

## NCERT QUESTIONS WITH SOLUTIONS

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

“The way we see the world shapes the way we treat it. If a mountain is a deity, not a pile of ore; if a river is one of the veins of the land, not potential irrigation water; if a forest is a sacred grove, not timber; if other species are biological kin, not resources; or if the planet is our mother, not an opportunity—then we will treat each other with greater respect. Thus is the challenge, to look at the world from a different perspective.” Discuss in small groups. What do you think this statement means? What implication does it have for our actions with respect to the air, water, land, trees and mountains around us?

**Ans.** David Suzuki’s quote urges us to change our perspective and see the natural world not just as resources for exploitation, but as sacred and living entities. When we see nature with reverence—as a deity, family, or a mother—we naturally treat it with love, care, and respect. The implications it has on our actions with respect to the air, water, land, trees and mountains around us are:

- (i) We will avoid polluting rivers and instead protect them like sacred lifelines.
- (ii) Forests would be preserved as sacred groves instead of being cleared for timber.

(iii) Mountains would be admired for their spiritual grandeur, not mined for minerals.

(iv) We would consider animals and other life forms as kin and not just as resources.

(v) The air, water, and soil would be treated as life-giving elements, not as commodities.

This shift in thinking can help us become better caretakers of the environment.

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

**Ans.** Sacred sites, for example- Uttarakhand:

- (i) Kedarnath-Considered sacred as it is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva.
- (ii) Badrinath-Dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is one of the Char Dham sites.
- (iii) Yamunotri and Gangotri- Sacred origins of rivers Yamuna and Ganga.

These are considered sacred because these places are associated with ancient myths, divine presence, and stories of gods and sages. Pilgrims visit them seeking blessings, purification, and spiritual upliftment.

A short essay with the title 'Preserving Our Sacred Places':

Sacred places are important for our religion, culture, and environment. They include rivers, temples, forests, mountains, and lakes. In my locality, there is a holy pond near a temple that was once clean and peaceful. But now, it is often filled with garbage and plastic. I spoke to my grandparents, and they told me how people used to respect the pond and even used its water for prayers. Today, many people do not take care of such places.

It is everyone's duty to keep sacred places clean and safe. Communities should come together to organize cleaning drives. Religious leaders can spread awareness about keeping these places pollution-free. The government should also take action against those who harm them.

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

**Ans.** Natural elements are considered sacred because they are believed to be abodes of gods or goddesses and sources of spiritual power. They contribute to our lives in the following ways:

- (i) Rivers provide water for drinking, agriculture, and rituals.
- (ii) Mountains affect climate, store water as glaciers, and are pilgrimage sites.
- (iii) Forests purify the air, provide medicine, and are seen as sacred groves. They are essential for both ecological balance and cultural traditions.

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

**Ans.** People visit tirthas or sacred places:

- (i) To seek spiritual purification and peace.
- (ii) To fulfill religious vows or express gratitude.
- (iii) To connect with divine energy and perform rituals.
- (iv) To be part of centuries-old traditions and experience a sense of unity with others.

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

**Ans.** Ancient pilgrimage routes and trade:

- (i) Pilgrims travelled with goods, spreading local products to other regions.
- (ii) Traders set up shops along routes to cater to pilgrims.
- (iii) These routes connected different regions culturally and economically.

The sacred sites help in developing the economy of the region in the following ways:

- (i) Promoting tourism and hospitality industries.
- (ii) Supporting local artisans, guides, and transport workers.
- (iii) Generating income through fairs, rituals, and donation centers.

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

**Ans.** (i) Sacred places are connected to religious stories, festivals, and local beliefs.

- (ii) People living nearby often take part in rituals, prayers, and celebrations.
- (iii) Festivals at sacred sites include music, dance, special food, and traditional clothes.
- (iv) These places teach values like kindness, honesty, and respect.
- (v) Local art, crafts, and songs often show stories from the sacred place.
- (vi) Sacred places bring people together and build a sense of community and belonging.
- (vii) Traditions are passed from one generation to the next, keeping the culture alive.

(viii) These places also attract visitors, helping locals share their culture with others.

**7.** What is the two-fold significance of a tirthayatra or a pilgrimage?

**Ans.** The two-fold significance of a tirthayatra or a pilgrimage are:

- (i) **Spiritual significance:** Helps cleanse the soul, seek blessings, and reflect on life's deeper meaning.
- (ii) **Cultural and social significance:** It strengthens community bonds. Encourages knowledge-sharing across regions and preserves heritage and traditions.