

CIVICS CHAPTER-4

CLASS-7

GROWING UP AS BOYS AND GIRLS



GROWING UP AS BOYS AND GIRLS

Introduction

- Being a boy or a girl is an important part of one's identity.
- The society we grow up in teaches us what kind of behaviour is acceptable for girls and boys, what boys and girls can or cannot do.
- But do all societies look at boys and girls in the same way?
- We will also look at how the different roles assigned to boys and girls prepare them for their future roles as men and women.
- The roles women play and the work they do are usually valued less than the roles men play and the work they do.

Growing up in Samoa in the 1920s

- In the 1920s, according to research reports on Samoan society, children did not go to school. They learnt many things, such as how to take care of children or do household work from older children and from adults. Fishing was a very important activity on the islands.
- Older children, often as young as five years old, took over
- this responsibility. Both boys and girls looked after their younger siblings. But, by the time a boy was about nine years old, he joined the older boys in learning outdoor jobs like fishing and planting coconuts. Girls had to continue looking after small children or do errands for adults till they were teenagers. But, once they became teenagers they had much more freedom. After the age of fourteen or so, girls also went on fishing trips

Growing up male in Madhya Pradesh in the 1960s

- From Class VI onwards, boys and girls went to separate schools. The girls' school was designed very differently from the boys' school.
- After reading the two examples above, we realise that there are many different ways of growing up.
- We also realise that societies make clear distinctions between boys and girls. This begins from a very young age. We are for example, given different toys to play with. Boys are usually given cars to play with and girls dolls. Both toys can be a lot of fun to play with. Why are girls then given dolls and boys cars?

Growing up male in Madhya Pradesh in the 1960s(cont...)

- In most societies, including our own, the roles men and women play or the work they do, are not valued equally.

Valuing housework

- Across the world, the main responsibility for housework and care-giving tasks, like looking after the family, especially children, the elderly and sick members, lies with women. Yet, as we have seen, the work that women do within the home is not recognised as work.
- It is also assumed that this is something that comes naturally to women.
- It, therefore, does not have to be paid for. And society devalues this work.

Lives of domestic workers

- They do a lot of work —sweeping and cleaning, washing clothes and dishes, cooking, looking after young children or the elderly.
- Most domestic workers are women.
- Sometimes, even young boys or girls are employed to do this work.
- Wages are low, as domestic work does not have much value.
- A domestic worker's day can begin as early as five in the morning and end as late as twelve at night! Despite the hard work they do, their employers often do not show them much respect.

Lives of domestic workers(cont ...)

- A number of these tasks require heavy physical work.
- In both rural and urban areas women and girls have to fetch water.
- In rural areas women and girls carry heavy headloads of firewood.
- Tasks like washing clothes, cleaning, sweeping and picking up loads require bending, lifting and carrying.

Women's work and equality

- equality is an important principle of our Constitution. The
- Constitution says that being male or female should not become a reason for discrimination. In reality, inequality between the sexes exists.
- The government is, therefore, committed to understanding the reasons for this and taking positive steps to remedy the situation.
- For example, it recognises that burden of child-care and housework falls on women and girls.
- The government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide crèche facilities.



Thank You

Languages: English, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and many others.

Illustrations: A butterfly, a ladybug, and a flower.