Understanding History
A Guidebook for Teachers

PAWAN KUMAR GUPTA

GYAN TARANG series on Contextual Learning

SIDH kusuma
Understanding History
A Guidebook for Teachers

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SIDH
P.O. Box 19, Hazelwood Cottage
Landour Cantt., Mussoorie - 248179
Tel.: 0135-2631304
Email : pawansidh@gmail.com
Website : www.sidhsri.com
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This book is born out of experiments in education at rural schools run by SIDH. It is a response to the questions, 'why history' and 'what is the relevance of history'?
PREFACE

SIDH has been working in the field of education since 1989. The process began with a primary school in an area deprived of any educational facilities (Jaunpur block of Tehri Garhwal district of what is now Uttarakhand state), and has evolved today into a mission seeking to challenge some of the assumptions implicit in the present system of education, while also seeking a viable alternative to it.

During the course of running village schools in small hamlets of this hilly region, we realised our well-meaning efforts were often doing more harm than good. Village elders, specially the women, were the first to bring this to our attention. The kind of education generally imparted in the schools distanced the young students from whatever was their own – be it their language, custom, lifestyle or culture – and imbued in them a deep sense of inferiority. As a result of this alienation, they were induced into imitating what they considered to be the symbols of ‘development’. Manual labour came to be looked down upon and the aspiration was for a desk-job or sarkari naukri. Customs and traditions of village life were seen as backward and the city was perceived as the epitome of modernity.

We realised then that the education imparted by us had a skewed bias in favour of urban living. We realised we were not really equipping them with any useful skills that could ensure them a decent job in the organised sector. Many such youth harboured a false sense of pride in having got an ‘education’ (a degree) and looked down upon their own community with disdain, and as being ‘backward’. We marked the increasing reliance on the market of those thus ‘educated’. In sum, we were forced to conclude that in many cases the educated village youth were in a worse state than they would have been, had they not been to a school.

In 1997-98, in a research study, we analysed the content of various textbooks - of national level institutions (ISCE, CBSE), of books prescribed by different states (Tamil Nadu Board, UP Board, Uttarakhand Board), and of books prescribed in RSS inspired schools like the Shishu Mandir and Vidya Mandir. The purpose was to find out the different underlying ‘values’ (assumptions) embedded in the texts. We were surprised to find only superficial differences in the ‘messages’ conveyed across all texts: For all of them, ‘development’ and ‘backwardness’ was identified with a certain lifestyle; Angrezi (English as a language and means of communication) got subsumed in angreziat; increasing consumption became a sign of progress; science was sacrosanct, something proclaimed ‘scientific’ was not to be questioned or doubted. We also realised that the craze for learning English was also superficial; actually the craze was more for what English, or modernity, represented.
This became a matter of deep concern and anguish for us. Mahatma Gandhi had pointed out this very syndrome a long time ago. He felt strongly about the schism between school and home. The concept of Buniyadi Shiksha perhaps had its roots in identifying alienation as one of the major blocks in our education. For Gandhiji, an education which did not infuse self-confidence, a sense of pride in ourselves and our vocation; which did not develop critical thinking to make us swatantra (self-reliant and free) and fearless, was useless.

Inspired by Buniyadi Shiksha, we decided to work with educators and help them teach various subjects, specially language, by making the local environment (both physical and cultural) the context for imparting knowledge, instead of relying only on textbooks. As we progressed, we discovered other benefits of this approach. We realised that with this process of teaching, the object/reality (vastu/vastavikta) took predominance over subjects, which are only a means to understand the object/reality. It also gave us the opportunity to teach in an integrated manner - weave in various subjects together. For instance, while studying their local habitat (local flora and fauna) apart from learning language the children also learnt concepts of science, environmental science, geography, etc., while learning about local crops and farming practices they also learnt how to measure the area of fields (math came in naturally). The children learnt how to formulate questions, how to sort out and categorise the information received; they learnt the importance of observation and listening and the value of traditional knowledge. Through this process, they developed an objective understanding of their own culture and environment.

The more skilled teachers taught their students to make the finer distinctions – e.g. between ‘education’ and ‘literacy’; between ‘knowing’ and ‘assuming’; between ‘knowledge’ or ‘understanding’ and ‘skill’ (e.g. writing, reading); between ‘meaning’ and ‘word’.

We found that this process is primarily dependent on the ability, attitude, sensitivity and enthusiasm of the teacher. There can be no standardisation of this process. The teacher gets enormous freedom to take the project in the direction of his/her choice. There are no fixed ways. For creative teachers this can be a boon and they can easily incorporate those concepts (from various subjects) that are required to be taught as per the prescribed curriculum. It is also possible to do the same project with children of different age groups by allocating responsibilities appropriate to their ability. The attempt is to take the child from the known to the unknown. While doing this we acknowledge what the child already knows and we bring the school closer to the child’s reality.

With the successes achieved in our schools we decided to write a ‘Handbook For Teachers’ for educators in other schools. Our first handbook was called “Jaunpur Ke Ped Paudhe”. Soon after, we found that children had little idea of the relevance of learning history, and were unable to connect history to their own lives. This led us to write a handbook on “Understanding History”. It was originally written in Hindi as “Itibas Ki Samgh”. We learnt to appreciate the meaninglessness of conventional straight-lacing of subjects and decided to challenge the notion that history is only about people, or about wars. Agriculture and technology, rivers and forests, laws and livelihoods;
in fact, the way people are related to all else — all this is part of history. Every thing evolves over time and hence has a history. Thus the present handbook encompasses Social Science and Geography within the framework of History.

Our attempt is to bring the school closer to the child’s own environment, closer to the child’s own reality. Readers are encouraged to take our concepts forward and improve upon them.

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Pawan Kumar Gupta

SIDH
INTRODUCTION

This handbook has primarily been written to facilitate teachers. It is not a ‘how to do’ book, but is an attempt to explain the concept of History and suggest possible ways of conveying this knowledge. Teachers are requested to understand and assimilate these suggestions before explaining to the students. They can adapt/modify according to the level of the students and their circumstances. There can always be other ways and the teacher must not hesitate in exploring better methods. In the teaching/learning process the priority has to be of the ‘what’ (content) and ‘why’ (purpose). There needs to be flexibility regarding the ‘how’ (method), which will depend on the environment and circumstances in which the teacher and students are situated.

This book attempts to help the teachers reduce their dependency on textbooks and the learning process more practical and relevant for the students. Projects can be designed for three days to several months. During these projects, students not only learn to read, write, speak and listen (the four aspects of language), but they also learn how to ask questions, how to interpret answers and take notes. By this method we are able to take teaching/learning closer to reality by integrating different subjects - language, geography, social science, science, environmental science, math, etc. - in a natural manner. This makes learning practical and ensures that the issue/reality (rastu/rastuvikhat) takes priority over the subject (vishay). Subjects are ultimately not the goal of education. They are categories – means to understand the existing reality.
History has generally been taught as a subject that includes detailed descriptions of great personalities - saints, mahatmas, kings, emperors and freedom fighters. We also describe important events like invasions, wars, etc. Sometimes social movements are also mentioned. But, the children are unable to:

- Understand the purpose and relevance of history as a subject.

- Connect history with their own lives.

If teachers are competent, they can, at most, present the subject as an interesting story. Stories have their own relevance and role in teaching, but certainly that is not the reason why history is taught.

If we are able to show students the relevance and purpose of history, and how it shapes their lives, it will encourage them to think in an original manner and be more creative. In order to enable understanding of the basic aspects of history some preliminary groundwork can be done with students keeping their age and their social and cultural context in mind.

2.1 History and Change: History is about reviewing the past which helps us better understand the present and plan the future. History helps us understand our present behaviour, lifestyle, predicaments, contradictions, conflicts, etc. We may even say that this is the very purpose of teaching history.
2.1.1 Change is Constant: History essentially is a study of change. Change is constantly happening. Nothing remains the same. Change is movement - in a certain direction and with a certain speed, like changes in our body and mind or in the social and material world. But the fact - that changes in the past lead to the present state - is seldom brought to our attention while studying history. We are unable to see the relevance of it in our daily lives. On the other hand, if we study history keeping in mind this fundamental aspect of change and the continuity between the past and present, we will be able to understand our present state better and the reasons that led to it. We would be able to take effective action if we want to change our present situation/state.

Even though change is constant but the nature of change is dependent on different factors, which may affect the direction and speed of change. Changes in regime, revolutions, invasions, agitations, changes in technology or in the law, can alter the prevalent direction and speed of change. These changes impact our behaviour, our relationships, our lifestyles, etc.

History is about understanding these changes - their direction and speed and the (external or internal) factors that caused them.

We have often seen that some events significantly alter the direction and speed of a process. Direction and speed of change are two intrinsic aspects of change and if we pay attention, we find that this is precisely what we study in history.
Summary:

- History is reviewing the past so as to understand our present state and be able to make effective plans for future.
- All changes have two aspects: speed and direction.
- Every situation changes, leading to a new situation.
- Changes in the past have brought us to our present situation/state. There is continuity between the past and the present.

2.1.2 Changes are all around us:

Objective:

- Every element of nature is changing constantly.
- Our present state is a result of changes that occurred in the past.
- The direction and speed of these changes may alter with intervention.

In order to explain the above, teachers need to draw attention of the children to the changes taking place around them, through examples, explanations and discussions e.g.

- Changes occur in our body all the time.
- Changes occur in the bodies of animals all the time.
- Plants alter their state all the time.
- The material world – air, water, soil, weather – is also constantly changing.

Invisible changes: It would be good to draw their attention to other 'invisible' changes that are occurring around us. They are
discernible only on close examination. For example, certain changes in our body—heartbeat, respiration, pulse, blood circulation, digestion, etc. We don’t perceive these changes until we pay attention to them. For instance, our breathing keeps varying in several ways. Children can be encouraged to sit quietly and observe these changes. They can easily perceive these changes:

i. Sometimes the left nostril is more active and sometimes the right nostril is more active. In a healthy body this change occurs every 45 minutes.

ii. The temperature of the air that is inhaled is lower than the temperature of the air that is exhaled.

iii. The breathing becomes faster when a person is agitated and slower when the person is calm.

When we see someone everyday, we are unable to notice the minute changes that occur in the person. But if we meet them after a long time or see an old photograph, we are able to notice them.

There is a ‘natural’ change (speed and direction): for instance change takes place constantly in a healthy body, whether we remain hungry or we eat. But the direction and speed is different depending on whether we eat healthy or unhealthy food or not eat at all. Eating contaminated or poisonous food brings about an instant change (fast speed and change in direction) in our body. Getting proper medication again brings about a quick recovery (change in direction and fast speed). Nothing is static.
Similarly, there are changes occurring in plants that are noticeable only after some time. Yet, we know that they are continuously interacting with air, water, soil, sunlight and heat from the sun, and they continuously undergo changes. If we water the plants there is a certain kind of change, if we do not water the plants the change is of a different kind.

Change is continuously occurring at different speed and in different ways, for example in plants whether the flowers are blooming or withering away, whether a tree is gaining height or not. We may not be able to perceive these changes all the time, as they are occurring naturally at a very slow speed but if observed after a reasonable interval we can easily understand that change is a constant part of life.

Changes occur in the material world too. Minute changes occur in stones, rocks and mountains when they interact with water, air, and heat. That’s why river stones are rubbed smooth by the running water. Mountains can be seen in place of the seabed that existed thousands of years ago. Similarly, we can observe changes in our houses, school building, chairs, tables, decorations, books, pencils, etc. If these were static there would be no need for maintenance!

In this way, the teacher can draw the students’ attention to the fact that changes are continuously occurring in all four orders of nature (no matter how minute they are) viz.
i. material order i.e. air, water, soil, minerals, etc.

ii. plant order i.e. all greenery and vegetation,

iii. animal/bird/insect order

iv. human order – both in the body and in the mind

Visible changes: Children can be made aware of gross changes around them e.g., rainfall, temperature, direction, speed of wind, the clouds and the sky. These can be easily discerned.

Other changes: We can draw the attention of the students to some other changes e.g.,

- Changes in our behaviour.
- Changes in our financial condition.
- Changes in our relationships (with our friends, relatives, etc.).
- Changes in our moods, desires, thoughts, feelings etc.
- Changes in our fields of interest, our tastes.

The children could be encouraged to reflect within and see if their thought and feelings remain the same or keep changing.

The teacher can draw the students' attention to the continuity of change by questioning or by giving examples. Once again, the aim must be to enable students to observe the changes. Once they are able to see they should be able to give examples on their own.

The teacher can then encourage the students to make a list of all the changes happening
around them. They can be asked to observe the kinds of changes occurring in a particular object, through written or oral activities - individually or as a group. This can be decided by the teacher based on the number of children, their age and the time available. In short the purpose of these activities is to help students realize that every object around them is changing in many ways - every moment.

**Note:** The teacher needs to understand that information given by him/her to the students has only one purpose - to enable the child to convert the information into knowledge. Instead of giving mere information the teacher needs to draw their attention to enable them to perceive these facts on their own so that they can reach these conclusions on their own through observation, reflection and discussions. Once the students understand that everything is continuously changing at every moment they can easily co-relate it with the understanding of history. There is a natural change taking place all the time and human beings have always endeavoured to bring about a better change through intervention. This is what we study in history.

### 2.2 Understanding oneself and society

**Objective:**

- To clarify that our present state has a relationship with the past.
- To clarify that History helps us evaluate the past and connect it to the present.
- A comprehensive understanding of our present circumstances helps us make effective plans for the future.
2.2.1 Individual level: All individuals want to understand themselves. Whether it is the food we eat, the clothes we wear, all of us have different preferences. Why is this so? We can ask the children why they like or dislike certain things? The students should be encouraged to reflect about these issues. The students can reach the following conclusions if the discussion is guided:

i. We all have individual preferences.

ii. Some people like certain things, others don’t. We all can differ in our likes and dislikes.

iii. Our likes and dislikes also undergo change over a period of time.

iv. These likes and dislikes are related to our past (experiences).

The discussion can be extended to various kinds of activities. There are some that we like and others we don’t. Some children like a certain game while others prefer a different one. Some like singing while others like drawing, jokes, solving math problems, writing, thinking, etc. The children can reflect upon their likes and dislikes and whether these were different earlier. Just as we prefer some objects, we also prefer certain activities.

The students can be encouraged to observe how their behaviour (mannerisms, the way we eat, talk, etc.), their likes or dislikes and thoughts, are related to their past. Our preferences (food, clothes, etc.) depend largely on what we have been exposed to in the past. Getting used to start liking new flavours takes time.
We are influenced by our environment — home and family, neighbours, village or locality — the society and its conventions. Our environment influences our likes and dislikes. As we grow up and as our environment changes our habits, behaviour, tastes, preferences undergo a change, under external influences.

Similar situations trigger different responses from different people. The atmosphere in a particular home may impact two brothers or sisters of the same family very differently. For example, in a traditional family some siblings may follow the traditions while others may rebel against them. But in both cases, there is a connection with the past.

The health of our body today is also a result of the past. People with healthy bodies are mostly those who ate fresh and nutritious food in their childhood and also did a lot of physical work. Those who didn’t pay attention to their diet and who did not work hard or exercise have less healthy bodies.

2.2.2 Societal level: People have certain similarities that make up the identity of that society. Societies also have their own likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, belief systems, methods of working etc.

People of a particular society have similar food habits, attire, architecture, methods of farming and animal rearing, language, health issues, songs and dances, customs, rituals, manners, means of entertainment and even methods of resolving disputes. These differentiate them from other societies. We call this ‘culture’. Culture is changing constantly. Sometimes these changes happen gradually in a natural manner while at other times they may occur suddenly due to unprecedented interventions.
The techniques that we employ today (in agriculture, sowing seeds, planting trees, protecting them, building houses, looking after guests, our manner of conduct, etc.), the implements (tractors, ploughs, television, telephones, vehicles, airplanes, etc.) were not always the way they appear now. Means of communication, modes of transport also keep changing with time. Due to various reasons, changes have occurred several times in the past. The study of history can help us understand all these changes, the reasons behind them as well as their impact on us/our behaviour.

If we look at our society, we see that many people have different skills, like cooking, weaving, stitching, farming, healing, etc. which they have acquired from their families and their traditions. These skills evolved over generations. Our ancestors must have tried different ways - some succeeded whereas others failed. Some medicines may have been effective, others may have been ineffective. They must have continued to learn through experience and gradually increased their understanding. This is how they must have arrived at the present state. Understanding these developments gives us a sense of confidence. We feel proud of the achievements of our ancestors. Studying all this is also a part of history.

If we look into our past, we find there was a lot of diversity. There were varieties of cultures in different geographical regions of the country.

Even in the times of the Mahabharat, approximately 100 kings participated from both sides, in the war. Each king represented
a specific cultural zone. Although each enjoyed autonomy, yet they were all connected with the kingdom of Kurus. The functioning at that time was very different from today’s centralized system. This proves that there are systems of governance other than the centralized one we know today. It is possible that those systems may be more suitable to our (Indian) nature (swabhav).

At times this natural process of development and progress gets an impetus and at times it gets hindered. For example, in the last century, interest in the field of traditional skills and knowledge (e.g. traditional medicines, knowledge of herbs, traditional agriculture, etc.) slowed down, while rapid developments took place in the area of modern science and information technology. We can understand the reasons thereof when we study history.

The identity of a society – with its strengths and weaknesses – can be traced to its history. Traditions and culture, strengths and weaknesses are all part of the history of a society. Culture is always in the making. We did not suddenly begin to start living in the manner we are living today, nor will we always live like this. It happened through a series of small and big changes. So, in order to understand our present situation, we need to explore and understand our history.

For example: We see that by and large, our society holds English language and western attire (suit, pant, tie, etc.) in high esteem. History can help us understand why this is so. It can be directly related to the period of British domination for approximately 250 years. Just like English is spoken in India, similarly in countries where the French and
Spanish dominated, those languages are spoken. So history can help us understand us why we are drawn to the English language and western culture. Students could also be encouraged to speculate on the outcome of a different scenario: had we not been dominated by the British, would we have different attitude towards western culture/language/clothes?

Note: This guidebook has been made to help the teachers understand the concept of history and then apply it according to the students’ level, their age, their context and their situation. We can develop the idea of how the past is connected with the present, by exploring the history of anything – the village, town, country, lifestyles, implements, belief systems, food, forest, rivers, different items of consumption, tastes, preferences etc.

2.3 History is an interpretation of the past:

Objective:

- The past can be seen from different perspectives.
- History is not just facts but an interpretation of those facts.
- Different perspectives need to be examined to arrive at a conclusion.

People write history according to their own perspective and ideology. History writing is also influenced by the era in which it is written. We need to be aware that the same event can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand our motives influence our perspective of the event and on the other, our drishii/conditioning/assumptions influence our objective/motive.
This can be explained very easily to the students. Often 3-4 children from a village or locality walk or travel together to school which could take 15 minutes to one and a half hours. These children can be given the task of individually writing about their personal experiences during this journey to school: what they saw, (animals and birds, vehicles, places, etc.), think, remember, talk about, how they felt, what they understood. If they observed anything, they should describe that too. They should even describe their conversations and any other experiences along the way.

Once they have completed their task, they can be individually asked to read their personal experiences aloud. When they have all read their accounts, the teacher can draw their attention to the fact that the descriptions of the same journey by the students travelling together can be different from one another. Most importantly, although the descriptions are different, each description was true for each student.

One child may have heard a bird twittering in the forest while the other walking alongside may not have noticed it because he/she was busy talking. We can point out that the sound of the bird reached the ears of both children but only one noticed it while the other didn't. The same can happen in the case of eyes and touch. One may notice seeing something or having felt something, while the other doesn't. We can draw the conclusion that seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching are distinct from paying attention. What is more decisive is one’s awareness. This can be expanded into a classroom activity wherein the students are
made to sit quietly and observe what they see and hear. They will start noticing a lot of different sounds and things that they were not aware of before.

The aim is to recollect the past in the present. Before they start writing, they can be given some time to recollect their experiences. This can itself be very enriching, because giving children a quiet time for recollection and reflection has many other qualitative benefits. It helps to improve the students’ concentration, memory, observation and expression.

The individual descriptions should be analyzed and discussed patiently. During this process, the teacher can draw their attention to several things and explain those which they may not have noticed or understood.

With the help of this exercise, students can easily come to the conclusion that an event or a situation can be viewed in different ways. One students’ description would not be considered as false and the others’ as true. It is possible that one student heard or saw a certain animal or bird, but the others didn’t. Just because they didn’t see or hear it, doesn’t prove that it wasn’t there. Neither does it mean that those who didn’t describe it are lying.

Once this has been pointed out, the entire class can be encouraged to have a discussion about the possible reasons for these differences. The teacher must make sure to point out that no one was lying (as there is no reason to lie) even though the descriptions were different. Every person views the past through their perspective and interprets it accordingly.
2.4 Impact of the changes:

Objective:

- History helps us examine the chain of events that lead to the change.
- It helps us examine the possible causes of the chain of events.
- It helps us study the impact of these changes.

Change is taking place all the time - at different levels — within us and around us. History tries to examine those events, and the processes that caused the change. A famine, earthquake, flood, revolution, agitation, war, drought or excessive rains, someone’s birth or death or change of regime - any of these events can bring about a significant change in family and society.

2.4.1 Changes in Families: We can examine how events like birth, death, a serious illness, a marriage, an addition to the family, or some family member migrating to a new place, a new occupation, going away for studies, etc. may cause a big change in the families, in many different ways.

When there is a wedding in the family, either someone leaves or a new member joins the family, this result is a change - in the speed and direction in which the family was progressing. When a girl joins a family, she brings new skills with her (e.g. cooking or other work, a new dialect, ways of conduct, etc.) which brings about a significant change in the family.

Sometimes a member may buy a new appliance (a TV, phone, car, tractor, etc.) and this has a major impact on the family.
It results in a change in the atmosphere of the family. For example, at one time, the elders of the family used to tell stories to the children and family members used to converse amongst themselves. With the introduction of television into homes, all this changes. The family members do not converse with each other in the same manner. Sometimes the topics of their discussions change. Children spend less time with the elders of the family. The stories that the elders narrated were different from what is shown on TV.

All these have far-reaching effects. The elders begin to have a less important role in the lives of the children. Children begin to relate to inanimate things (cartoons, toys, cars etc.) more than live things (their family, friends, neighbours, pets, farming, etc.). Family members don't discuss the details of their daily lives with one another as much as they used to. Their aspirations begin to change.

In other words, we can understand how changes take place in many different dimensions. This example of the TV appears to be innocuous but has far-reaching effects. These discussions in the classroom will vary according to the age of the children.

A rich discussion can be initiated around how technology and media mould our aspirations. The students can be made aware whether their desires are really their own or have been influenced by external factors.

An attempt can be made to distinguish between needs and wants. Needs are necessities while wants fulfil certain desires and aspirations created by the market. Wants are fanned by a feeling of competition amongst us.
Over a period of time the wants become our needs. This distinction helps us become aware about what we really need instead of giving the control of our actions/desires to others.

If the teacher so wishes, the students can be asked to examine some of the popular advertisements to understand how wants are being created and how these wants are slowly getting perceived as needs.

2.4.2 Changes in society: The changes that occur in a family can be observed in the entire society. For example, the making of the Tehri dam in Uttarakhand has resulted in a huge change for those people who had to leave their ancestral lands, homes, farms and shift to a new place. The change that occurred in their lives because of relocation is as significant as the changes that are caused due to the production and availability of electricity from the dam.

This example can be further expanded to see the chain of events. The making of the dam was an event. The resultant change – rehabilitation – was another event that had several good as well as ill effects. From history, we can also understand why the Tehri dam was made, how it was made, the related protest movements, the people involved in it, would all be a part of its history.

Thus we could draw the students’ attention to the following:

- History helps us understand our present situation through understanding our past. In this case in order to understand the lives of those displaced, we need to examine the making of the Tehri dam and its consequences: the rehabilitation of the people and subsequent changes.
• History helps us examine the causes of events like the making of the dam. For example, what was the concept of ‘development’ at the time of construction of the Tehri dam, the increasing consumption of electricity in cities like Delhi, etc.

• History helps us see the roles of various people involved in this event like the role of the builders, protestors, local community, and rest of the public.

• History helps us trace the consequences of the chain of events like: the changes in the lives of those displaced, the changes in the environment, etc.

2.4.3 Changes in the country: Our past definitely influences our present lifestyle and the choices we make. Legal and policy changes at the national level also affect our lives. We can understand these by studying history.

For example: nowadays, people don’t have a sense of ownership for the forests around them and hence do not take as much care of the forests as they did earlier. As a result the forests have depleted. If we look into history, we realize that in the past, the people had rights over their forests. The forests belonged to them. During the British rule, this right was taken away from them. Gradually, the people instead of taking ownership of their forests began to see them as the ‘property’ of the government. Earlier they used to consider it their responsibility to protect, nourish and conserve this resource. When the government took over the rights to the forests, the attitude of the people changed. This seems to be the biggest reason for the dwindling forests. It shows how external factors can influence our attitudes, perceptions and lifestyle in a significant manner.
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This book is born out of experiments in education at rural schools run by SIDH. It is a response to the questions, 'why history' and 'what is the relevance of history'?
PREFACE

SIDH has been working in the field of education since 1989. The process began with a primary school in an area deprived of any educational facilities (Jaunpur block of Tehri Garhwal district of what is now Uttarakhand state), and has evolved today into a mission seeking to challenge some of the assumptions implicit in the present system of education, while also seeking a viable alternative to it.

During the course of running village schools in small hamlets of this hilly region, we realised our well-meaning efforts were often doing more harm than good. Village elders, specially the women, were the first to bring this to our attention. The kind of education generally imparted in the schools distanced the young students from whatever was their own – be it their language, custom, lifestyle or culture – and imbued in them a deep sense of inferiority. As a result of this alienation, they were induced into imitating what they considered to be the symbols of ‘development’. Manual labour came to be looked down upon and the aspiration was for a desk-job or sarkari naukri. Customs and traditions of village life were seen as backward and the city was perceived as the epitome of modernity.

We realised then that the education imparted by us had a skewed bias in favour of urban living. We realised we were not really equipping them with any useful skills that could ensure them a decent job in the organised sector. Many such youth harboured a false sense of pride in having got an ‘education’ (a degree) and looked down upon their own community with disdain, and as being ‘backward’. We marked the increasing reliance on the market of those thus ‘educated’. In sum, we were forced to conclude that in many cases the educated village youth were in a worse state than they would have been, had they not been to a school.

In 1997-98, in a research study, we analysed the content of various textbooks - of national level institutions (ISCE, CBSE), of books prescribed by different states (Tamil Nadu Board, UP Board, Uttarakhanda Board), and of books prescribed in RSS inspired schools like the Shishu Mandir and Vidya Mandir. The purpose was to find out the different underlying ‘values’ (assumptions) embedded in the texts. We were surprised to find only superficial differences in the ‘messages’ conveyed across all texts: For all of them, ‘development’ and ‘backwardness’ was identified with a certain lifestyle; Angrez (English as a language and means of communication) got subsumed in angreziat; increasing consumption became a sign of progress; science was sacrosanct, something proclaimed ‘scientific’ was not to be questioned or doubted. We also realised that the craze for learning English was also superficial; actually the craze was more for what English, or modernity, represented.
This became a matter of deep concern and anguish for us. Mahatma Gandhi had pointed out this very syndrome a long time ago. He felt strongly about the schism between school and home. The concept of Buniyadi Shiksha perhaps had its roots in identifying alienation as one of the major blocks in our education. For Gandhi, an education which did not infuse self-confidence, a sense of pride in ourselves and our vocation; which did not develop critical thinking to make us swatantra (self-reliant and free) and fearless, was useless.

Inspired by Buniyadi Shiksha, we decided to work with educators and help them teach various subjects, specially language, by making the local environment (both physical and cultural) the context for imparting knowledge, instead of relying only on textbooks. As we progressed, we discovered other benefits of this approach. We realised that with this process of teaching, the object/reality (vastu/vastavikta) took predominance over subjects, which are only a means to understand the object/reality. It also gave us the opportunity to teach in an integrated manner— weave in various subjects together. For instance, while studying their local habitat (local flora and fauna) apart from learning language the children also learnt concepts of science, environmental science, geography, etc.; while learning about local crops and farming practices they also learnt how to measure the area of fields (math came in naturally). The children learnt how to formulate questions, how to sort out and categorise the information received; they learnt the importance of observation and listening and the value of traditional knowledge. Through this process, they developed an objective understanding of their own culture and environment.

The more skilled teachers taught their students to make the finer distinctions—e.g. between ‘education’ and ‘literacy’; between ‘knowing’ and ‘assuming’; between ‘knowledge’ or ‘understanding’ and ‘skill’ (e.g. writing, reading); between ‘meaning’ and ‘word’.

We found that this process is primarily dependent on the ability, attitude, sensitivity and enthusiasm of the teacher. There can be no standardisation of this process. The teacher gets enormous freedom to take the project in the direction of his/her choice. There are no fixed ways. For creative teachers this can be a boon and they can easily incorporate those concepts (from various subjects) that are required to be taught as per the prescribed curriculum. It is also possible to do the same project with children of different age groups by allocating responsibilities appropriate to their ability. The attempt is to take the child from the known to the unknown. While doing this we acknowledge what the child already knows and we bring the school closer to the child’s reality.

With the successes achieved in our schools we decided to write a ‘Handbook For Teachers’ for educators in other schools. Our first handbook was called “Jaunpur Ke Ped Paudhe”. Soon after, we found that children had little idea of the relevance of learning history, and were unable to connect history to their own lives. This led us to write a handbook on “Understanding History”. It was originally written in Hindi as “Itibas Ki Samajh”. We learnt to appreciate the meaninglessness of conventional straight-lacing of subjects and decided to challenge the notion that history is only about people, or about wars. Agriculture and technology, rivers and forests, laws and livelihoods;
in fact, the way people are related to all else — all this is part of history. Every thing evolves over time and hence has a history. Thus the present handbook encompasses Social Science and Geography within the framework of History.

Our attempt is to bring the school closer to the child’s own environment, closer to the child’s own reality. Readers are encouraged to take our concepts forward and improve upon them.

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Pawan Kumar Gupta

SIDH
This handbook has primarily been written to facilitate teachers. It is not a ‘how to do’ book, but is an attempt to explain the concept of History and suggest possible ways of conveying this knowledge. Teachers are requested to understand and assimilate these suggestions before explaining to the students. They can adapt/modify according to the level of the students and their circumstances. There can always be other ways and the teacher must not hesitate in exploring better methods. In the teaching/learning process the priority has to be of the ‘what’ (content) and ‘why’ (purpose). There needs to be flexibility regarding the ‘how’ (method), which will depend on the environment and circumstances in which the teacher and students are situated.

This book attempts to help the teachers reduce their dependency on textbooks and the learning process more practical and relevant for the students. Projects can be designed for three days to several months. During these projects, students not only learn to read, write, speak and listen (the four aspects of language), but they also learn how to ask questions, how to interpret answers and take notes. By this method we are able to take teaching/learning closer to reality by integrating different subjects - language, geography, social science, science, environmental science, math, etc. - in a natural manner. This makes learning practical and ensures that the issue/reality (vastu/vastuvikata) takes priority over the subject (vishay). Subjects are ultimately not the goal of education. They are categories — means to understand the existing reality.
History has generally been taught as a subject that includes detailed descriptions of great personalities – saints, mahatmas, kings, emperors and freedom fighters. We also describe important events like invasions, wars, etc. Sometimes social movements are also mentioned. But, the children are unable to:

- Understand the purpose and relevance of history as a subject.
- Connect history with their own lives.

If teachers are competent, they can, at most, present the subject as an interesting story. Stories have their own relevance and role in teaching, but certainly that is not the reason why history is taught.

If we are able to show students the relevance and purpose of history, and how it shapes their lives, it will encourage them to think in an original manner and be more creative. In order to enable understanding of the basic aspects of history some preliminary groundwork can be done with students keeping their age and their social and cultural context in mind.

2.1 History and Change: History is about reviewing the past which helps us better understand the present and plan the future. History helps us understand our present behaviour, lifestyle, predicaments, contradictions, conflicts, etc. We may even say that this is the very purpose of teaching history.
2.1.1 Change is Constant: History essentially is a study of change. Change is constantly happening. Nothing remains the same. Change is movement - in a certain direction and with a certain speed, like changes in our body and mind or in the social and material world. But the fact - that changes in the past lead to the present state - is seldom brought to our attention while studying history. We are unable to see the relevance of it in our daily lives. On the other hand, if we study history keeping in mind this fundamental aspect of change and the continuity between the past and present, we will be able to understand our present state better and the reasons that led to it. We would be able to take effective action if we want to change our present situation/state.

Even though change is constant but the nature of change is dependent on different factors, which may affect the direction and speed of change. Changes in regime, revolutions, invasions, agitations, changes in technology or in the law, can alter the prevalent direction and speed of change. These changes impact our behaviour, our relationships, our lifestyles, etc.

History is about understanding these changes - their direction and speed and the (external or internal) factors that caused them.

We have often seen that some events significantly alter the direction and speed of a process. Direction and speed of change are two intrinsic aspects of change and if we pay attention, we find that this is precisely what we study in history.
Summary:

- History is reviewing the past so as to understand our present state and be able to make effective plans for future.
- All changes have two aspects; speed and direction.
- Every situation changes, leading to a new situation.
- Changes in the past have brought us to our present situation/state. There is continuity between the past and the present.

2.1.2 Changes are all around us:

Objective:

- Every element of nature is changing constantly.
- Our present state is a result of changes that occurred in the past.
- The direction and speed of these changes may alter with intervention.

In order to explain the above, teachers need to draw attention of the children to the changes taking place around them, through examples, explanations and discussions e.g.

- Changes occur in our body all the time.
- Changes occur in the bodies of animals all the time.
- Plants alter their state all the time.
- The material world – air, water, soil, weather – is also constantly changing.

Invisible changes: It would be good to draw their attention to other ‘invisible’ changes that are occurring around us. They are
discernible only on close examination. For example, certain changes in our body – heartbeat, respiration, pulse, blood circulation, digestion, etc. We don't perceive these changes until we pay attention to them. For instance, our breathing keeps varying in several ways. Children can be encouraged to sit quietly and observe these changes. They can easily perceive these changes:

i. Sometimes the left nostril is more active and sometimes the right nostril is more active. In a healthy body this change occurs every 45 minutes.

ii. The temperature of the air that is inhaled is lower than the temperature of the air that is exhaled.

iii. The breathing becomes faster when a person is agitated and slower when the person is calm.

When we see someone everyday, we are unable to notice the minute changes that occur in the person. But if we meet them after a long time or see an old photograph, we are able to notice them.

There is a 'natural' change (speed and direction): for instance change takes place constantly in a healthy body, whether we remain hungry or we eat. But the direction and speed is different depending on whether we eat healthy or unhealthy food or not eat at all. Eating contaminated or poisonous food brings about an instant change (fast speed and change in direction) in our body. Getting proper medication again brings about a quick recovery (change in direction and fast speed). Nothing is static.
Similarly, there are changes occurring in plants that are noticeable only after some time. Yet, we know that they are continuously interacting with air, water, soil, sunlight and heat from the sun, and they continuously undergo changes. If we water the plants there is a certain kind of change, if we do not water the plants the change is of a different kind.

Change is continuously occurring at different speed and in different ways, for example in plants whether the flowers are blooming or withering away, whether a tree is gaining height or not. We may not be able to perceive these changes all the time, as they are occurring naturally at a very slow speed but if observed after a reasonable interval we can easily understand that change is a constant part of life.

Changes occur in the material world too. Minute changes occur in stones, rocks and mountains when they interact with water, air, and heat. That’s why river stones are rubbed smooth by the running water. Mountains can be seen in place of the seabed that existed thousands of years ago. Similarly, we can observe changes in our houses, school building, chairs, tables, decorations, books, pencils, etc. If these were static there would be no need for maintenance!

In this way, the teacher can draw the students’ attention to the fact that changes are continuously occurring in all four orders of nature (no matter how minute they are) viz.
i. material order i.e. air, water, soil, minerals, etc.

ii. plant order i.e. all greenery and vegetation,

iii. animal/bird/insect order

iv. human order – both in the body and in the mind

**Visible changes:** Children can be made aware of gross changes around them e.g., rainfall, temperature, direction, speed of wind, the clouds and the sky. These can be easily discerned.

**Other changes:** We can draw the attention of the students to some other changes e.g.,

- Changes in our behaviour.
- Changes in our financial condition.
- Changes in our relationships (with our friends, relatives, etc.).
- Changes in our moods, desires, thoughts, feelings etc.
- Changes in our fields of interest, our tastes.

The children could be encouraged to reflect within and see if their thought and feelings remain the same or keep changing.

The teacher can draw the students’ attention to the continuity of change by questioning or by giving examples. Once again, the aim must be to enable students to observe the changes. Once they are able to see they should be able to give examples on their own.

The teacher can then encourage the students to make a list of all the changes happening...
around them. They can be asked to observe the kinds of changes occurring in a particular object, through written or oral activities - individually or as a group. This can be decided by the teacher based on the number of children, their age and the time available. In short the purpose of these activities is to help students realize that every object around them is changing in many ways - every moment.

**Note:** The teacher needs to understand that information given by him/her to the students has only one purpose - to enable the child to convert the information into knowledge. Instead of giving mere information the teacher needs to draw their attention to enable them to perceive these facts on their own so that they can reach these conclusions on their own through observation, reflection and discussions. Once the students understand that everything is continuously changing at every moment they can easily co-relate it with the understanding of history. There is a natural change taking place all the time and human beings have always endeavoured to bring about a better change through intervention. This is what we study in history.

### 2.2 Understanding oneself and society

**Objective:**

- To clarify that our present state has a relationship with the past.
- To clarify that History helps us evaluate the past and connect it to the present.
- A comprehensive understanding of our present circumstances helps us make effective plans for the future.
2.2.1 Individual level: All individuals want to understand themselves. Whether it is the food we eat, the clothes we wear, all of us have different preferences. Why is this so? We can ask the children why they like or dislike certain things? The students should be encouraged to reflect about these issues. The students can reach the following conclusions if the discussion is guided:

i. We all have individual preferences.

ii. Some people like certain things, others don't. We all can differ in our likes and dislikes.

iii. Our likes and dislikes also undergo change over a period of time.

iv. These likes and dislikes are related to our past (experiences).

The discussion can be extended to various kinds of activities. There are some that we like and others we don't. Some children like a certain game while others prefer a different one. Some like singing while others like drawing, jokes, solving math problems, writing, thinking, etc. The children can reflect upon their likes and dislikes and whether these were different earlier. Just as we prefer some objects, we also prefer certain activities.

The students can be encouraged to observe how their behaviour (mannerisms, the way we eat, talk etc.), their likes or dislikes and thoughts, are related to their past. Our preferences (food, clothes, etc.) depend largely on what we have been exposed to in the past. Getting used to start liking new flavours takes time.

The students can be encouraged to observe how their behaviour (mannerisms, the way we eat, talk etc.), their likes or dislikes and thoughts, are related to their past.
We are influenced by our environment – home and family, neighbours, village or locality – the society and its conventions. Our environment influences our likes and dislikes. As we grow up and as our environment changes our habits, behaviour, tastes, preferences undergo a change, under external influences.

Similar situations trigger different responses from different people. The atmosphere in a particular home may impact two brothers or sisters of the same family very differently. For example, in a traditional family some siblings may follow the traditions while others may rebel against them. But in both cases, there is a connection with the past.

The health of our body today is also a result of the past. People with healthy bodies are mostly those who ate fresh and nutritious food in their childhood and also did a lot of physical work. Those who didn’t pay attention to their diet and who did not work hard or exercise have less healthy bodies.

2.2.2 Societal level: People have certain similarities that make up the identity of that society. Societies also have their own likes and dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, belief systems, methods of working etc.

People of a particular society have similar food habits, attire, architecture, methods of farming and animal rearing, language, health issues, songs and dances, customs, rituals, manners, means of entertainment and even methods of resolving disputes. These differentiate them from other societies. We call this ‘culture’. Culture is changing constantly. Sometimes these changes happen gradually in a natural manner while at other times they may occur suddenly due to unprecedented interventions.
The techniques that we employ today (in agriculture, sowing seeds, planting trees, protecting them, building houses, looking after guests, our manner of conduct, etc.), the implements (tractors, ploughs, television, telephones, vehicles, airplanes, etc.) were not always the way they appear now. Means of communication, modes of transport also keep changing with time. Due to various reasons, changes have occurred several times in the past. The study of history can help us understand all these changes, the reasons behind them as well as their impact on us/our behaviour.

If we look at our society, we see that many people have different skills, like cooking, weaving, stitching, farming, healing, etc. which they have acquired from their families and their traditions. These skills evolved over generations. Our ancestors must have tried different ways - some succeeded whereas others failed. Some medicines may have been effective, others may have been ineffective. They must have continued to learn through experience and gradually increased their understanding. This is how they must have arrived at the present state. Understanding these developments gives us a sense of confidence. We feel proud of the achievements of our ancestors. Studying all this is also a part of history.

If we look into our past, we find there was a lot of diversity. There were varieties of cultures in different geographical regions of the country.

Even in the times of the Mahabharat, approximately 100 kings participated from both sides, in the war. Each king represented
a specific cultural zone. Although each enjoyed autonomy, yet they were all connected with the kingdom of Kurus. The functioning at that time was very different from today's centralized system. This proves that there are systems of governance other than the centralized one we know today. It is possible that those systems may be more suitable to our (Indian) nature (swabhav).

At times this natural process of development and progress gets an impetus and at times it gets hindered. For example, in the last century, interest in the field of traditional skills and knowledge (e.g. traditional medicines, knowledge of herbs, traditional agriculture, etc.) slowed down, while rapid developments took place in the area of modern science and information technology. We can understand the reasons thereof when we study history.

The identity of a society – with its strengths and weaknesses – can be traced to its history. Traditions and culture, strengths and weaknesses are all part of the history of a society. Culture is always in the making. We did not suddenly begin to start living in the manner we are living today, nor will we always live like this. It happened through a series of small and big changes. So, in order to understand our present situation, we need to explore and understand our history.

For example: We see that by and large, our society holds English language and western attire (suit, pant, tie, etc.) in high esteem. History can help us understand why this is so. It can be directly related to the period of British domination for approximately 250 years. Just like English is spoken in India, similarly in countries where the French and
Spanish dominated, those languages are spoken. So history can help us understand us why we are drawn to the English language and western culture. Students could also be encouraged to speculate on the outcome of a different scenario: had we not been dominated by the British, would we have different attitude towards western culture/language/clothes?

Note: This guidebook has been made to help the teachers understand the concept of history and then apply it according to the students’ level, their age, their context and their situation. We can develop the idea of how the past is connected with the present, by exploring the history of anything – the village, town, country, lifestyles, implements, belief systems, food, forest, rivers, different items of consumption, tastes, preferences etc.

2.3 History is an interpretation of the past:

Objective:

- The past can be seen from different perspectives.
- History is not just facts but an interpretation of those facts.
- Different perspectives need to be examined to arrive to a conclusion.

People write history according to their own perspective and ideology. History writing is also influenced by the era in which it is written. We need to be aware that the same event can be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand our motives influence our perspective of the event and on the other, our drishtri/conditioning/assumptions influence our objective/motive.
This can be explained very easily to the students. Often 3-4 children from a village or locality walk or travel together to school which could take 15 minutes to one and a half hours. These children can be given the task of individually writing about their personal experiences during this journey to school: what they saw, (animals and birds, vehicles, places, etc.), think, remember, talk about, how they felt, what they understood. If they observed anything, they should describe that too. They should even describe their conversations and any other experiences along the way.

Once they have completed their task, they can be individually asked to read their personal experiences aloud. When they have all read their accounts, the teacher can draw their attention to the fact that the descriptions of the same journey by the students travelling together can be different from one another. Most importantly, although the descriptions are different, each description was true for each student.

One child may have heard a bird twittering in the forest while the other walking alongside may not have noticed it because he/she was busy talking. We can point out that the sound of the bird reached the ears of both children but only one noticed it while the other didn’t. The same can happen in the case of eyes and touch. One may notice seeing something or having felt something, while the other doesn’t. *We can draw the conclusion that seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching are distinct from paying attention.* What is more decisive is one’s awareness. This can be expanded into a classroom activity wherein the students are
made to sit quietly and observe what they see and hear. They will start noticing a lot of different sounds and things that they were not aware of before.

The aim is to recollect the past in the present. Before they start writing, they can be given some time to recollect their experiences. This can itself be very enriching, because giving children a quiet time for recollection and reflection has many other qualitative benefits. It helps to improve the students’ concentration, memory, observation and expression.

The individual descriptions should be analyzed and discussed patiently. During this process, the teacher can draw their attention to several things and explain those which they may not have noticed or understood.

With the help of this exercise, students can easily come to the conclusion that an event or a situation can be viewed in different ways. One students’ description would not be considered as false and the others’ as true. It is possible that one student heard or saw a certain animal or bird, but the others didn’t. Just because they didn’t see or hear it, doesn’t prove that it wasn’t there. Neither does it mean that those who didn’t describe it are lying.

Once this has been pointed out, the entire class can be encouraged to have a discussion about the possible reasons for these differences. The teacher must make sure to point out that no one was lying (as there is no reason to lie) even though the descriptions were different. Every person views the past through their perspective and interprets it accordingly.
2.4 Impact of the changes:

Objective:

- History helps us examine the chain of events that lead to the change.
- It helps us examine the possible causes of the chain of events.
- It helps us study the impact of these changes.

Change is taking place all the time - at different levels - within us and around us. History tries to examine these events, and the processes that caused the change. A famine, earthquake, flood, revolution, agitation, war, drought or excessive rains, someone's birth or death or change of regime - any of these events can bring about a significant change in family and society.

2.4.1 Changes in Families: We can examine how events like birth, death, a serious illness, a marriage, an addition to the family, or some family member migrating to a new place, a new occupation, going away for studies, etc. may cause a big change in the families, in many different ways.

When there is a wedding in the family, either someone leaves or a new member joins the family, this result is a change - in the speed and direction in which the family was progressing. When a girl joins a family, she brings new skills with her (e.g. cooking or other work, a new dialect, ways of conduct, etc.) which brings about a significant change in the family.

Sometimes a member may buy a new appliance (a TV, phone, car, tractor, etc.) and this has a major impact on the family.
It results in a change in the atmosphere of the family. For example, at one time, the elders of the family used to tell stories to the children and family members used to converse amongst themselves. With the introduction of television into homes, all this changes. The family members do not converse with each other in the same manner. Sometimes the topics of their discussions change. Children spend less time with the elders of the family. The stories that the elders narrated were different from what is shown on TV.

All these have far-reaching effects. The elders begin to have a less important role in the lives of the children. Children begin to relate to inanimate things (cartoons, toys, cars etc.) more than live things (their family, friends, neighbours, pets, farming, etc.). Family members don't discuss the details of their daily lives with one another as much as they used to. Their aspirations begin to change.

In other words, we can understand how changes take place in many different dimensions. This example of the TV appears to be innocuous but has far-reaching effects. These discussions in the classroom will vary according to the age of the children.

A rich discussion can be initiated around how technology and media mould our aspirations. The students can be made aware whether their desires are really their own or have been influenced by external factors.

An attempt can be made to distinguish between needs and wants. Needs are necessities while wants fulfil certain desires and aspirations created by the market. Wants are fanned by a feeling of competition amongst us.
Over a period of time the wants become our needs. This distinction helps us become aware about what we really need instead of giving the control of our actions/desires to others.

If the teacher so wishes, the students can be asked to examine some of the popular advertisements to understand how wants are being created and how these wants are slowly getting perceived as needs.

2.4.2 Changes in society: The changes that occur in a family can be observed in the entire society. For example, the making of the Tehri dam in Uttarakhand has resulted in a huge change for those people who had to leave their ancestral lands, homes, farms and shift to a new place. The change that occurred in their lives because of relocation is as significant as the changes that are caused due to the production and availability of electricity from the dam.

This example can be further expanded to see the chain of events. The making of the dam was an event. The resultant change – rehabilitation – was another event that had several good as well as ill effects. From history, we can also understand why the Tehri dam was made, how it was made, the related protest movements, the people involved in it, would all be a part of its history.

Thus we could draw the students’ attention to the following:

- History helps us understand our present situation through understanding our past. In this case in order to understand the lives of those displaced, we need to examine the making of the Tehri dam and its consequences: the rehabilitation of the people and subsequent changes.
• History helps us examine the causes of events like the making of the dam. For example, what was the concept of ‘development’ at the time of construction the Tehri dam, the increasing consumption of electricity in cities like Delhi, etc.

• History helps us see the roles of various people involved in this event like the role of the builders, protestors, local community, and rest of the public.

• History helps us trace the consequences of the chain of events like: the changes in the lives of those displaced, the changes in the environment, etc.

2.4.3 Changes in the country: Our past definitely influences our present lifestyle and the choices we make. Legal and policy changes at the national level also affect our lives. We can understand these by studying history.

For example: nowadays, people don’t have a sense of ownership for the forests around them and hence do not take as much care of the forests as they did earlier. As a result the forests have depleted. If we look into history, we realize that in the past, the people had rights over their forests. The forests belonged to them. During the British rule, this right was taken away from them. Gradually, the people instead of taking ownership of their forests began to see them as the ‘property’ of the government. Earlier they used to consider it their responsibility to protect, nourish and conserve this resource. When the government took over the rights to the forests, the attitude of the people changed. This seems to be the biggest reason for the dwindling forests. It shows how external factors can influence our attitudes, perceptions and lifestyle in a significant manner.