



1 Unity in Diversity

Learning Objectives

Students will know about:

- Understanding Diversity
- Diversity in Different Fields
- Need for Diversity



UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY

People are different from one another in many ways. We do not look exactly like each other. We differ in terms of the languages we speak, our cultural backgrounds, the religious rituals that we follow, etc.

Diversity is the state of being diverse. We see different types of people in our surroundings. They are in different dresses such as some wear kurta-pyjamas, while some other wear dhoti-kurta etc. People speak different languages like Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Bangla etc. They follow different religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism and Christianity.

India is a land of diversity. People here speak different languages, eat various types of food, celebrate different festivals and practise different religions. India does not have a uniform culture. It has diversity of cultural practices, languages, customs and traditions. Different people coming from different backgrounds, belonging to different religions and cultures make our country diverse and interesting.

India being the largest democracy has multiple cultural origins. It is a land of diverse cultures, religions and communities.



Students coming from different backgrounds study together in school

There is a great diversity in our traditions, manners, habits and customs. Each state has different customs and traditions. People



People of different religions

belonging to different castes and dialects live together in India. Yet, they all live together as Indians. In fact, diversity is a range of many people or things that are very different from each other.

Do You Know?

A culture consists of ideas, beliefs, customs, art, religion, music and dance. Food habits of people, festivals they celebrate, their art and handicrafts are also parts of their culture.

DIVERSITY IN DIFFERENT FIELDS

Languages: People speak different languages in different parts of India. There are over 700 languages and 2000 dialects spoken in India. The Indian constitution recognizes 22 official languages. But sometimes language differences create conflicts.

Festivals: India is known as a land of festivals. Persons belonging to different religions celebrate different festivals. Holi, Diwali, Rakshabandhan, Dussehra and Janmashtami are the main festivals of Hindus. Eid is an

important festival of Muslims. Baisakhi is the harvest festival of Punjab. Pongal and Onam are harvest festivals of Tamil Nadu and Kerala respectively. Onam is celebrated in Kerala. There are three national festivals which are celebrated unitedly by the people of all castes and creeds. These are— Independence Day, celebrated on 15 August, Republic Day on 26 January and Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 2nd October.

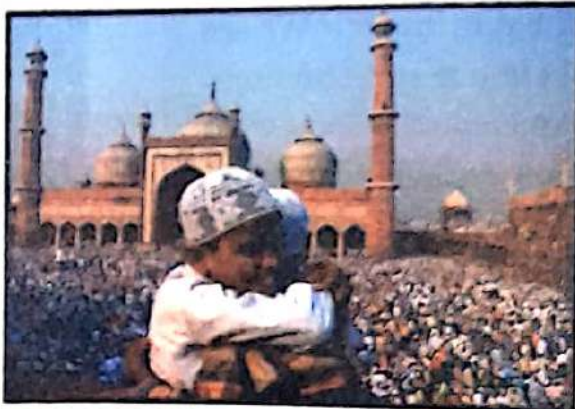
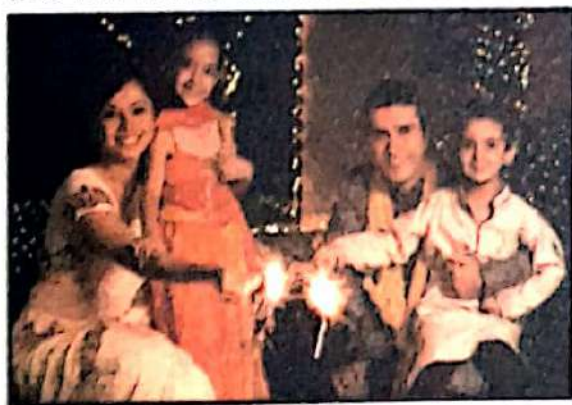
The Akshardham Temple (New Delhi), the Ajmer Sharif (Rajasthan), the Golden Temple (Amritsar) and the Parumala Church (Kerala) reflect the amazing multiplicity of religious practices in India.

We also celebrate the birthdays of Gods and great people as festivals. Lord Krishna's birthday is celebrated as Janmashtami, the birthday of Gautam Buddha is celebrated as Buddha Purnima, Lord Mahavira's birthday is celebrated as Mahavir Jayanti and Guru Nanak's birthday as Gurupurab.

Dance and Music: India also has various dance forms belonging to different parts of the country. It has two kinds of dances— classical and folk. The classical dance Bharatnatyam

is popular in Tamil Nadu, Kathakali in Kerala, Kathak in north India, Kuchipudi in Andhra Pradesh, Manipuri in Manipur and Odissi in Odisha.

Ancient Indian knowledge has been passed on by word of mouth. Stories with moral lessons were told through song, dance and drama. This is called the art of folk theatre. Folk dances are mostly



People celebrating Diwali, Eid, Guruparb and Christmas

based on seasons. For example, Bhangra from Punjab, Garba from Gujarat, Chhau from Jharkhand, Ghoomar from Rajasthan, Lavni from Maharashtra and Bihu from Assam are popular folk dances.



Bharatnatyam



Kathak

In India, there are two main schools of classical music. The North Indian school is called Hindustani and the South Indian school is called Carnatic. Indian music has the Gharana tradition. Students learn music from a guru by staying in his house. Devotional music such as couplets by Kabir and bhajans by Surdas, Tulsidas and Mirabai are sung all over the country. Indian folk music consists of traditional songs sang during festivals and wedding.

Art and Sculpture: The earliest form of art, based on the life of Buddha, are the cave paintings at Ajanta and Ellora in Maharashtra. Miniature art is seen in Pahari, Rajput and Mughal paintings. Earlier, craftsmen built beautiful monuments and places of worship. The stupas at Sanchi were built by Emperor Ashoka and the Taj Mahal by Shah Jahan. The later is now one of the wonders of the world. Many famous monuments and buildings are a part of our heritage.

Economic Activities: In India, people are engaged in three main economic activities. These include:

- (a) Most people in rural India are engaged in agriculture and related activities such as dairy products, fishing and forestry. These are primary activities. We do these things in order to raise our natural resources.

- (b) Many people in urban areas are engaged in the production of manufactured goods from primary products. They work in industries. We refer to their activities as secondary activities.

- (c) People engaged in tertiary activities do not produce any tangible goods. They provide transport, communication or banking facilities etc. All these activities are the backbone of our country.

Clothes: People living in different parts of our country wear different dresses. The selection of dress depends upon the climatic conditions of that area. Sari is the most popular dress among the women in many parts of our country. It is worn in different styles in different states. Women in Punjab wear salwar-kameez with dupatta. In Haryana, women wear ghagra kurta with *odhni*. In western India, Rajasthan and Gujarat, lehanga-choli forms core of the traditional dress of the locals.



1.



2.



3.



4.

People in India wear colourful dresses
(1. Maharashtra, 2. Punjab, 3. West Bengal, 4. Kerala)

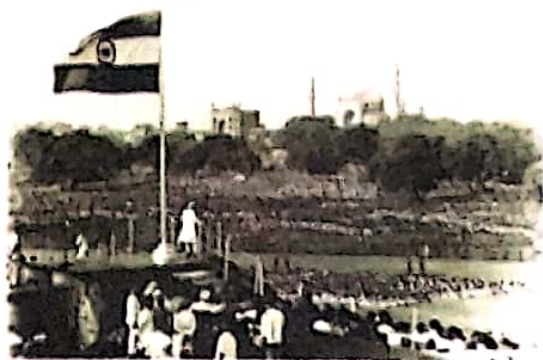
The most common dresses of men are trousers, shirts, dhoti-kurta, kurta-pyjama and kurta-lungi. The style of men dresses also differ from state to state. The people from Rajasthan especially those who live near Thar desert wear large 'turbans' to protect themselves from extreme heat and storms. The people from Kashmir wear long woollen 'Phirans' to keep themselves warm in the winter.

NEED FOR DIVERSITY

It is necessary to encourage diversities. Why do we need diversity in the country? Let us assume for a while that we all are similar in our look. We wear the same clothes. We react in the same manner. Will it be a colourful living? No, not at all.

Diversity leads to development of both the individual and the society. Every individual is dependent on others to fulfil his or her needs. It is long chain where every individual contributes to the healthy growth of society.

India's diversity was considered to be a source of her strength, during the time when India was fighting against the British rule. People from different walks of life united in the struggle for independence.



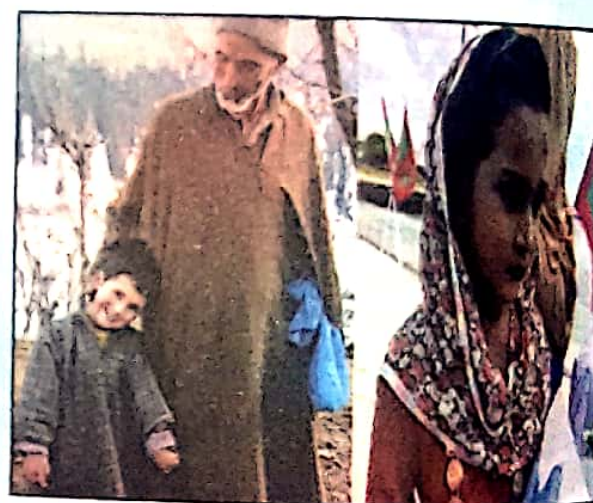
Pt. Nehru delivering an Independence Day speech on 15 August 1947

Jawaharlal Nehru, who coined the phrase 'Unity in Diversity' to describe the country. He says in his book *The Discovery of India* that Indian unity is not something imposed from the outside but rather, "It was something deeper and within its fold, the widest tolerance of belief and custom was practised and every variety acknowledged and even encouraged."

Thus, we find there is a deep underlying unity which keeps us united as a nation. There is a main current of national life, which we call our culture. But sometimes religious and language differences create conflicts among people. It should be kept in mind that we are children of one God. All religions teach us compassion, tolerance and brotherhood of mankind. We are one and we should contribute to the welfare and progress of country as a whole.

DIVERSITY BETWEEN LADAKH AND KERALA

Ladakh: It is a desert in the mountains in the eastern part of Kashmir. It is a new union Territory of India. Very little agriculture is possible as the region does not receive any rain and is covered with snow all the year round. There are very few trees that grow in the region and the major crops include rice, wheat, barley, peas, millet and maize. Phiran and Kasaba are the two popular costumes of Ladakh.



People in Costumes of Ladakh

In the past, Ladakh became recognized as the best trade route between Punjab and central Asia. For centuries, it was traversed by caravans carrying textiles, spices, raw silk, carpets, dyes, tufts etc. Goods were carried on ponies from Amritsar to the

central Asian route of Yarkand and Khota. On this long route, Leh was midway stop. Some of the most famous fairs and festivals are celebrated here are Losar and Hemis cheese. Losar is celebrated as their new year while Hemis cheese is the biggest summer festival held in Ladakh.



Hemis cheese festival

This festival symbolizes the victory of right over wrong or good over evil. Chami, the sacred masked dance, is performed on these occasions by monks dressed in brocade robes and masks. People from near and far come to see these events. Archery is an ancient sport of Ladakh. The largest city in Ladakh is Leh. It is the capital of Ladakh. In Leh and its surrounding villages, archery festival is held during summers.

Islam was introduced here from the west about four hundred years ago. Today, there is a substantial Muslim population in Ladakh. The imposing structures show a blend of Islam and Tibetan style. Ladakh is also called Little Tibet. We find that both the Muslims and the Buddhists sing and perform *Kesar sagu*, the national epic of Tibet.

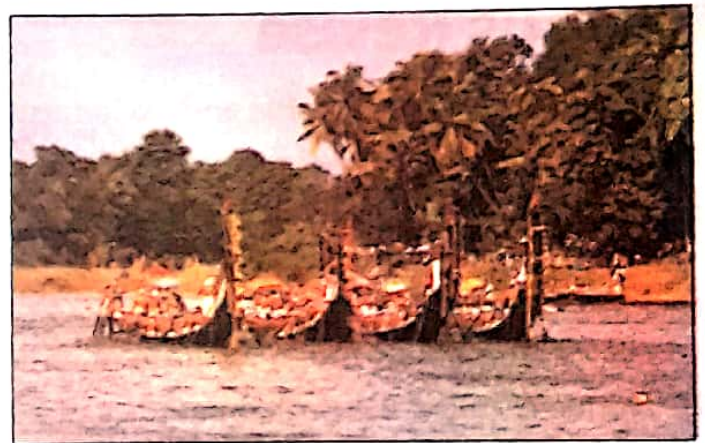
Kerala: It is a coastal state located in the southern part of India and is called the tropical paradise of India. It is surrounded by the Arabian Sea on one side and the Western Ghats on the other. The state Kerala derives its name from the Malayalam

word '*Kera*' meaning the coconut palm and '*Alam*' meaning the place. Coconut forms a part of their daily diet.

The tropical climate of Kerala offers a pleasing atmosphere throughout the year. Kerala has hot and humid climate in December-January. The lakes, canals inlets and rivers in Kerala are interconnected waterways that form the backwaters in Kerala. Kochi the commercial capital of Kerala is known as the Queen of the Arabian Sea.

Kerala basically thrives on agriculture. The main crops are paddy, coconut, pepper, cashew, cassava and plantation crops like rubber and cash crops like tea and coffee, spices, nutmeg and cashewnut.

The state of Kerala has the highest literacy rate. The government of Kerala initiated a state wide campaign for total literacy in the state.



Boat race during Onam festival

Onam is an important festival of Kerala. It is celebrated with joy by the people for ten days. Important features of Onam are vallam kali, the snake boat race and pookalam, flower mats designed by women. Jewish and Arab traders were the first among the people from outside to come here. Because of all these various historical influences, people started practising various religions such as Judaism, Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism.



Ladakh



Kerala

Though Ladakh and Kerala are quite different geographically but historically, they seem to have similar cultural influences.



Key Words

- Diversity** — A range of different things.
Community — Large number of people living together as a group to help each other.
Unity — Oneness, being joined together to form one unit.
Identify — The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.

Let us Revise

- Diversity also adds value and excitement to one's life.
- Dance and music are important aspects of our culture.
- India is a land of much diversity. It has diversity in terms of cultural practices, languages, customs and traditions.
- Ladakh is a desert mountain in the eastern part of Kashmir. It comes to be known as 'Land of passes'. It is a new union territory of India.
- Kerala is called the capital paradise of India.
- Land and climate determine the kind of clothes worn by the people of an area.



EXERCISE

Multiple Choice Questions

A. Tick (✓) the correct answer.

1. All Indians are one despite their

(a) beliefs

(c) country

(b) festivals

(d) differences

2. Which of the following state has the highest literacy rate?
- (a) Kerala (b) Odisha
(c) Assam (d) Punjab

3. Which of the following sentences is not a part of diversity?
- (a) People of India celebrate many festivals
(b) They speak different languages at home
(c) Their food habits vary from place to place
(d) Children wear uniforms in school

4. Large paddy fields and coconut groves are found on the
- (a) coastal belt (b) back waters
(c) hills (d) rivers

5. Pongal is an important festival of
- (a) Assam (b) Uttar Pradesh
(c) Tamil Nadu (d) Bengal

B. Write 'T' or false and 'F' for false statements.

1. Unity in diversity means that people of different faiths, customs and opinions live as one.
2. India gives no importance to dance and music in its culture.
3. India is the only nation with wide religious diversity.
4. Our heritage has a few famous monuments and buildings.
5. The geographical conditions do not affect the life style of the people.

C. Answer the following questions in brief.

1. What does unity in diversity in India mean?
2. What is culture?
3. What does diversity add to our lives?
4. What are religious music and folk music?
5. Why did people of Ladakh start practising various religions?
6. Name three national festivals and three religious festivals.
7. Which are two main schools of Indian classical music? What is the 'Gharana' tradition?
8. Which town is also called a little Tibet?

D. Answer the following questions in detail.

1. Define diversity.
2. Give an account of diversity in different fields.
3. Why do we need diversity in India?
4. Give a comparison analysis between Ladakh and Kerala.

HOTS

There have been instances when some narrow-minded people have tried to break the heritage of unity in diversity of our country by highlighting issues of religion, region or caste. How do you think as educated citizens, we should react to such issues?



Do and Learn

Activities

Collect pictures of some important festivals that are celebrated in your area, and paste them in your scrapbook.

Project Work

Choose a region in India and find out about its history, physical features, and salient features of its society and culture. Along with a partner, prepare a powerpoint presentation and display it in your class.

Map Work

On an outline map of India, locate and label the different states with their main festivals.

Group Discussion

1. Discuss the religious and cultural differences in any two leaders of India who were united during freedom struggle.
2. Organise a debate in class on the topic, 'Unity in Diversity'.

Life Skills

Students to discover more about the social, economic and geographical life of people belonging to different classes and would also help them compare it with their climatic conditions, clothing and geographical features.

Complete the following table with the help of internet or any other available resources.

Region	Geographic features	Climate	Livelihood	Clothing
1. Tamil Nadu				
2. Kerala				
3. Kashmir				
4. Punjab				
5. Nagaland				
6. Gujarat				