

ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENT



Notes

We face several ecological crises today, most of which are a result of the global materialist culture, which promotes rampant resource extraction and alterations of land use. Lately, the world at large has acknowledged the need for a paradigm shift in our attitudes, values and beliefs towards the environment. The spiritual and philosophical foundations of our Vedic heritage can provide the world with new ways of valuing, thinking, and acting in response to our environment. These foundational values of our Vedic culture enjoin us to see divinity in nature and treat it with respect. According to Rachel Wheeler, “Ecology has to do with one’s home—the root meaning of “eco”—ecological spirituality or eco spirituality describes how one related to the sacred within the context of our natural, global, and even cosmic ecosystems (or homes) of which we all form a part.”

Vedic knowledge is a very potent knowledge system, as it continues to be relevant in the present day, in the form of an unbroken tradition. Vedic verses express a deep connection between the human, natural and the divine world. The Vedic hymns and ideals preserve a holistic world-view towards every aspect of the Universe, where Nature is deemed as a friend, revered as a mother, obeyed as a father and nurtured as a beloved child. The cosmic order or *rita* enjoins upon the natural world as dharma and signifies the benevolent glory of nature as well as its terrifying wrath.



LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this lesson, the learner:

- Describes characteristics and style of early Sanskrit literature;
- Recognises traditional literary heritage of India;

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- **Garners:** to obtain or collect something such as information or support

- Identifies strong environmental values within our cultural heritage;
- Explains how Vedic hymns provide the most integrated, enlightened and realistic thoughts on the environment.

5.1 YAJUR VEDA

In the Shantipath, the Vedic seers pray for peace everywhere in the outside world, in a way that also **garners** peace within each human soul.

Yajur Veda 36/17 (Shantipath)

द्यूः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः।

वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वे देवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः सर्वं शान्तिः शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि॥१७॥

Translation

May the heavens bring us peace. May peace be with the skies, and may the skies shower us with peace. May there be peace on earth, and may Mother Earth bring us peace. May there be peace with the waters, and may the waters bring us peace. May there be peace in the herbs, and may the herbs bring us peace. May peace be with the trees and may the trees bring us peace. Peace be with the divinities of the world, and may they bless us with peace. May the Great Lord of the universe bless us with peace, and may the Veda inspire us with peace. May all existence be at peace and may peace come from all existence to all. May there be peace only, universal peace for all. May that heavenly peace come and bless me. May It bless all. (Translated by Dr Tulsi Ram)

The entire Vedic tradition reiterates that one should only listen to and observe that which is *bhadra* or good. *Dharma* is important and when dharma declines, human beings destroy nature. According to Kapila Vatsyayan, there is no Hindu text focusing on dharma, that advises us to be passive and accept the end of the world with a life-negating philosophy. Many Hindu texts are firm in their view that human beings must enhance the quality of life. The above verse from the Shantipath, praying for human happiness as well as for all life on earth, is uttered in many Hindu temples and homes.



Fig. 5.1

LET US UNDERSTAND 5.1

The Shantipath, a verse from the Yajur Veda, is a prayer for peace in the world and within ourselves. It asks for peace in the heavens, skies, earth, waters, plants, and trees. It also seeks peace from divine beings and the universe itself. The prayer emphasises the importance of peace for all living beings.

This prayer reflects the broader Hindu belief in doing good and following righteousness (*dharma*). It highlights that when people neglect their duties and harm nature, it disrupts peace. Hindu teachings encourage actively improving life's quality rather than accepting negativity. The Shantipath is recited in many Hindu temples and households as a reminder to strive for peace and happiness for all.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.1

1. What does the Shantipath prayer encompass?
2. What is the significance of the Shantipath in Hindu tradition?

5.2 RIG VEDA

According to Vedic cosmology, the basis of all cosmic creation is the philosophy of the

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panchamahabhuta. This implies that there are five fundamental elements, namely Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether (Akash), that constitute all matter. The human body too is similarly constituted. Thus, all aspects of the human being, namely birth, growth, health, disease and decay, as well as all aspects of human health, namely, our diet, movement and emotions, also primarily constitute all universal matter and thus connect us with nature and our environment. These five *mahabhutas* are the cosmic elements that create, nurture and sustain life. Thus, they play a vital part in the preservation and sustenance of the environment.

Nature, in the Vedic scheme of life, is divine. It is an inseparable and indivisible life force that unites the world of humans, animals and plants. Aspects and forces of the cosmos are venerated as Gods. In the society described in the Rigveda, the well-being of each individual depends primarily on the power of the group and its collective values. Indra, chief among Gods, as well as other Gods like Agni, Soma, Varuna and Bhaga, become the foci of unity that mark the primacy of the interconnectedness of a biodiverse, bounteous and manifold world and the power of the group over the individual, to obtain and defend natural resources.

The Vedas emphasise balance and a cure of imbalances. They promote the importance of a balanced diet and the need to incorporate natural foods to promote overall individual well-being. Fruits, with their abundance of nutrients, antioxidants, and medicinal properties, hold a special place in Ayurveda.

The Rig Veda, very specifically says that forests should not be destroyed. It emphasises the importance of afforestation for survival and dwells upon the various components of the ecosystem and their individual importance. Any injury to trees and ecosystems is liable to disturb the ecological balance of the earth, according to the Rig Veda.

Plants are personified as divine mothers. Herbs are believed to have descended from the heavens and spoken of their divine curative power, their ability to drive away all bodily defects and imbalances. Even the seers of Rigveda say, "Plant! Thus I hail thee, the Divine Mother of mankind."

Rig Veda 10.97.4

ओषधीरिति मातरस्तद्धो देवीरुप ब्रुवे।
सनेयमश्वं गां वास आत्मानं तव पूरुष॥

Translation

Plants, by this name I speak to you, Mothers, to you the Goddesses:

Steed, cow, and garment may I win, win back thy very self, O man.

(Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith)

The environment is sacred. Vishnu, Surya, Savitr and Aditya, are solar deities. Ushas signifies dawn, a female deity. Pushan represents agriculture. Dyauspitr is the divine father (the sky, father of the heavens), Prithvi is Mother Earth and Vayu is the wind. The Rivers Sarasvati, Sindhu (Indus) and the latter's tributaries—Shutudri, Parushni, Ashkini, Vitasta and Vipasa or the Sapta Sindhava—are all regarded as sacred. Agni is considered in the Vedas as the form and fount of life. Agni, in later Vedic description, is known as the sun and light. In the form of the sun, Agni is regarded as the soul, as well as the ruler and preserver of the world (*Maitrayana Upanishad*, 6.35). Agni is the supreme deity in the Rigveda. The divine Principle that resides within the body is Agni or Fire of Life. It is the unique principle underlying universal manifestation which we see in three forms, namely plants, animals and human beings.



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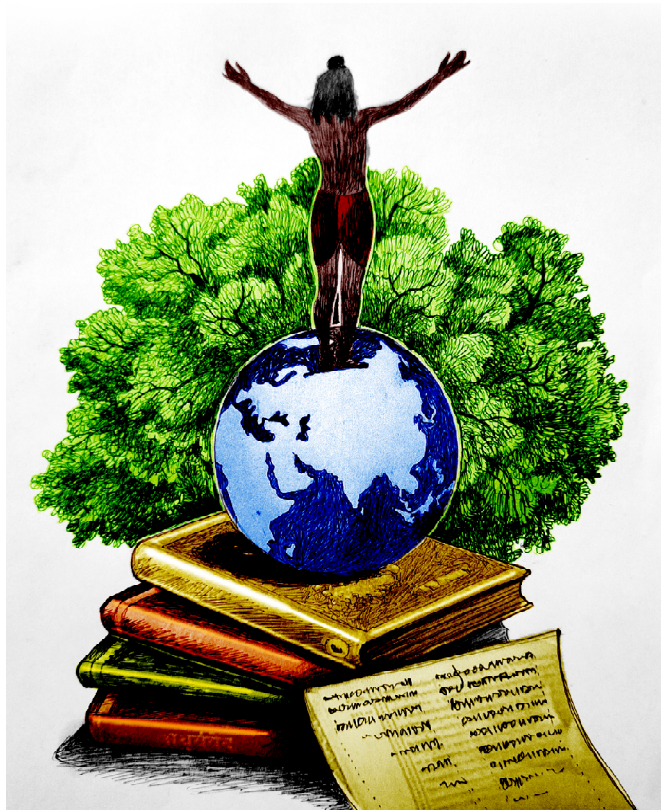


Fig. 5.2



Notes

Rig Veda 1.1.1

अग्निमीळे पुरोहितं यज्ञस्य देवमृत्विजम्।
होतारं रत्नधातमम्॥

Translation

I glorify Agni, the high priest of the sacrifice, the divine, the ministrant, who presents the oblation (to the gods), and is the possessor of great wealth. (Translated by H.H. Wilson)

This verse is chanted in the glory of Agni as God; as the ultimate bestower of splendid wealth, both material and spiritual in the form of wisdom, peace and faith.

Rig Veda 3.6.2

आ रोदसी अपृणा जायमान उत प्र रिक्था अध नु प्रयज्यो।
दिवश्चिदग्ने महिना पृथिव्या वच्यन्तां ते वह्नयः सप्तजिहवाः॥

Translation

Agni, as soon as born, occupy both heaven and earth; for you, to whom sacrifice is to be offered, exceed in magnitude the firmament and the earth; may your seven-tongued fires be glorified. (Translated by H.H. Wilson)

The Rig Veda dedicates an entire hymn to the rivers. It is called the Nadistuti Sukta. Water, as per our scriptures, is a necessary component of our lives. It has sacred, remedial and healing properties. The natural environment of a place is dependent upon the land-water relation of that area. The water cycle determines the regularity of crops and rains. The human mind can be purged and made pure or peaceful through the consumption of pure water. The Ayurveda too discusses the importance of water in 'snana' (bathing), 'paana' (consumption), 'shoucha' (toilet), 'chikitsaa' (cure), 'upachaara' (hospitality), 'krushih' (farming) and 'tarpanam' (offering which satisfies the ancestors).

Rig Veda 1.23.19

अप्स्वन्तरमृतमप्सु भेषजमपामुत प्रशस्तये।
देवा भवत वाजिनः॥

Translation

Ambrosia is in the waters; in the waters are medicinal herbs; therefore, divine (priest), be prompt in their praise. (Translated by H.H. Wilson)

Rig Veda 7.50.4

याः प्रवतो निवत उद्वत उद्वन्तीरनुदकाश्च याः।
ता अस्मभ्यं पयसा पिन्वमानाः शिवा देवीरशिपदा भवन्तु सर्वा नद्यो अशिमिदा भवन्तु॥

Translation

May the divine rivers, whether flowing down declivities, in hollow places, or upwards whether filled with water or dry, nourishing all with their water, be auspicious to us communicating not disease; may all the rivers be unproductive of harm. (Translated by H.H. Wilson)

*Notes***Rig Veda 7.62.5**

प्र बाहवा सिसृतं जीवसे न आ नो गव्यूतिमुक्षतं घृतेन।
आ नो जने श्रवयतं युवाना श्रुतं मे मित्रावरुणा हवेमा॥

Translation

Stretch forth your arms for the prolongation of our existence, bedew with water the pastures of our cattle, render us honoured among men; ever youthful Mitra and VaruGa, hear these my invocations. (Translated by H.H. Wilson)

Material objects are occasionally mentioned in Vedic literature as symbols representing certain deities. Animals and birds are treated as the representatives of certain deities in Vedic mythology. The goat is believed to be a symbol of Pushan, the lord of ways. The tree Ashvattha is worshipped as Vishnu, Nyagrodha as Shiva and Palasha as Brahma. A white horse represents the Sun in the Taittiriya Samhita. Even agricultural implements, such as suman and sira, are invoked as deities (Rig veda 4.57.5-8).

LET US UNDERSTAND 5.2

The Vedic understanding of creation revolves around five fundamental elements: Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether (Akash). These elements form the basis of all matter, including the human body, connecting us deeply with nature. In Vedic thought, nature is divine, with cosmic forces personified as Gods. Maintaining balance is crucial, whether in diet, movement, or emotions, for individual well-being and environmental harmony.

The Rig Veda highlights the importance of preserving nature, advocating against the destruction of forests and emphasising afforestation. Plants are revered as divine mothers, with herbs believed to possess curative powers. Rivers, considered sacred, are essential for life and agriculture. Water, especially, holds remedial and healing



properties. In Vedic hymns, deities like Agni (fire), Vishnu, Surya (sun), and various rivers are venerated. Agni symbolises life's essence and is revered as the supreme deity. The Nadistuti Sukta glorifies rivers, emphasising their importance for sustenance and purity. Vedic texts also attribute symbolic significance to animals, plants, and even agricultural implements, associating them with specific deities. To sum up, the Vedic outlook underscores the interconnectedness of humans, nature, and the divine, advocating for reverence towards the environment and its preservation.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.2

1. What is the significance of forests according to the Rigveda?
2. What is the symbolic significance of animals and trees in Vedic mythology?

5.3 ATHARVA VEDA

In the Atharvaveda, the Prithivi Sukta, a hymn of 63 verses, is dedicated to the glory of Mother Earth. These verses enjoin all human-beings to protect, preserve and care for the environment. The Prithivi Sukta maintains that the gifts of the earth (such as its firmness, purity and fertility) are for everyone, without any discrimination whatsoever. They are not the exclusive property of any individual claimant, for example any country or person. Prithvi provides food and prosperity to all, sustains the animal and vegetable/herbal world, fosters the growth and regeneration of forests and provides space for lakes, rivers and large water bodies. She symbolises the gentle balance of the earth as she holds fire (Agni) in her belly (centre of the earth). Recycling and regeneration are the core principles enshrined in the Vedic traditions, aspirations and practices and it is up to us as the progeny of Mother Earth to live in peace and harmony with all.

Atharva Veda 12.1.57

अश्व इव रजो दुधुवे वि तान्जनान्य आक्षियन्प्रृथिवीं यादजायत।
मन्द्राग्रेत्वरी भुवनस्य गोपा वनस्पतीनां गृभिरोषधीनाम्॥

Translation

As the horse scattereth the dust, the people who dwelt upon the land, at birth, she scattered, Leader and head of all the world, delightful, the trees; protectres, and the plants upholder. (Translated by Ralph T.H. Griffith)

The sage of the Arthavaveda warns that if the earth is not preserved in time, then the

human species should be prepared to suffer the vicious cycle because just as the horse shakes off the dust particles, in the same way earth, the planet, the protector of the world, the receptive earth of flora and medicines, has always shaken those humans who do not conserve it and harm it.

The Atharvaveda prays for the continuous growth of herbs:

Atharva Veda 12.1.35

यत्ते भूमे विखनामि क्षिप्रं तदपि रोहतु।
मा ते मर्म विमृग्वरि मा ते हृदय्यमर्षिपम्॥

Translation

Let what I dig from thee, O Earth, rapidly spring and grow again.

O Purifier, let me not pierce through thy vitals or thy heart.

(Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith)

Throughout the *Prithvi sukta*, the Earth is praised as *mahī* or the great one. The sages call her *jīradānu* or the bestower of life, and pray for her long life. They pray that Mother Earth be free from sickness and decay and in turn, may we, who enjoy her benevolence and enjoy along and uninjured life, be active and vigilant, so that we may serve her with devotion:

Atharva Veda 8.1.15

जीवेभ्यस्त्वा समुदे वायुरिन्द्रो धाता दधातु सविता त्रायमाणः।
मा त्वा प्राणो बलं हासीदसुं तेऽनु ह्वयामसि॥

May saving Savitar, Vyu, Indra, Dhatar restore thee to communion with the living. Let not thy vigour or thy breath forsake thee: we recall thy life.

(Translated by Ralph T. H. Griffith)



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Fig. 5.3

The *Prithvi sukta* celebrates the role of the trees, wilderness, herbs, wild beasts including the tiger and the lion. This is significant, because it suggests a range of ecotones and ecosystems; an area of grassy plains, savannah, open woodlands and scrub county for the lion and subtropical forests for tigers. Aranyaani, or the mistress of wild vegetation, including the animals inhabiting it, and Prakriti, or the feminine aspect of existence, are manifestations and materialisations of the Godhead. Their embodiment is governed by *Rita*.

Thus, the Atharvaveda espouses everlasting and enduring respect towards Mother Earth. The Prithvi Sukta enunciates an egalitarian attitude towards people of all races and belief systems. Those who defend and protect the environment are showered with divine blessings of nourishment, eternal serenity and peace. However, the onus is on us, as the progeny of Mother Earth, to appreciate her bounty and magnanimity and to live in peace and harmony with human beings and all other forms of life. These ideals endorse an eco-spiritual attitude towards the environment.

LET US UNDERSTAND 5.3

The Prithivi Sukta in the Atharvaveda is a hymn dedicated to Mother Earth, celebrating her importance and urging people to protect and care for the environment. It emphasises that the gifts of the earth, like its firmness and fertility, are for everyone and not owned by any individual or country. The Earth provides food, prosperity, and sustenance to all life forms, including animals, plants, and forests. The Sukta compares Earth to a

horse shaking off dust, warning that if it's not preserved, humans will suffer. It prays for the continuous growth of herbs and asks Earth to rapidly regenerate what is taken from it, without harming its vital parts.

Throughout the hymn, Earth is praised as the great one, the giver of life. The sages pray for her long life and freedom from sickness and decay, so that humans can also enjoy long and healthy lives. The Sukta celebrates the role of trees, wilderness, herbs, and wild animals, showing respect for the diverse ecosystems Earth supports. It promotes an egalitarian attitude towards people of all races and beliefs and showers blessings on those who defend and protect the environment.



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INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.3

1. What is the subject of the Prithivi Sukta in the Atharva Veda?
2. What does the Atharvaveda warn about regarding the preservation of the earth?



DO YOU KNOW

- A Veda is a collection of poems or hymns composed in archaic Sanskrit by Indo-European-speaking peoples who lived in northwest India during the 2nd millennium BCE.
- There are four Vedas: the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda and the Atharvaveda.
- Each Veda has four subdivisions:
 - a) the Samhitas (mantras and benedictions)
 - b) the Brahmanas (commentaries on and explanation of rituals, ceremonies and sacrifices - Yajnas)
 - c) the Aranyakas (text on rituals, ceremonies, sacrifices and symbolic-sacrifices)
 - d) the Upanishads (texts discussing meditation, philosophy and spiritual knowledge)
- Like the other Vedas, the Samaveda too, stresses the importance of the delicate equilibrium involved in the maintenance of seasonal cycles, that are likely to get altered in the face of incorrect human actions.



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LET'S DO

Participate in activities like Van Mahotsava (festival of trees) in your village/local area. Write your experiences in a paragraph.

LET'S TALK

Undertake a group discussion about the need to develop a community outlook towards respecting nature.

LET'S LEARN**Use of Will, Shall, Would, Should, used to**

- I. 'Will' in the first person, when used with I, expresses willingness, promise, determination, etc. Again, 'Shall' is used with 'I' to talk about the future. It also expresses determination.

Example:

- a) I will write soon.
- b) He will go away tomorrow.
- c) I shall visit you next week.

- II. 'Would' and 'should' are past tense forms of 'will' and 'shall'.

'Would' is also used politely in making requests.

Eg. "Would you help me to finish this work please?"

It also expresses habitual actions that took place in the past.

Eg. My mother would make rotis.

'Should' expresses an obligation.

Eg. We should help others.

I should visit my grandmother more often.

Your cough is very bad. You should see a doctor.

III. ‘Used to’ and ‘would’ both refer to past action. ‘Used to’ refers to repeated habitual action in the past, which has now been discontinued. In connected speech, we often begin with ‘used to’ and then change to ‘would’.

- a) The athlete used to practice daily for twelve hours. He would then win several prizes.
- b) The other birds who were living on the same tree used to give him small shares from their meals for his survival.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.4

1. Now fill in the blanks in the following sentences with either ‘will’ or ‘shall’.
 - i. I _____ post this letter tomorrow.
 - ii. The examinations _____ begin next week.
 - iii. I have not met my grandfather for a month now. I _____ see him next time.
 - iv. _____ you please stop talking.
 - v. _____ I serve dinner now?
 - vi. You _____ not steal.
 - vii. _____ you change this bulb for me?
2. Now fill in the blanks in the sentences below, with ‘would’ or ‘should’
 - i. He said his brother was in the Army and posted on the border and he had written to say that he _____ come home on leave on the 6th. 2
 - ii. The teacher said we _____ work harder.
 - iii. You _____ not eat so many sweets.
 - iv. _____ you pass the rice please?
 - v. He said that the train was very late, but it _____ arrive within the next fifteen minutes.



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3. Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with 'used to' or 'would'.
- i. When I was in primary school I _____ hate going to school.
 - ii. My brother _____ bully me as a child. Then I _____ call out to my sister for help.
 - iii. In his youth, John _____ travel extensively, exploring different countries.
 - iv. The old bookstore downtown _____ be a popular meeting spot for intellectuals.
 - v. Sarah _____ speak three languages fluently when she was younger.
 - vi. Back in the 1980s, they _____ throw extravagant parties every month.
 - vii. Before the company expanded globally, its headquarters _____ be a small office in the suburbs.
4. Now, fill in the blanks in the sentences below with 'would', 'wouldn't', 'should', 'shouldn't'.
- i. When we were in Delhi we _____ go to the zoo every week.
 - ii. You _____ read in bad light. It will harm your eyes.
 - iii. _____ you mind opening the window, please?
 - iv. You _____ wear a helmet when you are driving a scooter.
 - v. I _____ like to speak to the manager.
 - vi. _____ you like to try another outlet?
5. Read the dialogue and fill in the blanks with 'will', 'won't' and 'would':
- Suresh: I _____ go to the library tomorrow.
- Mohit: I know it may be difficult for you, but _____ you be able to pick me up?
- Suresh: Yes, of course I _____. But I _____ go late in the evening.
- Mohit: About what time _____ that be? I _____ be ready.

VOCABULARY ENRICHMENT**Idioms**

Idioms are expressions that convey a figurative meaning of a group of words different from the literal interpretation of the words.

Examples:

1. Break the ice: To initiate a conversation in a social setting.
2. Bite the bullet: To face a difficult situation with courage.
3. Cost an arm and a leg: Extremely expensive.
4. Hit the nail on the head: To describe exactly what is causing a situation or problem.
5. Jump on the bandwagon: To join others in doing something popular or trendy.
6. Kick the bucket: To die.
7. Let the cat out of the bag: To reveal a secret.
8. Piece of cake: Something very easy to do.
9. Raining cats and dogs: Heavy rain.
10. Under the weather: Feeling unwell or sick.
11. Burn the midnight oil: To work late into the night.
12. Spill the beans: To disclose a secret.
13. Throw in the towel: To give up or surrender.
14. Through thick and thin: Support in both good and bad times.
15. Burn bridges: To damage relationships.
16. Cry over spilled milk: To lament over something that has already happened and cannot be changed.
17. Don't count your chickens before they hatch: Don't make plans based on something that might not happen.
18. A piece of the pie: A share of something, usually profits.
19. Back to the drawing board: Starting over after a failure or setback.

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20. Hit the hay: Go to bed.
21. Kick the bucket: To die.
22. Break a leg: Good luck.
23. Hit the hay: Go to bed.
24. Every cloud has a silver lining: There is something positive in every negative situation.
25. Cut to the chase: Skip the preliminary details and get to the main point.
26. Burning the candle at both ends: Working excessively or exhausting oneself by doing too much.
27. The ball is in your court: It's your turn to take action or make a decision.
28. Bite off more than you can chew: To take on a task that is way too big or beyond one's capabilities.
29. Cost a pretty penny: To be expensive or costly.
30. Don't cry over spilled milk: Don't waste time worrying about things that have already happened and cannot be changed.

Idioms are used to add colour and depth to language, but their meanings may not be obvious to those unfamiliar with them.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 5.5**

1. Read each sentence carefully and identify the correct meaning of the underlined idiom. Choose the most appropriate option from the given choices.
 - i. He always knows how to read between the lines during a conversation.
 - a) Take everything literally
 - b) Understand the implied meaning
 - c) Ignore important details
 - ii. When the teacher announced a surprise quiz, the students had to hit the books immediately.

- a) Literally strike their textbooks
 - b) Study intensively
 - c) Avoid studying altogether
- iii. After a long day of hiking, Sarah was on cloud nine when she reached the mountain's summit.
- a) Feeling extremely happy
 - b) Exhausted and tired
 - c) Afraid of heights
- iv. The new employee decided to burn the midnight oil to finish the project on time.
- a) Work late into the night
 - b) Literally set oil on fire
 - c) Take a break from work
- v. When faced with a challenging problem, it's important to put your thinking cap on.
- a) Literally wear a special hat
 - b) Use your intelligence and think hard
 - c) Avoid thinking about the problem
- vi. Mark's excuse for being late sounded fishy; it seemed like he was pulling my leg.
- a) Telling the truth
 - b) Teasing or joking
 - c) Physically pulling someone
- vii. Despite facing many obstacles, Jane decided to bite the bullet and pursue her dream.
- a) Give up on her dream
 - b) Face a difficult situation with courage



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- c) Literally bite a bullet
- viii. When the unexpected guests arrived, Mary had to think on her feet to prepare a quick meal.
- a) Literally stand on her feet
- b) Quickly come up with a solution
- c) Take a long time to plan
- ix. Peter's plan to start his own business was a piece of cake compared to his previous job.
- a) Very challenging
- b) Involving a literal cake
- c) Extremely easy
- x. The team's victory was the result of everyone pulling together during the game.
- a) Working separately
- b) Collaborating and working as a team
- c) Physically pulling each other
2. Use the following idioms in correct forms in the sentences below:
- Have a finger in every pie
 - Put our heads together
 - Have all the facts on his fingertips
 - Put her foot down
 - Make head or tail of
- i. Our questions were quickly answered as the travel agent _____.
- ii. I can't _____ of this strange message.
- iii. Ravi knows a little about all the six different projects. Let's ask him about your project as he _____.

- iv. Let's _____ and see if we can decipher this message in code.
- v. The principal _____ and told his clerks that he wasn't going to grant him any more leave.



WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT

- Vedic culture and philosophy has ushered in profound spiritual possibilities, particularly with reference to our relation to nature and the divinity present in it.
- The current environmental crisis requires immediate attention and a paradigm shift in the global ethos that tends to abuse and damage nature.
- The values enshrined in our Vedic heritage can enable and motivate us towards positively protecting and conserving our natural resources.
- One should develop awareness of inter-dependability and inter-relatedness of ecological systems
- People must not demand or expect to control or dominate other creatures. They are forbidden from exploiting nature.



TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. What do you understand about eco-spirituality and eco-care? Can you discuss these ideas as they are enshrined in the Vedas.
2. What is the sacred importance given to the water from the Ganga as Ganga Jal? How do you think, this devotional cultural belief may be re-visited, towards purifying the Ganga? Can you take some lessons from the Namami Gange program?
3. In what way, does our sacred attitude to plants and trees like the tulsi and peepal important towards nature conservation?
4. What is the religious and cultural importance of sacred groves in India? In what way do they contribute to our environmental consciousness?
5. "The whole world is the body of God". Discuss the aspirations in this quote.



Notes

**Notes****ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS****5.1**

1. The prayer encompasses peace in various elements of nature, including the heavens, earth, waters, herbs, and trees, as well as blessings from divine entities for universal peace.
2. The Shantipath emphasises peace in both the external world and within each individual soul, reflecting the Vedic emphasis on harmony and well-being.

5.2

1. The Rigveda emphasises the importance of not destroying forests and advocates for afforestation to maintain ecological balance.
2. Animals and trees are often treated as representatives of certain deities or symbolic of divine principles in Vedic mythology.

5.3

1. Mother Earth (Prithivi) and the importance of protecting, preserving, and caring for the environment.
2. It warns that if the earth is not preserved, humans will suffer the consequences in a vicious cycle.

5.4

1.
 - i. shall
 - ii. will
 - iii. will
 - iv. will
 - v. shall
 - vii. will
 - vii. will
2.
 - i. would

- ii. should
- iii. should
- iv. would
- v. would
- 3. i. used to
- ii. used to, would
- iii. used to
- iv. used to
- v. used to
- vi. would
- vii. used to
- 4. i. would
- ii. shouldn't
- iii. would
- iv. should
- v. would
- vi. would
- 5. will, won't, will, will, would, will

5.5

- 1. i. b)
- ii. b)
- iii. a)
- iv. a)
- v. b)
- vi. b)



Notes

Ecology and
Environment



Notes

- vii. b)
- viii. b)
- ix. c)
- x. b)
- 2. i) had all the facts on his fingertips
- ii) make head or tail
- iii) has a finger in every pie
- iv) put our heads together
- v) put her foot down