

SST-I Year
Unit - 2

Chapter 2

(Aims and Objectives of Teaching Social Studies

Significance of the Aims of Teaching Social Studies

The aim and objectives of teaching social studies are necessary to point to the broad ideals and to enable us to select significant and meaningful content, teaching methods and techniques. They are the 'Crux' and 'Key' of the entire process of teaching and learning and therefore, they will have to be in consonance with the broader aims of education. John V. Michaels has aptly stated "The Social Studies are concerned with man and his interaction with his social and physical environment, they deal with human relationship—the central function of the social studies is identical with the central purpose of education—the development of democratic citizenship."

The Education Commission 1964-66, outlined the role of Social Studies as, "the aim of teaching social studies is to help the students to acquire a knowledge of their environment, an understanding of human relationships and certain attitudes and values which are vital for intelligent participation in the affairs of the community, the State, the nation and the world. An effective programme of social studies is essential in India for the development of good citizenship and emotional integration."

General Objectives of Teaching Social Studies

1. **Acquaintance with the environment.** Social studies acquaints the child with his past and present social, cultural and geographical environment.
2. **Interest in socio-economic institutions.** Social studies in schools helps the students to take a keen interest in the ways people live through various socio-economic and political institutions.
3. **Appreciation of cultural heritage.** The teaching of social studies enables children to appreciate India's rich cultural heritage.
4. **Sifting of material.** The teaching of social studies enables the students to recognize and get rid of what is undesirable and antiquated especially in the context of social change.
5. **Development of broadmindedness.** Social studies aims at ensuring that narrow, parochial, chauvinistic and obscurantist tendencies are not allowed to grow in our pupils and that they become tolerant and broad-minded.

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6. **Development of social commitment.** Social studies endeavours to develop a will and ability in every pupil to participate in the most important task of the reconstruction of society and economy with a sense of social commitment.

7. **Faith in the destiny of nation.** Teaching of social studies aims at developing a faith in the minds of the students in the destiny of our nation in terms of promoting a spirit of tolerance and assimilation and peace and harmony among the people of the world.

8. **Development of insight into human relations.** Social studies is intended to help pupils to develop an insight into human relationships, social values and attitudes.

9. **Effective participation in social affairs.** Social studies enables the growing children to participate effectively in the affairs of the community, the state, the country and the world at large.

10. **Promotion of ideals enshrined in the constitution.** Social studies promotes the values and ideals of humanism, secularism, socialism and democracy.

11. **Maximization of economic and social welfare.** Social Studies inculcates attitudes and skills for maximization of economic and social welfare.

12. **Promotion of peace.** Social studies inculcates attitudes and imparts the knowledge necessary for the achievement of the principal values of a just world order.

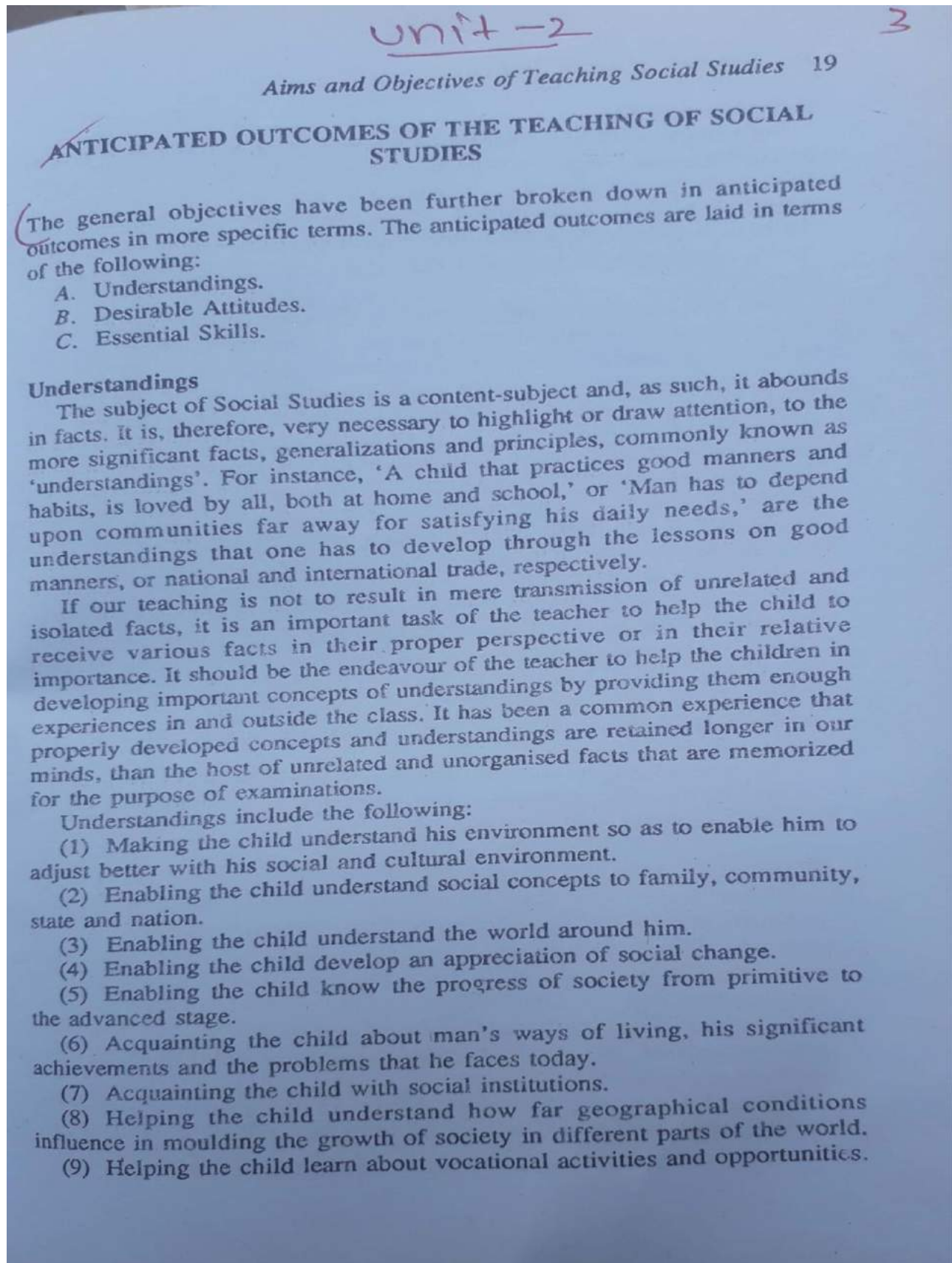
13. **Profitable use of leisure time.** Social studies affords opportunities to the students to develop such interests that will enable them to use their leisure properly.

14. **Foundation of specialisation.** Social studies provides a pattern and experience of study that will serve as a foundation for specialisation at a later stage of education of the students. At the early stages, students are made familiar with the elementary knowledge of various disciplines.

15. **Many-sided development of the personality.** The primary objective of social studies is to develop an appreciation of 3 R's—Rights, Responsibilities and Relationships. Social Studies aims at developing qualities like clearness of thought, intellectual conscience, courage, love of truth, initiative, self-reliance, spontaneity, tolerance, unbiased attitude etc., which go a long way in the development of a well-balanced personality, physically strong, intellectually mature, emotionally stable and socially efficient.)

Why Formulation of Objectives?

The formulation of educational objectives is needed for a variety of reasons.



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Desirable Attitudes

An attitude is a feeling, developed towards an object, or person or group or anything else. These attitudes last through a life time. The facts that a child learns in the class may be forgotten. But these attitudes linger, and mould his behaviour-pattern for all that is to follow. The child may forget the facts, he learnt about the duties of a policeman or the postman. But the feeling of friendliness he gained, for these public officials will remain for life.

The development of these desirable attitudes and appreciation is an important aspect of any good education. The attitudes, appreciations and habits are an inseparable part of the personality of an individual. All agree that it is the attitudes that matter, more than anything else in the behaviour of a person. The development of the attitudes is, however, not to be attempted as a separate item by lecturing or preaching. It should be the natural outcome of all the discussions and activities carried on by the class. They are developed unknowingly. It is often said that attitudes are caught and not taught. The teacher, should, therefore, be conscious of this aspect and reflect proper attitudes, through his disposition and behaviour, so that they are rightly adopted by the children under his charge.

Desirable attitudes imply:

- (i) Developing attitudes to assume social and civic responsibility and thus making the child an active participant and an enlightened individual.
- (ii) Developing attitudes to act in accordance with democratic principles and values.
- (iii) Developing attitudes of personal responsibility, civic and world mindedness, emotional maturity, intellectual integrity, aesthetic appreciation and suspended judgement.
- (iv) Developing attitudes of patriotism, cooperation and tolerance.
- (v) Developing attitudes to appreciate the viewpoints of others and making one's own contribution.

Essential Skills

The development of essential skills, in every child, should be an equally important outcome of the teaching of Social Studies in schools. The skills may pertain to various subject areas. For instance, it may be map reading and map making, building a time-chart, of observing and handling apparatuses such as a thermometer or a rain gauge. Another category of skills refers to his ability to communicate with others. This may include asking questions, telling a story, addressing a meeting, presenting a report or dramatizing an event.

Then there are the intellectual skills. This may include an ability to distinguish between a fact and an opinion, sifting data to arrive at

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conclusions or judgements. Similarly, social skills may include ability to work with a group and to seek cooperation from other members.

Development of basic skills includes as follows:

(a) Helping the child develop such skills as are necessary for effective participation in social life.

(b) Helping the child develop critical and scientific thinking and sense of time.

(c) Helping the child inculcate the social skills: (i) to interpret printed, pictured and chartered material; (ii) to place people, events and institutions in time, space and importance; (iii) to use words of social, cultural and economic significance correctly; (iv) to understand and interpret significant data and to compare, contrast, summarise, generalize and criticise them.) 5

SKILLS IN SOCIAL STUDIES LEARNING

Meaning of a Skill

James High of the University of California has stated, "A skill is the wherewithal to gain an end; in social studies this is to learn the facts, generalizations and formulation of social relations." The skill of citizenship is the ability to get along well and benefit from democratic social organisation. It is the responsibility of every social studies teacher to devote considerable time and effort to the matter of increasing his students' use of skills and to introduce them to new ones.

Apart from the motor and social skills needed from achievement in social studies (eye movement in reading vocal organs in speech, getting along with others), there is another group of skills which is of primary importance in social studies.

Prof. Charles A. Beard has analysed these skills as under:

1. Skill in methods of obtaining access to information (a) use of libraries and institutions, (b) use of encyclopaedias, handbooks, documents, sources, authorities, statistical collections etc.

2. Skill in the sifting of the materials and the discovery and determination of authentic evidence in the use of primary sources.

3. Skill in the observation and description of contemporary occurrences in the school and community.

4. Skill in methods of handling information (a) in analysis—breaking down large themes or masses of data into manageable units and penetrating to irreducible elements, (b) in synthesis—combining elements, drawing inferences and conclusions, and comparing with previous conclusions and inference—logical and systematic organisation, (c) in map and chart making and graphic presentation.

Values of Teaching Social Studies

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Generally, after the listing of knowledge and skills, educationists continue by identifying the values of people in a free society. This is the logical fallacy in which most social studies educators have been caught. They assume that all citizens of a free society will evolve on the same set of values, regardless of their diverse social backgrounds and differing economic status. In the past, the problem encountered in social studies has been so broad, That general objectives which have been stated could not be developed in the microcosm of the classroom. These values have been highly idealized and stated as fixed values which describe a static rather than a dynamic society.

The current trend is to see pluralistic values which are developed in the process of obtaining wants and needs. Currently, values are viewed as being fluid, differing among social classes and institutions. Values, indeed, determine behaviour. Values and attitudes are a result of man's knowledge and experience, interpreted in terms of successful acquisition of wants and needs. Some of the values of teaching social studies are stated below.

i) Develops Social Character

Social studies is a social initiation. It develops social character by drawing the individual into community, making him aware of its collective life and collective ideals.

ii) Develops a Sense of Belonging

The school and its programme of social studies implant a sense of belonging and progressively extend man's horizons from neighbourhood to town, from town to region, from region to nation and even beyond.

iii) Imparts Education for Identification

Social studies develops into "education for identification". The growing child needs adventure as well as security. He needs a

definite part to play as well as a sense of belonging. He must increasingly identify himself with the work and life, the achievements and aspirations of the community. He must discover his own role and the special contribution he has to make. Thus, he will find life satisfying and work self-rewarding and a means of self-realization.

iv) Helps in a Clear Understanding of Democracy

A special value of learning social studies is to spread a clear understanding of democracy and to secure the whole hearted acceptance of the values on which it is based. The fact that modern democratic institutions and ideals are so different from the socio-political patterns of our past, make it necessary to teach democratic values directly rather than incidentally in the course of other studies. What are the democratic values? First of all, we say that the individual human spirit is of supreme worth and every human personality is worthy of respect and deserves the fullest development, whatever the individual's station in life. Secondly, a democracy manages its affairs by means of liberal institutions and procedures based on discussion, agreement, tolerance and the rule of law. Thirdly, there is the ideal of the territorial community, local and national. While cultural self-expression of various groups enriches the national life, citizens must cease to think in political matters in terms of religious or linguistic or other social groups; political rights should flow to individual citizens along the channel of a common national citizenship. Further, the time is ripe for citizens and nations to think in terms of a common humanity and a world citizenship. Social studies is very much concerned with the spread of these ideals. Finally, it is incumbent on education to prepare men's minds for social change and the peaceful reconstruction of society.

v) Develops Moral and Intellectual Values

There are other moral and intellectual values which are developed through the medium of social studies and in the social context. Individual initiative, self reliance and a sense of personal responsibility replace spoon-feeding by teachers. The pupils must 'purpose' what they do in their projects. They learn to plan and to execute their own plans. There is a chance of cultivating 'the intellectual conscience', clearness of thought and love of truth. A

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critical attitude towards social institutions and modern methods of propaganda is built up. The capacity to distinguish between right and wrong, the choice of right means as well as of right ends, and social vision are qualities of character that can be fostered by right guidance.

vi) Helps in the Creative use of Leisure

Social studies develops interests among the students in the creative use of career. Scientific progress and social legislation are both ushering in a new age of leisure for mankind, but unless education for leisure keeps pace with them, the blessing may become a burden. It is a bad dualism to separate leisure from work, to allocate one part of life to the earning of money and another part to the enjoyment of life. But when this enjoyment consists of the psychological escapes-films and gambling - both and excitements of all sorts which play a large part in shaping the outlook of modern men, it is a melancholy age indeed.

vii) Helps for a Better Choice of Careers

Social studies will be of value to the students in helping them towards a better choice of careers. Those students, who have some advantage, where parental knowledge and parental effort help them to choose a career, they don't have any problem. But for the vast majority of the people it is a great problem. Social studies will help because in their survey of various activities of the community young people will have opportunities of discovering for themselves the qualities and qualifications required for various occupations and of testing their own aptitude and fitness for any particular job. Such personal choice of occupation, besides enabling the right man to choose the right job, will by the very fact of a man's selecting his own role in life strengthens his character.

viii) Provides Right Experience

Education is of experience by experience and for experience. The teaching of social studies helps the teacher to know the art of utilizing the surroundings, physical, social that exist so as to extract from them all they have to contribute to building up experiences that are worthwhile.

ix) Develops a Cosmopolitan Outlook

Learning social studies widens our mental horizon and tends to make one cosmopolitan in outlook. The study of widely differing groups of humanity in various stages of development with their differing customs, practices, laws, sanctions and institutions is in itself a liberalizing influence. The conviction also grows out of the study that inspite of the seeming outward differences, there is a spiritual affinity between man and man as they are often found to be striving towards the same ends and goals. The realization of this essential unity of man is well calculated to foster the spirit of kindness and tolerance towards other nations and peoples and is as sure a bond of international sympathy and goodwill as it is an antidote against the unreasoning arrogant nationalism.

x) Provides a Special kind of Mental Training

Social studies provides a special kind of mental training to the older children, which they will find extremely useful when they grow up and have to solve the problems of everyday life. It is an undoubted fact that a boy has to use his mind most in social studies. He is constantly drawing upon his memory to remember what he has been studying on his imagination to visualize conditions and civilizations widely different from his own; and on his imaginative sympathy to enter into the motives, inclinations and desires of the principal protagonists on the stage. But, most important of all, he has to rely on his ability to collect, examine and co-relate facts in an impartial manner and to express the result methodically in a clear vivid language; on his ability to think and argue logically, free from bias or prejudice; and lastly on his judgement to estimate character.

xi) Carrying out Responsibilities

At the very centre of the democratic idea is the concept that individuals can and will carry out responsibilities. Every right, privilege, decision, or plan of action carries related responsibilities. The success of democracy depends on the acceptance of responsibility by the people, both as individuals and as members of various groups. Responsibility is developed in the social studies programme as children plan, carry out, and evaluate learning activities.

xii) Concern for others

Individual development and group welfare are nurtured when concern for others is evident in all facets of living. Various aspects of concern for others are reflected in such expressions as "give them a break", "look out for others", and "lend a helping hand". Mutual respect, sensitivity to the needs of others, and willingness to help are evident in the behaviour of those who show concern for others.

xiii) Socializes the Students

People living together is said to be a society. Social studies helps the students to understand the society. The central concern of this discipline is the social relationships of mankind. It includes topics like structure and organization, the interaction of social groups, the means of social control and the process of social change. The human infant, at the time of birth is just like an animal. He is born with animal needs. In course of living he learns social ways of living and feeling. Thus he is moulded into a social being. This process of moulding is called socialization. The teaching of social studies helps the students to socialize.

xiv) Open - mindedness

Clear thinking and problem solving, which are essential in a democracy, call for open-mindedness. Group action is most effective when all points of view are considered in planning and evaluation. Individual study and action can be improved when various ideas are considered and a critical selection is made of those that are most appropriate in a situation. Prejudice and superstition can be rooted out as differing points of view and authenticated facts are considered. Those who are developing open-mindedness consider and explore the value of the ideas of others as well as the value of their own. They learn to be impartial, to report facts accurately, to analyze problems, and to appraise the validity of information. They consider facts and opinions in the light of the source from which they were obtained, their relationship to issues and problems, and their usefulness in solving problems.

xv) Develops Creativity

The greatness of a country depends upon creative individuals. Therefore, in the emerging Indian society, students of social studies

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should be provided with opportunities to develop creative urge for doing things, so that democratic living will be continually improved by a constant flow of new ideas and divergent thinking.

xvi) Development of a Spirit of Co-operation

The ability to co-operate is very important in an emerging society. Those who develop co-operative behaviour pool ideas, make plans, carry them through to completion, and evaluate the effectiveness of their work. When plans are changed on the basis of group decisions, they continue to work with others to achieve common goals. As they study various topics in social studies, they discover examples of co-operation in the home, school, community, state and nation. As they mature and undertake more advanced studies, they gain insight into the need for teamwork in solving international problems, and they critically assess the actions of individuals and agencies working together to improve human welfare.

Conclusion

The aims and values of teaching different subjects have undergone a great change. This change demands new aims and values and a new curriculum. In order to teach social studies with a view to cope with the changing needs of the present-day-society the aforesaid aims and values should be taken into consideration.

Evaluation

1. What are the expected values to be acquired by the pupils in the process of learning Social Studies?
2. Bring out the differences between Aims and Values?
3. How do you develop creativity among the children through the teaching of Social Studies?

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