

LET'S BEGIN

Our State is famous for many things. Study the following and gather information about them:

Gardens
Wood carving
Arts & handicrafts
Rivers/lakes
Winter sports
Scenic beauty
Hospitality
Kashmiri cuisine (called Wazwan)
Temples



LET'S READ

Who does not know about the valley of Kashmir (a beautiful place in the north of India)? It is called 'Paradise on the Earth'. It is famous not only for its scenic beauty but also for its handicrafts that have won name and fame throughout the world. Among these handicrafts is the Kashmiri shawl, a fine and light wrapping that keeps you warm in winter and gives elegance to your personality.

Kashmir has been producing shawls for centuries now. Francis Bernier was the first European who visited Kashmir in 1664 and who wrote about the softness and delicacy of this local fabric.



These shawls are woven on handlooms by men and are about 2 metres long and 1.25 metres wide. Bernier talks about two types of shawls: one made with local fine wool, and the other from the soft under-fleece hairs from the breast of the wild goat (the *kel* goat), the latter much more expensive. In winter, the wild goats, found in the high altitudes of Tibet and Central Asia, grow a layer of soft hair under their normal coarse hair (this helps them survive in cold at the high altitudes). When spring comes, these goats shed off their extra layer by rubbing their bodies against bushes and rocks. Now, there are farms where the goat is reared and the wool is collected. The local people gather this fleece (called *phamb* in Kashmiri) and sell it in Kashmir valley. We have now farms where the *kel* goats are reared and the wool is collected on a large scale. In Kashmir and other areas, local goats also produce wool and are combed to remove it, but the shawls made from this wool are inferior in quality to those made from wool got from the wild goat.

Local shopkeepers or vendors sell the wool taken from the goats to women who sort the fleece before spinning it on a spinning wheel. The superior quality thread is reserved for the warp and the coarser thread for the weft. The finer and softer the threads are, the better money you can get.

Kashmiri weavers always use horizontal looms, two or three sit

together at the same loom. The women prepare the warps by ‘doubling’ the thread. The designer (called *naqqash*) decides the pattern; the colour caller or *tarah-goru* reads the design from the bottom upwards and calls out each colour in turn together with the



Jamawar Shawl



number of warp threads under which the bobbin of the weft has to pass. A pattern master called the *talim goru* writes these instructions down using the traditional signs or ‘shawl alphabet’. The weavers keep this transcription called the *talim* in front of them as they work at the loom.

The motifs (designs) drawn on the shawls are as diverse as the natural beauty of Kashmir. Both men and women work on the patterns in their homes. The *naqqash* works out the patterns. The most popular design is the decorative border at both ends of the shawl. The design is worked evenly on both sides. The pashmina shawls are of two kinds: the loom shawl, woven entirely on the loom, and the shawl, with an embroidered pattern. The world famous ‘ring shawl’ is an exquisite and fine fabric that can pass through a ring. High in the plateau of Tibet and the eastern part of Ladakh, at an altitude of above 5,000 m, roam the *Tibetan antelope (Pantholops Hodgsoni)*. During grazing, a few strands of the downy hair from the throat are shed which are painstakingly collected by the nomads and finally supplied to the Kashmiri shawl makers as *Shahtoosh*. The *Shahtoosh* shawl made from the fleece (called *tosa* in Kashmiri) of the Tibetan antelope, Chiru, is a rare fabric now. Another rare and sophisticated shawl is the *Jamavar* shawl. In this, the warp and weft threads are dyed before weaving according to a design.

The price of a pashmina shawl varies from thousands of rupees to lakhs of rupees, depending on the craftsmanship and the time taken in its making.

The credit for starting the shawl industry goes to Sultan Zain-ul-Abideen (popularly known as *Budshah*). According to Carl Von Hugel, who visited Kashmir in 1836, the Sultan summoned in the fifteenth century a highly skilled weaver Naghz Beg from Turkestan to build a loom for weaving shawls. The Mughals reorganised the industry. Akbar and his successors wore shawls of Kashmir. After Napoleon presented a rare shawl to Empress Josephine, shawls became a craze in France. The British were the first to develop an interest in the Kashmiris’ woven goods. Both Britain and France sought to manufacture and copy ‘Cashmere’ * shawls, but they followed a technique more in keeping with

**Kashmir was spelt as Cashmere by Europeans.*



the European tradition. The European shawls were trimmed which weakened the shawl and thus the beauty was marred. The European women preferred Kashmiri shawls whose warp and weft were interwoven and interlocked, making their decorated sections much stronger. Also, the European shawls were woven in several pieces which had then to be sewn together, a technique that was quite different from the one followed in Kashmir. It was only during the nineteenth century that the Europeans learnt to make a single piece of shawl.



Kashmiri shawls are used as wedding gifts and form an important item in the bride's trousseau. They are worn by men of elite class over the shoulders.

Kashmiri shawl industry feeds a lot of people, men and women, especially in villages in Kashmir. Even young girls and boys help their parents in embroidery work. Although people have to sit a long time to weave, they do it to earn their livelihood.



Glossary

<i>paradise</i>	:	heaven
<i>elegance</i>	:	grace; attraction
<i>fleece</i>	:	the woolly fur of a sheep
<i>loom</i>	:	a special frame for weaving
<i>warp</i>	:	the threads that go along the length of a piece of cloth or a loom and crossed by weft. [What word is there for ‘warp’ in your mother tongue?]
<i>weft</i>	:	the threads carried by the shuttle back and forth across the warp. [What do you call ‘weft’ in your mother tongue?]
<i>bobbin</i>	:	a small round or tube-shaped object around which thread is put, often before putting it in a sewing machine or loom (called <i>phirik</i> in Kashmiri)
<i>rare</i>	:	not common and, therefore, sometimes valuable
<i>craze</i>	:	fashion
<i>trousseau</i>	:	a bride’s collection of clothes and other things for her wedding

WORKING WITH THE TEXT

I. Answer these questions:

1. What do you understand by ‘the talim’? Who writes it?
2. How is Pashmina obtained? How is it different from other types of wool?
3. How did the Europeans come to know about the Kashmiri shawl?
4. What is the other name for the designer of the Kashmiri shawl?



5. Who brought the shawl to Kashmir? How do you know?
6. How is the Kashmiri shawl different from the European one?
7. Why are shawls so popular?

II. Say whether the following statements are true or false. Write T or F in the boxes:

1. Naghz Beg visited Kashmir in 1836.
2. Josephine got a Kashmiri shawl from Akbar.
3. Pashmina wool is taken from a goat.
4. The Europeans could not copy the Kashmiri shawl.
5. The Kashmiri shawl is made in Europe.
6. Hugel visited Kashmir more than a century after Bernier.
7. The European women preferred the Kashmiri shawl to their own.

LANGUAGE WORK

Kashmir is the place where Kashmiris live. They speak Kashmiri.

Make similar statements about the following:

PLACE	PEOPLE	LANGUAGE
Britain	_____	English
China	Chinese	_____
Israel	_____	_____
Palestine	Palestinians	_____
Japan	_____	Japanese
America	_____	_____
Saudi Arabia	Arabs	_____
Holland	_____	_____
Ireland	_____	_____

**GRAMMAR WORK**

The 'ring shawl' can pass through a ring.

In this sentence, the underlined word shows us the relationship of 'the shawl' with the 'ring'. Words that show the relationship of subject with object are called prepositions. Some other prepositions are:

The policeman is **between** the two thieves.



The mother is standing **behind** the girl
and the girl is looking **into** the mirror.
The mirror is **in** front of her.



The dog is sitting **beside** his mistress.
Turn the book **at** page 5.



The plane is flying **over** the man. It is **above** the ground.



Doggie is sitting **outside** and **in** front **of** his kennel. The kennel is **behind** it.

The monkey is sitting **on** the tree.





Sheila is jumping **over** her friend.



The two friends are shaking hands **with** each other.
They are talking **to** each other.



The flag is flying **over** the mountaintop.



The children are going **into** the church. They are running **towards** it. There is a man **at** the church gate.










The boat is sailing **in** the river. There is a lot **of** water **under** the boat.

II. A shawl is a piece of fabric worn to keep us warm in winter. Do you know the names of the following pieces of clothing? Look at the pictures and write the names under/against each.





The pictures in the following sentences represent the different concepts that prepositions are used for. Guess the concept and replace the pictures with appropriate prepositions given above.

- i. Aslam put his ball  the box, and he locked it.
- ii. The ball is  the floor. Lift it and go out to play.
- iii. The thief jumped  the wall and ran away.
- iv. The ball is  the carpet. Get it from there.
- v. Don't look  the window. They're watching you.
- vi. Construct your house a little  the ground level. The flood water will not enter your house.
- vii. Somebody is knocking  the door. Could you see who it is?



LET'S TALK

Kashmiris do not only weave shawls. They weave carpets as well which are famous in the whole world. Talk to a friend about how carpets are woven on the loom. If you don't know, ask somebody in the class who can explain it to you. Note the differences/similarities between the shawl and carpet weaving.



LET'S WRITE

The following sentences describe how to make carrot pudding (popularly known as 'gajar ka halwa'), but the sentences are in jumble.



Read them and organise them to make a meaningful recipe:

- a. When the milk is absorbed, add 3 tablespoons of ghee.
- b. Get one kilogram of red carrots.
- c. Add ground dry fruits.
- d. Add one litre of milk and a tin of milkmaid and boil the mixture for 30 minutes.
- e. Wash the carrots, grate them and put them in a pan.
- f. Stir continuously till the grated carrot turns brownish.
- g. Serve hot.

The correct order is: _____

Now write the recipe of how to make a cup of “Kahwa/Sugar tea/ Nun chai/Gurgur tea”.
What ingredients do you put in it?



DO IT YOURSELF

Visit one of the silk factories in Jammu/Kashmir, and see how silk is produced. Talk to a weaver there. Make notes about it. The next day, talk to your class about what you learnt after visiting the factory.

Tongue Twister

The owner of the inside inn was inside.
His inside inn with his inside outside his inside inn.