



SOCIAL SCIENCES

**SOCIAL SCIENCE
CLASSES – VIII**

Introduction

The revised syllabus for the Social Sciences in Classes VII attempts to advance an on-going process of assisting children and young people to understand that a healthy engagement with the world must come as much from the way society takes shape and functions as from a proper sense of its material and physical foundations. From this, it is expected, a vision will evolve that the Social Sciences provide both essential skills of comprehension that are fundamental to any activity, and a means of self-understanding and fulfillment that can be diverting, exciting and challenging. The syllabus assumes that the knowledge apparatus of the child and the young person is itself complex – both given the wide range of materials that the visual and print media have drawn into country and urban life and the nature of the problems of everyday life. To negotiate the diversity and confusion and excitement the world throws up itself requires activity and insight that the Social Sciences can substantially provide. To have a firm and flexible perspective on India's past and the world from which, and in which, the country develops, sensitivity to crucial social problems is essential. The syllabus attempts to encourage such sensitivity and provide it with the ground on which it may deepen – stressing that attention should be paid to the means through which sensitivity and curiosity are aroused as much as the specific information that stimulates it.

The Social Sciences have been a part of the school curriculum before Class VI as part of the teaching of Environmental Studies. The revised EVS syllabus has attempted to draw the child's attention in Classes III-V to the broad span of time, space and the life in society, integrating this with the way in which she or he has come to see and understand the world around them.

In Classes VIII, this process continues, but with a greater attention to specific themes and with an eye to the disciplines through which Social Sciences perspectives have evolved. Up to a point, the subjects that are the focus of college-level teaching – History, Geography, Political Science, and Economics – are meant to take shape in the child's imagination during these years – but only in a manner where their boundaries are open to dispute, and their disciplinary quality is understated. With such intentions, syllabus-makers have been more concerned with theme and involvement rather than information. Textbook writers will be concerned to ensure that understanding does not suffer through suffocation by obsession with detail. Equally, the themes and details that are brought before the child for attention and discussion are also meant to clarify doubts and disputes that take shape in contemporary society – through an involvement of the classroom in discussions and debates via the medium of the syllabus.

With such a focus in mind, syllabus-makers for the Upper Primary and Secondary Stages have sought to ensure that their course content overlaps at various levels, to strengthen understanding, and provide a foundation in detail from which natural curiosity and the capacity for investigation may evolve and develop. It is also anticipated that, in keeping with the spirit of the National Curriculum Framework the syllabus itself will promote project work that encourages the child to take stock of the overlap, to see a problem as existing at different and interconnected levels. Guides to this as well as specific instances will be provided in textbooks.

Throughout, India's own experiences over time, and the solutions advocated by national governments, as well as the problems they have encountered, are expected to give the child a firm sense of locality, region and nation in an interconnected and complex manner. Both the intentions that have stimulated policy, the ideals and compulsions that have guided them as well as the diversity of experience of what has taken place finds attention and enquiry in the syllabus. Equally, comparisons between India's experience and global experiences are encouraged and India's interactions with the world find attention. Social, cultural and political issues are the focus of comparison.

It is within such a framework that the deeper engagement with disciplines are expected to evolve in Classes XI and XII – allowing the young person either to prepare for higher education or a broad range of professions that require more specific skills. While anticipating some of the concerns of higher education, the syllabus of this time must and does focus on foundation rather than information – stimulating an awareness of essential categories, and a broad sense of disciplinary areas.



HISTORY: OUR PASTS

Rationale

From Class VI all students would read history as a component of Social Sciences. This component has been devised in a way that would help students develop a historical sensibility and awareness of the significance of history. The assumption has been that students need to see history not simply as a set of facts about the past – economic, social, political, and cultural – but that they have to learn to think historically. Students have to acquire a capacity to make interconnections between processes and events, between developments in one place and another, and see the link between histories of different groups and societies.

In these three years (VI – VIII) the focus would be primarily on Indian History, from the earliest times to the present. Each year one chronological span of time would be studied. The effort would be to understand some of the social, economic, political and cultural processes within them.

Objectives

- Provide a general idea of the developments within these periods of history. This can be achieved by presenting a broad overview of a theme and a detailed case study. Care will be taken to avoid an excess of detail which can burden textbooks.
- Give an idea of the way historians come to know about the past. Students would be introduced to different types of sources and encouraged to reflect on them critically. This would require that extracts from sources – inscriptions, religious texts, travel accounts, chronicles, newspapers, state documents, visual material etc. – become an integral part of textbooks. Discussions built around these sources would allow learners to develop analytical skills.
- Create a sense of historical diversity. Each theme would provide a broad over view, but would also focus on a case study of one region or a particular event. In choosing the case studies the focus would shift from one region to another, so that the diversity of historical experiences can be studied without over burdening the syllabus.
- Introduce the child to time lines and historical maps that would situate the case studies being discussed, and locate the developments of one region in relation to what was happening elsewhere.
- Encourage the students to imagine what it would be like to live in the society that was being discussed, or how a child of the time would have experienced the events being talked of.

CLASS VIII: OUR PASTS – III

| Themes | Objectives |
|--|--|
| <p>Where, When, How</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) An overview of the period. (b) Introduction to the new geographical categories. (c) An outline of the time frame. (d) An introduction to the sources. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Introduce the changing nomenclature of the subcontinent and regions. (b) Delineate major developments within the time frame. (c) Suggest how the sources of study for this period are different to those of earlier periods. |
| <p>The Establishment of Company Power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mercantilism and trade-wars. (b) Struggle for territory, wars with Indian rulers. (c) The growth of colonial army and civilian administration. <i>Regional focus: Tamil Nadu.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Unravel the story of a trading company becoming a political power. (b) Show how the consolidation of British power was linked to the formation of colonial armies and administrative structures. |
| <p>Rural Life and Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Colonial agrarian policies; their effect on peasants and landlords. (b) Growth of commercial crops. (c) Peasant revolts: focus on indigo rebellions. <p><i>Regional focus: Bengal and Bihar. Some comparison with later developments in Punjab.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Provide a broad view of changes within rural society through a focus on two contrasting regions. (b) Show the continuities and changes with earlier societies. (c) Discuss how growth of new crops often disrupted the rhythms of peasant life and led to revolts. |
| <p>Colonialism and Tribal Societies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Changes within tribal economies and societies in the nineteenth century. (b) Tribal revolts: focus on Birsa Munda. <p><i>Regional focus: Chotanagpur and North-East.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Discuss different forms of tribal societies. (b) Show how government records can be read against the grain to reconstruct histories of tribal revolts. |
| <p>Crafts and Industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Decline of handicrafts in the nineteenth century. (b) Brief reference to growth of industries in the twentieth century. <p><i>Case-studies: textiles.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Familiarise students with the processes of de-industrialisation and industrialisation. (b) Give an idea of the technologies of weaving and the lives of weavers. |

| Themes | Objectives |
|---|--|
| <p>The Revolt of 1857-58</p> <p>(a) The rebellion in the army and the spread of the movement.</p> <p>(b) The nature of elite and peasant participation. <i>Regional focus: Awadh.</i></p> <p>Education and British rule</p> <p>(a) The new education system – schools, syllabi, colleges, universities, technical training.</p> <p>(b) Changes in the indigenous systems.</p> <p>(c) Growth of ‘National education’.</p> <p><i>Case-studies: Baroda, Aligarh.</i></p> <p>Women and reform</p> <p>(a) Debates around <i>sati</i>, widow remarriage, child marriage and age of consent.</p> <p>(b) Ideas of different reformers on the position of women and women’s education.</p> <p><i>Regional focus: Maharashtra and Bengal.</i></p> <p>Challenging the Caste System</p> <p>(a) Arguments for caste reform. The ideas of Phule, Veerasalingam, Sri Narayana Guru, Periyar, Gandhi, Ambedkar.</p> <p>(b) Consequences and implications of the activities of the reformers.</p> <p><i>Region: Maharashtra, Andhra.</i></p> <p>Colonialism and Urban Change</p> <p>(a) De-urbanisation and emergence of new towns.</p> <p>(b) Implications of colonial policies and institutions – municipalities, public works, planning, railway links, police.</p> <p><i>Case-study: Delhi.</i></p> | <p>(a) Discuss how revolts originate and spread.</p> <p>(b) Point to the changes in colonial rule after 1857.</p> <p>(c) Illustrate how vernacular and British accounts can be read to understand the rebellion.</p> <p>(a) Show how the educational system that is seen as universal and normal today has a history.</p> <p>(b) Discuss how the politics of education is linked to questions of power and cultural identity.</p> <p>(a) Discuss why so many reformers focused on the women’s question, and how they visualised a change in women’s conditions.</p> <p>(b) Outline the history of new laws that affect women’s lives.</p> <p>(c) Illustrate how autobiographies, biographies and other literature can be used to reconstruct the histories of women.</p> <p>(a) Familiarise students with the biographies and writings of individuals who sought to criticise and reform the caste system.</p> <p>(b) Discuss why the question of caste was central to most projects of social reform.</p> <p>(a) Outline the nature of urban development in the 19th and 20th centuries.</p> <p>(b) Introduce students to the history of urban spaces through photographs.</p> <p>(c) Show how new forms of towns emerged in the colonial period.</p> |

| Themes | Objectives |
|--|--|
| <p>Changes in the Arts: Painting, Literature, architecture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Impact of new technologies and institutions: art schools, printing press. (b) Western academic style and nationalist art. (c) Changes in performing arts – music and dance enter the public arena. (d) New forms of writing. (e) New architecture. <p><i>Case-studies: Mumbai, Chennai.</i></p> <p>The Nationalist Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Overview of the nationalist movement from the 1870s to the 1940s. (b) Diverse trends within the movement and different social groups involved. (c) Links with constitutional changes. <p><i>Case study: Khilafat to Non Cooperation.</i></p> <p>India after Independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) National and regional developments since 1947. (b) Relations with other countries. (c) Looking to the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Outline the major development in the sphere of arts. (b) Discuss how these changes are linked to the emergence of a new public culture. (c) Illustrate how paintings and photographs can be used to understand the cultural history of a period. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Outline the major developments within the national movement and focuses on a detailed study of one major event. (b) Show how contemporary writings and documents can be used to reconstruct the histories of political movements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Discuss the successes and failures of the Indian democracy in the last fifty years. (b) Illustrate how newspapers and recent writings can be used to understand contemporary history. |



GEOGRAPHY

Rationale

Geography is an integral component of social science. At this stage learners are introduced to the basic concepts necessary for understanding the world in which they live. Geography will be introduced to promote the understanding of interdependence of various regions and countries. The child will be introduced to the contemporary issues such as global distribution of economic resources, gender, marginalized group, and environment and on going process of globalisation.

The course at this stage comprises study of the earth as the habitat of humankind, study of environment, resources and development at different scales local, regional/national and the world.

Objectives

The major objectives of the course are to:

1. develop an understanding about the earth as the habitat of humankind and other forms of life.
2. initiate the learner into a study of her/his own region, state and country in the global context.
3. introduce the global distribution of economic resources and the on going process of globalisation.
4. promote the understanding of interdependence of various regions and countries.

CLASS VIII : RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT

| Topics | Objectives |
|--|--|
| Resources: resources and their types – natural and human. | To know the meaning of resources their variety, location and distribution; (Periods-10) |
| Natural resources: their distribution, utilisation and conservation, land and soil, water, natural vegetation, wildlife, mineral and power resources (world patterns with special reference to India). | To understand the importance of resources in our life; To appreciate the judicious use of resources for sustainable development; To develop awareness towards resources conservation and take initiative towards conservation process; (Periods-14) |
| Agriculture: types of farming, major crops, food crops, fibres, beverages, agricultural development – two case studies – one from India and the other from a developed country/a farm in the US/ Netherlands/ Australia. | Learn about various types of farming and agricultural development in two different regions. (Periods-15) |
| Industries: classification of industries based on size, raw material, ownership; major industries and distribution; infrastructure and development. Iron and Steel (a comparative study of Jamshedpur and a centre in USA e.g., Detroit). Textile Industry (Ahmedabad and Osaka). Information Technology (Bangalore and Silicon Valley). | To understand important forms of manufacturing industries. (Periods-14) |
| Human Resources – composition, population change, distribution and density. | To understand the role of human resources in development of nation's economy. (Periods-12) |
| <p>Project/Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observe and report about local agricultural practices, crops grown/manufacturing industries. Collect information regarding some endangered plants and animal species of India. Visit to an industry/local agricultural farm. Prepare a chart showing difference between life style of farmers in the developed countries and India on basis of pictures collected from magazines, newspapers and the internet. <p>Note: Any similar activities may be taken up.</p> | |

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Rationale

At the elementary stage, the idea is to introduce students to various aspects of political, social and economic life. This will be done through a preliminary focus on certain key concepts, knowledge of which is essential to understand the functioning of Indian democracy. These concepts will be explained using imaginary narratives that allow children to draw connections between these and their everyday experiences. There will be no attempt made at this level to cover all aspects of India's democratic structure, but rather the effort is more to provide an overview with which the child learns to critically engage by constructing herself as an interested citizen of a vibrant and on-going democratic process. The focus on the real-life functioning of institutions and ideals is to enable the child to grasp the deep interconnectedness between the political and social aspects of her everyday life, as well as the impact of these two in the realm of economic decision-making.

Objectives

- To enable students to make connections between their everyday lives and the issues discussed in the textbook;
- To have students imbibe the ideals of the Indian Constitution;
- To have children gain a real sense of the workings of Indian democracy: its institutions and processes;
- To enable students to grasp the interconnectedness between political, social and economic issues;
- To have them recognise the gendered nature of all of the issues raised;
- To have them develop skills to critically analyse and interpret political, social and economic developments from the point of view of the marginalised;
- To have them recognise the ways in which politics affects their daily lives.




RULE OF LAW AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

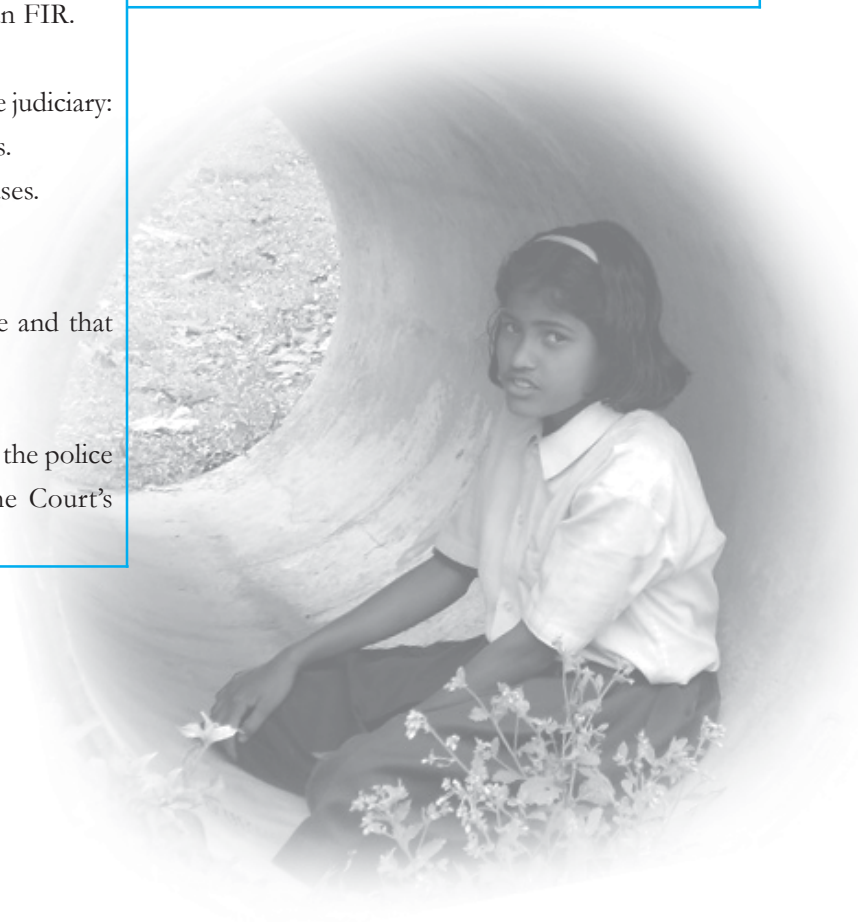
Rationale

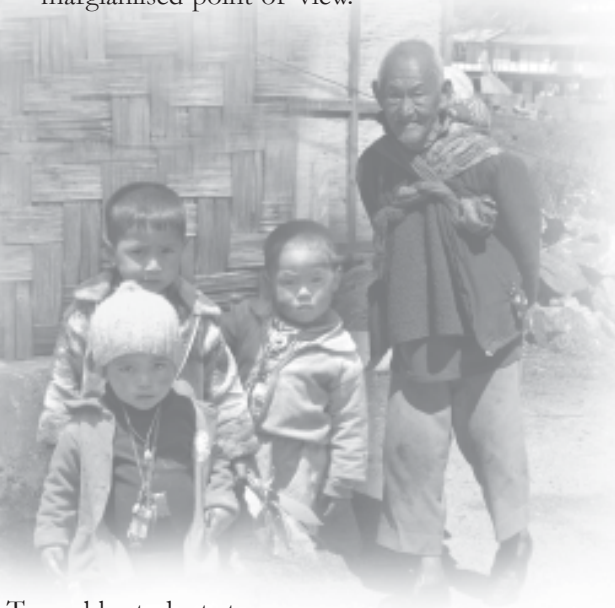
The theme of law and social justice for Class VIII attempts to connect constitutional values and vision to the reality of contemporary India and to look at the constitution as an inspiring and evolving document. Some provisions of the constitution relating to fundamental rights, parliamentary form of government, role of the judiciary and economic role of government are the topics discussed in this light. The attempt is to move from listing rules and functions to discussing some of the key ideas underlying the working of these institutions. The role of people as desiring and striving for a just society and hence responding and evolving laws and structures that govern us is brought forth.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the course, where it is not clear from the rationale of the approach, are indicated beside the themes to be taught in the course.

| Themes | Objectives |
|---|---|
| <p>UNIT 1: The Constitution</p> <p>This unit focuses on the Constitution through first highlighting why there is a need for laws and then showing how the Constitution is the framework that determines the making of laws in this country. Aspects of secularism as well as economic justice are highlighted with respect to the Constitution.</p> <p>Section 1</p> <p>The Role of the Constitution and the Need for Laws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On need for laws discussed through an example like dowry, • Role of Constitution in determining the authority/ legitimacy of the law, • Laws and Dissent: Salt Satyagraha and a post-1947 example such as anti-liquor agitation. <p>Section 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision set forth in the Indian Constitution with a focus on secularism. • On how an ideal of the Constitution translates into a law • On how ideals of secularism got translated into fundamental rights. • On Fundamental rights as human rights. • On Fundamental Duties. • On whether the fact that a law exists to secure certain rights mean that in effect these rights have been realised for all. This will be discussed with examples from current efforts of various marginalised communities to realise their rights. <p>UNIT 2: Parliamentary Government</p> <p>In this unit the functioning of parliamentary government and the roles and responsibilities of the various individuals involved in explained in context. In addition the workings of the central government are explained through the steps involved in passing a new law that arose out of people's struggles.</p> | <p>To enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of the rule of law and our involvement with the law, • understand the Constitution as the primary source of all our laws, • understand laws as evolving and subject to change. • understand the vision and the values of the Constitution, • develop an appreciation of human rights guaranteed in the Constitution • appreciate our continuous involvement with the constitution as a living document  <p>To enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand why India chose a parliamentary form of govt, • gain a sense\rationale of the essential elements of the parliamentary form of government, • analyse the role of people's agency in placing demands for legislation, |

| Themes | Objectives |
|--|--|
| <p>Section 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons why parliamentary form chosen in India. • Main features of composition of parliament and its role in debating a bill. • Accountability of the government to the parliament. • Role of President, PM and the Council of Ministers. <p><i>Case Study:</i> Debate between Nehru and Rajendra Prasad on the real powers of the President.</p> <p>Section 2</p> <p>Understand central government through issue of minimum wages or other struggles keeping following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translation of felt need into law and the critical features of the legislation. - Implication of law. <p>UNIT 3: The Judiciary</p> <p>This unit focuses on understanding the judiciary through tracing a case from the lower to the higher courts. It also examines the difference between civil and criminal cases and the difference between the police and the courts as well as provides information on an FIR.</p> <p>Section 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure and process followed by the judiciary: Trace a case from lower to higher courts. • Distinguish between civil and criminal cases. • Indicate the rationale of the process <p>Section 2</p> <p>Difference between the roles of the police and that of the courts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the Public Prosecutor. • On an FIR: filing one, on the illegality of the police not accepting an FIR and the Supreme Court's directive on this. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the ways in which the government and other groups respond to such issues. <p>To enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the main elements of our judicial structure, • appreciate the need for the processes followed, • understand what an FIR is and how to file one.  |

| Themes | Objectives |
|---|--|
| <p>UNIT 4: Social Justice and the Marginalised</p> <p>This unit focuses on issues of social justice and the marginalised. It first provides an understanding of what is meant by ‘marginalised’ groups. It then discusses in-depth the issue of untouchability and reservations.</p> <p>Section 1</p> <p>A brief explanation of what is meant by marginalised. Include how various communities (SC, ST, OBC, minorities) fit in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forms of social inequality – Constitutional provisions relating to social justice. • Effect of social inequalities on economic inequalities. • On Reservations. <p>Section 2</p> <p>Different forms of untouchability that continue to exist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The law on manual scavenging with reference to existing realities in rural and urban areas. <p>UNIT 5: Economic Presence of the Government</p> <p>Introduction of various ways by which government is engaged in developmental activities, especially in infrastructure and social sectors.</p> <p>Explain with an example from this area why we need the government, how is the provision done, how does it impact upon people.</p> | <p>To enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand what is meant by marginalised, • gain a critical understanding of social and economic injustices, • develop skills to analyse an argument from the marginalised point of view.  <p>To enable students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • think about the role of government in the economic sphere, • see some links between people’s aspirations\ needs and role of government. |