



UNIQUE STUDY POINT

Chapter 4 Growing up as Boys and Girls

Question 1: Are the statements given alongside true or false? Support your answer with the use of an example-

- (a) All societies do not think similarly about the roles that boys and girls play.
- (b) Our society does not make distinctions between boys and girls when they are growing up.
- (c) Women who stay at home do not work.
- (d) The work that women do is less valued than that of men.

Answer: (a) True. Our society believes that the roles of boys and girls are different. Broadly speaking, our societies are mostly patriarchal i.e., a male is always the head of the family. For example, in the Indian society, boys are encouraged to handle outdoor work and girls are encouraged to manage household chores. However, in some Latin American countries, both boys and girls are encouraged to manage both outdoor and household work.

(b) False. Our society does make distinctions between boys and girls when they are growing up. This can be exemplified as follows: Girls are usually given toys such as dolls, whereas boys are given toys such as cars, bat and ball etc. As compared to boys, girls spend more time in the kitchen and they are the ones who help the mother in taking care of the requirements of the household. On the other hand, boys are more involved in outdoor activities.

(c) False. Though it is a preconceived notion that women who stay at home do not work, it is not true. Women who stay at home do almost an equal amount of work as compared to their male counterparts by running the household, which is not an easy task. On an average, women spend more time working as compared to men in tasks such as cleaning, washing clothes, cooking, taking care of children and the elderly, etc. However, their work goes unnoticed because a bulk of their work is household-related and does not contribute to the generation of income.

(d) True. Since our society considers men to be the breadwinners of the family, any work that a woman does is not valued much because it does not contribute to the total income of the family. However, it must be noted that the amount of time women spend in taking care of the household, which involves tasks such as preparing three meals, getting children ready for school, taking care of the general cleanliness of the household, managing rations, dealing with maids or other such domestic helps etc., is truly commendable. 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.

Question 2: Housework is invisible and unpaid work. Housework is physically demanding. Housework is time consuming.

Write in your own words what is meant by the terms 'invisible', 'physically demanding', and 'time consuming'? Give one example of each based on the household tasks undertaken by women in your home.

Answer:

- 'Invisible' here means something which is not noticed. A good example will be cleaning the house. It is expected that the house should be clean at all times, however, women have to put in great effort to maintain the cleanliness.
- 'Physically demanding' means something which requires hard work and physical exertion. An example of this is washing clothes which requires physical labor.
- 'Time consuming' means something which takes a long time to be done. Cleaning the entire house is an example of a time consuming household task.

Question 3: Make a list of toys and games that boys typically play and another for girls. If there is a difference between the two lists, can you think of some reasons why this is so? Does this have any relationship to the roles children have to play as adults?

Answer: List of toys and games that boys play with:

- Cars
- Guns

- Action figures
- Sports items like football, volleyball, cricket, basketball etc.

List of toys and games girls play with:

- Dolls
- Cooking items
- Dollhouses
- Fashion Toy

It is clear from the list above that society makes a distinction between boys and girls, apparent right from their growing phase itself. Boys are taught to be tough and strong, which highlights their manly features but girls are expected to remain in the confines of their feminine virtues. In the end, it pushes home the message that they have specific roles to play when they grow up into adult men and women. Later in life, this may even have adverse effects when it comes to choosing careers.

Question 4: If you someone working as a domestic help in your house or locality talk to her and find out a little bit more about her life – Who are her family members? Where is her home? How many hours does she work? How much does she get paid? Write a small story based on these details.

Answer: Shanthi has been working in my house for several years as domestic help. She hails from a village on the Karnataka – Tamil Nadu border. She lives here in Bangalore with her husband and a daughter in her early twenties, who is currently pursuing B.com from a reputed institute.

She comes at around 7.30 in the morning and gets done for the day by 6:00 in the evening. She does her work with diligence and skill, never even once making a fuss or complaining about the work she does.

She gets Rs.5000/- per month with all other amenities like food, clothing etc. Her husband is involved in making wax mannequins for clothing stores which also earns him a handsome amount every day. Thus, Shanthi is leading a happy and fruitful life with us and her family members.

Very Short Answer Questions

1. Where are Samoan Islands?

Answer: The Samoan Islands are part of a large group of small islands in the southern part of the Pacific ocean.

2. What is gender inequality?

Answer: Whenever distinctions are made between men and women and an unequal treatment is given to one of them, it is called gender inequality.

3. What are the duties of a domestic worker?

Answer: The duties of a domestic worker include sweeping and cleaning, washing clothes and dishes, cooking, looking after children or the elderly.

4. What is double burden of women's work?

Answer: Women have to work hard both inside and outside the home. This is often referred to as the double-burden of women's work.

5. What does Indian constitution provide about equality?

Answer: The Indian constitution promotes equality of men and women. The constitution bans any type of discrimination between man and a woman.

6. Has the goal of Indian constitution of equality been realised?

Answer: Even though the constitution promotes equality of men and women, inequality between the two sexes still exists. The burden of childcare and housework falls upon women in addition to the work they do outside.

7. What is identity?

Answer: Identity is a sense of self-awareness of who one is, typically, a person can have several identities.

8. What is care-giving?

Answer: Care-giving refers to a range of tasks related to looking after and nurturing. Besides physical tasks, they even involve a strong emotional aspect.

9. What is de-valued?

Answer: When someone is not given a due recognition for a task or job one has done, one can feel devalued. For example, if a boy has put in a lot of efforts into making a special birthday gift for his friend and this friend does not even acknowledge the gift, then the boy may feel devalued.

Short Answer Questions

1. How are differences made between men and women?

Answer: (i) Societies make clear differences between boys and girls which begin from a very young age.

(ii) Boys are given cars as toys while girls are given dolls to play.

(iii) Toys become a way of telling children that they will have different futures when they become men and women.

(iv) Girls are told to be soft and dressed properly.

(v) Boys are told to be tough and given specific work.

(vi) Men and women do not have the same status.

2. How is housework devalued?

Answer: Across the world, the main responsibility of housework and care giving tasks like looking after the family, elders, sick and children, lies with women. It is some work which is not/never paid for. Thus, society devalues the household work done by women.

Long Answer Questions

1. Write a note on growing of boys and girls in Samoan islands in the 1920s.

Answer: (i) Samoan islands are one of the large groups of small islands in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean.

(ii) In 1920s, children in this island did not go to school.

(iii) When the babies started walking on own, they were left under the care of their older brothers and sisters. Children as old as five years looked after their younger siblings.

(iv) After attaining nine years of age, boys joined the older boys for outdoor activities like fishing and planting coconuts. However, girls continued looking after the younger ones.

(v) When girls became teenagers, i.e., 14 years of age, they were allowed more freedom as they could then go for fishing and plantation activities or help their mothers in cooking, etc.

2. How are rural and urban women and girls maltreated?

Answer: (i) A number of housework tasks require heavy physical work.

(ii) In both rural and urban areas, women and girls have to fetch water from long distances.

(iii) In rural areas, women and girls carry heavy headloads of firewood.

(iv) Tasks like washing clothes, utensils, cleaning, sweeping and picking up loads require bending, lifting and carrying.

(v) Many women work hard at home doing domestic chores.

(vi) However, housework and care giving is not given due attention.

(vii) In this way, women are maltreated and do not have time for leisure.

3. What are Anganwadis?

Answer: (i) Anganwadis are childcare centres set up in the villages in the country.

(ii) The government has passed laws that make it mandatory for organisations that have more than 30 women employees to provide creche facilities.

(iii) The provision of creches helps many women to take up employment outside the home. It also makes it possible for more girls to attend schools.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

1. How is growing of children different in Madhya Pradesh?

Answer: (i) In 1960s, from Class VI onwards, girls and boys went to separate schools in MP.

(ii) Girls' school was different from boys' school. They had a central courtyard where they played in total seclusion and safety from the outside world.

(iii) The boys' school had no such courtyard and had a big playground.

(iv) In the evening, boys watched as school girls crowded the streets.

(v) Boys used the street to stand idle, while girls walked in groups as street for girls was simply a place to get straight home.

FOR MORE STUDY MATERIALS VISIT: WWW.UNIQUESTUDYONLINE.COM

JOIN US ON:

