



Class 9 Social Science – Chapter 1

NCERT Textbook Solutions – Understanding Social Science

Book: *Understanding Society: India and Beyond*

Class: 9 | **Session:** 2026–27

Note: Chapter 1 does not have a conventional numbered “Exercises” section at the end. Instead, the textbook includes “**LET’S ANALYSE**” and “**LET’S EXPLORE**” activities within the chapter. The solutions below answer those textbook activities and questions based strictly on the official Chapter 1 content.



LET'S ANALYSE

Question:

Observe your surroundings and identify a change that has taken place in your locality over the past five years. It could be related to transport, housing, education, technology, or the environment.

Discuss:

1. What was the situation earlier?
2. What has changed?
3. What might have caused this change?
4. How has it affected people's lives?



Answer:

One major change in my locality over the past five years has been the increased use of **digital technology in education and everyday life**.

1. Situation earlier:

Earlier, most educational activities depended mainly on classroom teaching, printed books, notebooks and face-to-face communication.

2. What has changed:

Today, students increasingly use smartphones, computers, digital learning platforms and online resources for studying and communication.

3. Causes of the change:

The change has been encouraged by the rapid development of technology, greater internet access and the increasing use of digital services.

4. Effect on people's lives:

Digital technology has made information and learning resources more accessible. Students can learn from different sources and communicate more easily. At the same time, it has also created the need to use technology responsibly.

🌟 Conclusion:

This example shows how Social Science helps us connect **technology, society, education and people's everyday lives** rather than studying each aspect separately.

LET'S EXPLORE – Social Science as a Study of Disciplines

The textbook explains that Social Science is a group of related disciplines. At the secondary stage, the four core disciplines are:

-  Geography
 -  History
 -  Political Science
 -  Economics
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Question: What does Geography study?

✅ Answer:

Geography studies the location and distribution of places, objects, materials and people, as well as the relationship between human societies and their surroundings.

It examines:

- 🌍 Physical features of the Earth
- 👥 Human communities
- 🌱 Human interaction with the environment
- 📍 Location and distribution of things
- 🔗 Relationships between different places

Geography uses tools such as **maps, globes, atlases, GIS and infographics** to understand geographical patterns.

History

Question: What does History study?

✓ **Answer:**

History is the study of the human past.

It helps us understand:

- 👥 People's experiences
- 🏛️ Development of societies
- 🔄 Changes over time
- 🎭 Cultural traditions
- 🌍 Different historical developments

Historians use evidence from many sources, including archaeological remains, literary sources, inscriptions, coins, travelogues, memoirs, correspondence, genealogical records, folklore and oral traditions.

Political Science

Question: What does Political Science study?

✓ **Answer:**

Political Science is the study of governance, power and political institutions.

It examines:

-  Governments
-  Constitutions
-  Laws and institutions
-  Distribution of power
-  Political participation
-  Social movements
-  Foreign policy
-  Local self-government

For example, the **Panchayati Raj system** gives citizens a role in local development planning and demonstrates grassroots democracy.

Economics

Question: What does Economics study?

 **Answer:**

Economics helps us understand how individuals and societies use limited resources to meet their needs.

It studies:

-  Production of goods and services
-  Exchange
-  Distribution
-  Consumer decisions
-  Producer decisions
-  Government policies
-  Economic development
-  Equity and fairness
-  Sustainable growth

Economics therefore deals not only with numbers and markets but also with **well-being, equity and justice**.



Important Conceptual Question

Question: Why is Social Science not a single subject?

✓ **Answer:**

Human society is complex and cannot be fully understood from a single perspective.

For example, a **drought** may:

- 🌾 Affect crops → Geography
- 💰 Reduce farmers' income → Economics
- 🏛️ Require government relief → Political Science
- 👤 Cause migration → Social aspects
- 🧠 Influence traditional ways of coping → Culture

Therefore, different Social Science disciplines examine different aspects of the same situation. Together, they provide a **comprehensive understanding of society**.



Question: How do Indian knowledge traditions relate to Social Science?

✓ **Answer:**

India has a long tradition of **questioning, observation, discussion and logical reasoning**.

The chapter gives examples such as:

🌍 **Pañchamahābhūtas** – the five great elements: earth, water, fire, air and space. The concept presents nature as an interconnected system and helps explain relationships between humans and the environment.

👤 **Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam** – expresses the idea that the world is one family and highlights the interconnectedness of human societies.

📖 **Arthaśāstra** – associated with Kauṭilya, it discusses administration, economic management, taxation and the responsibilities of rulers towards people.

These examples show that systematic thinking about society, governance and the environment has a long history in India.

Question: Why do social scientists use different sources of evidence?

Answer:

Social scientists need evidence to understand how societies function and change.

They may:

-  Observe people's lives
-  Conduct interviews
-  Conduct surveys
-  Examine documents
-  Compare different places
-  Compare different periods of history

Using information from multiple sources helps them develop explanations supported by evidence.

Question: What are archaeological sources?

Answer:

Archaeological sources are material remains used to study the past.

Examples include:

-  Monuments
-  Artefacts
-  Architectural structures
-  Excavated sites

-  Sculptures
-  Paintings

Their study may involve scientific instruments and laboratory testing.

Question: What is an epigraphic source?

✓ Answer:

An **epigraphic source** is a historical source consisting of texts, decrees or records inscribed on durable materials such as:

-  Stone
-  Metal plates
-  Rock surfaces

Such inscriptions provide evidence about past events, rulers, administration and society.

Question: What are numismatic sources?

✓ Answer:

Numismatic sources are historical sources consisting of:

-  Coins
-  Currency
-  Medals

They help historians study:

-  Economy
-  Chronology
-  Rulers
-  Trade

- 🗺️ Political boundaries
- 🗣️ Culture

Information can be obtained from the metal content, inscriptions and symbols on coins.

Question: How does Social Science help us understand everyday life?

✅ Answer:

Social Science helps us understand the systems that shape our everyday lives.

For example:

🏠 Our houses depend on materials from different places.

🍲 Our food may come from different regions and pass through systems of harvesting, processing, transportation and trade.

🛣️ Roads are planned and maintained by public authorities.

🎓 Schools are influenced by educational policies.

⚡ Electricity reaches homes through complex networks.

Therefore, everyday life is connected to **governance, economics, environment and social cooperation**.

Question: Why should we study Social Science?

✅ Answer:

We should study Social Science because it helps us:

- 🔍 Observe society carefully
- ❓ Ask meaningful questions

-  Examine evidence
-  Think logically
-  Understand people and places
-  Understand governments and institutions
-  Understand economies
-  Understand the past
-  Think about future challenges
-  Respect diversity
-  Become responsible citizens

The subject helps us understand the connection between the **past, present and future** and prepares us to participate thoughtfully in society.

Question: How can Social Science help address future challenges?

Answer:

Social Science can help society understand and respond to challenges such as:

-  Climate change
-  Sustainable development
-  Social harmony
-  Equitable use of resources
-  Urbanisation
-  Migration
-  Technological change
-  Global connections

It also helps people examine evidence, recognise connections and make informed decisions about the future.

Quick Revision – Chapter 1



Discipline

What it studies

 Geography	Earth, places, environments and human-environment relationships
 History	Human past and changes over time
 Political Science	Governance, power, constitutions and institutions
 Economics	Resources, production, exchange, distribution and economic decisions

Remember:

Social Science = Understanding Society through multiple connected perspectives.

Geography

-  History
-  Political Science
-  Economics
- =  **A comprehensive understanding of society**

Important Terms

- ♦ **Social Science** – Systematic study of human society.
- ♦ **Empirical Evidence** – Information collected through actual observation or experimentation.
- ♦ **Archaeological Sources** – Material remains used to study the past.
- ♦ **Epigraphic Sources** – Historical records inscribed on durable materials.
- ♦ **Numismatic Sources** – Coins, currency and medals used as historical evidence.
- ♦ **Pañchamahābhūtas** – The five great elements: earth, water, fire, air and space.
- ♦ **Vasudhaiva Kuṭumbakam** – The idea that the world is one family.
- ♦ **Panchayati Raj** – A system of grassroots local self-government.

Source Note

All answers above are based on **Chapter 1, “Understanding Social Science,” of the official Class 9 *Understanding Society: India and Beyond*, Grade 9 – Part 1**, including its embedded activities and explanations.