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# **SOCIAL STUDIES**

**Class 8 Part 1**

**AN EKLAVYA PUBLICATION**

## ***A Word at the Beginning...***

*We are glad to present to you the first English edition of the class 8 text book on Social Studies developed by Eklavya.*

*The Eklavya Institute for Educational Research and Innovative Action initiated its Social Science teaching Programme in 1984. The then government of Madhya Pradesh and the SCERT accepted Eklavya's proposal to develop a new way of teaching the social sciences in the mainstream school system. Nine government middle schools were selected for this experiment. The textbooks of class 6, 7 and 8 developed by Eklavya were broadly in-keeping with the state curriculum and syllabus, and were allowed to be prescribed for these nine schools instead of the SCERT textbooks. This experiment was launched in schools in 1986 and ended in 2002.*

*The programme did not consist of textbooks alone. Teachers were involved through training workshops and monthly meetings. The teaching of the lessons in actual classroom conditions was closely observed and feedback was collected on the chapters. A new scheme was evolved to evaluate students on their understanding of concepts and their hold on the skills of information gathering, information processing and application. An open book examination system was designed for this purpose and it was hoped to minimise the negative impact of rote learning in social science.*

*Scholars from many universities and research institutions were deeply involved in the progress of the work and actively participated in it. The feedback and reviews from teachers, parents, children and academicians enabled Eklavya to revise and improve the books further.*

*The books thus have their roots in the mainstream schooling system of the country and were originally written in Hindi. However, as people came to know about the books, many people from non-Hindi states as well as English medium schools began demanding English editions of the Eklavya textbooks. The present edition is therefore our attempt to make available our work to a larger audience. This edition has also given us the opportunity of revising and updating the material contained in the Hindi edition.*

*The material of the Hindi edition of class 8 was initially translated into English by Subir Shukla. Karen Haydock has designed and illustrated most of the book and has contributed to the revision of content as well. The photographs have been taken from many published works and it is not possible to acknowledge them all. We record our deeply felt gratitude and appreciation for the efforts of all those who helped in developing and producing this book.*

*We hope this book will encourage intense interactions among students and between students and teachers. Many other resources such as atlases, pictures, reference books from libraries, newspapers, visits and surveys, and personal experiences will be brought in to enrich the interaction. True education results from high quality interactions and dialogues and this textbook is meant to enunciate this vision of education. We also hope that many of you who will use the material provided here will share your suggestions, questions and needs with us. Where necessary and possible, we can try and provide support to your efforts in the class room as well. We look forward to reflecting, improving and innovating further on our inputs through such interactions with you.*

*There has been a widely felt need for a fresh look at the curriculum of social sciences and the methods of teaching. This has led to considerable debate and fresh efforts by government as well as non-government agencies. Many schools and teachers are trying to create innovative spaces in their daily work with children. More than ever before there is need today to reach out to each other and share our experiences and materials. It is necessary to concretely debate on what is desirable and what is possible in social science teaching. It is necessary to concretely try and make the desirable possible – to move from complaints and theories to small changes in practice and then keep refining and improving the practice. It is to such an ongoing struggle for true education that we dedicate our small efforts.*

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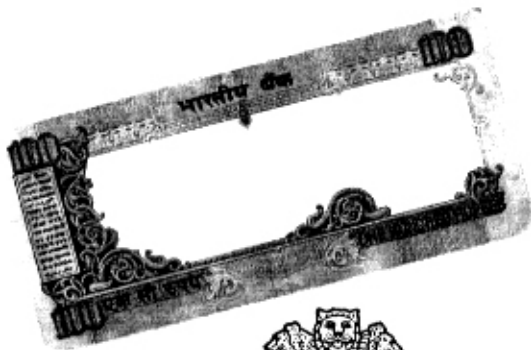
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