

Based on **Exploring Society : India and Beyond**
New NCERT Textbook

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REFRESHER

Social Science

**EXPLORING SOCIETY :
INDIA AND BEYOND**

For the Student of Class 6

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Vinisha Nakra*



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Exploring Society : India and Beyond

Introduction : Why Social Science?

Social Science is the study of human society, behaviour and relationships. The focus of social science is a human society. We live in the 21st century, it is a challenging time for humanity. There is rapid progress in technology, the world is witnessing multiple wars, armed conflicts and rising social tensions. Our planet's natural environment is also under great stress. It shows, we live in an age of great possibilities but also great challenges. If we want to build a better future, we first need to understand our world, and human societies in particular.

That is what Social Science is all about.

Social Science has many subdisciplines : geography, history, political science, economics, sociology etc. In this textbook, we have opted for five broad themes.

Theme A : India and the World – Land and the People

This first theme includes the basics of the geographical world around us such as the main features of our planet, its geographical features : oceans, mountains, rivers etc. and the way to represent them on a map.

We will study the role of these physical features in the development of entire civilisation throughout their histories. It is also, in India's case, about how its natural setting has contributed to give this ancient civilisation a unique identity.

Theme B : Tapestry of the Past

A tapestry is where we will be painting scenes from the past, beginning with India's past. Past is the key to understand the present. It helps us to understand who we are and where we come from. It is useful to understand where people, governments or rulers have done wrong. Only then we hope to avoid repeating those errors.

Theme C : Our Cultural Heritage and Knowledge Traditions

India has a rich and ancient culture. True, but what are its main characteristics? Its guiding principles? How has it manifested itself in India's history? And how can it help us to deal with issues of our times? There are some of the questions that this theme is exploring with the objective that every student should understand some of the cultural foundations of our civilisation and learn to appreciate their values.

Theme D : Governance and Democracy

Citizens of any country should have knowledge of their political system. India, as the world's largest democracy has an elaborate system working at different levels.

By studying this theme, we can become more responsible citizens. We will study government, its organs and their functions, our rights and duties or Dharma. It will create aware and responsible citizens.

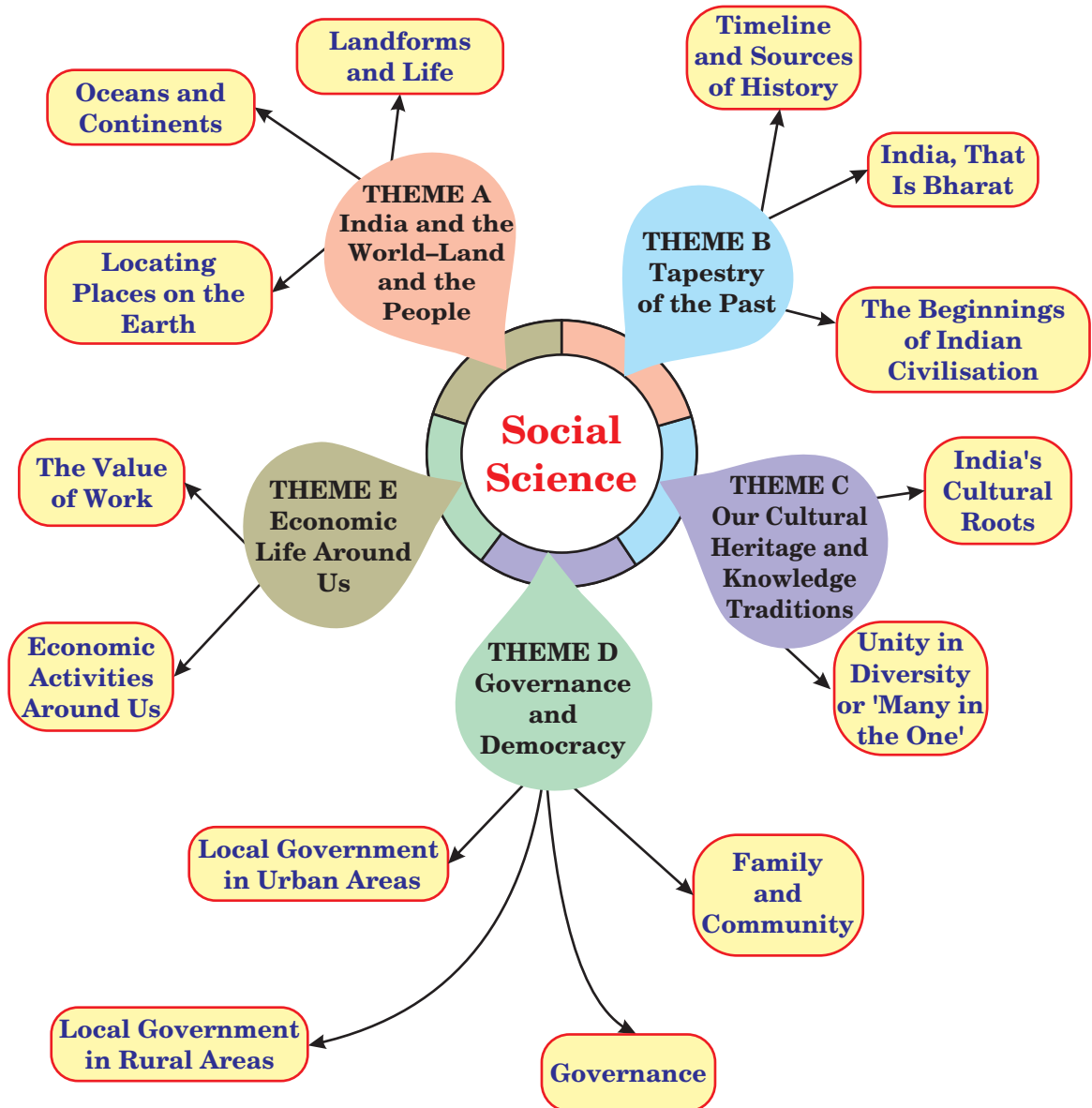
Theme E : Economic Life Around Us

We all need food, clothes, shelter access to water as our basic needs. Similarly, a country needs sound economy for its development.

In this theme we will read : How does an economy work? What is money? Where does it come from? How can it be increased? What economic activities can people engage themselves?

We will get understanding of all these concepts in this theme.

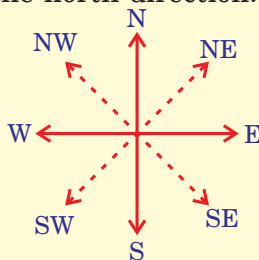
Introduction of Social Science can be understood with the help of following image :



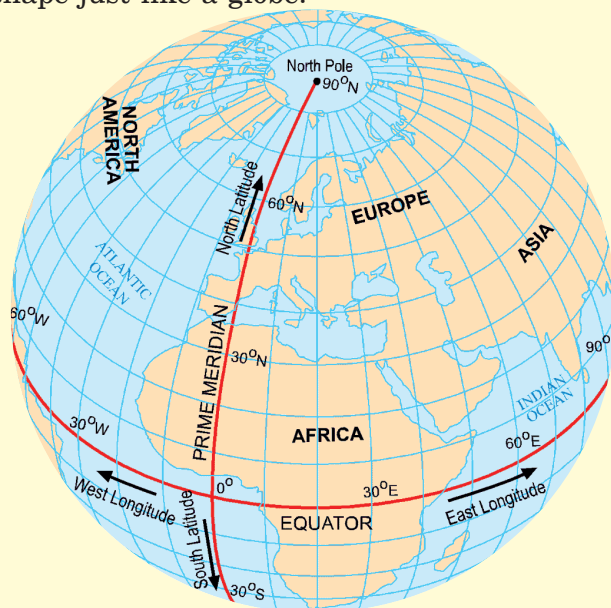
Locating Places on the Earth

Summary

- A map is a drawing or a representation of the Earth's surface. It can represent a large area like India or a small area like a town.
- An atlas is a book or collection of maps.
- There are several kinds of maps—
 - Physical Maps :** These maps show some natural features like mountains, oceans and rivers.
 - Political Maps :** These maps show details of countries or states, boundaries, cities etc.
 - Thematic Maps :** These are the maps which provide a specific kind of information on different subjects or topics.
- There are three important components of maps : distance, direction and symbols.
- The scale of the map represents the ratio of a distance on the map and the actual distance on the surface or ground. So, the actual distance between two points represented on the map depends on the scale that the map is using. A large region can be represented on a map with the help of reduced map scale. Each cm on the map represents a certain distance on the ground like 500 metres.
- There are four cardinal directions : north, east, south and west. These are also called as cardinal points.
- There are four intermediate directions also : northeast (NE), southeast (SE), southwest (SW) and northwest (NW). Most maps have an arrow marked with letter 'N' which points to the north direction.



- Symbols are an important component of maps. These are the small drawings of actual buildings and a few other elements. It is not possible to draw all the elements on the maps so a symbol is used to represent features like different kinds of buildings, for roads and railway lines, and for natural elements such as a river, a pond or a forest.
- Different countries use different sets of symbols. The Survey of India has fixed a set of symbols for maps of India.
- Globe is a sphere on which the Earth is drawn. The globe is a better representation of the Earth's surface than a flat map because the Earth is spherical in shape just like a globe.



- The fixed points on the top and bottom of the globe when it rotates are called North and South pole respectively. Equator is the imaginary line that runs halfway between the North and South poles.
- Parallels of latitude are the imaginary lines that run parallel to the Equator. The parallel of latitude become smaller as we move northward or southward of the Equator.
- Latitudes are expressed in degrees. The Equator is 0° (zero degree) latitude and it is the largest circle runs half way between the poles – East and West. The latitudes of the two poles are 90° degrees North and 90° South.
- Climate is connected to the latitudes. The climate is hot around the Equator. As the latitude increases, the climate becomes more moderate and as we go closer to the North pole or South pole the climate grows frigid.
- The Prime meridian or Greenwich meridian is the International standard meridian and is marked as the zero degrees longitude. Longitude measures the distance east or west from the Prime meridian. Longitude is measured in degrees westward or eastward, it increases in value from 0° to 180°.