

Exploring Society: India and Beyond

**Social Science Textbook for
Grade 7 | Part 1**



0781

विद्यया ऽ मृतमश्नुते



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NCERT

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Foreword

The National Education Policy 2020 envisages a system of education in the country that is rooted in Indian ethos and its civilisational accomplishments in all fields of knowledge and human endeavour. At the same time, it aims to prepare the students to engage constructively with the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. The basis for this aspirational vision has been well laid out by the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) 2023 across curricular areas at all stages. By nurturing students' inherent abilities across all the five planes of human existence, (pañchakośhas), the Foundational and the Preparatory Stages set the stage for the further learning at Middle Stage. Spanning Grade 6 to Grade 8, the Middle Stage serves as a critical three year bridge between the Preparatory and Secondary Stages.

The NCF-SE 2023, at the Middle Stage, aims to equip students with the skills that are needed to grow, as they advance in their lives. It endeavours to enhance their analytical, descriptive, and narrative capabilities, and to prepare them for the challenges and opportunities that await them. A diverse curriculum, covering nine subjects ranging from three languages—including at least two languages native to India—to Science, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Art Education, Physical Education and Well-being, and Vocational Education promotes their holistic development.

Such a transformative learning culture requires certain essential conditions. One of them is to have appropriate textbooks in different curricular areas, as these textbooks will play a central role in mediating between content and pedagogy—a role that will strike a judicious balance between direct instruction and opportunities for exploration and inquiry. Among the other conditions, classroom arrangement and teacher preparation are crucial to establish conceptual connections both within and across curricular areas.

The National Council of Educational Research and Training, on its part, is committed to providing students with such high-quality textbooks. Various Curricular Area Groups, which have been constituted for this purpose, comprising notable subject-experts, pedagogues, and practising



teachers as their members, have made all possible efforts to develop such textbooks. The Social Science textbook for Grade 7—*Exploring Society: India and Beyond Part 1*—has been prepared for the second year of the middle stage. It carries forward the themes and approach of Grade 6; the focus is on core concepts and major developments. It endeavours to keep the students engaged in learning through illustrations, maps and pictures laid out in an attractive design. There are abundant reflective exercises and activities embedded in the text to support exploration, discovery and meaning-making. The thematic approach with a multidisciplinary lens continues, helping students to understand ideas and concepts holistically. The text integrates the values we desire our students to develop, is rooted in the Indian cultural context and introduces global perspectives in an age-appropriate manner. For all practical purposes, it has, to my mind, succeeded in its curricular goals: first, to foster natural curiosity among students through a proper selection of content, and second, through a pedagogical approach in line with the recommendations of NCF-SE 2023.

However, in addition to this textbook, students at this stage should also be encouraged to explore various other learning resources. School libraries play a crucial role in making such resources available. Besides, the role of parents and teachers will also be invaluable in guiding and encouraging students to do so.

With this, I express my gratitude to all those who have been involved in the development of this textbook and hope that it will meet the expectations of all stakeholders. At the same time, I also invite suggestions and feedback from all its users for further improvement in the coming years.

Dinesh Prasad Saklani

Director

National Council of Educational
Research and Training

March 2025
New Delhi



Letter to the Student

Dear Student,

You have now entered the second year of the Middle Stage. In Social Science, this year we will further explore about our country, India, across all the five themes we began with last year. You will also get glimpses of our interactions with the rest of the world in the past as well as the present. As you are older now, there will be a little more independent reading, writing and doing. This year too we have tried to keep the text to a minimum—the book has lots of colourful maps, pictures and illustrations.


Since good education should promote understanding and reflection, we have created opportunities for you to explore, discover, think, create, ask questions and propose answers.

Look for the ways in which each theme brings together multiple inputs from several disciplines—whether history, geography, political science or economics. This brings us closer to real life and helps us understand the events of today better.

Finally, we will start exploring some of the people, places and ideas that strengthened India's foundations, as well as delve into some of the aspects of society today. You will observe that the threads of the past continue to be part of today's tapestry and give us the design for strengthening it for tomorrow.

A number of people put their hearts and heads in the preparation of this textbook. It has given us all great joy, and we offer it to you with the hope you will experience some of this joy when you discover new horizons or figure out an original answer to some of the challenging questions we sometimes like to throw at you!

We need to add an important detail. In this textbook, every part of it—text, side box, image or map—can be subject to evaluation and assessment. There are however four exceptions:

- 
- *The quotation or quotations on the first pages of chapters.* Some are straightforward, others offer deep thought. Do not worry if you do not understand them at the first reading; they are meant to stimulate you or inspire you.
 - *Wherever we have mentioned in the text, “You need not remember this”.*
 - *The diacritical signs on some Sanskrit words—do look at ‘Your Journey through this Textbook’ in the next few pages to understand what we mean.*
 - *The Glossary (at the end of the textbook).*

No evaluation should bear on these four aspects.

Your Journey through this Textbook

This is your second year in the Middle Stage. You are now fairly familiar with the approach to the study of Social Science. This year we will take our journey of exploring Bharat further. We continue to ask questions and explore answers—How did people live in the past? What does our country, India or Bharat, look like? What do her mountains, rivers, and plains look like? Why does the weather behave the way it does? ... and so on. In some chapters, Bhavisha and Dhruv, friends of ours (we hope you will also become friends), will accompany us with their time machine.

This textbook has interesting features. As you flip through it, you will see colourful illustrations, including pictures, maps and drawings of many kinds. Let us give you a quick tour of the book and its features. Your teacher will also guide you through it.

Each chapter begins with an **inspiring quotation** from a renowned person or text. Read it and let it stay with you. Some of these quotations are profound thoughts. Don't worry if you do not understand right away; you can return to them later, and they can also be discussed in the class. Here's an example —

The Rise of Empires

There cannot be a country without people and there is no kingdom without a country.

Kauṭilya in Arthaśāstra

CHAPTER 5

The **main text** is written in simple language. You will learn about people and places in India and beyond.

Technical words are explained in the margin right next to the text. They are also listed in the **glossary** (or mini-dictionary) at



<p>Needs: In economics, a need is something that a person requires to survive, such as food, water, clothing, and shelter</p> <p>Wants: In economics, a want is something that a person desires but is not essential for survival.</p>	<h3>What is a Market?</h3> <p>A place where people buy and sell goods is called a market. It is also known as bazaar, haat (in Hindi), and <i>mārukattē</i> (in Kannada). What is it called in your region? This can be at a physical place or, as is becoming popular today, online. Goods and services become available to individuals, households, and businesses through markets. For a long time, people have relied on markets to fulfil their needs and wants for goods and services. In addition, markets connect people, traditions, and ideas.</p> <p>Let's see an example of a market from 16th century India.</p>
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the end of the textbook. In addition, we have included a few words you may not be familiar with. Do consult the glossary often.

The Big Questions ?

1. What makes India's climate so diverse?
2. What are the monsoons? How are they formed?
3. What is the effect of climate on economy, culture and society?
4. How can understanding the climate help us to prepare for natural disasters?
5. What is climate change? What are its consequences?

‘The Big Questions’, just two or three, give you an idea of what you are going to explore in the chapter.

As we move through the chapter you will find some sections called **‘Let’s Explore’**, **‘Think About It’**, **‘Let’s Remember’** which propose activities, in-text exercises, recall of concepts learnt earlier or will invite further reflection.

LET’S EXPLORE

Warfare apart, what other methods do you think the rulers might have used to expand their empires? Pen your ideas and share them with your class.

THINK ABOUT IT

What might happen if the king considered himself to have divine powers? How would he rule over the people?

LET'S REMEMBER



In your Grade 6 Science textbook, Curiosity, you read about different types of thermometers used for measuring the temperature—the clinical thermometer and the laboratory thermometer. You also learnt about temperature scales. One of them is the Celsius scale; another is the Fahrenheit scale. If, for instance, we have a cool temperature of 15 degrees Celsius (noted as 15°C), it is the same as 59 degrees Fahrenheit (noted as 59°F).

‘Don’t Miss Out’ brings out intriguing or fun facts that will trigger your curiosity.



DON'T MISS OUT

The famed Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini lived around the 5th century BCE, during the time of the Nandas. He is known for composing the *Aṣṭādhyāyī*, an ancient text that lists the rules of Sanskrit grammar in 3,996 short *sūtras*.



Fig. 5.8. An India post stamp commemorating Pāṇini

ancient Indian text) in a way that's easy to remember and pass on.

Tapestry of the Past
5 – The Rise of Empires

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Before we move on...



- All religions in India have their sacred places dotted over the landscape. In Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, such places are usually associated with some of the great figures in these belief systems.
- Hinduism has dense networks of pilgrimage sites, covering the entire geography of India. The practice of pilgrimage is interwoven with the lives of people, as it serves the individual development and spiritual growth, but also the socio-economic purposes of trade expansion and pan-Indian cultural integration.
- In many Hindu, tribal and folk traditions, the very land is perceived as sacred.
- Our sacred places are being polluted owing to widespread neglect and a lack of concern. It is our duty to protect our national heritage, as our Constitution also reminds us.

At the end of every chapter, **‘Before we move on’** sums up some of the core ideas that the chapter tried to convey. A choice of exercises, questions or projects follow.

Finally, on the first page of every chapter, you will find a **QR code** leading you to interesting videos, puzzles, games, stories, and so on, which are related to the content of the chapter and will lead you to further explorations. Do scan it, or take an adult's help to scan it, and browse through the material.

Your teacher will be with you on this journey of exploring this textbook. We hope you will read parts of it with your parents or guardians too. Maybe you can try out some of the activities with them!

We wish you an enjoyable journey through Social Science and its rich insights into human life and society.



A note on the pronunciation of Sanskrit words

Since this textbook is in English, we use the Roman alphabet. But we will also encounter some words in Sanskrit and a few other Indian languages. The Roman alphabet cannot make their pronunciation clear without some additional marks or signs, such as dashes, dots or accents, called 'diacritical signs' or 'diacritics'. You can ignore all these signs if you wish, and you don't need to remember them. However, as we are using only a few simple signs, you will find it easy to get used to them. You will also find that they help you pronounce Sanskrit words fairly correctly.

Here is how they work:

- A short dash (called 'macron') over a vowel makes it long. For instance, *dāna* is pronounced 'daana'; *līlā* is pronounced 'leelaa'; *sūtra* is *sootra*.
- *śh* and *ṣh* are pronounced more or less as 'sh' in 'shall' (there is a slight difference, since they correspond to श and ष in the Devanagari script, but you can ignore it in practice). So *śhāstra* is pronounced 'shaastra'; *kṣhīra* is 'ksheera'.
- Consonants with a dot below them (*ḍ*, *ṭ* and *ṇ* mainly) are 'hard', i.e. pronounced by hitting the tongue on the palate; without a dot, they are soft, with the tongue on the teeth. (As a rough comparison, in the preceding English word 'teeth', the first 't' is hard, while the final 'th' is soft.) Examples of hard consonants: *Āryabhaṭa*, *gaṇa*, *paṭhana* (studying), *pīṭha*, *goṣṭhī* (association, assembly), *dhanāḍhya* (rich), *aṇu* (atom).

- Finally, *r* is the Devanagari letter ऋ. We choose to write it as *ṛi*, although in some parts of India it is also pronounced as *ṛu*. So we write ‘Rig Veda’, for instance.

For those who wish to know the precise correspondence between the Devanagari alphabet and the Roman script in our system, the tables of short and long vowels are as follows:

Devanagari	Roman script
अ	<i>a</i>
इ	<i>i</i>
उ	<i>u</i>
ऋ	<i>ṛi</i>
ए	<i>e</i>
ओ	<i>o</i>
Devanagari	Roman script
आ	<i>ā</i>
ई	<i>ī</i>
ऊ	<i>ū</i>
ऋ	<i>ṛī</i>
ऐ	<i>ai</i>
औ	<i>au</i>

And the table of consonants:

Guttural	क	ka	ख	kha	ग	ga	घ	gha	ङ	ṅa	ह	ha
Palatal	च	cha	छ	chha	ज	ja	झ	jha	ञ	ña	य	ya
Cerebral	ट	ṭa	ठ	ṭha	ड	ḍa	ढ	ḍha	ण	ṇa	र	ra
Dental	त	ta	थ	tha	द	da	ध	dha	न	na	ल	la
Labial	प	pa	फ	pha	ब	ba	भ	bha	म	ma	व	va
Sibilants	श	śha	ष	ṣha	स	sa						

CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

Part III (Articles 12 – 35)

(Subject to certain conditions, some exceptions
and reasonable restrictions)

guarantees these

Fundamental Rights

Right to Equality

- before law and equal protection of laws;
- irrespective of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth;
- of opportunity in public employment;
- by abolition of untouchability and titles.

Right to Freedom

- of expression, assembly, association, movement, residence and profession;
- of certain protections in respect of conviction for offences;
- of protection of life and personal liberty;
- of free and compulsory education for children between the age of six and fourteen years;
- of protection against arrest and detention in certain cases.

Right against Exploitation

- for prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour;
- for prohibition of employment of children in hazardous jobs.

Right to Freedom of Religion

- freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion;
- freedom to manage religious affairs;
- freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion;
- freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in educational institutions wholly maintained by the State.

Cultural and Educational Rights

- for protection of interests of minorities to conserve their language, script and culture;
- for minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Right to Constitutional Remedies

- by issuance of directions or orders or writs by the Supreme Court and High Courts for enforcement of these Fundamental Rights.



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Constitution of India

Part IV A (Article 51 A)

Fundamental Duties

It shall be the duty of every citizen of India —

- (a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- (b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- (c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- (d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- (e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- (f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- (g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers, wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures;
- (h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- (i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- (j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;
- * (k) who is a parent or guardian, to provide opportunities for education to his child or, as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.

Note: The Article 51A containing Fundamental Duties was inserted by the Constitution (42nd Amendment) Act, 1976 (with effect from 3 January 1977).

* (k) was inserted by the Constitution (86th Amendment) Act, 2002 (with effect from 1 April 2010).



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THE CONSTITUTION OF INDIA

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a ¹**[SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC]** and to secure to all its citizens :

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;

LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;

EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all

FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the ²[unity and integrity of the Nation];

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949 do **HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.**

1. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Sovereign Democratic Republic" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)
2. Subs. by the Constitution (Forty-second Amendment) Act, 1976, Sec.2, for "Unity of the Nation" (w.e.f. 3.1.1977)




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Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam:
The whole world is one family