Chapter 4: Growing up with Nature

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4.1 Welcome to the Village

Q1 Write names of five colourful flowers in your area. For example, Palash is called Kesuda in Gujarat.

The textbook shows a table with three columns — 'Name of the flower', 'Local name', and 'Draw and colour flower of your choice' — with five blank rows for students to fill in. Write five colourful flowers from your area, their local names, and draw each one in the third column. Sample flowers: Marigold (Genda), Hibiscus (Gurhal), Lotus (Kamal), Jasmine (Mogra), and Palash (Kesuda in Gujarat). Draw and colour each flower simply — a few petals around a centre circle is enough for Class 4.

4.2 Make a Model of a House

Q1 Make the model of a house using materials from nature such as clay, wooden sticks, hay, grass, leaves, etc. Decorate it with an art form of your choice.

Collect clay, wooden sticks, hay, dry grass, and leaves. Shape the walls with clay, use sticks as a frame, and layer hay or grass for the roof. Once dry, decorate the walls using rice-flour paste, natural colours, or simple line patterns inspired by traditional art such as Gond or rangoli.

4.3 Prepare a Natural Dye

Q1 Let us prepare a natural dye. Collect some flowers, leaves, barks, and roots such as beetroot, hibiscus, and marigold. Boil them in water, strain the liquid, and use it to paint a piece of light-coloured cloth.

Collect plant parts with colouring properties (such as beetroot, hibiscus petals, or marigold flowers). Boil them in 1–2 litres of water for 30 minutes to an hour, then strain out the plant material. Soak a light-coloured cloth in the dye overnight, squeeze it, and dry it the next morning to reveal the natural colour.

4.4 Traditional Ways of Preserving Grains

Q1 Find out some traditional ways of preserving grains and vegetables at your place, and fill the table. One example given is Tumri (Uttarakhand) — a container made from a dried bottle gourd.

Sample answer: Earthen pots (matkas) lined with neem leaves are used in many states to keep grains safe from insects. Bamboo baskets coated with cow dung on the outside are used in villages to store grains, as the coating protects against pests. Underground pits (called kothi or bakhri in some regions) are used to store large quantities of grain, as the cool temperature slows spoilage.

4.5 Plants as Medicine and First Aid

Q1 Discuss with the elders in your family and write the name of the plant, its parts, and its uses. (Example: Indian basil (Tulsi) — Leaves; Carom seeds (Ajwain) given as example.)

Sample answer: Tulsi (Indian basil) — its leaves are used as a remedy for cough, cold, and fever. Ajwain (carom seeds) — seeds are used to relieve stomach pain and indigestion. Neem — its leaves and oil are used as mosquito repellent and antiseptic. Ginger (Adrak) — its root is used to soothe sore throats and aid digestion.

Q2 What things should be kept in a first-aid box?

A first-aid box should contain bandages, antiseptic cream or ointment, cotton wool, adhesive plasters, scissors, a thermometer, ORS (oral rehydration salts), pain-relief balm, and mosquito repellent cream.

Q3 Why do you think providing first-aid is important if someone gets injured?

First aid helps reduce pain and prevent a wound from getting infected right away. It provides immediate care that can stop bleeding, stabilise an injury, and give the person time to reach a doctor.

4.6 Traditional Dances and Electricity

Q1 Find out the traditional dances and songs of your region. Perform a traditional dance with your classmates and teachers for the Annual Day of your school.

Sample answer: Some well-known traditional dances from different regions are Bihu (Assam), Garba (Gujarat), Bhangra (Punjab), and Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh). Find out which traditional dance or folk song belongs to your state and practise it with your classmates to perform on Annual Day.

Q2 Imagine if there is no electricity in your area for two days. What changes will you see in your life?

Sample answer: Without electricity for two days, fans and lights would stop working, making it hot and dark. We could not use televisions, computers, or charge mobile phones. Food in the refrigerator might spoil. We would need to use candles or lanterns at night and rely on natural light during the day.

4.7 Rituals Connected to Plants and Animals

Q1 Talk to your elders and find out the rituals connected to animals and plants celebrated in your locality. Examples given: Vat Purnima (Banyan tree — worshipping); Hari Jiroti (Fruit-bearing trees — plantation); Kaziranga Elephant Festival (Elephant — awareness drive).

Sample answer: In many parts of India, the Peepal tree is considered sacred and people water it and pray near it. During Nag Panchami, snakes are worshipped as a sign of respect for nature. In some states, cows are decorated and worshipped during festivals like Govardhan Puja or Mattu Pongal. These traditions reflect our culture of caring for living beings around us.

4.8 Nature in Our Daily Life

Q1 What are the things that we use from nature in our daily life? (Activities: Eating — Fruits; Clothing — Cotton; Healthcare — Neem; Any other)

In eating, we use fruits, vegetables, grains, milk, and honey collected from nature. For clothing, we use cotton, silk, wool, and jute — all natural fibres. For healthcare, we use neem, tulsi, aloe vera, and turmeric. We also use wood and clay for building homes, and rivers and rain for water.

Q2 What challenges arise when we overuse natural resources? (Example: if we overuse wood, our forests deplete. Fill for Water, Soil, Sea products, Any other.)

If we overuse water, rivers and groundwater levels fall, causing shortages for drinking and farming. If we overuse soil by excessive farming or construction, it loses its fertility and erodes, making it harder to grow crops. If we overuse sea products such as fish, marine life reduces and ocean ecosystems are disturbed.

Q3 How can we protect the natural environment around us? (At home, at school, in parks, in our locality)

At home: save water, avoid wasting electricity, reduce plastic use, and compost food scraps. At school: reduce paper waste, plant trees in the school garden, and keep the surroundings clean. In parks: do not litter, avoid plucking flowers, and keep food and water for birds. In our locality: organise clean-up drives, say no to plastic bags, and spread awareness about saving plants and animals.

Q4 Design your herbal garden. Draw pictures of your favourite herbs in different parts of the garden and write down their names.

The textbook shows a large blank garden frame bordered by trees and bushes, with a 'MY GARDEN' sign at the bottom. Draw your favourite herbs in different sections of this space and label each one. Suggestion: draw Tulsi (basil) with oval leaves in one corner, Aloe Vera with thick pointed leaves in another, Mint (Pudina) with small round leaves, and Lemon Grass as tall thin blades. Write the herb name below each drawing. You may also draw herbs you like less — such as Neem or Bitter Gourd — and label them too.