

Lesson at a Glance

- How we live, what we speak, what we eat and wear and what we play—all depend upon the historical background and geographical settings of the place we live in.
- Each of the eight major world religions is followed in India. There are over 1600 mother tongues and over a hundred dance forms.
- Many of us are **prejudiced** about people that differ from us—like we think our traits, religions, etc. to be the best and we automatically presume that those of others are not good. This is not a healthy trait of our diversity. In prejudice, we often hurt others.
- We also tend to create **stereotypes**—that is, we form one particular image—positive or negative—about something, without pondering over it carefully. The stereotype may be with respect to religion, place of origin or residence, sex, race, background, etc.
- When people act in a way that is driven by their prejudices or stereotypes, **discrimination** happens. In this, we prevent people from using their rights just because we think they are inferior.
- Castes were created as a result of discrimination on the basis of occupation of people. Rules were created by the people who called themselves upper caste. The group at the bottom of the caste ladder were labelled as “**untouchable**”.
- The “untouchables” were not allowed to take on work, other than what they were meant to do. People maintained distance from them. They were called ‘**Dalits**’.
- Many Dalits and women came forward to demand equality with other castes and men, respectively. When India became independent, the Constitution was made which laid down laws for equality among all Indians.
- Dr. Ambedkar, a Dalit himself who had suffered a lot, is considered the father of the Constitution.

■ IN-TEXT QUESTIONS SOLVED ■

9. 1. Arrange the statements given below in these two sections, according to what you think is appropriate for the section.

They are well behaved.

They are soft spoken and gentle.

They are naughty.

They are physically strong.

They are good at dance and painting.

They don't cry.

They are rowdy.

They are good at sport.

They are good at cooking.

They are emotional.

Girls	Boys
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5

Now check, with your teacher's help, who has put which statement where. Find out and discuss people's reasons for doing this. Are the qualities you put in for boys something that boys are born with?

(NCERT Text book, page 15)

Ans.	Girls	Boys
1.	They are well behaved.	1. They are physically strong.
2.	They are soft spoken and gentle.	2. They are naughty.
3.	They are good at dance and painting.	3. They don't cry.
4.	They are good at cooking.	4. They are rowdy.
5.	They are emotional.	5. They are good at sport.

Yes, the qualities that we have put in for boys are something that boys are born with.

9. 2. Do you think children with special needs should be a part of regular schools or study in a separate school? Give reasons for your answer. (NCERT Textbook, page 16)

Ans. I think children with special needs should be a part of regular schools and they should be sent to separate schools. This step would definitely boost up the morals of such children. By mixing them with general children, we would make them forget about their disabilities. In this way, they would do better and achieve better. They would try to complete with general students and this would definitely add to their personality.

9. 3. You can take other statements such as 'They are soft and gentle' or 'They are well behaved' and discuss how these are applied to girls. Do girls possess these qualities at birth or do they learn such behaviour from others? What do you think about girls who are not soft and gentle and those who are naughty? (NCERT Textbook, page 17)

Ans. Softness and delicacy are some of the qualities girls are born with. If these qualities are not in optimum quantity in any of the girl, it becomes the duty of her parents to teach her these qualities right from the moment they come to know about this.

The girls who are not soft and gentle and those who are naughty are very few in number. I think they acquire these qualities from the society in which they live. They may also acquire these qualities in bad company.

9. 4. What is the difference between discrimination and stereotype? (NCERT Textbook, page 18)

Ans. **Discrimination** is the practice of treating someone less fairly than others on the basis of caste, colour, sex, religion, etc. For example, dalits are discriminated against others on the basis of their social status, which is not justified.

Stereotype. A fixed idea that many people have of a particular type of people but which is often not true in reality is known as Stereotype. For example, if we say that girls' brain is not scientific or technical, we are using stereotypes. Some girls may lack scientific brain but not all. Hence, it is not fair to declare that girls as a whole don't own scientific mind.

9. 5. How do you think a person who is discriminated against might feel? (NCERT Textbook, page 19)

Ans. He might feel hurt and insulted. He might feel secluded.

■ TEXTBOOK QUESTIONS SOLVED ■

Q. 1. Match the following statements in a way that challenges stereotypes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (a) Two surgeons were sitting down to lunch when one of them made a call on the mobile phone. | 1. Suffers from chronic asthma |
| (b) The boy who won the drawing competition went to the dias | 2. to become an astronaut which she did. |
| (c) One of the fastest athletes in the world | 3. to speak with her daughter who had just returned from school |
| (d) She was not that well-off but had a dream | 4. on a wheelchair to collect his prize |

Ans. (a) **3. Remark.** Many people have formed a stereotype that people living in cities or having influential jobs like surgeon are busy and do not give time to their family. But this example proves that feelings for the family are universal and the surgeon wanted to talk to her daughter.

(b) **4. Remark.** This challenges the stereotype that crippled children are good for nothing. But the truth is that they have only one, or probably two defective organs, but they can still use their mind and talent and win prizes like this boy.

(c) **1. Remark.** This challenges the stereotype that chronic asthma patients can not run fast or take part in sports.

(d) **2. Remark.** This challenges the stereotype that only influential and high-class people can dream big. Even poor people can dream big and prove themselves.

Q. 2. How can the stereotype that girls are a burden on their parents affects the life of a daughter? Imagine this situation and list at least five different effects that this stereotype can have on the way daughters get treated in the house.

Ans. Girls have been treated as a burden since time immemorial. Even today their condition has not changed. Whether it is home or outside, they are not given due opportunity. The mental set-up of the parents is such that it never accepts the birth of a daughter wholeheartedly. As a result girls' life is badly affected. Here is the list of five different effects that this stereotype can have on the way daughters get treated.

- Girls would feel discouraged and they would not concentrate to their studies.
- All their dreams to achieve separate identity in the society would be shattered.
- Sometimes girls are not allowed to join any school or college. This ruthless attitude of the parents towards their daughters ruin their career. They feel helpless even in their parents' house.
- Even marriage does not bring fortune to the girls all the time. Some in-laws prove themselves good by giving proper treatment to the newly married girls. But most of the time we find that they are ill-treated in their in-laws' house. They are subject to exploitation.

Q. 3. What does the Constitution say with regard to equality? Why do you think it is important for all people to be equal?

Ans. Our Constitution provides that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on the basis of religion, race, caste, sex or region.

It is important for all people to be equal because only then our society would develop in true sense of the term. It is our right to be treated equally. It is our right to be given due respect. It is our right to be given equal opportunities. In absence of all these, our life would be hell. Our personality would be suppressed. Hence, we need equality so that we may go ahead without any hindrances. We may prove ourselves helpful in the development of the society and country.

Q. 4. Sometimes people make prejudiced comments in our presence. We are often not in a position to do anything about this because it is difficult to say something right then and there. Divide the class into groups and each group discuss what they could do in one of the following situations:

- (a) A friend begins to tease a classmate because he is poor.
- (b) You are watching TV with your family and one of them makes a prejudicial comment about a particular religious community.
- (c) Children in your class refuse to share their food with a particular person because they think she is dirty.
- (d) Someone tells you a joke that makes fun of a community because of their accent.
- (e) Some boys make remarks about girls not being able to play games as well as them.

Discuss in class what the different groups have suggested for the above situations, and also talk about the problems that can come up when raising the issue.

- Ans.** (a) I would try to convince my friend that being a poor is not a crime nor a matter of laughter. Hence, he should not tease his classmate. Instead, he should take care of his dignity and self-respect.
- (b) I would stop him/her to do that.
- (c) I would advise my classmates to be friendly with one and all.
- (d) I would not get involved in the joke and would proceed from their immediately
- (e) I would try to convince those boys that girls are in no way less efficient than their male counterparts. I would give examples of Kalpana Chawla and Sunita Williams who did what many men could not think of.