1. Understanding Diversity

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Class 6

Social And Political Life (POLITY)

Chapter 1

Understanding Diversity

**INTRODUCTION**

- In this chapter you will learn that people are different from each other in many ways. Not only do they look different but they might also belong to different regional, cultural or religious backgrounds.
- These differences enrich our lives in many ways and also make them more fun! All these different people, who come from all kinds of backgrounds, and belong to all kinds of religions and cultures help to make India so interesting and so diverse.
- As per the story of Samir ek and Samir do, Although they both are more at home in different languages they still communicated with each other. They made the effort to do so because this was what was important to them.
Different religious and cultural backgrounds such as these are an aspect of diversity.

Diversity is also in languages of people.

Some people are some are rich.

This difference is not the same as the one we have seen earlier. Here, we’re talking not of difference but of inequality.

Inequality comes about when a person does not have the resources and opportunities that are available to other persons.

The caste system is another example of inequality. According to this, society was divided into different groups depending upon the work that people did and they were supposed to remain in those groups.

This system was considered irreversible. And because you were not supposed to change your profession, it was not considered necessary for you to know anything more than what you needed in your profession. This created a situation of inequality.

What does diversity add to our lives?

By the example of the story tellers/writers, they give us point that due to people lived in different they observed different society and culture thus they were able to write different types of the stories.

If we force them all to live in same environment and same society and gave them same type of upbringing then they couldn't been so different at all and may have wrote similar stories.
Thus due to this diversity we have so many options in our life.

**DIVERSITY IN INDIA**

- India is a country of many diversities.
- We speak different languages, have various types of food, celebrate different festivals, practice different religions.
- But actually, if you think about it, we do many things that are similar except that we do them in different ways.

**How do we explain Diversity?**

- A little more than two hundred years ago or long before the train, aeroplane, bus or car became a part of our lives, people travelled from one part of the world to another, in ships, on horses, on camels or on foot.
- Imagine
- Different ways in which people greet each other
- Different ways in which people dress
- Different ways in which people get married
- Different ways in which people pray
- List at least three different ways in which people in India do the following. One of the possible answers has been provided for you already.
- Different ways in which people cook rice By making Biriyani, pulav, plain etc.
1. Many others left their homes because there were famines and drought and they could not get enough to eat. Some went in search of work while others left because there was a war.

2. Sometimes, as they began to make their homes in new places, people began to change a little and at other times they managed to do things in the old ways.

3. So their languages, food, music, religions became a mix of the old and the new, and out of this intermixing of cultures, came something new and different.

4. The history of many places shows us how many different cultural influences have helped to shape life and culture there. Thus regions became very diverse because of their unique histories.

5. Similarly diversity also comes about when people adapt their lives to the geographical area in which they live. For example living near the sea is quite different from living in a mountainous area.

Consider two different states:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Points</th>
<th>Ladakh</th>
<th>Kerala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographical Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Ladakh</strong> is a desert in the mountains in the eastern part of Jammu and Kashmir</td>
<td><strong>1. Kerala</strong> is a state in the southwest corner of India. It is surrounded by the sea on one side and hills on the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agriculture</strong></td>
<td><strong>2. Very little agriculture is possible here since this region does not receive any rain and is covered in snow for a large part of the year.</strong></td>
<td><strong>2. A number of spices like pepper, cloves and cardamoms are grown on the hills.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Water Availability

3. For drinking water, people depend on the melting snow during the summer months.

3. This area has no shortage of drinking water.

### Trades

4. The people in Ladakh carefully collect the pashima wool of the sheep and sell this to traders from Kashmir. Pashmina shawls are chiefly woven in Kashmir.

4. It is spices that made this region an attractive place for traders. Jewish and Arab traders were the first to come here. Other trades also happens here.

### Route

5. It was considered a good trade route as it had many passes through which caravans travelled to what is today called Tibet. These caravans carried textiles and spices, raw silk and carpets.

5. The Portuguese discovered the sea route to India from Europe when Vasco da Gama landed with his ship here.

### Religion and Culture

6. **Buddhism** reached Tibet via Ladakh. **Islam** was also introduced in this region more than four hundred years ago and there is a significant Muslim population here.

6. Different religions such as Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism and their related culture.

### Food

7. Meat and milk products like cheese and butter, they depend on the market to buy all the food and other goods that they need because it has little agriculture.

7. The agriculture here is very good people have so many options to grow vegetable and crops. Sea food is also available here.

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**UNITY IN DIVERSITY**

- India’s diversity has always been recognized as a source of its strength.
- When the British ruled India, women and men from different cultural, religious and regional backgrounds came together to oppose them.
- India’s freedom movement had thousands of people of different backgrounds in it. They worked together to decide joint actions, they went to jail together, and they found different ways to oppose the British.
- Interestingly the British thought they could divide Indians because they were so different, and then
continue to rule them. But the people showed how they could be different and yet be united in their battle against the British.

- Men and women, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, rich and poor had gathered to protest against the British.
- In his book *The Discovery of India* by Jawaharlal Nehru says that Indian unity is not something imposed from the outside but rather, “It was something deeper and within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practiced and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged.” It was Nehru, who coined the phrase, “unity in diversity” to describe the country.
- India’s national anthem, composed by Rabindranath Tagore, is another expression of the unity of India.