

Exploring Society: India and Beyond

**Social Science Textbook for
Grade 8 | Part 2**



0882

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NCERT

राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद्
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

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Social Science Textbook for Grade 8 Part 2

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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 domains of human endeavour and knowledge while at the same time preparing the students to constructively engage with the prospects 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. Having nurtured the students' inherent abilities touching upon all the five planes of human existence, the *pañchakośhas* in the Foundational and the Preparatory Stages have paved the way for the progression of their learning further at the Middle Stage. Thus, the Middle Stage acts as a bridge between the Preparatory and the Secondary Stages, spanning three years from Grade 6 to Grade 8.

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 8 — *Exploring Society: India and Beyond* Part 2 — carries forward the themes and approach of Part 1; 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.

January 2026
New Delhi

Dinesh Prasad Saklani
Director
National Council of Educational
Research and Training



Letter to the Student

Dear Student,

You have now entered the second half of Grade 8, the final phase of the Middle Stage. We trust you have enjoyed engaging with Part 1 of the textbook. We now bring you Part 2. We continue our journey across the five themes — India and the World, Tapestry of the Past, Our Cultural Heritage and Knowledge Traditions, Governance and Democracy, and Economic Life Around Us. As you prepare to step into the Secondary Stage, we have prepared some chapters with a little more text than the previous textbooks. Do spend some time reading carefully. We urge you to continue to explore the maps and illustrations, participate in discussions with your friends and teachers, as well as carry out the activities described with support from your teachers and parents.

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 better the events of today.

You may notice that Chapter 8, ‘Cultural Currents’, is at the end of the book though it belongs to the Our Cultural Heritage and Knowledge Traditions theme. This is because it is intended to be shifted to the Grade 8 Part 1 textbook in future.

We have approached the creation of this book with the same love and care as the earlier ones. We hope you will enjoy learning with this textbook along with your teacher, friends and parents.

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!

As usual, 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 book’ 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.

A note on the pronunciation of Sanskrit words — in case you need guidance sometimes

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, *ṛ* 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 ‘Ṛig 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>ṛi</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						



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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 certain educational institutions.

Cultural and Educational Rights

- for protection of interests of minorities;
- for minorities to establish and administer educational institutions;
- saving of certain Laws 31A–31D.

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 Kuṭumbakam:
The whole world is family.