

1. SOURCES OF HISTORY

All the children of the class had gathered a round Raju. Raju was telling about the size and weight of the sword and shield of Maharani Lakshmi Bai. Everyone was astonished. Raju was talking about the things which had been used much before he was born. How could Raju know about the events of ancient times? After sometime Raju himself told them that he learnt all this by looking at the things which are kept in the museum.

Just then the teacher entered the class. Harsha asked him about the ways of learning about the past- that is – history. Teacher said-

History can be known through several sources like – manuscripts, inscriptions, archaeological source materials, monuments, tools, utensils, weapons, coins etc.

The teacher felt that it was necessary to make the explanation simpler, so he explained further- See, near your house there might be some old buildings. Find out how old they are? Besides this, find out other things related to them. If you do this, it means you are trying to find out its history.

All the children nodded in affirmation. Radha stood up and said – Teacher, just now you told us about the several sources of history. Please explain them in detail.

Teacher said - Radha earlier the people did not know the way to read and write. So they used to converse through drawings. You must have read about the Kabara hill and the caves of Singhanpur in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh. It is said that those cave drawings are of the times of the early man. When man learnt writing he started engraving it on stones, these are called inscriptions. Later on writing was done on palm leaves, bhojapatra, tamrapatra, paper etc.



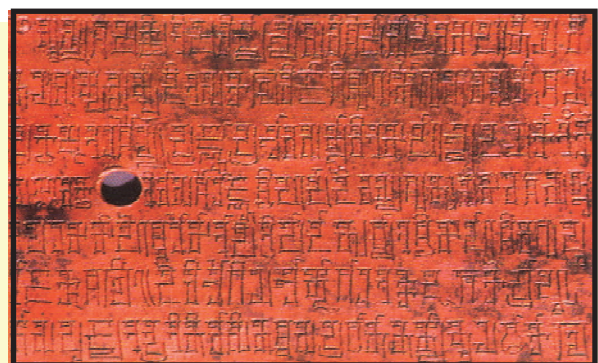
Pic.1.1 Wall Painting of Singhanpur Caves

New Words :

Inscriptions- writings engraved on rocks, pillars etc.

Bhojapatra- bark of birch trees, used as writing material by ancient Indians.

Tamrapatra- writings engraved on metal plates etc.



Pic. 1.2 Picture of Tamrapatra



Several children asked- Can we see the writings of ancient times? Teacher explained them that all these things can be seen in the museums. It is difficult for everyone to read them, as those are written either in Pali or Prakrit languages. These languages are not in use. Historians and archeologists learn to read these writings and are able to tell us what was written in the era by reading them. 'Archaeologist' many children asked. Yes- the teacher continued, archeologist is a person who excavates and studies the material remains of the past. You know that, if anything is covered with dust and sand it cannot be seen. At the time of floods, storms, earthquakes etc. several houses, cities and other things are buried under the earth. Archeologists search and excavate such places and tell the world about them. The study of the remains help us to understand the life styles of the people of that era.

Ankita asked- Do the old houses, mansions, temples, coins etc. also give us information about history?

The teacher told them that all these are the proofs of the happenings of that time. Old houses also tell us about the art of construction of that time. In the same manner old coins, tools, utensils, ornaments etc. also provide a lot of information.

The teacher further explained that by the study of old books we can learn about the society, cities, customs and traditions of that time.

Sapna said- Like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Quran, Gita, Bible etc.

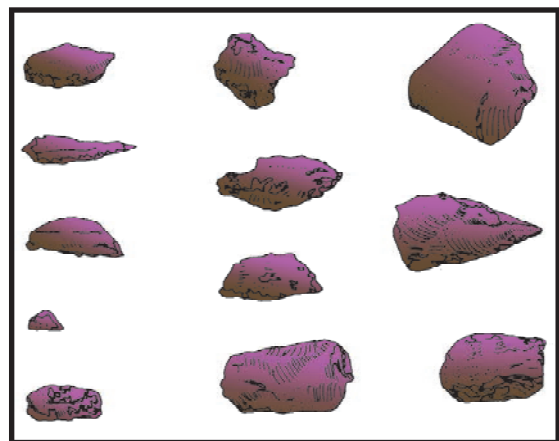
Teacher agreed and further said- when we return after a trip from anywhere, we tell people about that place and its people. Similarly, in ancient times also, foreign travellers would travel to several countries. The descriptions of their voyages provide a lot of information of that era.



Pic 1.3 Laxman Temple, Sirpur



Pic.1.4 Kuleshwar Temple, Rajim,



Pic. 1.5 Excavated things of early times



Monu informed that he had seen the wooden inscriptions which have been found from Kirari village of Bilaspur district in the Mahant Ghasidas Museum at Raipur. Teacher told them how several other ancient things have informed us about the lifestyle of that time, like- which type of utensils were used? How were their combs? What was their way of dressing up? What did they eat? And, which gods or goddesses were worshipped? etc.



Pic.1.6 Old Coins & Currency



Inscribed pillar from Kirari village in Raipur Museum

Besides this history informs us about the various kings and their empires, and about all people- big and small of that time.

Swati asked an interesting question- why should we study history?

The teacher explained – It is essential to know how we were earlier. To understand the present, knowledge of the past is a must.

History is very interesting and exciting. It is the story of our development. It is by reading history that we can learn a lot about our civilization and tradition. We know that a long and a great past is constantly helping us in moving forward in our development.

EXERCISE

I. Fill in the blanks-

1. Singhanpur caves are situated near _____.
2. Those who search for old things are called _____.
3. Mahant Ghasidas Museum is at _____.
4. Rock paintings made on Kabara hills are of the times of the _____.
5. _____ found from Kirari village is of historical importance.

II. Make correct pairs -

- | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Mahabharata | - | rock paintings. |
| 2. Pali | - | collection of rare things. |
| 3. Kabara hill | - | Book. |



4. Museum - writing engraved on rocks.
5. Stone inscription- ancient language.

III. Answer in Yes or No -

- a. History is the study of kings and emperors only.()
- b. Rock paintings of Singhanpur caves are of the times of early man.()
- c. Writings engraved on metal plates are called Bhojapatra.()

IV. Answer the following questions-

1. What is history?
2. What are the sources of knowing history?
3. In which languages were the ancient texts written ?
4. Who is an archeologist?
5. Why is it necessary to know history?
6. How do the ancient things tell us about the 'History'? or How can we Know the history by the ancient things?

Things to do

- 1- Visit any nearby museum and make a list of the things seen there.
- 2- How did people trade when there was no currency?

