

Social Science

(Social and Political Life)(Chapter – 2) (Understanding Secularism)
(Class – 8)

Question 1:

List the different types of religious practice that you find in your neighbourhood. This could be different forms of prayer, worship of different gods, sacred sites, different kinds of religious music and singing etc. Does this indicate freedom of religious practice?

Answer 1:

The different types of religious practices found in my neighborhood strongly indicate freedom of religious practice. The various forms of prayer, worship of different gods, sacred sites and different kinds of religious music found in my locality are of Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Jews and the Baha'is. The Christians sing hymns, the Hindus Bhajans, while the Muslims offers Namaaz five times a day. The Baha'is believe in world unity and peace.

Question 2:

Will the government intervene if some religious group says that their religion allows them to practise infanticide? Give reasons for your answer.

Answer 2:

The government in any democratic nation would intervene if some religious group says that their religion allows them to practice infanticide because this tradition goes against the Fundamental Right to Life. It involves the killing of an innocent and is, hence, unacceptable. The government, in this case, interferes by coercion. However, sometimes, the government may also intervene via support.

For example, Sikhs in Delhi are excused from wearing helmets on two-wheelers because their religion demands them to wear a turban-a sacred tradition for them.

Question 3:

Complete the following table:

Objective	Why is this important?	Example of a violation of this objective
One religious community does not dominate another. The State does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals. That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community.		
Answer 3:		
Objective	Why is this important?	Example of a violation of this objective
One religious community does not dominate another. The State does not enforce any particular religion nor take away the religious freedom of individuals. That some members do not dominate other members of the same religious community.	This is important to protect the Fundamental Right to Freedom of Religion This is important to uphold the ideals of a democratic nation which allows its citizens freedom to choose whichever religion they wish to follow. This is necessary to uphold individual freedom in the light of pressure from a group or religious community that one belongs to.	The demolition of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya on 6th December, 1992 by Hindu nationalists. France, in February 2004, banned headscarves and turbans in public places, thereby hurting the sentiments of Muslim and Sikh minorities. The Christian community is divided into Protestants and Catholics; Irish Catholics are looked down upon and troubled by the officials of the Church of England who are predominantly Protestants.

Question 4:

Look up the annual calendar of holidays of your school. How many of them pertain to different religions? What does this indicate?

Answer 4:

Many holidays on a school's annual calendar pertain to different religions. This indicates that India is a secular country where religious freedom is granted to its citizens and all religions are equally respected.

Question 5:

Find out some examples of different views within the same religion.

Answer 5:

Many religions are further segregated into groups and communities that hold differing ideological opinions. One of these is the rift between the Shias and Sunnis - both followers of Islam. The division between Shias and Sunnis dates back to the death of the Prophet Muhammad and to the question of who was to take over the leadership after the Prophet. Sunni Muslims agree with the position taken by many of the Prophet's companions, that the new leader should be elected from among those capable for the job. This is what was done, and the Prophet Muhammad's close friend and advisor, Abu Bakr, became the first Caliph of the Islamic nation. The word "Sunni" in Arabic comes from a word meaning "one who follows the traditions of the Prophet."

On the other hand, some Muslims share the belief that leadership should have stayed within the Prophet's own family, among those specifically appointed by him, or among Imams appointed by God Himself.

The Shia Muslims believe that following the Prophet Muhammad's death, leadership should have passed directly to his cousin/son-in-law, Ali. Throughout history, Shia Muslims have not recognized the authority of elected Muslim leaders, choosing instead to follow a line of Imams which they believe have been appointed by the Prophet Muhammad or God Himself. The word "Shia" in Arabic means a group or supportive party of people. The commonly-known term is shortened from the historical "Shia-t-Ali," or "the Party of Ali." They are also known as followers of "Ahl-al-Bayt" or "People of the Household" (of the Prophet).

Question 6:

The Indian State both keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea can be quite confusing. Discuss this once again in class using examples from the chapter as well as those that you might have come up with.

Answer 6:

The Indian State keeps away from religion as well as intervenes in religion. This idea is quite confusing. It allows Sikh citizens to wear turbans and thereby be exempt from the use of helmets but it also disallows government schools from celebrating any particular religious festival. Annual holidays are given with regard to all religions and not any specific ones.

Question 7:

This poster alongside highlights the need for 'Peace'. It says, "Peace is a never-ending process....It cannot ignore our differences or overlook our common interests." Write in your own words what you think the above sentences are trying to convey? How does it relate to the need for religious tolerance?

This chapter had three drawings on religious tolerance made by students of your age. Design your own poster on religious tolerance for your peers.

Answer 7:

Every human loves peace. All religions preach peace, humanity and non-violence. So, for the sake of security and protection, peace is the necessary tool. It also provides a way of living with honour.

Peace is a human phenomenon which is for the protection of all. Terrorism is to be condemned by all of us.

A picture can be drawn showing the celebration of Holi, Eid, Diwali, Gurupurab, Christmas, being celebrated together by people of different religion.



❖ Intext Question Pg-19

Question 1:

Re-read the introduction to this chapter. Why do you think retaliation is not the proper response to this problem? What would happen if different groups followed this path?

Answer:

In my opinion, retaliation is not at all a proper response to this problem because even if we retaliate towards it, the problem is nowhere going to suppress rather it will strengthen its roots more deeper which will create an even worse situation.

Hence, rather retaliating we must fight against this and demand for a law that would eliminate this problem forever.

In case if various groups started following this path than the complete world would turn out to be a discriminating system where the word 'Equality' would be erased and the minority sections present everywhere will suffer.

❖ Intext Question Pg-20

Question 1:

Discuss in class: Can there be different views within the same religion?

Answer:

Yes, there are different views that are followed even within the same religion.

Let us understand them with the help of some examples:

- (a) In the Hindu religion there are hundreds of deities worshipped by different people.
- (b) Similar is the case in Muslim community where there are Shiyas and Shunnis.
- (c) In Jains, there are Shwetambar and Digambar sects.
- (d) While in Buddha Dharma, there are Hinayaans and Mahayaans.

❖ Intext Question Pg-22

Question 1:

In the above storyboard, discuss the answer given by the teacher.

Answer:

The answer given by the teacher in the above storyboard is according to the law of our country. As the celebration of the religious festivals within the schools would have been a violation of government's policy of treating every religion equally. According to our constitution government schools cannot promote any religion but this law is not applicable in the private schools.

❖ Intext Question Pg-23

Question 1:

Government schools often have students from different religious backgrounds. Read the three objectives of a secular State and write two sentences on why it is important that government schools do not promote any one religion?

Answer:

Government should not promote any one religion because:

(a) Since, in the constitution of our country there exist a word called 'Secularism' which gives freedom to every citizen to possess the religion they want and government schools are strictly based on the constitution. Hence, if they do so they would be violating the constitution of our nation.

(b) If any school promote any certain religion it would be a sort of partiality with the students of other religion which will again violate the law of constitution which says that every citizen and their respective religion should be treated equally.

❖ Intext Question Pg-25

Question 1:

Can you think of a recent incident, from any part of India, in which the secular ideals of the Constitution were violated and persons were persecuted and killed because of their religious backgrounds?

Answer:

The recent example in which the secular ideals of the Constitution were violated and persons were persecuted and killed is the banning of beef by Indian government.

The government of our country should not have imposed the law on beef as it violates the religion of Muslims. This decision should be taken by the people whether they should eat or not because. Due to this law many people were killed as they were caught carrying beef with them.