



Chapter 8: How the Land Becomes Sacred

Questions and Activities

Que 1. Read the following statement by a well-known environmental thinker, David Suzuki:

“The way we see the world shapes the way we treat it. If a mountain is a deity, not a pile of ore; if a river is one of the veins of the land, not potential irrigation water; if a forest is a sacred grove, not timber; if other species are biological kin, not resources; or if the planet is our mother, not an opportunity—then we will treat each other with greater respect. Thus is the challenge, to look at the world from a different perspective.”

Discuss in small groups. What do you think this statement means? What implication does it have for our actions with respect to the air, water, land, trees and mountains around us?

Answer:

- This statement means that we should consider nature as not just a resource, but the basis of life.
- If we look at nature with respect and reverence, we will conserve it.
- Air, water, land, trees and mountains are essential for our life.
- The feeling of respect for them inspires us to protect the environment.
- This inspires to reduce pollution, plant trees and make judicious use of natural resources.

Que 2. List the sacred sites in your region. Enquire into why they are considered sacred. Are there stories connected with these sacred places? Write a short essay of 150 words. (Hint: You could speak to elders in your family and community, discuss with your teacher, read books and articles, etc., to gather relevant information.)

Answer: There are many holy sites in my area, such as temples, gurudwaras, and historical religious sites. These places are the centers of faith and reverence of the people. These sites are believed to be associated with a saint, deity or historical event.

There are many folklore and religious beliefs associated with these places. People come here to offer prayers, seek peace of mind and seek blessings. Fairs and religious events are also organized on special occasions. These holy places not only hold religious significance but also strengthen social unity and cultural traditions. That's why people respect and care for them.

Que 3. Why do you think natural elements like rivers, mountains and forests are considered sacred for the people? How do they contribute to our lives?

Answer:

- Rivers provide us with water.
- Forests provide pure air, wood, medicines, and shelter for wildlife.
- Mountains are the source of rivers and influence the climate.
- All of these natural elements play an important role in sustaining life.
- For this reason, people consider them sacred and respect them.

Que 4. Why do people visit a tirtha or other sacred sites?

Answer:

- To express religious faith and reverence.
- To attain spiritual peace.
- To participate in religious rituals and worship.
- To know the historical and cultural significance.
- To increase engagement with family and society.

Que 5. How did the ancient pilgrimage routes help in fostering trade during those times? Do you think the sacred sites help in developing the economy of the region?

Answer:

- Trade increased due to the influx of pilgrims.
- Markets, inns and rest houses developed along the routes.
- Employment opportunities should be provided to the local people.
- Sales of handicrafts, food and other items increased.
- This led to the economic development of the surrounding areas.

Que 6. How do sacred places influence the culture and traditions of the people living near them?

Answer:

- Sacred places are centres of religious and cultural activities.
- Festivals, fairs and religious events are organized.
- Folklore, dance, and traditions are passed down from generation to generation.
- People develop a sense of social cohesion and cooperation.
- Local culture and identity are protected.

Que 7. From the various sacred sites of India, select two of your choice and create a project explaining their significance.

Answer:

Project: Two Major Sacred Sites of India

1. Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh)

- Situated on the banks of the Ganges River.
- A major pilgrimage site of Hinduism.
- Famous for Kashi Vishwanath Temple.
- A center of religious and cultural significance.

2. Amritsar (Punjab)

- Famous for the Golden Temple.
- The holiest pilgrimage site of Sikhism.
- Thousands of devotees come here every day.
- It gives the message of service, equality and brotherhood.

Conclusion: Both sites are important symbols of India's religious and cultural diversity.

Que 8. What is the two-fold significance of a tīrthayātrā or a pilgrimage?

Answer:

- Pilgrimages have religious significance as people travel for worship, prayer, and spiritual peace.
- They also have social and economic significance as they enhance people-to-people contact and encourage local trade.
- Thus, pilgrimages are important both from the religious and socio-economic point of view.

To get notes visit our website

mukutclasses.in

MUKUTclasses