met Sugriva, the monkey king. Sugriva made friendship with Rama by making the fire as a witness. Sugriva and Bali are two brothers. Bali was the king of Kishkindhya. Once Bali went to kill a demon, but could not return on time. Everyone thought that Bali must be killed, So Bali's brother Sugriva ascended to the throne of Kishkindhya.

However, Bali returned and chased away Sugriva by inflicting torture. Fearing death, Sugriva started living on Rishyamukh Mountain. Bali would not enter this mountain for the fear of Sage's curse.

After the advice of Rama, Sugriva invited Bali to fight in a dual. Rama shot an arrow to Bali from a distance and killed him. Sugriva was made the king of Kishkindhya. The monkeys went in different directions after the advice of King Sugriva. They wanted the information to know where is Sita. When Hanuman, Jambuban, and others reached Vindya Mountain, they met Sampati, the elder brother of Jatayu. Sampati informed them that Ravana, the king of Lanka, took Sita to Lanka by air. Hanuman climbed to the top of Mahendra Mountain to cross the ocean.

5. Sundarakanda:

Hanuman reached Lanka finally after crossing various obstacles. He met Sita in Ravana's Ashokvana. Then Hanuman started destroying Ashokvana. Indrajit, Ravana's son came there and captured Hanuman with a Brahma-Jal arrow and brought him before Ravana. Hanuman's tail was put on fire with cloth, oil and ghee. He then started leaping and setting fire to palace after palace. Hanuman returned and informed Rama of all the news.

6. Yuddhakanda:

A floating bridge was built over the ocean. Rama-Lakshmana and the monkeys went to Lanka in groups. Meanwhile, righteous Vibhishana, younger brother of Ravana, took shelter at Rama's feet.



Picture 1.7: Monkeys are building bridge in the sea

Then a great war broke out between the sides. Kumbhkarna, Ravana's younger brother, used to sleep for six months and wake only for one day. He was awakened before time and was brought to the battle ground. He was killed by the Aindravana of Rama. Ravana's son Indrajit was killed by the Aindravana of Lakshmana. Lakshmana was knocked unconscious by Ravana's Shakti weapon. Hanuman went to the Himalaya to bring the antidote. However, being failed to identify the right antidote, he lifted the entire mountain peak. Lakshmana got cured by the application of the right medicine.

Ramachandra tied Brahmastra to his bow. The heaven and Earth began to shake. Ravana, the king of Lanka, died after being struck by the Brahmastra. At the end of the war, Vibhishana was made the king of Lanka. Now, Sita, for whom so many preparations were made to rescue, was brought to Rama. Ramchandra did not show any extra emotion or excitement to Sita. Because ram was not only husband of Sita but also a king. Sita did not tolerate that contempt of Ram. Sita decided to sacrifice her life in the fire. However, the god Agni came out of the blazing fire with Sita in his arms. At the end everyone rode the Pushpak chariot and left for Ayodhya. Rama's coronation was completed in Ayodhya.

7. Uttarakanda:

Meanwhile in Ayodhya, there was a rumour among the people. They thought as Sita lived in Ravana's Lanka, the purity of her character might be lost. King Ramchandra decided to send Sita into exile to please his subjects. On Rama's order, Lakshmana left pregnant Sita in Maharshi Valmiki's Ashram. There Sita gave birth to two sons, named Luv and Kush.

Twelve years have passed since then. King Ramachandra started Ashwamedha Yajna. Sage Valmiki attended the Yajna along with Luv and Kush. He requested Rama to accept Sita cordially. However, the subjects present there kept silent. Then Rama told Sita to undergo again the Agnipariksha (fire ordeal). Sita felt humiliated incredibly. She requested the goddess Earth to take her in. The Earth split into two and from there a snake-bearing throne emerged. Devi Sita sat on the throne and entered the underworld.

Then Ramachandra, under the instruction of Mahakala, abandoned Lakshmana one day. Lakshmana went to the river Sarayu and left his body under a great penance. After a few days, Ramachandra also decided to leave this human body and came near the bank of the river Sarayu. His relatives followed him. After Ramchandra descended into the water, Brahma arrived there. At the request of Brahma, Rama entered Vishnu's effulgence. His devotees also attained enlightenment by sacrificing their lives in the water of the river Sarayu.

- Complete the following table individually with your favourite topic from the seven chapters of the Ramayana.

Table 1.12: Topics that I like most

Serial	Kanda	Topics that I Like and Causes of my Interest
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

- What lessons from the Ramayana we can apply in our personal lives and fill in the table individually

Table 1.13: The Ideals and Significance of the Ramayana

Ideals and Significance of the Ramayana	Explanation
Patriotism	
Brotherhood	

- Since the time of Ramayana, there have been many changes in the social system of today. Many beliefs, behaviours, and rules have been changed.

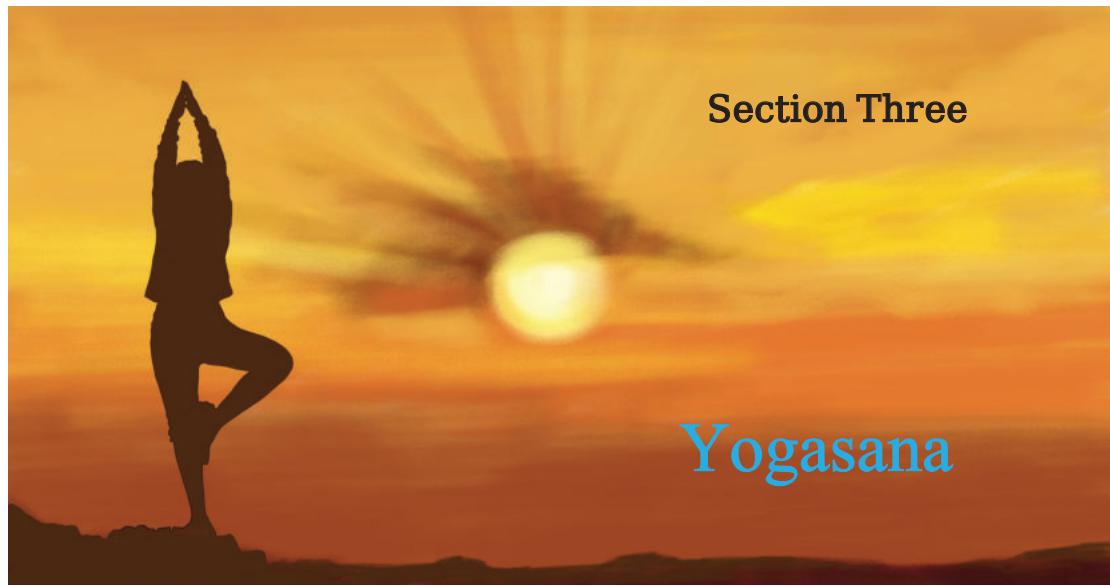
Now, discuss in groups/pairs and make a table mentioning the similarities and differences between the women of the present time and the time of Ramayana.

Table 1.14: A Comparative Study of women during the time of Ramayana and the present time

Similarities	Dissimilarities
1.	
2.	
3.	

- Find out in groups/pairs what we could do to establish women's rights in society and present them using different ways
- Write down what you will do to establish the importance and honour of women.

Table 1.15 My Duties to Protect Women's Rights



World Yoga Day is observed all over the world each year on the 21st of June. This day has also been observed in our country for the past few years. Now, write your experience of participation in a program of Yoga Day held in your school or locality and exchange with others through presentation in your class.

Table 1.16: Memories of Yoga Day

“আত্মানং বিদ্ধি”- know thyself, that means, know the eternal soul. Ultimate joy prevails in growing into your ownself. The ultimate source of joy is yoga. The word yoga comes from the Sanskrit root ‘yuj’. The word ‘yuj’ means to involve oneself in the work closely. There are some steps to get connected with yoga.

Raj Yoga: Deeply Experiencing the Supreme Being in the Soul through Patanjali's Yoga Darshana.

Karma Yoga: Being constantly engaged in work. Performing the duties without attachment to the results of the work.

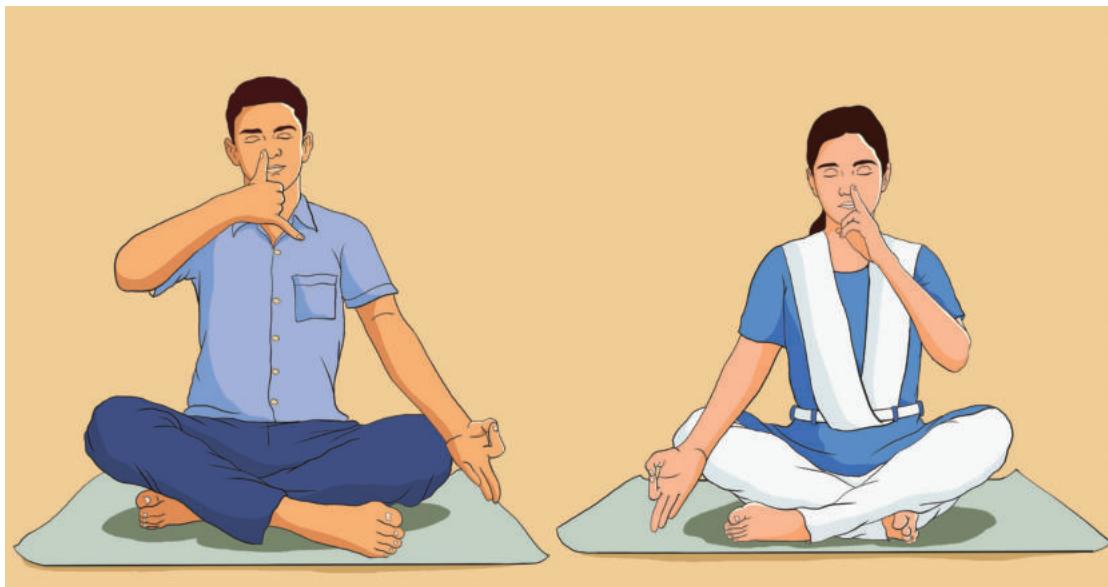
Jnana Yoga: To realize the Absolute Truth beyond name and form. There is no need for meditation taking the special name or form in thought. This Yoga Sadhana is possible only through knowledge.

Bhakti Yoga: Worshipping of the Lord through love full of devotion. The word Bhakti comes from the word ‘Bhaj’, which means to share or participate. Bhaktiyoga is a combination of honour, belief, devotion, affection or loving pursuit.

Hatha Yoga: The word Hatha means ‘to force’. It means applying force to the body through various techniques or asanas.

A daily practice of Pranayama and meditation is necessary to understand these yogas well.

1. Pranayama: Pranayama increases vitality by controlling the rate of breathing in the body. As a result, our body is saved from disease and premature death.



চিত্র ১.৮: প্রাণায়াম

2. Meditation: Meditation is the most important part of the Vedas, Upanishads

and Patanjali's Yogasutra, i.e. Raja Yoga. Through this real life and soul can be closely observed.

In previous classes, we have learned about several yogasanas and practised them in our daily life. Yoga is very beneficial for our body and mind. This time we will learn about three more Yogasanas.

Tadasana

Tada means mountain. In this posture the body looks like a mountain, for which it is called Parvatasana or Tadasana.

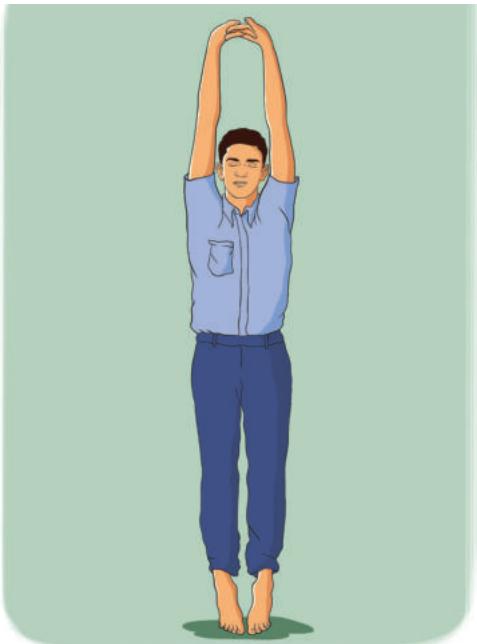


Figure 1.8: Tadasana

Procedure:

3. First, stand with your feet together on a yoga mat or in a comfortable place. Thighs and knees of both legs will be close. Compressing the buttock muscles pull them inward. Stand with the chest stretched and the spine straight without inflating the stomach.
4. Both the ankles and the toes will be attached to each other. Feet will remain combined. Feet will remain connected to the ground.
5. If there is difficulty in standing or keeping the body balanced, then keep a space of two or three inches between the feet.

6. Hands should be kept relaxed and extended on both sides of the body and the fingers should be attached to each other.
7. After inhaling a long breath both hands should be raised above the head along the ears.
8. Insert the right fingers between the left fingers and turn the palms upwards.
9. Spread all the body weight on both legs. It should be kept in mind that the body weight should fall only on the ankles or soles of the feet.
8. Placing the body in this state keep breathing normal and stand for thirty seconds.
9. Then take rest for thirty seconds in Shavasana. Continue this asana for two more times.

Benefits of Tadasana:

1. It is a practice to stand with equal weight on both legs.
2. Prevents curvature of the spine.
3. Knee pain is relieved. Thigh muscles are strengthened.
4. Provides strength to the body.
5. Helps increase physical height.
6. Reduces depression and stress.
7. Helps increase morale, confidence, concentration and enthusiasm.
8. Helps reduce tension by relaxing the nerves.

Caution:

If you have the problems with low blood pressure, migraine, insomnia etc., it is better to avoid this asana.

Adhomukh Virasana This asana is done keeping the face down towards the ground.
This asana is also called Mudhasana by many people.

Adhomukh Virasana

This asana is done keeping the face down towards the ground. This asana is also called Mudhasana by many people.



Figure 1.9: Adhomukh Virasana

1. Kneeling on a Yoga mat or a flat place keep both knees and feet together. Hips will be on both ankles.
2. Both the hands should be placed gently on both knees.
3. After that, both hands should be straitened and pulled to the top of the head by the sides of the ears and brought to a straight position.
4. Try to raise both the arms as high as possible. In this condition, the knees should never leave the ground and rise upward.
5. Breathe slowly and deeply from inside the chest.
6. After inhaling a full chest, bend the body toward and try to touch the ground. In this position the arms can not be folded and the buttocks should be kept over the ankles.
7. The forehead will touch the ground when the hands touch the ground vertically.
8. Both palms should be attached to the ground and fingers should be extended.
9. The chin should be pulled slowly towards the knees. The chin and the knees will come into a connected position.
10. Stay in this position for 30 seconds keeping the breathing normal.

11. Then take rest for thirty seconds in Shavasana. Continue this asana for two more

Benefits of Adhomukh Virasana:

1. This asana helps to calm the mind by relieving fear, anxiety, and anger.
2. It makes the spine strong and relieves arthritis in leg muscles and bones. Shoulder muscle pain is also relieved.
3. Digestive system is also strengthened. As a result, indigestion, heartburn and gastric are removed. Appetite increases due to increased digestion. It can cure stomach diseases like constipation, dysentery etc.
4. It is beneficial to diabetes and asthma.
5. Reduces belly and hip fat. Thighs become strong.

Caution:

This asana can be dangerous for high blood pressure patients.

Reverse Virabhadrasana:

Reverse Virabhadrasana has much potentiality in Yoga Shastra. This is also called the reverse warrior pose. This is a special variation of Virabhadrasana.



Figure 1.10 : Reverse Virabhadrasana

Procedure:

1. At first, stand straight on a flat place and raise both hands above the head.
2. Both hands should be kept in touch of ears and the palms should be turned forward.
3. Turn left. The left foot should be turned to the left two to two and a half feet away from the right foot. The right leg will remain in the previous position.
4. Bend the left knee and keep the body straight. The right leg will be kept backward and straight.
5. Bending the body backwards in half-moon pose, the right hand behind should be placed in front of the right foot.
6. Stand straight in this position for ten seconds.
7. By changing the hands and feet, repeat the asana.
8. After leaving the asana take rest for twenty seconds in Shavasana. Repeat the asana for two more times.

Benefits of Reverse Virabhadrasana:

1. The soft spine bones get strengthened and the elasticity of the spine increases.
2. The imbalance of the rib bones gets eliminated.
3. Abdominal and buttock fat gets reduced.

- Discuss in groups/pairs what the benefits of Yoga are and write them individually.

Table 1.17: Importance of Yogasana

Name of Yogasana	Importance

- Organize a Yoga fair or Yoga festival at the initiative of your Yoga club. Invite your teachers, staff members, and students to the fair.
- Make a slogan related to Yogasana to create awareness about Yoga to inform everyone about its benefit.

Table 1.18: Yoga Festival Slogan

- Write in brief about the Yoga day festival

Date:

Those who were present:

Events:

Our achievements through this festival:

Chaper Two
Section One

Worships, Festivals and Rituals



All of us have taken part in various social festivals of Hindu Religion like marriage, Annaprasana, Hatekhari, etc. Besides, we also have participated in Durga Puja, Kali Puja, Saraswati Puja etc. Many of us even have the experience of working as an associate in organizing these pujas at home or in the neighbourhood.

- Describe one such programme of Hindu Religion that you have taken part in.

Table 2.1: The program that I attended

- Hindu religious ceremonies have some distinctive rules and regulations. Discuss with your parents or any religiously experienced person and enlist the necessary ingredients, rules and regulations for any celebration/worship/festival

Table 2.2: Rules of Worship

Name and Purpose of celebration / worship/festival:	
Required Ingredients:	

Rules and regulations:	
------------------------	--

All these different types of worship and festival, different rules and regulations of rituals, and different types of materials needed are altogether called worship ingredients.

Puja means praising or paying homage. Differences in worship methods are seen across countries and regions. However, there is no difference in basic rules and rituals of worship. The methods of worship and Mantras are different according to different gods and goddesses. The rules and regulations which are followed during worship are known as rules of worship or Puja-bidhi.

During the Vedic period, worship was based on Yajna. Later, in the Puranic period, gods and goddesses were worshiped as incarnations of various powers of God. Sages have described the forms of the gods and goddesses by observing them in meditation. Hindu Religion is not a polytheistic religion, though worship of many gods and goddesses is practised here. The gods and goddesses are not the God, the Almighty. They are only the manifestation of various forms of the God's power. There is a practice of worship contemplating the form of God and gods in pots, idols, sacrificial altars, fire, water, Yantras (special symbols), images of idols, Mandalas, and in hearts. At present, the practice of worshiping in idols and images, pots, etc. is very common.

Ingredients or Materials of Worship

Flowers, Durba grass, Wood Apple leaves, Holy Basil (Tulsi), Rice (not boiled), sandalwood, incense, lamp, and Naivedya etc. are used as worship ingredients. Usually the gods are worshiped with ten types of ingredients. However, on special occasions,

the gods are worshipped in sixteen ingredients.

Panchopachara (Five Ingredients) – Sandalwood, Flower), Incense, Lamp, and Naivedya are the five main ingredients or Panchopachara.

Dasopachara (Ten Ingredients) – Padya (water to wash feet), Arghya (water to drink), Achamaniya (water to clean mouth before eating), Snaniya (water to take bath), Punarachamaniya (water to clean mouth after eating), Gandha (sandalwood), flower, Incense, Lamp, and Naivedya (a special types of offerings) are the ten main ingredients or Dasopachara.

Sodasopachara (Sixteen Ingredients) – Rajatasana (Silver Seat), Avahana (invocation), Padya (water to wash feet), Arghya (water to drink), Achamaniya (water to clean mouth before eating), Madhuparka, Snaniya (water to take bath), Cloths, Covering, Sandalwood, Flower, Incense, Lamp, Naivedya, Punarachamaniya (water to clean mouth after eating), and Tambula (Batel Leaf) are the main sixteen ingredients or Sodasopachara. One of the sixteen ingredients in Sodasopachara is Madhuparka. This Madhuparka is made with a combination of milk, curd, ghee, honey, and a little water.



Figure 2.1: Ingredients of Worship

Each god loves different kinds of flowers and leaves more and again does not like some flowers or leaves at all. For example, Dhutra and Akanda flowers are auspicious in Shiva Puja, white flowers in Narayan Puja, and red flowers in Durga Puja. Vishnu or Narayana must be worshiped with Tulsi leaves. Shiva likes wood-apple leaves. Basil leaves are forbidden in Ganesha, Shiva and Durga puja. On the other hand, wood-apple

leaves are prohibited in Narayan and Surya (the Sun god) Puja.

The significance of some ingredients of worship is highlighted here.

1. Idol (Vigraha or Pratima): The devotee attains the meeting with the Supreme Soul if he/she is deeply absorbed with the form of the Idol.

2. Pither or earthen pot (Ghat): Ghot, used in worship, are made of clay or metal objects. Ghat is the symbol of welfare. This indicates the earth or human body. The water of the Ghat is a symbol of life and Kulkundalini or the holy Ganga. Amrapallava (leaves of the mango tree) on the mouth of the Ghat indicates the developing progress. The coconut set on the mouth of the Ghat represents wisdom or head. The broad part of the Ghat represents the Earth and the neck part represents Fire and the open mouth represents Air i.e. the form of life. Durba, rice, and Naivadya on the Ghat are the symbols of the sustenance of the living world. The flowing water of the Ghat reveals the relationship of creative melody with music and the living world.

3. Pradeep (Lamp): The light of the lamp symbolizes knowledge.

4. Conch: Conch creates auspicious sacred sounds. It calls the devotees to the world of knowledge and devotion.

5. Garland of Flower: Garland of Flower is an auspicious ingredient to honour and decorate.

6. Asana: Asanas are used for sitting of gods.

7. Crown: The crown is a symbol of high honour.

8. Betel and Betel-nut: Betel is a symbol of purity. The hard part of the Betel-nut symbolizes our egotism, which is offered to the god at the end of the worship.

9. Camphor (Karpoor): Fragranta camphor is a symbol of purity and softness.

10. Ganga Water (Gangajol): The Ganga water is a symbol of purity. It is believed that this water cures various ailments. This water is considered to be helpful in increasing spiritual thoughts and material wealth.

11. Plate (Thala): Thala is a symbol of a gathering of all ingredients.

12. Incense: Incense is a symbol of fragrance and good deeds, which keeps the free from the influence of evil forces.

13. **Sandalwood (Chandana):** The scent of sandalwood creates a holy atmosphere.
 14. **Abeer (Colourful powder):** Abeer is a cure for diseases and a symbol of a good heart. So, this material is used in Dol Yatra or Holi festival and in various pujas.
 15. **Rice:** Rice symbolizes material food, which sustains the prana, which is the form of body for life.
 16. **Naivadya (special type of offering):** Flowers, fruit, sweet food items etc. are offered as Naivadya, which indicates surrender.
 17. **Pancharati:** Pancharati is a unique means of uniting Panchabhuta with the Supreme Soul.
 18. **Bell:** The bell symbolizes auspicious sounds.
 19. **Turmeric:** Turmeric indicates pure thoughts and attracts the mind. Turmeric has herbal properties. It also refers to goddess Durga (goddess Vasanti).
 20. **Sacred Thread:** The sacred thread is a symbol of bonding. Therefore, thread is used around the arrowhead during Ghatbandhan.
- Make a list of the name of the ingredients of worship you like most, their main features and significance, and mention how they have a positive impact on you. One example is provided for your convenience.

Table 2.4: Ingredients of Worship

Ingredients	Features	Positive Influence
Lamp	Light of Knowledge	Expands perspective by eliminating ignorance.

Musical Instruments of Worship: Musical instruments like Kansa (brass plate), Ghanta (bell), Dhak (Drum), Dhol (Small Drum), Sanai (Clarinet), etc. are played in the worship of gods and goddesses. The bell is said to be a ‘Universal Instrument’. In the absence of other instruments, puja can be performed by just ringing the bell. However, one or other musical instrument is prohibited in the worship of one god or another. For example, bells are prohibited in Lakshmi Puja, Cymbals in Shiva Puja, flutes in Durga Puja, drum in Brahma puja, and Conch in Surya Puja.

Aarti of Worship: While playing the bell with the left hand, the worshiper has to bow to the gods/goddess four times to the Sricharan (feet), two times on his/her navel, three times on his/her face, seven times on the entire body. Besides, there is a trend of using peacock feather fans.

Now, let's learn about various worships and festivals of Hinduism.

Kali Puja: The word ‘Kali’ is the feminine form of the word ‘Kal’ (time). The word ‘Kal’ means ‘Krishna’ or ‘Absolute Dark’. It is Kali who composes time in the real sense. Goddess Kali is a form of mother Durga. According to Shakta, She is the Supreme Brahman. Kali stands upon an immovable object which is Shiva. Shiva is still and silent. On the other hand, Kali is the ‘symbol of speed’. This motion is the life force of the world. Matripuja (worshiping mother) has been practised in Hinduism since long ago. Among them, Kalipuja is especially notable. Kalipuja is the most popular practice of worship in Hindu society after Lakshmi and Saraswati puja.

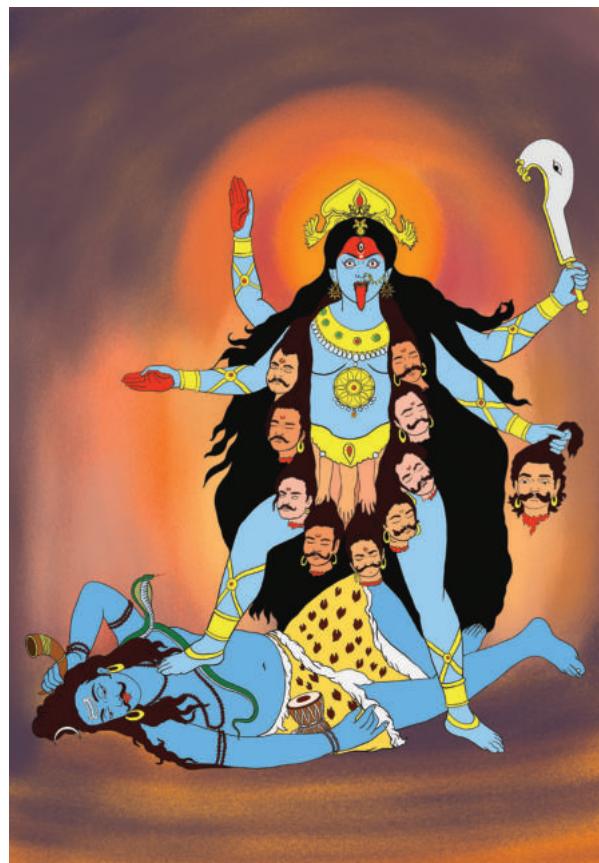


Figure 2.2: goddess Kali

Significance of Idol of Kali

The idol of Kalimata has some special significance. She has four hands. The upper right hand holds Abhayamudra and the left hand holds a sword. There is a Baramudra in the lower right hand and a severed head in the left. There is a garland of severed heads around the neck of the Devi. The head contains five senses, i.e. eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin, which manifest all types of knowledge. Again the number of heads is fifty, which expresses knowledge as a symbol of fifty letters in Sanskrit. The fifty severed hands at the waist of the goddess are the symbols of action. She is biting her red tongue with white teeth. It means refuting the Rajoh Guna with the Sattwa Guna, i.e. conquering the pleasure with renunciation. The cremation abode of the goddess indicates the final refuge of the living being after suffering from the result of the action. Her three eyes are the eyes of Manas, Jnana, and Divya. Mahakal Shiva lies at the feet of the goddess, who is the cremation-dweller and self-sacrificing. This posture of Swami Mahakaal Shiva is shown to pacify the dancing goddess after the destruction of the Asuras. Moreover, as the mother of the world, the goddess rose above all types of

shame and became Digambara.

Time Schedule of Kali Puja

Kali is worshipped in two ways- at home or in a public temple. Kali Puja is performed in the Amavasya Tithi of the month of Kartik, which is the most popular time. Apart from this, Ratanti Kali Puja on Krishna Chaturdashi Tithi of the month of Magh and Falharini Kali Puja on Amabasya Tithi of the month of Jaistha are also quite popular. Besides, daily Puja is also performed in the temple of the goddess Kali.

The Method of Worshipping Kali

Kali Puja is performed by making an idol at home or in a Mandop. Kali Puja is performed late at night. The puja begins with Chakshudan (Offering Eyes to the goddess) and Prana Pratishtha (Consecrating the idol). After meditation, Puja, Aarti, Bhog, etc. the worship ends with prostration and flower offering.

Dhyanam of Kali Puja

Meaning: The goddess Kali is Sabaruda (who stands on dead body), Bhima (big sized), and terrible. She is Trinayani her teeth terrible, and her tongue is fierce. She is free-haired and holds a human head and sword in her hands. Another two hands show Var and Abhoi Mudra. The goddess is smiling.

Pranam Mantra goddess Kali

কালি কালি মহাকালি কালিকে পাপনাশিনি।
ধর্মার্থমোক্ষদে দেবি মহাকালি নমোহস্তুতে॥

Meaning: O Kali, Mahakali, you are Kalika and remover of sin. I salute you, O goddess of Dharma, asset, and salvation giver.

Teaching and Impact of Kali Puja

The goddess Kali destroys all the evil forces in the world and spreads the good news to all. She is the resistive force of injustice and a benefactor. She nurtures her devotees as a mother. She is engaged in establishing justice in society. She always blesses us. We learn from the goddess Kali to resist injustice and to become gentle towards the common people. She loves her children and cherishes them. At the same time, if the evil forces want to do harm to her children, Maa Rudra immediately destroys those evil forces by holding Chamundamurti. These stories are available in mythology. So, by worshipping the goddess Kali we can get mother's love as well as protection from evil forces.

A fair is held on the occasion of the Puja. People, irrespective of caste, creed, and religion, join the festival. All celebrate the Puja with rejoicing. It also creates a social bond. This is a special significance of Kali Puja. This puja has a positive impact on our socio-economic, familial, and moral life.

- Write a point on Goddess Kali which you think is beneficial for the society with explanation.

Table 2.5 Significance of Kali worshipng



Figure 2.3: Sri Krishna's Janmaleela

The Story of Janmashtami

Janmashtami is one of the major religious events of the Hindus. Lord Krishna's birth festival is celebrated every year on Ashtami tithi of Krishna Paksha of the month of Bhadra. On this day, Hindus in Bangladesh and all over the world celebrate Janmashtami in a due dignity with Janmashtami Vrata.

Lord Sri Krishna was born as the eighth child of Vasudeva and Devaki. Devaki's elder brother Kansa imprisoned their father Ugrasena and grabbed the throne of Mathura. Soon after the marriage of Vasudeva and Devaki, Kansa came to know from a godly oracle that he would be killed by Devaki's eighth child. Hearing this, Kansa imprisoned Devaki and Vasudeva. He killed their six children one by one. At the behest of Sri Hari Vasudeva implanted the embryo from Devaki's seventh womb into Rohini's own womb and Rohini gave birth to the child Balaram. Lord Sri Krishna was born as their eighth child.

At the divine command, Vasudeva took his newborn son Krishna on the very night of his birth to Gokula from the prison of Kansa. Yashoda and Nanda became his new

parents.

Kansa sent rakshasas like Putna, Shakatasura, Trinavartasura, Vatsasura, Bakasura, Dhenukasura, and Aghasura to kill Sri Krishna at his childhood. However, Lord Sri Krishna killed each one of them.

Method of Observing Janmashtami Vrata

On the day before observing Lord Krishna's Janmashtami Vrata, one has to observe abstinence and take Havishhyanna. On the day of the Puja, one has to take a bath early in the morning and keep a fasting. According to the Tithi, keeping the Shalagram in front of the Vigraha of Krishna (in the form of Gopala) is worshipped in various rituals at night. A Gopal-shaped idol is placed in a fruit or in a sweet gourd before the Puja to symbolize Krishna's birth. After birth, the navel-cord-cutting ceremony is celebrated with a new knife and silk. Then the goddess Shasthi is worshipped. After that, the important Samskaras including Namakaran, Chudakaran, and Upanayana of Sri Krishna are also performed with due dignity.

Meditation on Lord Krishna in Child Form

মাঞ্চাপি বালকং সুপ্তং পর্যজ্ঞে স্তনপার্ষিগ্নম্ ।
শ্রীবৎসবক্ষঃপূর্ণাঙ্গং নীলোৎপলদলচ্ছবিম্ ॥

Meaning: The Lord in the form of a boy is lying on the couch suckling the breast. His chest is full of divine beauty and his body looks like the petals of a blue lotus.

Puja Mantra

"ওঁ ক্রীঁ শ্রীকৃষ্ণায় নমঃ।"

After meditation and chanting of Mantras, one has to set fire with Veda Mantras and add ghee to do Homa. The Mantra of Homa is "ও ধর্মায় ধর্মেশ্বরায় ধর্মপতয়ে ধর্মসন্তায় গোবিন্দায় নমো নমঃ স্বাহা। After that, Chandraghrya should be given with molasses mixed ghee. During this time, one has to sit in Virasana with conch water, Kush, sandalwood, Durba, Atap Rice (rice made from unboiled paddy) and offer to Chandra (Moon god). And the mantra has to be chanted,

“ক্ষীরোদান্বিসম্ভূত অগ্নিনেত্রসমুক্তব। গৃহাগার্য্যং শশাঙ্কেদং রোহিণ্য। ব্রহ্মাত্মে সহিতো মম ॥”

Pranam Mantra of the Moon god

“ও জ্যোৎস্নায় পতয়ে তুভ্যং জ্যোতিষাং পতয়ে নমঃ। নমস্তে রোহিণীকান্ত সুধাবাস নমোহস্তুতে ॥

নতোমঙ্গল দীপায় শিরোরঞ্জায় ধূর্জটেঃ। কলাভিবর্দ্ধমানায় নমশচন্দ্রায় চারবে ।”

Pranam Mantra of Sri Krishna

শ্রী কৃষ্ণায় বাসুদেবায় হরয়ে পরমাত্মানে।
 প্রগত ক্লেশনাশায় গোবিন্দায় নমো নমঃ ॥
 বসুদেবং সুতং দেবং কংসঃ চাণুর মর্দনঃ ॥
 দেবকী পরমানন্দং কৃষ্ণং বন্দে জগৎ গুরোঃ ॥
 হে কৃষ্ণ করুণাসিঙ্কো দীনবন্ধো জগৎপতে।
 গোপেশ গোপীকাকান্ত রাধাকান্ত নমোহস্তুতে ॥
 পাপোহং পাপকর্মাহং পাপাত্মা পাপসন্তবঃ।
 ত্রাহি মাঃ পুড়ুরীকাক্ষ সর্বপাপ হরো হরিঃ ॥

Then the Puja should be completed by Dakshina and Acchidradharan.

Vrata Samarpana Mantra

বৃত সমর্পণ মন্ত্র- ভূতায় ভূতেশ্বরায় ভূতপতয়ে ভূতস্ববায় গোবিন্দায় নমো নমঃ ॥"

At the end of the puja, the Parana mantra should be chanted before eating the Prasad

— "ওঁ সর্বায় সর্বেশ্বরায় সর্বপতয়ে সর্বসন্তবায়ে গোবিন্দায় নমো নমঃ ।"

Teaching and Impacts of Janmashtami

At the time of Krishna's birth, the anarchy, oppression, and tyranny were at their peak point. During that time, there was no such thing as freedom for human. Spread of evil was prevailing everywhere. Lord Krishna saved the world from the evil. On Janmashtami, we express our mutual sympathy and solidarity by gathering together through pujas and rallies. Hence, Sri Krishna's Janmashtami is an eternal festival for all in the perpetual stream of time.

- Now write from your own experience how Janmashtami is celebrated in your area, and what arrangements are made during this occasion. (If you cannot remember, take help from the elders of your house/area.)

Table 2.6: Janmashtami Festival in Our Area

Sankranti

Sankranti means to transmit or move. The movement of the sun from one Rashi (sign) to another is called Sankranti. The last day of each Bangla month i.e. the day on which the month is completed is called Sankranti. Thus there are twelve Sankrantis in twelve months. Paush Sankranti and Chaitra Sankranti are notable among them. According to scriptures and folklore, bathing, donating, Vrata, fasting, Tarpana to the ancestors, etc. are very auspicious on this day.

The main festival of Chaitra Sankranti is the worship of Lord Shiva or Neel Puja. Charak Puja is a part of this festival. Fairs are held on this Chaitra Sankranti in different regions of Bangladesh. This is why, twelve months of worship and celebration in the Sankrantis, are described as “Thirteen Parvans in twelve months”.

New Year Celebration

Although Bangla New Year started from the time of King Shashanka, it is believed that its celebration became more widespread from the time of Mughal Emperor Akbar. However, it is difficult to pinpoint the date of when and how the Bangla New Year first started. However, since ancient times, various familial and social festivals such as Halkhata, Punyah, Amani, Playing with sticks, Kabi Gaan, Bullfight, Boishakhi fair, etc. were regularly held in rural Bangladesh at the beginning of the month of Baishakh.

Although there are certain rituals during the New Year according to Hindu customs, the festival of Pahela Boishakh is traditionally celebrated by all the people of Bengal irrespective of caste and religion. At present, it is a universal national festival of the Bangalees. New Year is celebrated by wishing everyone happiness, peace, and

prosperity by forgetting all the mistakes and failures of the past and welcoming the new. At the beginning of the New Year, the traders finish their old accounts and open new account books. On this occasion, the traders invite new and old customers and offer them sweets. They also collect old debts through the festival. People also wear new clothes. Relatives, friends, and neighbours are invited and fed. In New Year, greetings are exchanged through gifts and people embrace with their friends and relatives.

Baishakhi fairs are held in different places on the occasion of the New Year. In different regions there held different festivals of Boat-race, Hadudu game, Jatra, and folksongs like Palagan, Kabigan, Baul-Marfati-Murshidi-Bhatiyali etc are held.

On the eve of welcoming New Year and Chaitra Sankranti, festivals like Baisabi, Biju etc. are celebrated in the hilly regions of Bangladesh in a joyful atmosphere. In Phulbiju, people living in the hilly areas appease the water god by floating flowers in water. Marmas and Rakhines organize traditional water games to mark the New Year.

On this day, many people take part in the New Year's procession singing the song 'Eso Hey Boishakh'. They say goodbye to evil for a year.

- Now, write how the New Year is celebrated in your time and how people of your grandparents' age used to celebrate the New Year in their childhood in the table below. For this work, you will take interviews with aged people of your grandparents.

Table 2.7: The Past and Present of New Year

New Year of the Past	New Year of the Present

Deepabali

The word Deepabali means festival of light. Deepabali is celebrated by lighting rows of lamps on the new moon day of Kartik month. This festival is also known as Diwali, Deepanvita, Deepalika, Deepali, Sukhratri, etc. Lakshmi and Alakshmi are worshiped on the day of Deepabali. After bidding farewell to Alakshmi, Lakshmi is placed in the house with great festivities. Houses are cleaned on the occasion of Deepabali. The house is decorated with colourful Alpanas and various materials. Hindus wear new clothes. Apart from the Hindus, Jain and Sikhs also celebrate this festival.

When Sri Ramachandra returned home after fourteen years of exile, his devotees celebrated the festival by lighting lamps. Deepabali festival was also celebrated in Ayodhya on the news of Rama's victory in Rama-Ravana war.

On this day, Lord Krishna killed Narakasura and freed sixteen thousand prisoners. On that day, the festival of Dipanwita was celebrated with illuminations all over Dwarka. According to Srimad Bhagavat, the Brajgopinis in Vrindavan worshiped Giriraja Govardhana on Dipanvita Amavasya and decorated Vrindavan with numerous lamps.

Diwali celebrations are held over five days depending on the region. First day is Dhanteras. The festival begins on the day of Krishna Troyodashi in the month of Ashwin. Dhanteras day marks the beginning of the financial year for traders. It is customary to buy new dishes, gold jewelry etc. on this day. On the second day, Naraka Chaturdashi or Bhuta Chaturdashi, fourteen types of leaf vegetables are eaten to boost immunity. Usually the women of the house along with the children also go to collect different kinds of leaf vegetables. In this way, they become closely acquainted with nature. On this day, fourteen lamps are lit to remember the fourteen Purushas (ancestors) of the paternal and maternal clans. Diwali is celebrated on the third day with lamps, candles and fireworks. On the fourth day the Shuddha Padyami or Bali Pratipada ceremony takes place. On this day, the newly wedded bride applies the Mrittunjayee red tilak on the forehead of her husband and prays for his long life through aarti. On this day, the Vaishnavites perform Govardhan Puja or Annakoot and cook 108 types of items and offer them to Lord Krishna. The fifth day is celebrated as Vaiphonta or Yama Dwitiya.

Vatridwitiya or Vaifonta

Vatridwitiya or Vaifonta is celebrated on Shukladwitiya Tithi in the month of Kartik, two days after Kali Puja. According to Puranas, Yama, the god of death, visited his sister Yamuna's house on this tithi. On that day, Yamunadevi worshiped for the welfare of her brother. As a result of this worship, Yamadev attained immortality. Yama said to Yamuna that if anyone on this tithi goes to his sister's house and accepts her worship and takes food from her hand, he will not face immature death. Since then this tithi is known as Yama Dwitiya, Vatridwitiya, or Vaifonta.



Image 2.5: Vaifota

Another myth says that after killing Narakasura, Krishna went to meet his sister Subhadra. Subhadra welcomed her elder brother with sweets and flowers. He applied Tilak on his brother's forehead. Some also consider this event to be the beginning of the Vatridwitiya festival.

Many Hindus still celebrate this festival. On the occasion of this festival, the sister gives new clothes or other gifts to the brother and the brother also gives gifts to the sister. Special food is organized on this day in homes.

On this day, the sisters wish for the long life of their brothers and recite the following while giving a drop of sandalwood on their forehead-

ভাইয়ের কপালে দিলাম ফৌটা, যমের দুয়ারে পড়ল কাঁটা।
যমুনা দেয় যমকে ফৌটা, আমি দিই আমার ভাইকে ফৌটা॥

Rakhi Bandhan

Sisters tie rakhi on their brother's wrist during Rakhibandhan festival. In return, the brothers give their sisters a gift and swear to protect her for the rest of her life. Then brothers and sisters feed sweets to each other.

Draupadi tore the hem of her sari and tied it to Krishna's hand when Krishna's wrist was injured in the battle and started bleeding. Krishna addressed Draupadi as his sister and promised to repay Draupadi. This is how the practice of Rakhi Bandhan started. Again according to the mythological story, Vishnu left Vaikuntha and came to protect the kingdom of demon king Boli. Vishnu's wife Lakshmi approaches Boliraj in the

guise of an ordinary girl to win back her husband. Lakshmi says to Boli, "My husband is useless. Until he returns, shelter me." Boliraja granted her request. On Shravan Purnima festival, Lakshmi ties a rakhi on the hand of Boliraja and reveals everything by introducing herself. Boliraja was impressed by this and requested Vishnu to return to Vaikuntha. Boliraja sacrificed everything for Vishnu and Lakshmi. Since then the Shravan Purnima Tithi is celebrated by the sisters as Rakhibandhan festival.



Image 2.6: Rakhi Bandhan

As a protest against the partition of Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore celebrated Rakhi Bandhan in 1905. He held this festival to instill a sense of brotherhood among the people of all religions in Bengal and to build resistance against the division of Bengal. On that day he walked along the path and put rakhis on everyone's hands. Rabindranath wrote a song dedicated to this day -

"বাংলার মাটি বাংলার জল বাংলার বায়ু বাংলার ফল-

পুণ্য হউক, পুণ্য হউক, পুণ্য হউক হে ভগবান।

বাংলার ঘর, বাংলার হাট, বাংলার বন, বাংলার মাঠ-

পূর্ণ হউক, পূর্ণ হউক, পূর্ণ হউক হে ভগবান।

বাঙালির পথ, বাঙালির আশা, বাঙালির কাজ, বাঙালির ভাষা –

সত্য হউক, সত্য হউক, সত্য হউক হে ভগবান।

বাঙালির প্রাণ, বাঙালির মন, বাঙালির ঘরে যত ভাই বোন –

এক হউক, এক হউক, এক হউক হে ভগবান।"

Rabindranath probably got the inspiration for Rakhi Bandhan from North India. On Shravani Purnima there is a custom of tying coloured threads on each other's hands in

Hindu and Jain society as a sign of friendship or brotherhood. At the time of tying the thread they say, "With that thread which Mahaboli Boli, the king of the demon, was tied; I have tied you with that, which means that this bond should never be broken."

- Celebrate the festival of 'Rakhi Bandhan' with your classmates by planning in groups/pairs and making beautiful Rakhis with readily available materials.
- Fill the table below in the light of the 'Rakhi Bandhan festival'.

Table 2.7: Importance of Rakhi Bandhan

The values you have gained from the Rakhibandhan festival	
The values you have gained from the Rakhibandhan festival (Circle the box to the right)	Manners, Piety, Righteousness, Brotherly love, Devotion to parents, Truthfulness, Devotion to elders, Humanity, Compassion, Cordiality, Responsibility, Diligence, Harmony, Tolerance
How will you use the values gained from Rakhi Bandhan festival for human welfare?	

Nabanna

The word 'Nabanna' means 'new food' or new rice. It is a folk festival of Bengal. Hindu householders celebrate this festival in the month of Agrahayan or Magh after harvesting the Aman paddy during the late Autumn. In the Navanna festival, new food is offered to gods, Agni, Brahmins, neighbors, relatives etc. Offering food made of rice to the crow is a special secular practice during this festival. According to folklore, the food reaches the soul of the dead through crows. This offering is called 'Kakboli'.

On the day of Paush Sankranti also there is a custom of offering Navanna to the house deity. On this day, the ancestors are worshiped with various types of cakes and rice

made of new paddy. With the evolution of time, the popularity of this Navanna festival has decreased a lot, but it still survives in rural Bengal. During the Navanna festival, the villages of Bengal become lively with the exchange of cakes and payes and the arrangement of kirtans, palagans, jarigans, etc.

House Warming Ceremony

Various pujas and welfare ceremonies are advised to observe during the construction of a new house and the first entry into the house. A house fulfills the Chaturvarga i.e., Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha in our life. Vishnu, Vastu or Bhoomi, the householder's deity, is worshiped while entering a new house. At this time, the blessings of the ancestors are sought through Nandimukh Vikshashraddha. Door deity is worshipped. Bhoomi Puja, or Bhit Puja is also prescribed before building a new house. On the day of entering the house, priests, elders, relatives, friends, neighbours are invited and fed. On this day, the householder prays with everyone for the happiness, peace, and prosperity of the house.

Now, collect information about folk festivals associated with Hinduism celebrated in your area in groups or pairs. Then complete the table below individually.

Table 2.8: Folk Festival of My locality

Name of Folk Festival	Notable Features



Birth and after-birth rites or Ten sacred rites

According to Hinduism, Sanskar is the welfare ceremony that is performed throughout life following religious norms and traditions. These reforms of Hinduism are written in detail in scriptures like the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Atharva Veda, Manusamhita, Parashara Samhita, Yajnavalkyasamhita, etc.

There are certain rules to be observed by every Hindu during birth and post-birth time. These are called Dashabidha Sanskar (Ten sacred rites). These Dashabidha Sanskar include Garbadhan, Pungsavan, Seemontonnayan, Jatkarma, Namkaran, Annaprashan, Churakaran, Upanayan, Samavartan, and Vivaha. However, all these ten reforms are not celebrated equally at present.

The most practised reforms are mentioned below.

Seemontonnayan: This Sanskar is performed during the fourth, sixth or eighth month after conception with a desire for safe delivery. Today this Sanskar is better known as Sadh-Bhakshan or Sadh.

Jatkarma: As soon as the child is born, the father touches the child's tongue with Yob (Barley seed), Yastimadhu (liquorice), and Ghee and chants the mantra.

Namkaran: The child should be named on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth or hundredth days after birth.

After naming, there is another additional Sanskar called Niskraman mentioned in the scriptures.

Niskraman: Niskraman means “going out”. On this occasion the parents take the child outside. During this time the child gets acquainted with the outside environment for the first time. It is customary to observe it in the fourth month after birth. The baby is bathed and dressed in new clothes. He/she is taken outside and shown sunrise, sunset, moon, or sun.

Annaprashan: The welfare ceremony which is performed on the occasion of the baby's

first meal is called Annaprashan. We also know it as ‘Mukhe Bhat’. This ceremony is performed in the first or eighth month for a male child and in the fifth or seventh month for a female child. At Annaprashan, relatives and neighbours come as invitees and bless the child and give gifts.

After Annaprashan there is another Sanskar, which is called Vidyarambha.

Vidyarambha: It is a religious ceremony to introduce young children to knowledge, alphabets, and the learning process. When the child crosses the age of four, an appropriate time to start school is determined by looking at the calendar. Then worship is done. Alphabets are written by holding the child’s hand. This Sanskar is popularly known as ‘Hatekhari’.

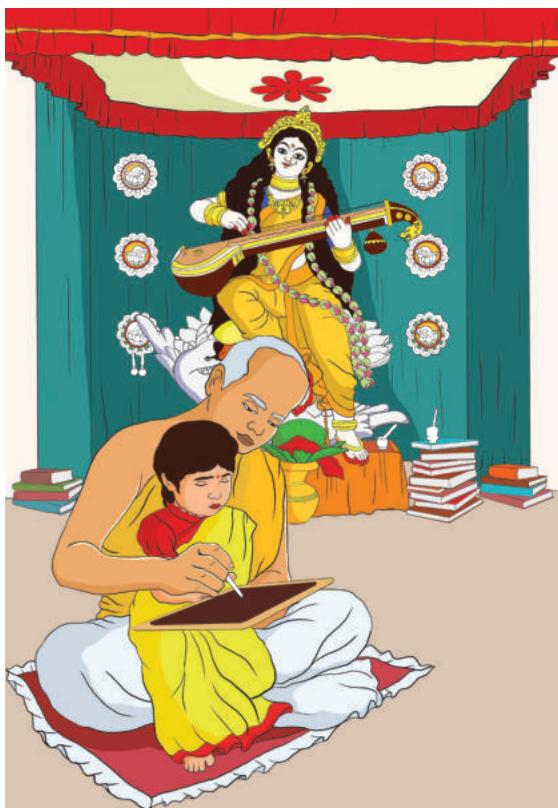


Image 2.6: Hatekhari

Churakaran: It is a welfare ritual of cutting off the hair that grows on the child’s head during pregnancy. If there is Upanayana Sanskar, it is done during Upanayan,

otherwise it is done during Annaprasan.

Along with this Sanskar an additional Sanskar is also mentioned, which is Karnaved.

Karnaved: Karnaved means “piercing the ears”. This Sanskar is observed more in the case of girl children. In Upanayan Sanskar there is a provision for Karnaved after Churakaran.

Upanayan: In Upanayan Sanskar, the student is first taken to the Guru (teacher) for learning. The word Upanayan means ‘to bring near’. Upanayan in a conventional sense refers to Yajnapaveet or holding sacred thread.

There is mention of another additional reform called Vedarambha after the eighth reform or Upanayan.

Vedarambha: This Sanskar is performed only after Upanayan. At this time the acquisition of spiritual knowledge began according to the Vedas and various scriptures. He/She has to wander in all branches of knowledge. Through this he/she acquires knowledge of worldly and spiritual subjects.

Samavartan: A festival is held when the guru allows the disciple to return home at the end of his studies. This is the convocation. In earlier days it was customary to stay in Gurugriha after Upanayan. After completing his studies there, he had to return home with the Guru’s permission.

At present there is no practice of education from Gurugriha. That is why, this Sanskar is no longer celebrated. But the name ‘Samavartan’ is there. The university certificate distribution festival is now celebrated as ‘Samavartan’. Today’s graduation ceremony can be compared to the festival of ‘Leaving Gurugriha’ of previous times.

Vivaha (Marriage) [Atharva Veda - 11/5/18]: The word marriage means ‘bearing something specially’. Sanskar of joining the lives of bride and groom together by chanting mantras from Vedas and through Pitrupuja, and Homa, etc. after puberty is called marriage. Through this ceremony, a family is formed. Everyone in the family shares happiness and sorrows together and lives by helping each other.

As there are some scriptural rules observed in marriage, so there are also some worldly and local rules observed, which are known as Stri-Achar (wife-rituals).

Manusamhita describes eight types of marriage, which are - Brahma, Daiva, Arya, Prajapatiya, Asura, Gandharva, Rakshasa, and Paishaca. Brahma marriage is common

and accepted form of marriage in today's society. The parents dress their daughter in new clothes and ornaments, keeping the invited guests and relatives as an eye-witness, and present the girl to the bridegroom. This is called Brahma marriage. Gandharva marriage is also prevalent in society from ancient times to modern times. A marriage where a man and a woman swear to each other and exchange garlands is called a Gandharva marriage. The best mantra for marriage is -

“যদেতৎ হৃদয়ং তব তদন্ত হৃদয়ং মম। যদিদৎ হৃদয়ং মম, তদন্তু হৃদয়ং তব।” (হান্দোগ্য ব্রাহ্মণ)

Meaning: Let this heart of yours be mine, let my heart be yours.

It is expected to develop a deep loving relationship between husband and wife through marriage. They start a new journey on the path of life by becoming each other's companions in weal and woe.

- Discuss with the elders/experienced people of your family and make a list of the practices among the Tenfold Reforms that are observed or not observed nowadays.

Table 2.9: The Past and Present of Sanskar

Many people observe them till date	Very rarely observed	Not observed nowadays

- Organize an exhibition in groups/pairs by collecting materials for any religious ceremony/puja/ritual/renovation of your choice. Let's make a list of the materials we have collected.

Table 2.10: Festival Materials

Our Collected Materials		Materials Collected by Friends	
Name of the festival	Ingredients	Name of festival	Ingredients

Section Two

Hindu Religious Sites



- Write and present to the class the significant aspects of any Hindu religious site on the basis of your experiences like traveling to a pilgrimage site /watching videos/ visiting a famous temple/listening to stories from pilgrims/ getting previously acquainted with the site etc.

Introduction to Hindu religious sites

Name of the Hindu religious site:	
Location:	
Notable Features:	
1.	

2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

- Now, discuss in groups or in pairs and write the names and locations of five other Hindu religious sites or pilgrimage sites that are known to you.

Table 2.11: Tirthakatha (About the Pilgrimage)

Name of the pilgrimage sites	Location

The word ‘Tirtha’ means ‘place of descent’. Pilgrimage sites are places of birth or descent of deities, great humans or sages. For the welfare of the world, they are born as human beings. Again after completing the necessary work, they leave the world. The pilgrimage sites also include the holy land associated with their life and Lila. By visiting the pilgrimage sites, the mind becomes sanctified and pure. We can gain Punya (religious merit/ virtue). People can become the inhabitants of heaven by gaining

Punya. Again, people want to get close to the creator of the world with a heart devoid of worldly desires. This is called Jeevanmukti or Moksha (salvation).

Now, we will know about some holy places or pilgrimage sites.

Saptatirtha (Seven Pilgrimage sites)

Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar, Kashi or Varanasi, Kanchi, Avantika and Dwarka- these seven Tirthas together are called Saptatirtha (Seven Pilgrimage sites). About this it is said in the Hindu scriptures-

অযোধ্যা মথুরা মায়া কাশী কাঞ্চী অবস্থিকা।
পুরী-দ্বারাবতী চৈব সপ্তেতা মোক্ষদায়িকাঃ ॥ (পদ্মপুরাণ, ভূমিখণ্ড)

Meaning: Ayodhya, Mathura, Maya or Haridwar, Kashi or Varanasi, Kanchi or Kancheepuram, Avantika or Ujjain and Dharavati or Dwarka these seven pilgrimages give salvation to people.

Among the Saptatirthas, the four Tirthas such as Ayodhya, Mathura, Haridwar and Kashi are described here:

Ayodhya

Ayodhya is a city in Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh, India. Ayodhya is the birthplace and Lila Bhumi of Vishnu's Avatar Ramachandra. Ayodhya is therefore mentioned in



Image 2.7: Hanumangarh Temple

the scriptures as the holy pilgrimage site belonging to Saptatirtha. Hanumangarh, the temple of Mahavir Hanuman, is the first thing to be seen in Ayodhya. After conquering

Lanka, Hanuman came to Ayodhya along with Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. Hanuman was allowed to stay in this Hanumangarh. The temple is situated in a hilly place. Rama and Sita are worshipped here along with Hanuman. Kanakabhavan is a notable temple in Ayodhya. Here there are idols of Rama-Sita adorned with gold ornaments. After marriage Rama and Sita returned to Ayodhya from Mithila. Then they started living in Kanakabhavan. Ram and Sita are worshipped here daily.

There is an Ashram of Kulguru Rishi Vasishta of the Raghu dynasty in Ayodhya. 'Tulsi Smarak Bhavan (Tulsi Memorial Building)' has been established here in the name of Tulsi Das, author of Ramayana in Hindi language. Every evening Ramlila and Kirtan are performed there.

The most attractive place of this pilgrimage site is the Saryu River. There are many Shanbandhan Ghats (landing places made of concrete) here. Among these Ramghat is the best. At this ghat, Ramachandra descended into the river to abdicate. Just then Brahma appeared and requested Rama to enter Vishnu's Jyoti (divine light of Vishnu). Vishnu's incarnation Ramachandra merged with Vishnu's Jyoti (divine light of Vishnu). Followers of Rama also abdicated in the river water at this place and became dwellers of heaven. Hence this Ghat is called the Mahaprasthan Ghat of Ramachandra. One can become free from sin by getting wet in the water of the Ghat. Devotees have a belief that if one gives Pitritarpan (A special ritual of offering water to appease deceased ancestors) here, the parents become dwellers of heaven. Next to Ramghat there is Lakshmanaghat. The place in the river where Lakshman left his body through yoga is called Lakshmanaghat.

The two biggest festivals of Ayodhya are Ram Navami and Diwali. Ramachandra was born on the Navami Tithi of Shukla Paksha of Chaitra month. Ramnavami is observed on that Tithi (a specific time of the day). Again, Ramachandra returned to Ayodhya after the Lanka conquest. The people of Ayodhya became happy and lighted clay lamps on that day. They congratulated Rama. This festival is celebrated on the new moon day of Krishna Paksha in the month of Kartik. The Ghats of the Ganges become illuminated in the darkness with the light of the lamps. Millions of pilgrims and visitors attend this festival.

It can be reached by train or bus from major cities in India. The distance from Ayodhya cantonment station to the main pilgrimage site is ten kilometres. This distance can be covered by autorickshaw or taxi.

Mathura

Mathura is an ancient city in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh. Vrindavan is situated next to it. Lord Krishna was born in the prison of Kamsa in Mathura during the Dwapara era. His childhood and adolescence were spent in Vrindavan. These two places are full of the significance of the Lila of devotees and Bhagaban. Mathura Tirtha has all these. There are about five thousand temples here. Some of the major temples and parts of Lord Krishna's Leela Mahatma (significance) are described here.

The Keshav Temple: It is an ancient temple located in the city of Mathura. On the left side of the main altar of the temple there are images of Jagannathdeva, Balarama and Subhadra. On the right, there are idols of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. The statue of Mahavira Hanuman is located nearby. Inside the temple premises, there is a small temple called Kamsa's prison. Lord Krishna was born in this prison as the son of Vasudeva and Devaki. At the time of Krishna's birth, Vasudeva saw Krishna as a quadrupedal form of Narayana. That idol is worshipped here.

The Dwarkadish Temple: Dwarkadish means Lord of Dwarka i.e. Sri Krishna. His idol is worshipped in the temple. Next to it, there is the statue of Prabhu Nityananda.

Rangabhoomi: Rangabhoomi means battlefield or battleground. Sri Krishna fought with Kamsa at this place on the banks of the Yamuna. Kamsa was killed in the battle. It is considered as a holy place of pilgrimage.

Resting Ghat: Being exhausted after killing Kamsa, Krishna rested at this Ghat on the bank of Yamuna. It is one of the best of the twenty-four ghats of Yamuna. Here there is a belief that if one gives Pitritarpan (A special ritual of offering water to appease deceased ancestors), the parents become dwellers of heaven.

Kaliyanag Ghat: Kaliyanag was a venomous serpent with a thousand hoods. Sri Krishna suppressed him at this place and saved the people of Vrindavan. That's why the ghat has been named Kalinag Ghat.

The Banke Bihari Temple: This is one of the major temples in Vrindavan. Jugol idols (A pair of idols) of Radhakrishna are worshipped here. Swami Haridas got the Jugol idol of Radhakrishna at Nidhuban and established this temple.

The Radha-Damodara Temple: Jivagoswami, one of the six Goswamis founded this temple. Radhakrishna's jugalamurti is worshipped here.

The Sriranganath Temple: Here is the idol of Bhagabhan Vishnu reclining on the eternal serpent. There are many paintings on the walls of the temple. Various idols that focus

on the Lila of Sri Krishna are kept in the museum here.

The Madanmohan Temple: The Madanmohan temple is a beautiful temple situated on a very high altar. One has to cross many steps of stairs to reach the main altar. There are unique designs on the wall of the temple. Behind this temple, there is the tomb of Mahaprabhu Chaitanya dev.



Image 2.8: Madanmohan temple

Nidhuban: Nidhuban is the meeting place of Bhagavan Sri Krishna and his devotees. Radha and her friends stayed here with Krishna. The entire forest is full of basil plants. **The Govardhan Mountain:** Govardhan Mountain is located in the centre of Mathura Tirtha. Temples are located around it like a circle. Devotees visit the temples on foot. Walking around the temple along with temple seeing is called Brajamandal Parikrama (circumambulation). This Parakrama begins every year in the month of October-November.

Dolpurnima, Raspurnima and Jhulanayatra are the three major festivals of Mathura and Vrindavan. Dol Purnima festival is celebrated on the Purnima Tithi of Shukla paksha (Waxing Moon period) in the month of Phalgun. Jhulanatra festival is held on Ekadashi Tithi of Shukla paksha month of Shravan. Again, Raspurnima occurs on the Purnima Tithi of Shukla paksha in the month of Kartik. Then Vaishnavite devotees and visitors

from all over the world including India come to join this festival.

One can reach Mathura by intercity train or long-distance bus from any major city in India. To go by air, first one has to land at Agra airport. The distance from Agra to Mathura is only fifty-seven kilometres. It is possible to reach Mathura by covering this distance by taxi or public transport. The main pilgrimage sites are very close to Mathura city. One can visit Mathura-Tirtha by covering this distance by rickshaw or auto.

Ayodhya and Mathura are historically famous cities. Apart from the information given here about them, collect some more information individually using different mediums. Then discuss in groups or pairs or with a guardian and write.

Table 2.12: Tale of Ayodhya and Mathura

Ayodhya	Mathura

Haridwar

Haridwar Tirtha is situated in Haridwar district of Uttarakhand state of India. Haridwar means the gate of Hari or Vishnu. On the other hand, devotees of Shiva named it Hara Dwar. Haridwar Tirtha is located at the point where the Ganga enters the plains, originating from the Himalayas. This Tirtha is very holy among Saptatirtha. According to mythology, there was a king named Sagara in Bhagiratha's clan. Sixty thousand of his sons were burned to death by the curse of Kapil Muni. They would get redemption by the holy touch of the Ganges water – with this aim, Bhagirath began austere penance to bring down the goddess Ganga to earth. Satisfied, the goddess came down to earth in the form of water. The remains of Sagar's children are soaked in the Ganges water. As a result, they got redemption and went to heaven. That is why the devotees believe that by bathing in the Ganga water at this pilgrimage site, they can be freed from sins and can attain heaven. In the Mahabharata, this holy pilgrimage site is mentioned as Swargadwara (gate of heaven).

On both banks of the Ganga, there are beautiful mountains and forests. Viewing this beauty, visitors become very happy. A kind of attraction or Maya (allure) is created in the mind. Hence this Tirtha is also called Mayapuri. On the other hand, by visiting this Tirtha, the delusion of the living being is removed. So, it is named as Mayapuri in the scriptures.



Image 2.9: Shiva idol in Haridwar

There is a huge idol of Shiva on the banks of the Ganges that is easily visible from a distance. Both sides of the flowing Ganga are lined with stones for miles. There are crossing bridges and embankments at different places. Brahmakund Ghat is famous among the Ghats. Local people call it 'Har Ki Pauri'. That is Hari's departure Ghat. It is one of the four 'Kumbh Melas' places held in India. According to the Puranas, at the end of churning the ocean, the god Dhanvantari came up with Amritakumbha. Amrita (nectar) is a drink that gives immortality and Kumbha is a large container. Lord Narayana took the nectar and left for its protection. Then drops of nectar fell from Kumbha to this place in Haridwar. The fair is named Kumbh Mela because of nectar falling from the Kumbh. This fair is held every twelve years. Purna Kumbh Mela is held in Haridwar when the Sun and Jupiter are in aquarius.

Aarti of Ganga Devi is performed in the evening at Brahmakund Ghat in Haridwar. Devotees arrange offerings in small boats made of tree leaves, and light lamps and float them in the Ganga. The entire Ghat becomes luminous. The scene is very beautiful.

Haridwar can be reached directly by bus from major cities of India. If one wants to go by train, he/she has to get down from the big city station to Haridwar station. The distance from Haridwar station to Tirtha is twenty kilometres. If one wants to go by plane, he/she has to get off at Dehradun in Uttarakhand from the airports of major cities. The distance from Dehradun to Haridwar is fifty-one kilometres. It is possible to reach Haridwar easily covering this distance by autorickshaw.

Varanasi

Varanasi Tirtha is located in Varanasi district of Uttar Pradesh, India. In fact, Varanasi is formed by two tributaries of Ganga, 'Varuna' and 'Asi'. Varanasi is the holy land between the meeting place of the Ganges and the two rivers. Another name for Varanasi is Kashi. People's disillusionment is destroyed by visiting Kashi Tirtha. Ignorance is removed and the heart is enlightened. Hence its name Kashi. Mahadev never leaves this holy place. Hence this tirtha is named Abimukta.

Varanasi, the city of pilgrimage, has about twenty-three thousand big and small temples. Hence it is called the religious capital of Hindus. Among the temples, 'Kashi Vishwanath Mandir' is one of them. Shiva Linga is worshipped here which is one of the twelfth Jyotirlingas. Mahadev appeared between Brahma and Vishnu in the form of Jyotirmaya Linga to resolve their conflict. His petrified form is Jyotirlinga. It is believed that Mahadev resides here always. Along with worshipping, Vedic mantras are recited here, classical music is performed.

The top of the Vishwanath temple is wrapped with gold weighing 1000 kg. There is a Kunda (water tank) called Gnanabapi next to it. Devotees believe that by taking a bath in the water of the Kunda (water tank) even a fool can gain knowledge.

Sankat-Mochan Mandir is a notable temple in Varanasi. Devotees get rid of crisis by the grace of Mahavir Hanuman. The temple is named after his name. Rama and Sita are worshipped here along with Hanuman. Tulsimanas temple is a big temple here. This temple is named after Tulsidas, author of Ramayana in Hindi language. In various rooms of the temple, the story of Ramayana has been expressed through artworks. Verses of the Ramayana are written on the wall. Along with Rama, Sita and Hanuman, Tulsidas is also worshipped here. Again, Rani Bhavani of Natore in North Bengal (Now Bangladesh) built a Durga temple here. Dashabhuja (ten-handed) Durga Devi is worshipped there.



Image 210: The Vishwanath Temple in Kashi

Besides, another notable temple is the temple of Annapurna Devi. Adorned with various ornaments, Annapurna Devi is also worshipped here. It is said that by the grace of the goddess, no one suffers from want of food in Kashi.

The holy Ganga flows through Varanasi Tirtha. There are more than 81 Ghats on the banks of the Ganges. Dashashvamedh is a notable Ghat. Grandfather Brahma performed ten Ashwamedha yagnas here. It is said in the Mahabharata that bathing in Dasashwamedh Ghat leads to salvation. Again, the 'Mani' of Shiva's ear ornament fell at 'Manikarnika Ghat'. This happened when Shiva was dancing with the dead body of Sati. So, its name is Manikarnika Ghat. Harishchandra Ghat was built in the name of the greatest benevolent person Harishchandra. Two cremations of Kashi are situated beside Harishchandra and Dasashwamedh Ghats. Devotees believe that by cremating the dead body here, the dead person gets access to the Divvalok. again, Osighat is made at the meeting place of rivers Asi and Ganges. It is also a sacred pilgrimage.

The scene of the evening Aarti of Ganga Devi at the Ghats is very pleasing. A well-decorated stage is built at the Ganga Ghats. Various aromatic products are burnt in Dhunuchi. Certain lamps called Jhar Prodip are lit for Aarti. Then the well-dressed priests perform the Ganga Aarti on stage with lamps in their hands to the rhythm of the music. Millions of devotees gather there to witness this beautiful scene. Not getting a place at the Ghat, some people board the boats and sit on them in the Ganga to enjoy the view of the Aarti.

The two major festivals of Varanasi are the Mahashivratri festival and the Ganga festival. Shivratri Puja is held on the Chaturdashi Tithi of Krishna Paksha in the month of Phalgun. A procession takes place on the occasion of the festival. Aarti is performed in Ganga. Again, the Ganga festival is celebrated on the occasion of Rama's return to Ayodhya at the end of conquering Lanka. On this day, millions of lamps are lit and floated in clay pots in the river Ganga. Seeing this scene in the darkness of the new moon is fascinating.

Varanasi can be reached by train or bus from any major city in India. The distance from the stations to the main pilgrimage site is between five or six kilometres. To go by air, first one has to land at Lal Bahadur Shastri Airport in Varanasi. From there the distance of the main pilgrimage is twenty-five kilometers. It is easily possible to visit the main Tirtha by covering this distance by autorickshaw or taxi.

- Fill up the table below about the four pilgrimage sites

Table 2.13: Information about Pilgrimage sites

Name of the pilgrimage site	Festival (Time/ Tithi)	The temple	Location	Notable features

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Worldwide Hindu Religion

There are followers of the Hindu religion not only in the Indian subcontinent but also in the whole world. They have made many temples of wonderful architecture in different countries of the world. Now, we will know about those temples and their location.

Pandit Chanakya said ‘বসুধৈর কুটুম্বকম’। Everyone is related to everyone in this world. The Hindu religion supports this universal concept. The various prayers of the Hindu religion seek the well-being of all beings around the world.

Hindu religion, which was developed in the Indus basin, once spread across the subcontinent to a vast area of Southeast Asia. Vast empires were formed under the leadership of Hindu kings in those regions.

The Kalinga, Chola and Vijayanagara kings of South India encouraged seafaring. With their encouragement, the merchants of these states began to expand their trade towards the south-west. Through them, the Hindu religion spread in present-day Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia and Indonesia. There are still thousands of ancient Hindu temples in these regions. Ancient temples are being discovered regularly through various archaeological excavations.

The island of Java in present-day Indonesia was once called the Jov Island. Java was very fertile land for rice cultivation. A lot of paddy grew here. Various spices were brought from neighbouring islands to buy rice. Traders from India and Arabia used to come here to buy spices. Thus Indians went to that region.

A Hindu prince named Radhen Vijay established the Majapahit dynasty in 1294 after liberating Java from Mongolian invaders. Later, under the leadership of a Hindu commander named Ghazmad, this empire expanded further. By the mid-14th century, the Majapahit Empire extended from Papua New Guinea to the Malay Islands. The current country of Indonesia was mainly formed during this dynasty. Today's Malaysia was also part of this empire at that time.



Figure 2.11: Map of the Majapahit Empire

In 1398, the Majapahit Empire attacked another neighbouring empire. It was the Srivijaya Empire of Sumatra. The king of Srivijaya had his base in present-day Singapore. King Premeshwar retreated from there to the island of Malacca.

Meanwhile, the Majapahit dynasty started to become weaker due to internal conflicts. Once, the last Majapahit king fled westward and took refuge in a Hindu temple on Mount Lau. In this political vacuum, other religions began to spread in the region. Still, about 90 per cent of the population on the Indonesian island of Bali are Hindus. The name Indonesia is a combination of the words India and Asia. The influence of the Hindu culture can still be seen in Indonesia's national symbols and principles.

The Majapahit Empire was preceded by the Shailendra Empire, which took over Java and Malaya in the 8th century. In 1025 the Shailendra Empire was defeated by the Chola Empire. Day by day the empire became weak.

The current Khmer Empire was established in Cambodia under the leadership of the Hindu king Jayavarman in the 9th century. The Hindu empire ended when the king converted to Buddhism in the 14th century. But the people of this region still worship Hindu gods and goddesses.

The word Singapore comes from the Sanskrit word Sinhpur. It means city of lions. Sang Nila Utama brought down this kingdom. The previous name of Myanmar was

Brahmadesh. It was colloquially called Burma. There were some Hindu kingdoms. There was a Hindu kingdom called Champarajya in Vietnam. The influence of Hindu religion can also be seen in the culture of Japan, Korea and the Philippines. The Japanese gods and goddesses Benzaiten, Kangiten and Bishamanten are seen as if they were the counterparts of the Hindu gods Saraswati, Ganesha and Kubera respectively.

The names of important places in this region still bear the memory of Hindu heritage. For example, the earlier name of Afghanistan was Upaganasthan. Kandahar was the Gandhara kingdom mentioned in the Mahabharata. Cambodia was called Kamboj. Peshawar came from Purushpur. Similarly, Lahore came from Lobpur, Kashmir from Kashyappuri, Malaysia from Malaydesh, and Tibet from Tribisthap.

In ancient times, Hindus could not go to other parts of the world because of the Himalayas and Hindu Kush mountains and oceans. As India is rich in natural resources, there was little need to move to other regions. But later, a large number of Hindus from India spread to Africa, America and Europe due to trade, commerce, agriculture, setting up railways etc.

Outside the Indian subcontinent, Hindu communities live in Indonesia, Malaysia, the United States, the United Kingdom, Myanmar, Mauritius, Fiji, Guyana, Suriname, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates.

Some notable temples established outside the Indian subcontinent in ancient times are described here.

The Prambanan Temple in Indonesia

The temple is located in the state of Yogyakarta on the island of Java, Indonesia. This Hindu temple, the largest in ancient Java, was built in the middle of the 9th century. Near this temple, the world's largest Buddhist temple Barbur was established by the Shailendra dynasty. It is believed that the neighbouring Sanjay dynasty established it in competition with this dynasty.

It is basically a temple complex. There were 240 temples centred around eight 154 feet high temples. Although many temples have been destroyed, 8 major temples still survive. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwar are worshipped in these temples.

Ballads on Ramayana are performed every evening in this temple premises. Thousands of foreigners come to watch this ballad every year.



Image 2.12 Prambanan Temple in Indonesia

The Ankerwat Temple in Cambodia



Image 2.13 Angkor Wat temple in Cambodia

Angkor Wat in Cambodia is a temple complex similar to Prambanan Temple. The complex, established on 162.6 hectares of land, has been recognized by Guinness World Records as the world's largest religious structure. In the 12th century, King Suryavarman dedicated this temple to Lord Vishnu. Later, it was converted into a Buddhist temple. Today it is used as a place of worship for Hindus and Buddhists.

Angkor Wat literally means 'capital temple'. It took twenty-seven years to complete this temple complex.

The Batu Cave in Malaysia

The word Batu means stone. Batu Cave is a network of rocky caves. There is a 140 feet tall statue of Marugan here. In 1890 Tamil businessman K. Thambusamy Pillai established this statue. There is a temple called Sri Subramaniam Swamy Devasthanam centered around this idol. Today it is a popular tourist destination in Malaysia. The famous Hindu festival called Thaipusam is celebrated here. Tourists from India, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore participated in it.



Image 2.14: Subramaniam Swamy Devasthanam Temple in Malaysia

The Tanah Lot temple in Indonesia

Seven temples were lined up along the beach on the Indonesian island of Bali. In the local language, Tanah Lot means land of the sea. The temple is situated on a rock by the sea shore. It is one of the most popular tourist spots in Bali. It is assumed that Hindu religion Guru Dang Hyang Nirtha founded this temple in the 16th century. Varuna is the worshipped deity here.



Image 2.15: The Tanah Lot temple in Indonesia

The Shiva Sagar Temple in Mauritius

This temple is located at the eastern end of Mauritius. Bikash Gunoa established this temple in 2007. There is a 108 feet high bronze idol of Shiva. The temple is surrounded by lakes and mangrove forests. Its nature is very beautiful.

Besides, Arulmigu Sri Rajakaliamman Glass Temple in Johor Bahru, Malaysia, Sri Venkateswara (Balaji) Temple in England, Radha Madhav Dham in the United States, Sri Krishna Temple in Muscat, Oman, Yagun Sri Kali Temple in Burma, Sri Shiva Subramanya Temple in Fiji, Sri Shiva Vishnu Temple in Victoria, Australia are notable.



Image 2.16: The Shiva Sagar Temple in Mauritius

- Look at the pictures carefully and in groups/pairs describe the characteristics of the temples. If you have information about any other temple except these temples, you can also present it to the class.

Table 2.14:Temples of distant countries

- In pairs/ group express the location and number of the Hindus in different countries on the map of the world.

Hindu Religious Population in the world



Image 2.17: Map of the world

- Discuss in groups or pairs and find out whether your relatives or acquaintances are Hindus living on different continents of the world. If necessary, you can take the help from the guardian. If there is any such person, write about your relationship with him (relative/ acquaintance). Collect information about with the help of your guardian how to contact him/her. Collect information about the medium of contact email/ phone/ social media etc.
- Collect the information about how the Hindu communities in different countries are maintaining social bonds by celebrating their religious festivals. Make a list of things which are required to celebrate the religious festivals of different countries. Dress

up in the costumes of different countries, and present how the religious festivals are celebrated in those countries by acting in groups/pairs with the flags, maps, symbols etc. of those countries.

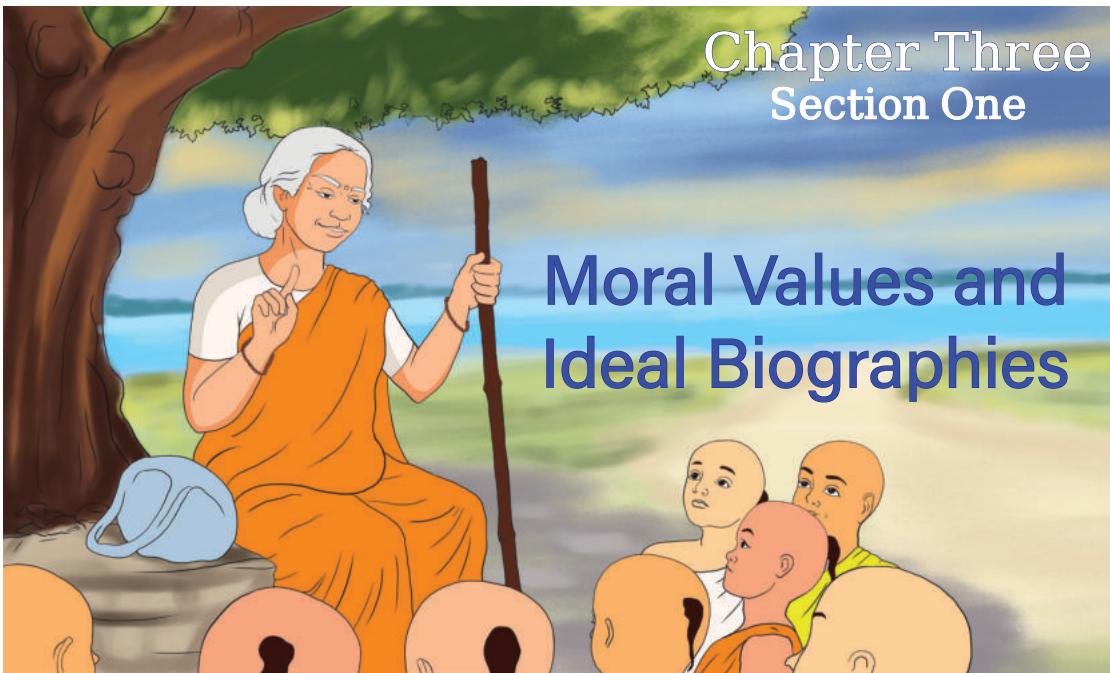
- You can collect information about foreign relatives and acquaintances by writing letters, sending emails and messages or calling them over the phone. You can also collect information by mailing foreign religious institutions, especially, the temples you have known in this chapter. For this first, you have to collect email addresses from the websites of those temples and other foreign religious institutions. Apart from these, information can also be collected from other mediums such as social media, newspapers, the Internet etc.

Table 2.15 A list of different ingredients

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Chapter Three Section One

Moral Values and Ideal Biographies



Every day we do various works. We do some of these works only for our own needs. Again we do some works for someone else. Our works that bring happiness or benefit to others are called good works.

- Make a list of five best works you've ever done in your life.

Table 3.1: All of my good works

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Now discuss in groups/pairs and choose the best five works from everyone's works. Complete the table below by identifying which of your values are expressed in these

good works. (One has been done for your convenience.)

Table 3.2: We are doing good works

Our works	Moral Value
1. I nursed a sick cat and cured it.	Serving living beings, sympathy
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

The good deeds you have done show your moral values. We learn many such values from Hindu scriptures and the biographies of great people of the Hindu religion. Let's learn some of the moral values and the lives of some ideal people among them.

Honesty

Honesty is thinking righteously, engaging in righteous deeds, not concealing the truth, not indulging in falsehood, not doing any wrongful or illegal act, and not taking someone's property unjustly. Honesty makes people trustworthy to other people. Honesty brings peace and comfort to human life and makes life enlightened. It leads people to the path of dignity, and to the glorious place. Honesty is a part of religion and a moral virtue.

We will learn a story from Mahabharata about honesty-

Dronacharya once became the commander of the Kauravas in the battle of Kurukshetra. When he became formidable on the battlefield, the Pandavas consulted Lord Krishna to kill him. If Dronacharya fought like this, it would be difficult for the Pandavas to win the war. Then Lord Krishna realized that there is no other way without strategy. So he told Bhima to kill Ashwathama, the elephant of Pandavamitra King Indravarma, and to propagate it. When Dronacharya would abandon his arms on hearing the news of his beloved son's death, Arjuna was instructed to kill him. But Arjuna said, "O Madhava,

forgive me. I cannot commit the sin of killing the Guru by deception." Sri Krishna told him, "Your only aim is to fight against unrighteousness. You just do that."

Bhima killed the elephant Ashwathama with a mace and informed Dronacharya, "I have killed Ashwathama with this mace." But Dronacharya did not believe him. He said, "I will believe this only if I hear it from Dharmaputra Yudhishthira." Because Yudhishthira was pious and honest. He never told a lie. But at the request of everyone, Yudhishthira also deviated from honesty. He said to Dronacharya, অশ্বথামা হতঃ- ইতি গজ। He spoke 'ইতি গজ' (the elephant is no more) so softly that it did not reach Dronacharya's ears. The truth was told and the purpose was accomplished. Hearing Yudhishthira's words, Dronacharya was saddened and began penance. The soul of his father left the body and entered heaven to seek the soul of the son. Using this scope, Draupadi's elder brother, the Pandava commander Dhrishtadyunma cut off the head of Dronacharya's lifeless body with his sword. Yudhishthira was very sad with grief and remorse. He had been dishonest just this once in his life.



Image 3.1: Bhima giving the news of the death of Ashvathama to Dronacharya

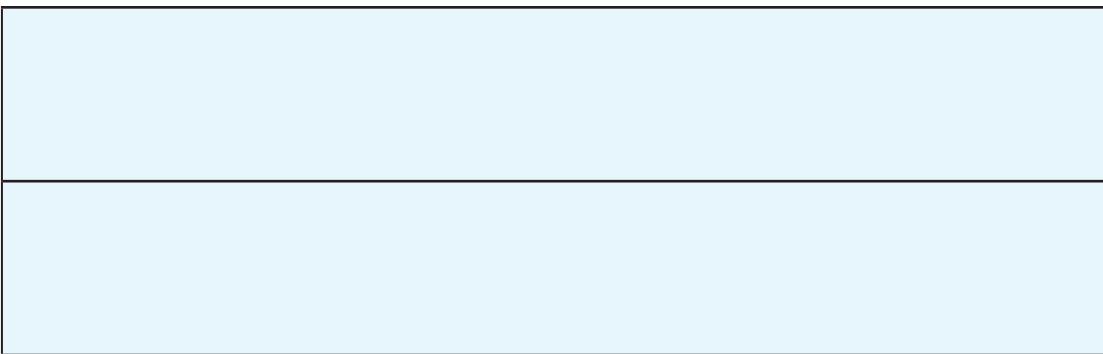
Draupadi said, "Dronacharya remained silent when the Kauravas tried to snatch my clothes when the Pandavas were defeated in the game of dice. So he deserves the death penalty." But even in this console, Yudhisthira could not stop him from repenting of his dishonesty.

Truthful Yudhisthira's chariot wheels never touched the ground. But since that day Yudhisthira's chariot wheels are touching the ground like all others because of his deception with Dronacharya. Yudhisthira went to heaven alive because of devotion to righteousness. He was seated in the most honourable seat of heaven. But no achievement could erase his sin of dishonesty. So even after his ascension to heaven, he had to go to hell for a single day. So everyone should live with honesty.

- Write down five of the characteristics that you think an honest person has to possess.

Table 3.3: Five characteristics of an honest person

1.
2.
3.
4.



Courage

The word 'Courage' means fearlessness. The word 'sat' means following the path of truth and justice. So, 'Satsahas' (Courage) means to stand against wrongdoing and injustice for the sake of truth and justice. In spite of a risk in one's life, doing good work, and showing courage for the welfare of the country or others is called courage. If a strong person oppresses a weak person, the brave stand by the side of the weak without fear and protect him/her. Courage is a special moral quality of human beings. Courage is a part of religion. We find many brave characters in Hindu scriptures. We will know the tale of the heroic warrior Abhimanyu from Mahabharata.

There was a kingdom called Hastinapur. The kings of the Kuru dynasty ruled there. One of the kings of this dynasty was Vichitravirya. He had two sons - Dhritarashtra and Pandu. Dhritarashtra was the eldest but he was born blind. So, the younger brother Pandu became the king.

Dhritarashtra's wife was Gandhari. They had a hundred sons named Duryodhana, Dusshasan, Bikarna etc. and a daughter named Dussala. They are called Kauravas after the name of the Kuru dynasty.

On the other hand, Pandu had two wives - Kunti and Madri. Kunti's sons were Yudhishtira, Bhima and Arjuna and Madri's sons were Nakula and Sahadeva. They are called Pandavas after Pandu. A war broke out between the Kauravas and the Pandavas over the rights to the kingdom.

Grandfather Bhishma was appointed the commander of the Kaurava side by Duryodhana. Moreover, the great master of the weapon Dronacharya, Angaraj Karna were also with the Kaurava. Other relatives participated in the war divided on two sides.

Jadhavraj Krishna sent a large number of his Narayani army to fight for the Kauravas. And he himself joined the Pandavas. But he did not fight directly. He was the charioteer of Arjuna.



Image 3.2: Abhimanyu in the Chakravyuhe

At one point in the war, Arjuna was fighting a huge army of Kauravas. Then Duryodhana consulted Dronacharya and made a Chakravyuh. Chakravyuh is the arrangement of troops in a circle. It has only one way to enter into and to come out. It is very difficult to break this system. The great warriors of the Pandava side like Bhima, Satyaki, Dhrishtadyumna etc. could not break this system. Abhimanyu was the son of Krishna's sister Subhadra and Arjuna. Abhimanyu was then only sixteen years old. Moreover, he knew how to get into the Chakravyuh but he did not know how to get out. Lord Krishna did not fight with weapons. Arjuna was busy fighting elsewhere. Again, even if one did not advance, the Pandavas would be defeated. Then Yudhishtira said to Abhimanyu, "Go and break the Chakravyuh. We will bring you out with an army."

Courageous Abhimanyu broke through the Chakravyuh and entered. A huge army of Kauravas was killed by his arrows. Many warriors were killed, including the brother of Mahavir Shalya, and Duryodhana's son Lakshmana. Then seven great warriors Drona, Karna, Duryodhana, Dushasana, Kripacharya, Ashwatthama and Shakuni started fighting with Abhimanyu. They were also defeated seven times. Then these seven warriors attacked Abhimanyu combinedly from all sides. Abhimanyu's weapons

and chariots were all destroyed in this combined attack. Then he took the wheel of the chariot and started the battle. Finally, brave Abhimanyu sacrificed his life fearlessly while fighting.

- Write some points about your understanding of courage

Table 3.4 Courage

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Conscience

The word ‘conscience’ means the sense of judgement. Ability to distinguish between right and wrong and act accordingly. A small child only understands his/her own needs, comforts and discomforts. The feeling of thinking about anyone else does not develop in him. He has to be told again and again what is good and what is bad, what is proper and what is improper. But in his/her adult age, he/she can distinguish between right and wrong, and learns to think about others without thinking only about his/her own interest, we call him/her a conscientious person.

We find Yudhisthira, the glorious character of Mahabharata, as a conscientious man. There are many stories that reveal his conscience. Now, one of them will be told to you. Yudhishtira was then the king of Hastinapur. He decided to leave the earth forever, making Abhimanyu and Uttara's son Parikshit the king. Because he knew that Bhagavan Krishna had left the earth. Draupadi and the rest of the Pandavas gave up all their

possessions, all their ornaments, and expensive clothes and joined Yudhishtira. On the way, they met a dog. The dog also became a companion of these six people. They started walking a long way across the mountains and deserts.

Draupadi left her worldly life on the way. Then one by one Sahadeva, Nakula, Arjuna and finally Bhima also died. Only Yudhishtira and his loyal dog survived. Yudhishtira continued his journey. Finally, Indra, the king of the gods, came down in a chariot to take Yudhishtira to heaven. Yudhishtira then expressed his desire to take the dog with him. But Indra prevented it. He said, "He who lives with a dog cannot go to heaven." But Yudhishtira said, "My brothers and my wife have left me. But the dog is always with me. It will be a great sin to leave him here and go to heaven alone." Yudhishtira denied the offer to leave the dog and go to heaven. Hearing his words, the Dharma Devota left his disguised form of a dog and appeared in his own form. He said to Yudhishtira, "There is no one else in heaven equal to you

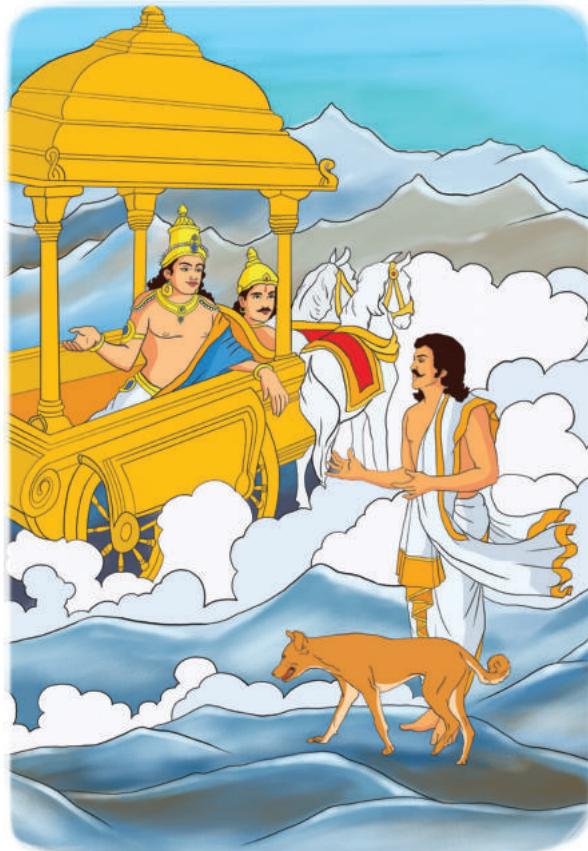


Image 3.3 Indra with a chariot to take Yudhishtira, accompanied by a dog

Yudhishtira went to heaven and saw that neither his brothers nor Draupadi were there. He came to know that they all stayed in hell. He went to hell to see the condition of his wife and brothers. Yudhisthira also did not want to enjoy heavenly happiness after seeing their miserable condition there. He thought it would be better to suffer in hell with everyone. At last, Yudhisthira returned to heaven with everyone.

- In this story of Yudhishtira, in what behaviour do you see his sense of conscience? What have you learnt yourself from this?

Write in the table below.

Table 3.5: Conscience

Yudhisthira's conscience	Explanation	Self-learning

Sense of Courtesy

The word 'courtesy' means politeness or polite behaviour. This gentleness is not feigned. Courteous people sincerely respect everyone, regardless of the junior–senior, higher or lower classes. He/she behaves well with everyone. He never forgets to express his gratitude even if he gets the slightest benefit from the work of others. He/she does not be ashamed to apologize if he/she makes a mistake. Again he/she does not hesitate to ask for forgiveness if he/she does any wrong. Basically, the sense of courtesy between people is formed by the combination of many virtues.

Now, we will know a story of courtesy from a mythological tale.

Devotee Dhruvar's son Utkal was then the king of the world. Utkal was also religious-minded like his father. His donation was not limited to meditation and yajna. He was loved by all as the king of the people. Every day he used to give gifts to the guests, feed them and then take the food himself. Then he sat in the royal court. There is no resentment in his behaviour. He had a smiling face always.

The king's court used to be illuminated by great sages like Angira, Pulastya, Pulha, Marichi, Lomash, Durbasa, Brihaspati, Shukra etc. Even though he was such a benevolent king, he also had to face a great crisis one day. One day, it was too late to finish the Yajna Karma. In the evening, the king was very tired and sat on the throne. At that time a Brahmin with a skeleton body came. He put on little clothes and a clotted of rough hair. He came and blessed the king according to the custom. But the tired king could not entertain the Brahmin properly. He should have risen from the throne and greeted him. And then he should take steps to serve him. But he didn't do any of those things and just bowed with both hands on his forehead.

For this Brahmin became very angry! He shouted and said, "Shiva is my Guru. Sri Krishna is my God. I did not come as a gift seeker in your court. I came to meet the saints. But you are so proud that you forgot to show me proper courtesy! I curse you, disease will devour you, you will lose your beauty, and your pride will be crushed."

The king was shocked to hear these sad words. What a terrible disaster for a little negligence! All the sages of the court were also startled. Would so many pious deeds of the king fail because of one day's indecent behaviour? They all begged the Brahmin for mercy. They wanted to know the way to get rid of this curse.

Realizing his mistake, the king repented and took the Brahmin to the palace with due respect. The king satisfied him by serving him as best he could. The Brahmin told the king how to get rid of the curse and left

- Think about what kind of courtesy should be conveyed in the above situation. Then everyone in the class will say it orally. After that, discuss in groups or pairs and complete the table below

. Table 3.6: The courtesy that should be conveyed in particular situations

Situation	Appropriate courtesy	Self-assessment
At the time of speaking in the class		
At the time of waiting for the bus		
If you bump into someone		
If you hurt someone without understanding		
When talking to someone who disagrees		

In the above list, circle the ones you follow; put triangle signs on those you don't follow, and put square signs on those you try to follow.

We have seen that there are many beautiful stories in our scriptures. By following their inner meanings, we can become people with moral values. Similarly, many great people have appeared in our history of the Hindu religion. They are unforgettable for their knowledge, wisdom, human values, and public welfare work. We can learn from their lives to make ourselves successful persons.

Here we will learn about the lives of some ideal human beings who can be followed by us to become ideal human beings with human values.

Maitreyi

About three thousand years ago there was a famous sage named Yajnavalkya. One day while taking a bath in the Saryu river, he saw his reflection in the water and suddenly thought that he would live for only a few more days. But there was still a book to be written. There was no distribution of his property either. Yajnavalkya returned home worriedly.

His two wives were Katyayani and Maitreyi. He called his wives and said, "My death is imminent. Now it's time to leave home and take to Banaprastha. I want to divide whatever property I have between you two." Katyayani was older. She also had several children. Maitreyi was a young woman. She lived in her own way. Along with leading a family life, she also practised Brahmavidya. Her curiosity was unquenchable. She was indifferent in her behaviour. It was not understood what her devotion was. It seemed that she was waiting for something as if it were unreachable. She enjoyed discussing Brahmavidya with Yajnavalkya. Maitreyi did not agree to take any property.

When Yajnavalkya requested her to take some land, Maitreyi asked, "Can I become immortal if I get land?"

Yajnavalkya replied in the negative. Maitreyi said, "Then what should I do with the land?" Whenever Yajnavalkya wanted to give something, Maitreyi refused it. She needed nothing by which man could not be immortal. She only sought immortality to inherit from Yajnavalkya.

Maitreyi said, "Why do I need only the wealth of your Ashram? If the whole world full of wealth is mine, can I get immortality with it? Will I be able to become immortal if I perform many sacrifices with this wealth?"

Yajnavalkya was overjoyed to hear Maitreyi's question and replied, "Like the rich man's life, so will your life be. You can never attain immortality with wealth." Yajnavalkya further said, "When a man is engrossed in worldly pleasures, he/she does not have the capacity to enjoy the sweetness of nectar. Because human beings are mortal, that eternal death comes and puts an end to all human pleasures. Therefore, there is no possibility of attaining immortality through wealth."

Hearing Yajnavalkya's answer, Maitreyi realized the philosophical truth, "There is no hope of immortality through wealth. Death will not set her free. If immortality is not found, wealth is insignificant, property is insignificant, and this household is insignificant. People who fall into delusion do not gain the absolute truth."



Image 3.5: Maitreyi

Maitreyi said to her husband sadly, “যেনাহং নাম্তা স্যাঃ কিমহং তেন কুর্যাম্?” (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad 2/4) That is, “What can I do with what I can not get immortality? What will happen to me with this useless wealth? Please advise me about the knowledge with which you renounced this wealth and give me the knowledge with which you become wise. Please, give me a quest for immortality.” Hearing Maitreyi's words, Yajnavalkya gave up his decision to leave the family. He began to explain immortality to Maitreyi. He said, “The husband is favourite to wife because the soul of the wife is happy by loving the husband. Parents feel spiritual happiness by loving their sons and daughters, so children also feel their own spiritual happiness in the love of their parents. Therefore children are attached to their parents. People do not really love wealth. Wealth is a favourite to people because it fulfils their needs. So, husband or son or wife or even gods, everyone becomes beloved of others for the happiness of their own soul. The soul is the main object of human love. Except this, wealth, people, property, heaven-everything is insignificant.”

Maitreyi was satisfied after hearing Brahmarishi Yajnavalkya's advice. He realised that the ocean of nectar was not far away. It was inside one's own heart. Atma is the ultimate nectar. Finally, Maitreyi found the nectar.

- Discuss in groups/pairs and write how you can use your learning from Maitreyi's philosophy for human welfare.

Table 3.7: In search of nectar

What I learned	How to use it for human welfare

Sri Chaitanya

Sri Chaitanya was a spiritual master and a social reformer in the 15th-16th century. According to his followers, he is an incarnation of Sri Krishna. Sri Chaitanya's religious movement led to the establishment of the Gaudiya Vaishnava religion. His role in reforming the Hindu religion is unique.

Sri Chaitanya was born in Nabadwip, West Bengal. His father's name is Pandit Jagannath Mishra and his mother's name is Sachidevi.

Jagannath Mishra and Sachidevi had a lot of hardships in their lives. One by one their eight daughters died prematurely. Then a son was born. His name was Vishwarup. He left home at a young age and became a monk. It is said that one day Sachidevi was

taking a bath in the Ganges and engrossed in the thought of God. At that time a Tulsi leaf floated and touched her navel. After this incident, a son was born to her. This son was named Vishwambhar. He is also called Gaur, Gaurachandra, Gauranga because of his fair complexion. But his nickname was Nimai. Later this Nimai came to be known as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or Chaitanyadeva.

When Nimai was ten or eleven, his father died. Mother Sachidevi was in great danger with her youngest son. Boy Nimai was very fickle and restless. But he was not only handsome but also very talented. Everyone loved him because of his talent and looks. Vishnu Pandit gave Nimai Hatekhari (commencement of training or learning). Nimai was admitted to Gangadas Pandit's Chatushpatti for his studies. Boy Nimai was very devoted to his studies. Therefore, within a short period of time, he acquired great erudition in grammar, rhetoric, mnemonics and Nyaya Shastra. He was extraordinarily talented. He was able to attract people wherever he went. At the age of only sixteen, he became known throughout the country as Pandit Nimai. At that time he himself opened a toll and started teaching students. Within a short time, the fame of his teaching spread far and wide. Mother Sachidevi married Nimai to Pandit Vallabhacharya's daughter Lakshmidevi. According to the customs of that time, she could take a lot of dowry on her son's marriage. But Sachidevi did not take any dowry.

At that time, there was a famous scholar in Kashmir named Keshav Mishra. He came to Nabadwip after defeating the scholars of places like Kashi, Kanchi, Dravida, Nalanda etc. Coming to Nabadwip, he called the scholars there to judge their knowledge of the scriptures. He proudly declared, "Either judge the argument or write the victory paper." His erudition was known to all. So the scholar-society of Nabadwip was frightened by his call. Then the young Pandit Nimai encountered the great scholar Pandit Keshav Mishra. On the banks of the Ganges, they exchanged greetings. At the request of Nimai, Keshav Mishra instantly composed the Gangastrotra in over a hundred verses orally. And Nimai then started criticizing the verses. He explained where there was a mistake in a verse. The scholars present there were surprised to hear Nimai's criticism. Keshav Mishra also admitted his mistake. After this incident, the reputation of Nimai's wisdom in Nabadwip increased further.

After some time, Nimai once visited East Bengal. Returning to Nabadwip, he heard that his wife Lakshmidevi died of snakebite. He was mournful by the death of his wife. He had an aversion to family life. He became very devoted to religion. Realizing this, mother Sachidevi remarried Nimai to Bishnupriya, the daughter of Sanatan Pandit, to attract him to the family.

A few years passed happily. At the age of twenty-two, young Chaitanya went to Gaya for oblation to his deceased father to seek the welfare of his deceased father's soul. There Nimai met the famous Vaishnava saint and monk Ishwarpuri alone. He took initiation in Krishna's name from Ishwarpuri. This brought about a great change in his mind. Returning to Nabadwip, he gave up teaching and family life. He just chanted Krishnanam. The Vaishnavas of Nabadwip also joined him. Among them, there were Nityananda, Srivasa, Gadadhara, Mukunda, Advaitacharya etc. They were his main companions. But Nityananda was the closest.

Nimai went from house to house with his followers and even on village paths preaching the name of Krishna. However, many people were angry at this. Many also created obstacles. Two drunken brothers named Jagai-Madhai attacked Nimai and Nityananda one day. But Nimai embraced everyone with love and devotion. They all realized their mistake and respected Nimai's religion of love and devotion

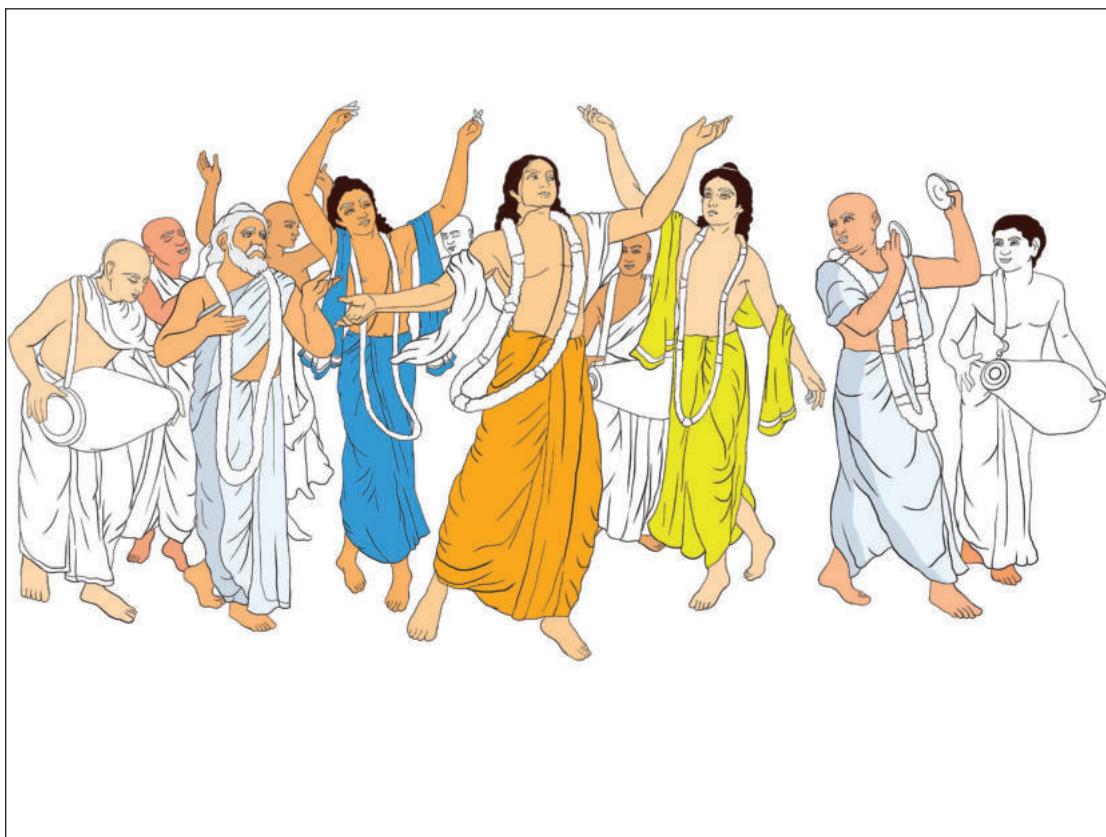


Image 3.6: On the roads of Nabadwip, Nimai preaching Krishnanam

On the other hand, Nimai's had no attraction towards the family life. He thought of leaving the family. Then on a late night of Shukla Paksha of the month of Magh, he departed from home leaving his mother, wife and devotees. Going to Katwa, he took initiation into monasticism from Keshav Bharati. Then his new name was Sri Krishna Chaitanya, Sri Chaitanya for short.

Sri Chaitanya traveled to different parts of India to preach his religion of love and devotion. He spent the last eighteen years of his life in Nilachal of Puri after visiting places like Puri, Daksinaty, Vrindavan, Kashi, etc. Devoted to his mother, Sri Chaitanya took his mother's information from Nilachale till the end of his life at his mother's request. At that time, prominent Vaishnava scholars like Srirup, Sanatan, Raghunath Bhatt, Raghunath Das, Srijiva, Gopal Bhatt, etc. were with him.

Sri Chaitanya's love for Krishna increased day by day. On the way, he used to go around saying "Where is Krishna, please appear before me, please appear before me." Sri Chaitanya was often maddened by the name of Krishna. One day in 1533 A.D. he entered the temple of Jagannathdev in a divine trance. Suddenly the door of the temple was closed. Everyone was waiting outside eagerly. Then the door opened and he was no longer seen. Inside the temple, there was only the statue of Jagannath. Devotees believed that Sri Chaitanya was absorbed into the body of Jagannathdev. There are many studies by many scholars on the disappearance of Sri Chaitanya. However, there is still no consensus on this issue.

Sri Chaitanya treated all people equally. He did not discriminate between people. He worked tirelessly to remove the caste system and all forms of discrimination and prejudice from society. Rising above all narrow-mindedness, Sri Chaitanya called for the abolition of untouchability and spoke of equality among men. It was a revolutionary step at that time.

There was no place for high and low status in his religion of love and devotion. He distributed affection and love equally to all. Sitting in a row with everyone, he took food. In this way, he saved the Hindu society from various degradations. He was able to remove the dissensions and conflicts among communities of Hindus to a large extent. Not only Hindus, his love had no discrimination for Muslims, Christians etc. He embraced everyone with love. So he said:

যেই ভজে, সেই বড়, অভক্ত হীন ছাড়।
কৃষ্ণ ভজনে নাহি জাতি কুলাদি বিচার॥
উভয় হঞ্চা বৈষ্ণব হবে নিরভিমান।
জীবে সম্মান দিবে জানি কৃষ্ণ অধিষ্ঠান॥

The followers of Sri Chaitanya had to read books on Krishna daily. Due to this, education spread during that time. In later times Sri Chaitanya's influence could be seen in female education. In the 19th century, Vaishnavites used to come to the noble houses of Bengal to teach girls. Women were given dignity in Vaishnava society. Even females got the right of initiation. In that case, there was also the influence of Chaitanya. Caitanya's favourite was the name of Krishna and the Padakirtan on Krishna. Again Vaishnava's daily routine was reading and listening to books on Krishna. As a result, during Chaitanyadeva's time and after him, the Vaishnava Padavali of Bengal became rich in spiritual wealth.

Find out in groups/pairs the renaissance that Sri Chaitanya brought about in the Bengali life of those days based on religion and present it to everyone through an infographic poster.

Write down the lesson from Sri Chaitanya's life that you want to apply in your life.

Table 3.8: Nectar-Life

Bamakshapa

Bamakshapa was a famous saint. He attained siddhi (complete success in religious pursuit) through Sadhana (religious pursuit) following the Tantric Moth. His place of Sadhana was Tarapeeth. The location of Tarapeeth is in Birbhum district of West Bengal. Here many more Tantrasadhaks attained siddhi through Sadhana. Such as Anandanath, Kailasapati etc. Tarapeeth is a special pilgrimage site for the Hindus.

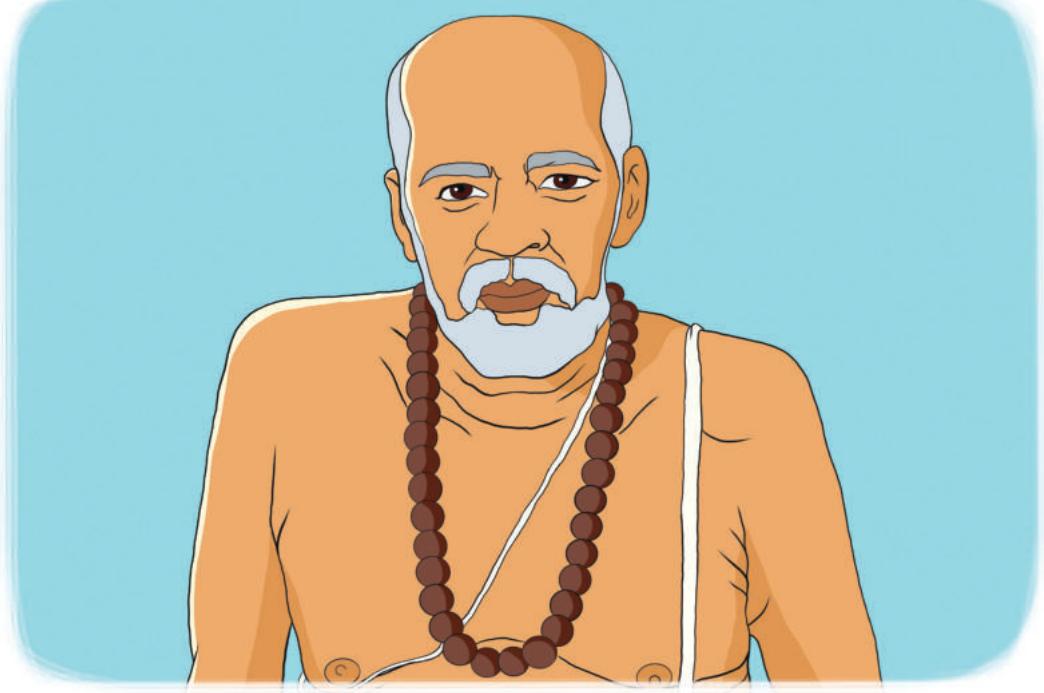


Image 3.7: Shadhak Bamakshapa

Atla village is situated near Tarapeeth. Bamakshapa was born there on Shiv Chaturdashi Tithi in 1837. His father was Sarbananda Chattopadhyay and his mother was Rajkumari Devi.

Bamakshapa's real name was Bamacharan Chatterjee. Later, everyone used to call him Bamakshapa after seeing his excessive devotion to the pursuit of Tarama. His father Sarbananda used to work on the farms. He managed his family with the little income he got from it.

Sarbananda was a very pious and simple man. Being initiated at a young age, he plunged

into the pursuit of Taramay. His wife Rajkumari Devi was also devout and devoted to religion. Being the child of such parents, Bamacharan also became a devotee of Taramay. He used to say, "Jai Tara Jai Tara" and rolled on the ground. His simplicity seemed to be madness in the eyes of others.

Bamacharan was not interested in formal education. Somehow he completed his primary school education. He did not go to high school.

Bamacharan could sing in a melodious tone. One day there was a singing session in the temple of Taramay. His father Sarbananda was playing the violin. At one point Sarbananda dressed up Bamacharan as Krishna. And Bama began to dance and sing in a sweet voice. The people of the village were delighted to see Bama as Krishna and hear his music.

One day, Bamacharan insisted on going to the crematorium. His father Sarbananda could not stop him. Finally, he went to the crematorium with Bamacharan. Bama's mind changed after seeing the crematorium. He liked the crematorium a lot.

Bama became mentally unstable after this incident. He really became kshapa (insane). This insanity was due to his deep religious devotion. Along with the crematorium grounds, he developed an intimate relationship with Taramay. The cremation Lila of Bamacharan started. At that time there was a Tantra monk and sage Mokshadananda in the crematorium. Also, there was Kailaspati from Braja. Kailaspati initiated Bama. And Mokshadananda gave Siksa Sadhana. Bamacharan's Tantra Sadhana began in the crematorium.

Then suddenly one day his father Sarbananda died. Bamacharan was then 18 years old. Thinking about the family, his mother Rajkumari became very worried. She asked Bama to do something. Bama engaged himself in one job after another. But he could not focus anywhere. He remembered only Taramay's Ranga Charan (feet). Once he took the job of plucking flowers in a temple. But while plucking the red-coloured Chinese rose, he remembered Tarama's feet. At once he fainted. Sometimes he started to sing alone in a melancholy mood sitting under a tree. As a result, none of his work lasted long. Thus he came to be known as Bamakshapa.

This insanity continued. He deeply absorbed his heart and soul into the pursuit of Taramay and at one time, he succeeded in his pursuit. The news of his success spread far and wide. Then Maharani Annadasundari of Natore came to know about him. The maintenance of the Tarapeeth was then the responsibility of the royal family of Natore. Bamakshapa was appointed the priest of the Tarapeeth on the orders of the queen.

Bamakshapa was very simple and unconcerned about himself. He did not maintain

anything food, non-food, or worship - mantra. He worshipped saying “ Ma, Take this wood apple leaf, rice, water, flowers, and incense.

Although Bama was a great devotee of Taramay, he respected his mother very much. After the death of his mother Rajkumari, her body was brought to Tarapeeth. Bama was then in the Tarapeeth crematorium across the river Dwarka. There were heavy waves in the river during the rainy season. So, no one wanted to take the dead body to the crematorium on the other side out of fear. The crematorium was being arranged on this side of the river. But thinking that his mother should be cremated in Tarapeeth's crematorium for the sake of the welfare of her soul. So, Bamaksha jumped into the river with the name of Tarama. After reaching the other side, he tied his mother's body to himself and swam to the other side and cremated the mother's body in the crematorium.

Bamakshapa used to say for the learning of the people:

- ১। ধর্ম অন্তরের জিনিস। বেশি আড়ম্বর করলে নষ্ট হয়।
- ২। মায়াকে জয় করতে পারলেই মহামায়ার কৃপা পাওয়া যায়।
- ৩। তারা মায়ের করুণা পেলেও মোক্ষ লাভ হয়।
- ৪। গুরু, মন্ত্র আর ভগবান এঁদের মধ্যে পার্থক্য ভাবতে নেই। তোমরাও ভাববে না, তোমাদের মঙ্গল হবে।
- ৫। কলিযুগে মুক্তিসাধনা আর হরিনাম ছাড়া জীবের গতি নেই।
- ৬। দিনরাত যে কালীতারা, রাধাকৃষ্ণ নাম করে, পাপ তাকে স্পর্শ করতে পারে না।

1. Religion is a matter of the heart. Too much pomp destroys it.
 2. Mahamaya's grace can be gained only by conquering delusion.
 3. Even if we get the Tarama's mercy, we will get Moksha (salvation)
 4. We should not differentiate between Guru, Mantra and God. Don't think that, your welfare will be ensured.
 5. In the Kali Yuga, there is no way of living beings without the pursuit of salvation and Harinam.
 6. One who chants Kalitara and Radhakrishna day and night, cannot be touched by sin.
- Bamakshapa passed away in the year 1911 after establishing everlasting achievements in Tantra Sadhana.

- Write down with explanation about the learning that you want to apply in your life from the life of Bamakshapa

Table 3.9 Easy Life

Swami Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda was born on January 12, 1863 in Calcutta. His father Vishwanath Dutta was a renowned lawyer. He was also a scholar. He knew many languages. Vivekananda's mother Bhubaneswari Devi was a religious-minded and good housewife. Vivekananda's real name is Narendranath Dutta. Another name he had as a child was

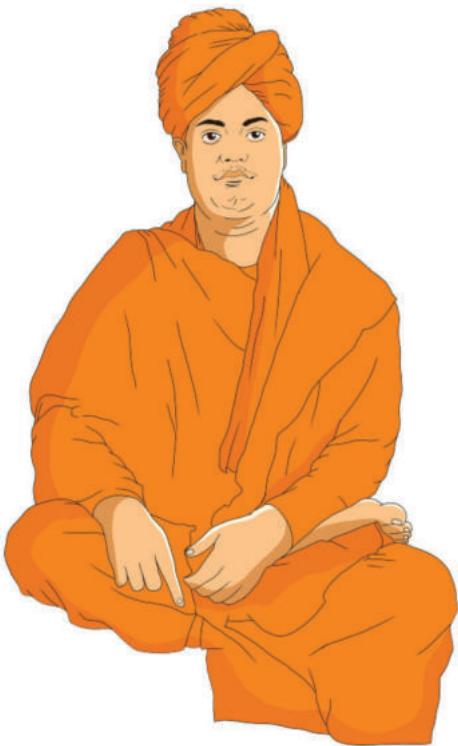


Image 3.8 Swami Vivekananda

Vireshwar. But everyone affectionately called him 'Bile'. Bile was very restless and unyielding. He was a little different from others. Generous outlook, and kindness to living beings, were his natural characteristics. He did not like caste discrimination. His father's clients included Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras, Muslims, and Christians. In the living room of the house, they all had separate hookahs (water pipes that are used to smoke) for smoking. Each hookah had a name written on it. One day Narendranath was touching all the hookahs with his mouth. At that time, his father Vishwanath came. He said to his son, "What is going on, Naren?" Narendranath said, "I used all the hookahs, but I did not lose my caste." His father laughed upon hearing

this strange statement from his son. Just as the morning shows the days, this event, on that day also indicated the future Vivekananda who would show equal treatment for all living beings.

Narendranath was very good in his studies. He was also good at sports and music. He was not only truthful but also fearless. One day the teacher was teaching in the classroom. Bile was talking with some of his classmates. The teacher got angry. He asked them the lesson. No one could answer except Bile. Because Bile was listening to the lesson as well as talking. So, the teacher asked others to stand except Bile. But Bile also stood up with them. The teacher said, "You don't need to stand." Bile replied, "But, I have spoken too." The teacher was very happy with Bill's honesty and courage.

Bile loved the poor. So whenever he saw them, he would run home. He used to bring clothes, food and whatever he got in the house and give them. Bile was the team leader of his teammates. Whenever he got a chance, he used to play meditation with his companions. Sometimes he would meditate alone. Meditation was one of his favourite pastimes.

Narendranath passed the entrance exam in the first division. He also studied a lot in law and philosophy. In 1884 he passed B.A. Soon after this, his father died. As a result, their family was in great financial crisis. He looked for jobs in different places to support his mother and younger siblings. But he did not get any job. Finally, he took a job in an attorney's office in Kolkata. He started earning some money by translating books.

At that time Narendranath had a change in his mind. He only thought about God. Does God exist? Can He be seen? Such questions often arose in his mind. He asked many people this question. But he could not be satisfied with anyone's answer. In that situation, one day he met the great saint Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna then lived in Dakshineswar Kalibari, Kolkata. Narendranath went there one day. He asked Sri Ramakrishna, "Have you seen God?" Sri Ramakrishna smiled and said, "Yes, I have seen Him as I see you. If you want, I can show you too."

Narendranath liked Saint Sri Ramakrishna. A sense of devotion arose towards him. So, he started to go to Dakshineshwar regularly. Once he was initiated into the mantra of renunciation by Sri Ramakrishna. Narendranath became an ascetic. Then his name was Vivekananda. Later devotees called him Swami Vivekananda or simply Swamiji.

Vivekananda left home but did not leave India and her people. So, he went out on the streets. He wanted to see the condition of the people of India with his own eyes. He travelled all over India. He saw only poverty, illiteracy, ignorance and superstition all

over the country. He was very sad to see the plight of the countrymen. He wanted to know the causes of these illiteracy, ignorance and poverty. He started thinking about how to save the countrymen from all these.

At that time there was British rule in the country. The country was subjugated. He realized that the country was going to be destroyed under the foreign rule. So the country must be saved. The country had to be woken up. The country had to be made independent. A subjugated country can never prosper. The poverty of the country had to be eliminated. Illiteracy must be eliminated. All people must be loved. Religion is the source of vitality. This religion is to serve the people like deities. Everyone should be awakened to this mantra. Confidence should be increased among all. Only then the country would progress.

Vivekananda went to America in 1893. On September 11, he spoke at the World Religion Conference held in Chicago. Vivekananda said in his speech, "Hindu religion considers all religions of the world to be equally true. All religions have the same goal. Just as rivers merge into an ocean, so all religions have the same goal - the attainment of God. So, no contention, but assistance; No destruction, acceptance of each other; No discord, but harmony and peace." Everyone was very impressed by Vivekananda's speech. In the judgment of the congregation, he was the best speaker. Admired by his erudition, famous Harvard University professor John Henry Wright said, "He is a man whose erudition surpasses all our professors combined."

Vivekananda's name spread across America after his speech in the congress. Invitations came from various places for giving speeches. He also conquered America with a series of lectures on Hindu philosophy, especially Vedanta philosophy. Then he went to Europe. He travelled and gave speeches in England, France, Italy etc. He expressed the main theory of Vedanta philosophy. The main point of Vedanta is, "There is no difference between living beings and Brahman; a living being is Brahman." Therefore serving the living being should be done as serving Brahman. Through his speech, he established the fact that the Hindu religion does not only worship idols but also worships one God through the worship of all gods. From his speeches, Europeans got to know about the Hindu religion and philosophy anew. Many became his ardent devotees. Among them, the name of Margaret Elizabeth Noble was particularly noteworthy. She was so inspired by Vivekananda's ideals that she left his native Ireland and migrated to India. She took initiation from Vivekananda. Then her name was Sister Nivedita.

After travelling the world for about four years, Vivekananda returned to the country in

1897 AD. The people of the country received him with great respect. They arranged a grand reception. At the reception, he asked the people of the country to fight against injustice and abandon all superstitions. He asked everyone to forget their differences and be united. He said, "Strength and bravery are religion. Weakness and cowardice are sins. Freedom is religion, subjugation is sin. Benevolence is religion, persecution is sin. Truth is the basis of all religions. To be honest and to do honest deeds are part of religion." Vivekananda quoted the Atharva Veda as saying, 'Not falsehood, but truth triumphs; The path to attaining God is widened only through truth.'

Vivekananda did not believe in the division based on religion and did not believe in the caste system. He strongly hated the caste system and untouchability. He hated violence, narrow-mindedness, bigotry. He treated all people equally regardless of caste, religion and race. He considered everyone a child of nectar. He loved people of all religions equally. People of all religions, castes and races are equal despite differences in lifestyle and religious rituals. There is no discrimination among people. He used to say, "The low caste, the illiterate, the poor, the ignorant, the cobbler, the scavenger are all our brothers. Serving them is the ultimate religion."

Vivekananda thought of eradicating poverty and spreading education among the poor. He used to say that we could not be religious while remaining on an empty stomach. Therefore, first of all, the poverty of people had to be eradicated. He said, " We want food! We want food! Food should be given to the poor. At first, food is needed, then religion." According to him, self-confidence and faith in God are both ways to progress. Young people had to build a healthy body first. Then they would practise religion. A weak body could not practise religion and any work. That was why they should play football before reading Gita. It would help to form a healthy body. Then they would understand the Gita better.

Vivekananda could feel with his heart that without education no nation could develop. That was why he used to say – "The people of the country should be educated, everyone should be given an equal opportunity to get education. Only then it will be possible to build a developed nation. To be a real man himself and to help others to be real men too - this should be the purpose of human life."

Inspired by his ideals, hundreds of Sevashrams, service centres and Vidyashrams (Educational institutions) have been established in villages and cities. Through the organizations, services and education have been given to the masses and are still being given.

Vivekananda did not only talk about serving the living beings but also showed it through his actions. In 1898 there was an epidemic of plague in Calcutta. He was in Darjeeling then. Immediately after hearing about the plague, he moved to Calcutta and worked with his co-disciples in the service of the sick.

Vivekananda also thought about the plight of women in the society. Referring to Vedic era women like Maitreyi, Gargi, he said, "If the women of that era could get so much education, then why can't the women of this era receive education?" According to him, a nation that does not respect women can never prosper. It is not possible to improve the world without improving the condition of women. So, Vivekananda was very vocal about the development of women. He said, "Each of the girls should learn something so that they can earn their livelihood if needed. Girls should have the same rights and opportunities as men in learning industry-business-agriculture."

He saw women as a symbol of power. Therefore, he used to say, "The renaissance of the world is not possible without power." According to him, all women other than wives should be like mothers to every man. Vivekananda expressed his gratitude to Raja Rammohan Roy for abolishing the custom of sati-dah (The burning of a chaste wife on the funeral pile of her husband). Vidyasagar was called Mahavira for the practice of widow marriage. He also advised the remarriage of widows as well as self-reliance by getting an education and living with self-respect. He hated child marriage. He also favoured the asceticism of women.

Vivekananda established the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission to spread the ideals of human service of his Gurudev Ramakrishna Paramahansadev. It is located on the western bank of the Ganges at Belude in Howrah district of West Bengal. It is commonly known as Belur Math. Vivekananda also founded the Ramakrishna Mission. Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission have branches in different countries of the world. Hundreds of people are being served by Ramakrishna Maths and Ramakrishna Missions all over the world. Services include education, treatment, emergency assistance etc.

Vivekananda served everyone irrespective of caste and religion. Once there was a severe famine in Calcutta. Then a shelter was opened by the Ramakrishna Mission. Some Muslim boys came to stay there. When he was asked what would be done with them, Vivekananda said, "Muslim boys must stay here". Not only that, special care had to be given to ensure that there was no disturbance in their eating, drinking and religious practices.

Vivekananda was a hard-working person. So, his health deteriorated at an early age due to lack of rest. He passed away on July 4, 1902, at Belur Math.

A few sayings of Swami Vivekananda:

- ১। ধর্ম এমন একটি ভাব যা পশুকে মানুষে এবং মানুষকে দেবত্বে উন্নীত করে।
- ২। আমার ঈশ্বর কোনো দূর গ্রহ-উপগ্রহের অধিবাসী নয়, অজ্ঞতাবশত যাকে আমরা মানুষ বলি সেই আমার ঈশ্বর।
- ৩। পরধর্ম বা পরমতের প্রতি শুধু দ্বেষভাবশূন্য হলেই চলবে না, আমাদেরকে ঐ ধর্ম বা মতকে আলিঙ্গনও করতে হবে; সত্যই সকল ধর্মের ভিত্তি।
- ৪। সৎ হওয়া এবং সৎ কাজ করা - তার মধ্যেই সমস্ত ধর্ম। যে ঈশ্বরের ইচ্ছানুযায়ী কাজ করে সেই ঠিক ঠিক ধার্মিক।
- ৫। মানুষের মহন্ত্বের পরিচয় তার চরিত্রে, বৃত্তিতে নয়।
- ৬। অপরকে ভালোবাসাই ধর্ম, অপরকে ঘৃণা করাই পাপ। ঈশ্বর ও নিজ আত্মাতে বিশ্বাসাই ধর্ম, সন্দেহই পাপ। অভেদ দর্শনই ধর্ম, ভেদ দর্শনই পাপ।
- ৭। ওঠো, জাগো, আর ঘুমিয়ো না; সকল অভাব, সকল দুঃখ ঘোচাবার শক্তি তোমাদের নিজেদের ভেতরে রয়েছে- একথা বিশ্বাস করো, তাহলে শক্তি জেগে ওঠবে।
- ৮। যে শিক্ষায় জীবনে নিজের পায়ের ওপর দাঁড়াতে পাড়া যায়, সেই হচ্ছে শিক্ষা।
- ৯। হৃদয় ও মস্তিষ্ক দ্বারাই চিরকাল যা-কিছু বড় কাজ হয়েছে, টাকার দ্বারা নয়।
- ১০। ভেবো না তোমরা দরিদ্র, ভেবো না তোমরা বন্ধুহীন; কে কোথায় দেখেছে- টাকায় মানুষ করেছে! মানুষই চিরকাল টাকা করে থাকে। জগতের যা কিছু উন্নতি, সব মানুষের শক্তিতে হয়েছে, উৎসাহের শক্তিতে হয়েছে, বিশ্বাসের শক্তিতে হয়েছে।
- ১১। বিশ্বাসাই হলো মানবসমাজ ও সব ধর্মের সবচেয়ে বড় শক্তি।
- ১২। দরিদ্র, মৃখ, অজ্ঞান, কাতর- এরাই তোমার দেবতা হোক, এদের সেবাই পরম ধর্ম বলে জানবে। দরিদ্র দেবো ভব। মৃখ দেবো ভব।
- ১৩। যার নিজের ওপর আস্থা তথা বিশ্বাস নেই তাঁর ঈশ্বরেও বিশ্বাস নেই।

English meaning:

1. Religion is an ideology that elevates animals to humans and humans to divinity.
2. My God is not an inhabitant of a distant planet-satellite, but what we ignorantly call human is my God.
3. It is not enough to be hatred-free towards other religions or opinions, we have to

embrace those religions or opinions too; Truth is the basis of all religions.

4. To be honest and to do righteous deeds - here lie all religions. He/She who works according to God's will is righteous.
5. A man's greatness lies in his character, not in his occupation.
6. Loving others is religion, hating others is a sin. Belief in God and self is religion, doubt is sin. To view no discrimination is religion; to view discrimination is sin.
7. Arise, awake, sleep no more; You have the power within yourself to overcome all wants, all sorrows - believe that, then the power will arise.
8. The education that helps to be self-reliant in life is education.
9. Great things have always been done by heart and brain, not by money.
10. Do not think that you are poor, Do not think that you are friendless; Who has seen that money made people! People always make money. All the progress in the world has been made by the power of people, by the power of enthusiasm, by the power of faith.
11. Faith is the greatest strength of human society and all religions.
12. The poor, the foolish, the ignorant, the wretched – may all of them be your gods, know that their services will be the ultimate religion. Consider the poor and ignorant as your gods.
13. He who has no faith in himself/ herself has no faith in God.

Identify one saying, thought, and action of Swami Vivekananda that you want to apply in your life. Now fill up the table below.

Table 3.10: Enlightened consciousness

Sayings	Thoughts	Deeds

Swami Vivekananda determined his duties in the light of society and the surroundings. Find out and write three of the social problems of his time which are still seen in our time.

Table3.11 Social Problems

Now, in groups/pairs, identify the most important problem by choosing from each person's list. Then find out what Swami Vivekananda showed to solve this problem. Find an applicable solution at this time in the light of his way.

Present your work in groups/pairs using any medium like infographic posters, multimedia etc.

Sri Guruchand Thakur

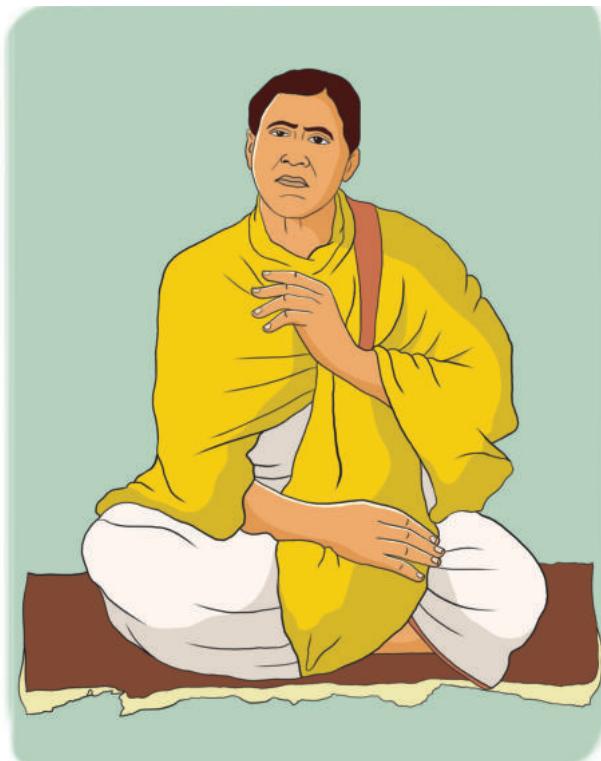


Image 3.9 Sri Guruchand Thakur

Guruchand Thakur is well known as a propagator of Matua ideals and a reformer of Hindu society. He was born on March 1, 1847, in Orakandi village of Gopalganj district. His father Harichand Thakur was the pioneer of the Matuabad of equality among castes and men and women. Guruchand Thakur's mother's name was Shantidevi Thakur.

Guruchand Thakur received his education at the Pathshala (primary school) level from Dasharath Biswas of Padmabila village. He then learned Sanskrit from Golak Kirtanya of Mallakandi village. He learned Persian at Makub Miya's Maktab of Arkandi village. After that, he became self-educated by reading various scriptures at his home. He was married to Satyabhama Devi, daughter of Ramakrishna Biswas.

At a very young age, he took up the responsibility of preaching the ideals of his father Harichand Thakur. Along with that, he was also associated with various social reform movements. The aspects of Matua's ideals that he particularly preached were - attending religious rituals irrespective of men and women, practising religion along with family

life, not making any caste distinctions, discouraging wearing religious dresses and adornment, and possessing strict moral character etc.

The main goal of Guruchand Thakur's social reforms was the welfare of the backward Hindu society. His first movement was the movement to establish the social status of the Namashudra. In 1872, the then-British government entitled a large section of Bengali agricultural Hindus as Chandals in the official records. Guruchand Thakur was able to prove with scriptural evidence that this title was incorrect. A massive social movement took place under his leadership. A written application was also submitted to the government. In the end, the Namashudras were written as Namashudras only in the official registers, excluding the Chandal identity. The Namashudra caste regained their self-respect.

Guruchand Thakur's second movement was about mass education. This movement was to give equal opportunity to people in education. But at that time farmers, fishermen and labouring Hindus did not have the opportunity to receive formal education. It was thought that if their children got the education, there would be a livelihood crisis in the society. Guruchand Thakur moved against it. He thought that education is the basic right of everyone. So, he reached people in remote areas from village to village. He encouraged them to build educational institutions and receive education. In 1881, an international conference was held at Dattadanga village in Bagerhat district. Around 5000 delegates from Bengal and Assam attended it. Guruchand Thakur presided over the conference. He highlighted the importance and significance of education there. As a result, a consciousness was created among people. People came forward to build educational institutions with money, land and labour. Thus, under the inspiration and initiatives of Guruchand Thakur, around 1820 educational institutions were built at that time most of them were Pathshalas or primary-level educational institutions. He himself supervised them and led the work of mass education further.

Guruchand Thakur's third movement was the movement for the freedom of women. At that time girls were married off at a young age. Again, if someone was widowed at a young age, there was no scope for a second marriage. That was the social custom. Despite the relevant legislation on widow marriage or the social movement of Vidyasagar, the society could not come out of this practice. It was not possible to prevent child marriage either. Guruchand Thakur formed a social movement in this regard. As a result, widow marriage was widely introduced in the backward Hindu society. Child marriage also began to be controlled.

Guruchand Thakur's fourth movement was to prevent waste in social events. At that

time, many people used to spend a lot of money on parents' obsequial rites or various auspicious ceremonies. Many used to arrange money by selling their last possessions. Its purpose was to increase one's social status and to be recognized as a master of society. In that case, Guruchand Thakur strictly instructed that one should spend according to one's ability. After this instruction of Guruchand Thakur, wastage was prevented in obsequial rites etc.

Guruchand Thakur's fifth movement was to provide government jobs to backward-class people. At that time, the backward, peasant community, fishermen and other working-class people did not have the opportunity to get respectable government jobs. Guruchand Thakur considered it a violation of human rights. So, he created public opinion about it. A strong demand was made to the British government of the time for getting jobs according to the merit of the backward people. A Christian missionary called Dr. CS Mead especially supported him, in this regard. As a result, the doors of merit-based government jobs were opened for the backwards.

Guruchand Thakur's sixth movement was not to restrict the occupation of the Hindus to particular communities. Guruchand Thakur was not a supporter of specific professions to be confined to specific castes. He was a supporter of the view that people could change their profession according to their aptitude and needs. That is, an agriculturist or a labourer could also be a businessman if necessary. People of different professions might take agriculture as an occupation for livelihood if necessary. There should be no social barriers to it. He was able to convince the people of the society about this. If there was any obstacle, he took everyone together and decided to prevent it in an organized way. As a result, through his movement, consciousness was created among the people of the Hindu society to change their profession. Working-class people or agricultural people became successful by engaging themselves in trade and commerce.

Guruchand Thakur's Seventh Movement was a movement for providing financial security. He encouraged cooperative activities to bring the backward classes financially forward. He was able to establish an organization and system called Dharmagola, especially in rural areas. As a result, people who were in financial crisis at a particular time of the year could be benefited.

Guruchand Thakur used Kabigan and Dhuagaan (Baul songs are sometimes called by these names) to propagate his ideals. He patronized many folk poets of that time. Tarakchandra Sarkar was Guruchand's very favourite Kabial. Besides, Haribar Sarkar, Manohar Sarkar, Ashwini Sarkar etc. were great professional versifiers. They were able to spread Guruchand's ideals through music in the Hindu society of that time.

Guruchand Thakur established a printing press in Orakandi village to propagate his ideals. Various religious books were printed there. In 1907, a magazine called Namashudra Suhrid was published there. Through this magazine, he regularly published the sufferings of the backward Hindu society and the hard struggle to overcome it.

Guruchand Thakur also contributed a lot in making Orakandi a place of pilgrimage. He established a big Harimandir there which is considered by devotees as the central Harimandir of the Matuas. Several big ponds were also excavated there. A pond was named 'Kamana-Sagar'. Every year millions of Matua devotees visit Orakandi on the occasion of Harichand's birth anniversary. They believe that they will gain Purna (religious merit) by taking a bath in the water of the 'Kamana-Sagar'.

This great preacher and social reformer Guruchand Thakur passed away on February 26, 1937.

Some Special Sayings of Guruchand Thakur:

- ১। খাও বা না খাও তাতে কোনো দুঃখ নাই।
ছেলেপিলে শিক্ষা দাও এই আমি চাই ॥
- ২। বিদ্যা ছাড়া কথা নাই বিদ্যা করো সার।
বিদ্যা ধর্ম, বিদ্যা কর্ম, অন্য সব ছার ॥
- ৩। নরাকারে ভূমভূলে যত জন আছে।
এক জাতি বলে মান্য পাবে মোর কাছে ॥
- ৪। যথা ধর্ম তথা জয় এক বাক্য সার।
ধর্মপথে যে চলিবে ক্ষয় নাই তার ॥
- ৫। দুষ্ট বুদ্ধি করি ঠিক ওজন না দিলে।
বাণিজ্য হইবে ঝংস যাবে রসাতলে ॥
- ৬। পবিত্রতা সত্যবাক্য মানুষে বিশ্বাস।
তিন রত্ন যার আছে হরি তার বশ ॥
- ৭। পরদোষ ছেড়ে সদা নিজ দোষ কও।
আঅগুণ ফেলে রেখে হরিগুণ গাও ॥
- ৮। হরিনামে ডঙ্কা মারো শঙ্কা করো কারে।
শ্রীহরি সহায় হয়ে সাথে সাথে ফেরে ॥
- ৯। যার দল নাই, তার বল নাই।

English meaning:

1. Whether you eat or not, is not a sorrowful matter.

Educate your children, this is what I desire.

2. There is no way, without education.

Education is religion, education is work, and everything else is worthless.

3. The number of people on Earth is vast.

They will be considered as one race in my eyes.

4. Where there is religion, there is victory- this one sentence is a basis.

Those who walk the path of righteousness incur no loss.

5. If you use a false measure of your wickedness,

your business will be destroyed.

6. The persons who have purity, truthfulness, and faith in human beings will be able to keep Hari under their control.

7. Give up pointing out the faults of others; instead, cast aside your own faults and sing the praises of Hari."

8. Chant the name of Hari without hesitation, fearing no one,

as the Lord will come to help you."

9. One who has no group has no power."

Select a saying of Guruchand Thakur that you can follow to help others. Explain how to do it.

Table 3.13: Sayings of Guruchand Thakur on Human Welfare

The saying that will be followed	How to follow

Swami Advaitananda Puri

Swami Advaitananda Puri was born in the village of Banigram in the Banskhali Upazila of Chittagong district in Bangladesh. His father's name was Pratap Mitra Choudhury, and his mother's name was Shachi Devi. A child was born on May 19, 1903, illuminating their laps. According to the guidance of their guru, his father named him Advaita.

His educational journey began in the village school, and he excelled as a meritorious student at Banigram High School. Advaita was modest, benevolent and friendly. He respected his teachers highly. He received his first Mahamantra from Amritlal Goswami on Ramnavami Tithi of Basanti Puja when he was in class three. Advaita's education and spirituality continued hand in hand from his childhood. In 1923, he passed the entrance examination from Banigram High School with first division securing letter marks in Sanskrit and mathematics. He also staged a drama with the village children.

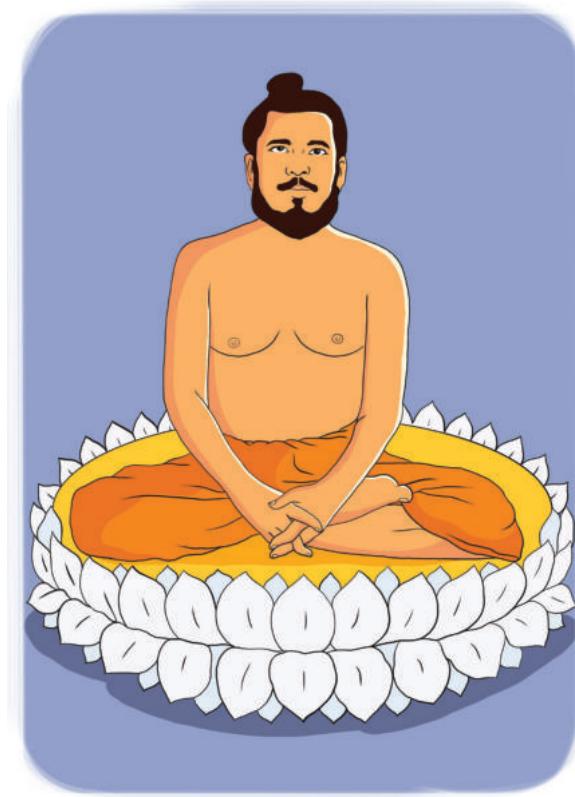


Image 3.10 Swami Advaitananda Puri

In the Sanskrit language, he possessed profound erudition. Alongside acquiring expertise in Sanskrit, he pursued his ancestral profession of Ayurvedic treatment, earning fame and recognition. He established Arya Chatushpatti at home for the physical development as well as mental and spiritual development of people.

He instituted the Tarakabrahma Yajna in the Sri Sri Rajarajeswari temple premises of the house and used to perform the Puja from the seat of the Tantradharak during the autumn festival.

For regular and deep meditation and contemplation, Advaita would often venture into the quiet depths of the forest during the dark nights. He used to say, “Meditation that brings relief, is the Mantra. Direct command of God is gained through deep meditation. Advaita became Sivakalpatru Srimat Swami Advaitananda Puri by means of sadhana. He got Amritakumbha or absolute knowledge. He did not marry. His only desire was to leave home and go to the isolated forest as a wandering saint. But his father forced him to stay in the family and Guru Swami Jagdananda dissuaded him at that time. But with his Gurudev Jagdananda, he always accompanied his visit to many pilgrimages. Gurudev gave him Vidvatsannyas (asceticism). The meaning of this asceticism is to practise asceticism with mind and soul giving up all desires for the results. To him religion is truth, God is ultimate truth. According to him, so many ways, and so many paths have been created to reach the ultimate truth through truth. He referred to those who were on the right path as Arya. Swami Advaitananda used to say, “The person who is righteous in his/her work, is an honest person. His/her conduct is called good conduct. Our body, mind and intellect are dirty. By virtue of good conduct, our body becomes pure, the mind becomes calm, and the intellect is refined.” He termed the good deeds for the country and the country's people as religion, and such deeds are Yajna.

After the death of his father Pratapchandra, he handed over all familial responsibilities to his younger brother, accepted asceticism and went on a pilgrimage. He visited Goddess Kamkhya in Assam. He visited the great pilgrimage of the Himalayas Kedarnath, Badrinath, Amarnath, Haridwar, and Hrishikesh. He also visited Kanyakumari, Rameshwaram Setubandha, Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, Sri Kshetra Puridham, Sringeri Math and Gangasagar Sangam.

In March 1952 he visited Gaya, Kashi, Mathura, Vrindavan, Prayag, Lucknow, and Ayodhya. After completing all the pilgrimages to India, on the instructions of Videhi Guru, he concentrated on the work of establishing Rishidham in the abandoned hilly land of Jungle Kokdandi. Today it is a beautiful Ashram with numerous devotees. In 1954, thinking about the devotees of this country, he introduced Rishikumbha and

Kumbh Mela through Akashvritti to spread the ideals of Sanatani sages. Akashvritti means the active participation of all in the immense grace of God. This fair has been held every three years since its inception.

According to Hindu mythology, Kumbh Mela is held in four places in India. These are Haridwar, Prayag, Nashik and Ujjain. After three years the Kumbh Mela is held at four places in a cycle. Accordingly, this fair is held every 12 years at each place. This fair is organized only in Rishidham, Bangladesh every three years. Many saints and devotees from home and abroad participated in it. Impressed by Swami Advaitananda Puri's auspicious arrangement of Rishikumbha and his overall activities, Mohant Sri Jayaram Das of Tulsi Dham Akhera, Nandankanan, Chittagong met him. Later in 1961, he handed over the full responsibility of Mohant of Tulsi Dham to Swami Advaitananda.

He has many disciples in Chattogram and outside the country. Among his disciples, the names of Natun Chandra Singh (Founder of Kundeshwari Ochadalaya and martyred in 1971 by the Rajakars in the liberation war in front of his Ishta Devi Kundeshwari), Yogesh Chandra Singh and others are notable. Many of his disciples are working tirelessly in the service of humanity by establishing monasteries and missions to spread Swami Advaitananda's philosophy in the country and abroad.

There are Advaita Ashrams, monasteries, missions and centres of Swami Advaitananda Puri in Chottogram, Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Khagrachari, Barasat, North 24 Parganas (Guma), Kakdeep, Ujjain, Haridwar, California in America and many other places. Among the services in his ashrams, monasteries, missions and centres, there are orphanages Ashrams, Sanskrit colleges, orphan schools, Gita education centres and primary schools, yoga education, religious discussions, various vocational education including computer training, relief management in natural disasters, forestry and agriculture programs, arrangement of food, clothing, education and treatment to the needy. Moreover, various humanitarian works including marriage and cremation, publishing, library and educational materials distribution activities, temple-based children and mass education activities are ongoing.

Swami Advaitananda left his worldly life on 16 April 1966.

Dasmahavidya, Gita Gurushishya, Parthiva Shivlinga Rashiya, Shalagrama Tattva, Dharma Pravemika, and Upasana System books written by him are priceless resources of the Sadhana world.

Some sayings of Swami Advaitananda

1. Lust, anger and greed are compared to the three gates of hell. The person who uses harsh words also has to be humiliated by others. Hoarse people are always disrespected.
 2. He/ she whose work is excellent can attain the position of Guru, he is Brahman. He/ she should be respected, and given a seat first.
 3. In our pursuit of self-knowledge, we are following in the footsteps of the Arya sages. It is our job to free others by being free ourselves. The idea of unity in the midst of multiplicity is our best idea. We are for all and will go with all. We have not come to create any group or sub-group. To ensure the happiness of many people and to pray for their welfare are our vows.
 4. We are faults seer. We only look for faults without looking at the quality of others. Practising faults corrupts the heart.
 5. Narayana exists among those who will be donated. Donate respectfully, according to ability. Donate secretly. All wealth belongs to God, so donate humbly. Do not take pride in donating.
 6. A Karma Yogi's devotion is in action, a Jnana Yogi's devotion is in knowledge. Both paths are identical. This is the path of non-attachment. This is the highway.
- Write down the teaching from the life of Swami Advaitananda Puri that seems to you to be followed.

Table 3.14: Path to follow

Srima

It was Paris city of France on 21 February 1878 AD. A daughter was born to Moses Maurice Alfasa of Turkey and Mathilde Ismalun of Egypt. The baby was named Blanche Rachel Mira Alfasa. She was named Srima in her adulthood when she came to Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry, formerly Pondicherry, India.



Image 3.11: Srima

Srima's spirituality was awakened from her childhood. When she was only four years old, she sometimes absorbed in meditation. Like other children, she was given primary education at an early age. But she had no interest in studies. Srima had no attachment to anything worldly, not just studies. All the time she was absorbed in the thought of God. She was engrossed in spiritual thoughts.

Outside the city of Paris, there was a huge forest. Srima used to go there and meditate under the tree whenever she had time. Birds would fly fearlessly over her, and sit on her body, rabbits would jump, and squirrels would run. In this way, she developed a close relationship with nature, plants and animals.

Reading Swami Vivekananda's books on Raja Yoga increased her desire to know Indian culture, civilization and religion. Then she read the Bhagavad Gita and other Hindu books in French. This changed her mind. She went to Clemson, Algeria. There she learned Hatha Yoga and Gupta Vidya from a famous scholar named Teo.

On returning home Srima became more deeply engrossed in the pursuit of God. She realized that God is celestial and that human has a spiritual relationship with Him. Once

she saw a celestial man in her dream. He said to Srima, “Get up, get up higher. Rise above all, but pervade thy soul among all.”

Srima then started studying Indian philosophy and theology. Her firm belief was that the formless Nirguna God had manifested Himself in Sri Krishna. So, her mind became anxious to come to India, the place of appearance of Shri Krishna. In 1914, she came to India with her husband Paul Risher.

They arrived at Aurobindo Ashram in Puducherry on March 29 while visiting India. Seeing Sage Aurobindo there, Srima remembered the celestial man seen in her dream. She felt as if she had come to this world to perform a specific divine work. It was not possible without the help of the great yogi Sri Aurobindo. She realized that the liberation of her soul was in uniting with Aurobindo. Puducherry Ashram seemed like paradise to her in the whole world. In this quiet ecstasy, she found the fulfilment of all her pursuits, the ultimate fulfilment of her soul. So, they both stayed in the Ashram. She took initiation from Sri Aurobindo and became an associate of his Sadhanakarma. At that time, a magazine named 'Arya' was published in English and French from the Ashram. Both of them started helping Aurobindo in publishing this magazine.

But Srima could not stay in India for long during this journey. They had to return to Paris soon after the outbreak of World War I. Srima became upset at this. Parting with Sri Aurobindo seemed to her like the separation between the soul with the Supreme soul.

About five years passed like this. The war had stopped. He received an invitation from Aurobindo to come to India. Her mind became restless. So, without any more delay, she travelled to India. She returned to Puducherry on 24 April 1920 AD. Her mind calmed down. As instructed by Gurudev, she started a regular yoga practice. Abandoning the European costume, she assumed the form of an Indian yogini. She was wearing a saree. Her food was also Indian. She became vegetarian instead of non-vegetarian. Later, however, on the instructions of Sri Aurobindo, she also wore European clothes. Because Aurobindo used to say, “If you can conquer the senses and the mind, the outer clothing does not matter.”

On 24 November 1926, Sri Aurobindo attained complete Siddhi (success in religious pursuit). From that day he confined himself in a room. As a result, all the responsibilities of the Ashram fell on Srima. Srima also accepted the responsibility wholeheartedly. She inherited a lot of wealth and money from his father. With that money, she paid the expenses of the Ashram. Day by day the number of people in the Ashram increased.

Srima also supported everyone with great merit. Abandoning all desire for the result of action, she began to work for the well-being of others. Srima made the Ashram a self-sufficient institution by opening departments of food, agriculture, industry, cow husbandry etc.

Srima understood that in order to do spiritual Sadhana one had to keep the body healthy. This requires yoga. So, she built a gymnasium in the Ashram. She established a hospital for the treatment of Ashram residents. This hospital started providing free medical services to all.

According to Sri Aurobindo's plan, Srima established a Pathshala in the Ashram. Its name was 'International School of Education'. Along with spiritual education, various subjects of knowledge and science were taught there. Students from all over the world can study here. Currently, there are branches of Rishi Aurobindo Vidyalaya in different parts of India. Its main centre is in Pondicherry.

A special notable thing about the Ashram is that there is no discrimination. All those who live in the Ashram have to work. There is no difference between works. There is no such thing as religious bigotry. Srima loved everyone in the Ashram like her children. Like mother, she took care of everyone's happiness and sorrow. Not only that, Srima had a deep love for the plants and animals of the Ashram. When a new guest came to the Ashram, she used to explain to everyone that no one should disrespect them. No one should pluck the leaves or flowers of the trees or break the branches of the tree unnecessarily.

Ma always loved to work. She liked to work day and night only. To do work was her life. In her whole life, she gave up all desires and worked for the welfare of people.

Ma was not just a Jnanatapashwini or a yogini. She also had a great sense of beauty. With a keen sense of beauty, she maintained a fine balance between outer nature and inner nature. She wanted the inner nature of man to become as beautiful as the outer nature. Thus she developed the Ashram as a Lilabhumi of natural beauty.

One of Srima's unique plans was to establish Auroville Nagar in the name of Sri Aurobindo. In 1965 Srima declared, "Auroville wants to be a universal city where men and women of all nations, irrespective of caste, politics and nationality, will be able to live in peace and progress." The following year the idea of Auroville was raised by the Government of India at the General Assembly of UNESCO. It was unanimously approved. Two years later, about five thousand people gathered for the opening ceremony of the city. Delegates came from 124 countries of the world. They all brought with them some soil from their respective countries. Everyone's native soil is placed in a white marble lotus-shaped container. It is currently preserved in the Amphitheater of Auroville.

Construction of Auroville City started on 21st February 1972 on Srima's birthday. Its construction was completed in 2006. Currently, about 2500 people from 49 countries

live in Auroville. Upholding the ideals of Srima, the inhabitants are living in harmony there.

From playing tennis to shooting, Srima mastered various skills. She could draw beautiful pictures. She also knew music. She could play the organ well. On the last day of every year after twelve o'clock at night, she would welcome the new year by playing the organ. Her literary talent and poetic power are also identified in various works.

Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry became famous as an ideal place due to Srima's tireless work. Aurobindo Ashrams have been established in different parts of India. In Bangladesh, there are also Aurobindo Ashrams.

During the liberation war of Bangladesh, Mrs. Indira Gandhi wrote a letter asking her to stand by Bangladesh. This noble woman passed away on 17th November 1973 at Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry.

- Write a reflection journal by completing the table below in the light of information and teachings from Srima's biography.

Table 3.15 Teaching of Srima

Srima was great because:
1.
2.
3.

The ways Srima worked for humans, nature, and welfare of the society:

I want to do this work from the teachings of Srima's biography:

- Form a group of 2/3 and visit the nearest temple or Ashram in the area after discussing with the temple committee.
- Visiting the temple write down in your reflection journal what humanitarian work you have seen and what else can be done.
- Gathering information from everyone's reflection journal, make a plan in groups/pairs as to what other philanthropic works can be done through the temple. You have to add information, pictures and other necessary things to the plan.
- Submit the plan at your own initiative to the temple authorities.

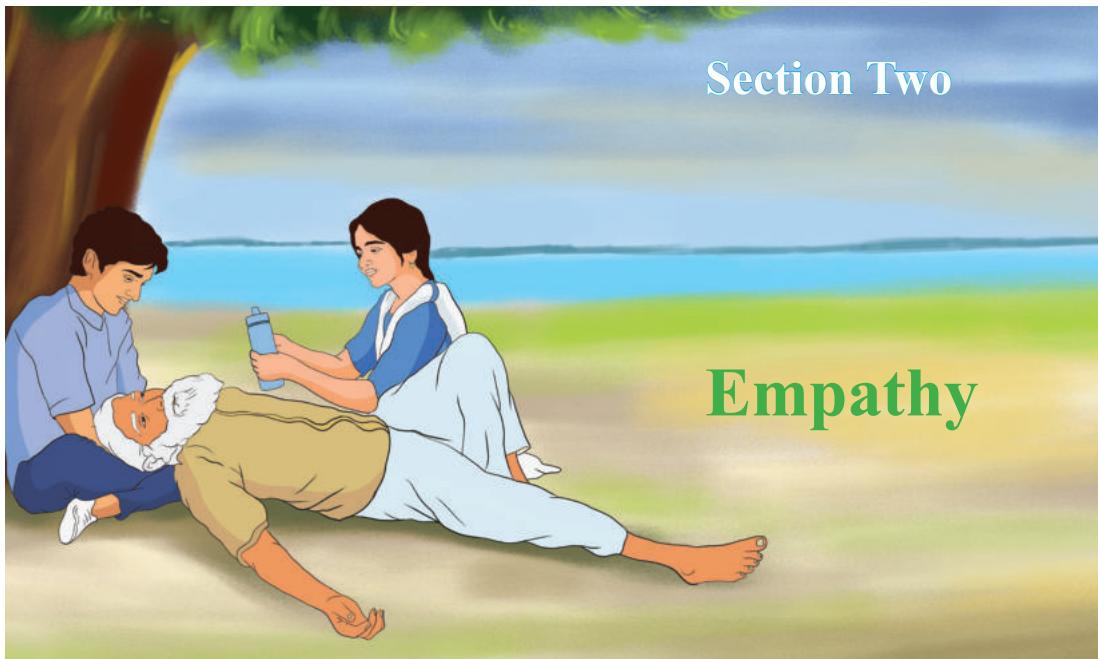
Table 3.16: Activities of temples/Ashrams

Address of Temple/ Ashram	
Social/philanthropic activities	

Address of Temple/ Ashram	
Recommendations	

Section Two

Empathy



We all live together in society. Various problems are constantly seen in our personal life, family, society, country, and world. At some point in our social or family life, we all face various dangers or problems which affect our lives in many ways.

- Now individually, make a list of 3 such problems that you have experienced at different times in your life.

Table 3.17: Crisis events in my life

Serial	Description of the crisis
1	

2	
3	

Now, put all the problems together. Treat similar problems as a single problem. Thus make a list entitled ‘Various Crises in Life’. Now, discuss in groups/pairs, choose ten important issues from the group’s ‘Various Crisis in Life’ list. Write a summary of possible solutions for one of the issues and make a poster to present it.

Write down 5 problems and their solutions in the table below from the problems that seem most important to you from everyone’s list.

Table 3.18: Crisis resolution

The name of the crisis	Possible solutions
1.	
2.	

3.	
4.	
5.	

Here, we have identified the problems, that is, we have understood the sources of sufferings of humans and nature and find out how to resolve them. These actions are actually expressing our empathy for others. This sense of empathy in our hearts does not come considering, any particular animal, person, sex, class, community, region etc. A truly empathetic person feels empathy for all regardless of place, time, and people. They consider the convenience and inconvenience of others more than their own convenience and inconvenience.

People of all races and religions, all children, people with special needs are the creation of the same God. All are equal; No one is superior, no one is inferior. In the Hindu religion, it is said that God resides in the form of the soul in all living beings. To love God's creation is to love God. It is showing respect to God. Service to living beings means service to Him. In the Rigveda (5.60.5) it has been stated that there is no one superior and no one inferior in the eyes of the Mahaprabhu. All are equal. God's blessing is for all. So, being empathetic towards all is part of religion. It is the moral quality of humans. Therefore, at all times, it is necessary for all to cultivate a sense of empathy in their hearts and express it in words and actions. The Samveda states that truly religious people are always soft-spoken and empathetic to others (Samveda 2.51).

Humans, plants, animals, and all inanimate objects in nature - God has woven everything into one formula. So, we have to be empathetic towards all people and all nature.

We listen to a popular song sung by Bhupen Hazarika

মানুষ মানুষের জন্যে,
জীবন জীবনের জন্যে,
একটু সহানুভূতি কি মানুষ পেতে পারে না?

ও বন্ধু, মানুষ মানুষের জন্যে,
জীবন জীবনের জন্যে,
একটু সহানুভূতি কি মানুষ পেতে পারে না?
ও বন্ধু, মানুষ মানুষের জন্যে।

We find many beautiful words about empathy in the sayings of the sages stated in the scriptures of the Hindu religion. Let us read some of them.

ওঁ সহনাববত্তু, সহনৌ ভুন্তু, সহ বীর্যং করবাবহৈ।
তেজস্বীনাবধীতমস্তু, মা বিদ্বিষাবহৈ ॥
ওঁ শান্তিঃ, ওঁ শান্তিঃ, ওঁ শান্তিঃ ॥

(Taittiriya Upanishad.)

That is, may the Supreme Soul protect both of us (teacher and student) equally and give equal knowledge so that we can afford equal education; May the wisdom of both of us be bright; Let us not hate each other. Let these three types of obstacles, spiritual, supernatural and metaphysical, be destroyed.

Love the community. Feed the hungry. Help the distressed. Gain the strength to play a courageous role in the struggle for truth and justice. [Rigveda 1.125.6]

O mankind, collectively engage yourselves in human welfare. Work together with mutual compassion and good wishes. Share the joy of life equally. [Atharvaveda 3.30.7]

Swami Vivekananda said, “No war, but compassion; No destruction, but creation; No conflict, but peace and harmony. No dispute but support; No destruction but acceptance of each other; No discord, but harmony and peace.” He said to determine one's behaviour by perceiving the happiness and sorrow of others. In his words, think about how it feels to hurt yourself before hurting someone in life. Thakur Anakulchandra said,

মনের কথা প্রাণের ব্যথা
বলিস কেবল তাকে পেলে
উপেক্ষা তোমায় করে না যে জন
যায় না তোমায় ঠেলে ফেলে।

Write or draw a picture of a similar incident in your life that expresses empathy.

Table 3.19: The story of empathy in my life

Listen to a story from Mahabharata about empathy -

King Pandu of Mahabharata had five sons. They are Yudhishtira, Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. They were collectively called the Panchpandavas. During their exile in the forest, they used to live by eating forest fruits. One day Arjuna collected some fruits from the forest. Their mother Kunti Devi asked the boys to eat these fruits equally, but Bhima did not agree to eat them because the fruits were not enough for all of them. The other four brothers understood the matter that Bhima's food was less and so he did not want to eat. First Yudhishtira, then the other brothers gave some fruits from their share to Bhima. Bhima was overjoyed and started eating happily. The remaining four brothers also started eating happily.

Seeing that Kunti Devi's eyes filled with tears of joy. She said to everyone, " May you keep this feeling of empathy in your whole life". Then Yudhishtira said to his mother, "Mother we five brothers complement each other."

Another story of the Mahabharata on empathy-

King Parikshit is another character of Mahabharata. He was the son of Arjuna's son Abhimanyu, and Uttara, the princess of the Virat kingdom. Parikshit became the king of Hastinapur after Yudhishtira. Parikshit was very pious and loved the subjects. Once he went hunting. There he chased a deer and could not catch it by any means. While chasing the deer, he came to the side of a field. There he met sage Shamik. King Parikshit asked him, did you see a deer passing this way? But the sage then took a vow of silence. So, he didn't say anything. The king asked him again. He did not reply this time either. Hungry, tired and bored, Parikshit got very angry after asking the same question again and again and getting no answer from Shamik. A dead snake was lying nearby. The king picked up the snake and wrapped it around Sage's neck and left.King

Parikshit did not know sage Shamik. But the sage knew the king well. He knew the devotion of the king and his devotion to the people. So, Shamik did not get angry at all in this incident. But Shamik's son Shringi Muni was very angry. When he came to know about this incident, he cursed him. He said that whoever insulted my father like this, would die after seven days from the bite of the snake named Takshak.

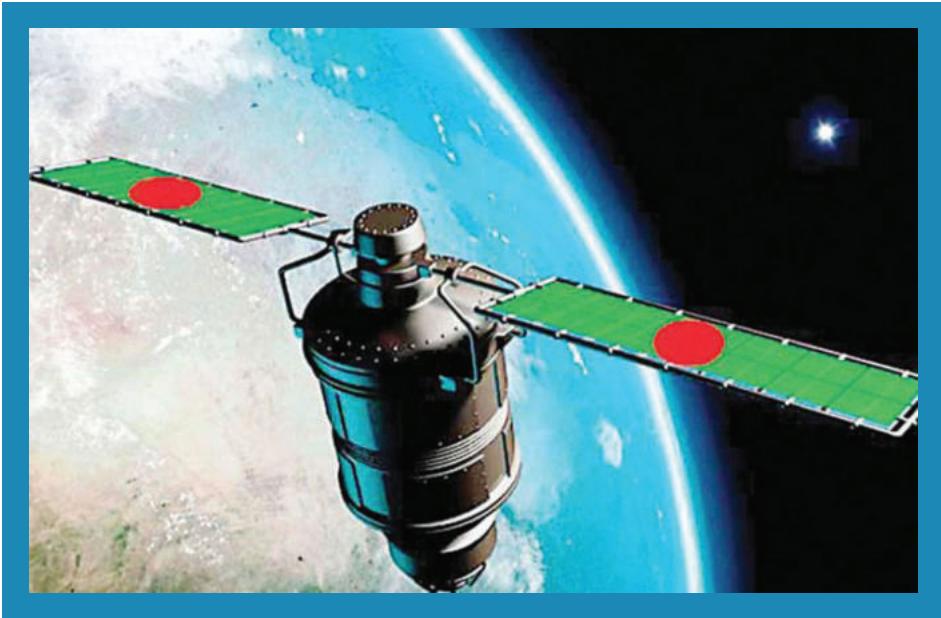
Sage Shamik was very sad to know this. He said to his son, "You have made a great mistake. We are ascetics. Forgiveness is our religion." Despite being insulted by Parikshit, sage Shamik was empathetic towards Parikshit. He arranged to tell all the events to save the king from the consequences of this curse.

- Create a 'Unity Corner' to stand by others in times of distress. Discuss with classmates, teachers and parents to make a list of things you can put in the 'Unity Corner'.

Table 3.20: The things that can be put in 'Unity Corner'.

According to the list, some things will be collected by all of you. Collect all the things and put them in one place according to the teacher's instructions. In case of any natural calamity or any such crisis, the things will be distributed as relief from the Ethics Club.





বঙ্গবন্ধু স্যাটেলাইট-১ : বাংলাদেশের মালিকানাধীন প্রথম কৃত্রিম উপগ্রহ

বঙ্গবন্ধু স্যাটেলাইট-১ বাংলাদেশের প্রথম ভূহির (Geostationary) যোগাযোগ ও সম্প্রচার উপগ্রহ। এর মধ্য দিয়ে ৫৭ তম দেশ হিসেবে নিজস্ব স্যাটেলাইট উৎক্ষেপণকারী দেশের তালিকায় যুক্ত হয় বাংলাদেশ। এটি ১১ই মে ২০১৮ যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের কেনেডি স্পেস সেন্টার থেকে উৎক্ষেপণ করা হয়। এটি ছিল ফ্যালকন ৯ ব্র্লক-৫ রকেটের প্রথম পেলোড উৎক্ষেপণ।

এটি ফ্রান্সের থেলিস অ্যালেনিয়া স্পেস কর্তৃক নকশা ও তৈরি করা হয়েছে। বঙ্গবন্ধু স্যাটেলাইট-১, ১৬০০ মেগাহার্টজ ক্ষমতাসম্পন্ন মোট ৪০টি কে-ইউ এবং সি-ব্যাড ট্রাস্পোন্ডার বহন করছে এবং এর আয়ু ১৫ বছর। এর নির্মাণ ব্যয় প্রায় তিন হাজার কোটি টাকা। বর্তমানে স্যাটেলাইটের ব্যান্ডিউইথ ও ফিল্কোয়েন্সি ব্যবহার করে ইন্টারনেট বাধিত অঞ্চল যেমন-পার্বত্য ও হাওড় এলাকায় ইন্টারনেট সুবিধা প্রদান করা সম্ভব হচ্ছে, প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চলে ইন্টারনেট ও ব্যাংকিং সেবা, টেলিমেডিসিন ও দূরশিক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা প্রসারণে এটি ব্যবহৃত হচ্ছে। টিভি চ্যানেলগুলো তাদের সম্প্রচার সঠিকভাবে পরিচালনার জন্য বিদেশি নির্ভরতা কমিয়ে এর উপর নির্ভর করছে। ফলে দেশের টাকা দেশেই থাকছে। বড় প্রাক্তিক দুর্ঘাগের সময় মোবাইল নেটওয়ার্ক অচল হয়ে পড়লে এর মাধ্যমে দুর্ব্যুত এলাকায় যোগাযোগ চালু রাখা সম্ভব। শুধু তাই নয় বঙ্গবন্ধু স্যাটেলাইট-২ মহাকাশে উৎক্ষেপণেরও উদ্যোগ নেওয়া হয়েছে। বঙ্গবন্ধু ১৯৭৫ সালের ১৪ই জুন বেতরুনিয়ায় ভূ-উপগ্রহ কেন্দ্র স্থাপনের মাধ্যমে যে স্বপ্নের বীজ বপন করেছিলেন, সেই স্বপ্ন মহীরুহে পরিণত করেছেন প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা।

স্যাটেলাইটের বাইরের অংশে বাংলাদেশের লাল-সবুজ পতাকার রঙের নকশার উপর ইংরেজিতে লেখা রয়েছে বাংলাদেশ ও বঙ্গবন্ধু-১, বাংলাদেশ সরকারের একটি মনোহামও সেখানে রয়েছে।

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Class Nine

Hindu Religion Studies



জীবনের উদ্দেশ্য ঈশ্বর লাভ
—শ্রী রামকৃষ্ণ

দারিদ্র্যমুক্তি বাংলাদেশ গড়তে হলে শিক্ষা গ্রহণ করতে হবে
— মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রী শেখ হাসিনা

তথ্য, সেবা ও সামাজিক সমস্যা প্রতিকারের জন্য ‘৩৩৩’ কলসেন্টারে ফোন করুন

নারী ও শিশু নির্যাতনের ঘটনা ঘটলে প্রতিকার ও প্রতিরোধের জন্য ন্যাশনাল হেল্পলাইন সেন্টার
১০৯ নম্বর-এ (টোল ফ্রি, ২৪ ঘণ্টা সার্ভিস) ফোন করুন



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