

# 1

## Introduction

# Constant change is here to stay !

### SESSION AT A GLANCE

#### Story

*Words of wisdom*

#### Discussion

*What I know about change*

#### Recap

*The last four kits*

#### Game

*The chain of change*

#### Home activity

*Worksheet 1  
Challenge !*

## Preparing for the session

This introductory session begins with a story to make the point that everything changes. The characters in this story will make an appearance in some of the following sessions as well, so try to give each of them a distinct 'personality' while reading out the story. Read the flipchart in advance, so that you can make the story-telling more effective.

The story is followed by a brief discussion and then a recap of the **Sangati** kits done so far. Go through the session to get the main points for the recap - especially those of you who are not familiar with the first four kits. You have to draw a diagram on the blackboard for this activity; it would be a good idea to do so before you begin the session - you can copy the drawing given in the manual. The last activity is a game which is to be played quickly.

The session ends with the distribution of a worksheet, which is to be completed at home. Make sure that your students file this worksheet (and other materials that they will get in the sessions to come) in their folders. They can use the folders that they have created as part of the first four kits of **Sangati**. Remind them to bring their folders to class regularly. In fact it would be a good idea to ask them to bring their folders to this session as it would help in the recap of the first four kits.

### Main ideas

- An important truth about life is that nothing is constant; everything changes.
- People change - their appearance, abilities, thoughts, opinions, relationships, all keep changing.
- The world around us also keeps changing - the study of history tells us that societies have always been changing.
- Our earth provides a great example of change - it started off as a hot ball of gas and is today a planet supporting millions of life forms.

# 1

## To conduct the session you will need

- Flipchart : *Words of wisdom*
- Copies of Worksheet 1 (one copy per child)

@Avehi Abacus Project

## Conducting the session

### Activity 1 Story

Words of wisdom

Tell the class that you are going to tell them a story that will introduce the topic of a new *Sangati* kit. Then use the flipchart to tell them the following story.

#### Frame 1

Buddharam is a city boy on his first trip to the Himalaya. Hearing that there are many holy men in the mountains he goes in search of one and is directed towards an ascetic, Buddhiram. He sees the holy man sitting on a rock surrounded by the majestic snow-capped peaks, and bows down before him. "Oh holy man," he says, "Give me some words of wisdom by which I can lead my life."



#### Frame 2

Buddhiram slowly opens his eyes and looks deeply into the eyes of the boy in front of him. "You want some words of wisdom, eh? Here are the wisest words you will ever hear - **everything changes all the time.**"



Buddharam blinks and waits. When Buddhiram starts closing his eyes again, he says impatiently, "Yes, go on!" Buddhiram looks at him, surprised. "Go on? There is no more. **Everything changes all the time.** That's it." Buddharam gets very upset. He says, "I came all the way to the Himalaya to hear this? It doesn't even mean anything and anyway it is not true."

Buddhiram glares at Buddhuram. "Go away, young man," he thunders, "I didn't call you here, and yet I have told you something that has taken me years and years to realise. You are foolish and very quick to reject things. Go away, before I loose control of myself. I have no time for you!"

### Frame 3

Buddhuram is worried. He has been told that it is dangerous to anger holy men; they might put a curse on you. So he says in a completely changed tone of voice, "Oh no, no, wise one, I did not mean to offend you. I only meant that . . . look at yourself. You are so wise. How could that change?"



Buddhiram's eyes twinkle. "Hmm, so now from offence you turn to flattery. Of course I change. Do you think I was always an old man with white hair sitting on this rock, contemplating? Every thought, every experience changes me and the way I look at the world."

### Frame 4

Buddhuram says, "True, I can see that. But surely some things don't change." He points to Buddhiram's staff. "Your staff, wise one. How much can a piece of wood change?"

Buddhiram looks at him pityingly. "And where did my staff come from? Where is the tree from which it was made? Where is the carpenter who cut it and fashioned it? And see, it grows old much as I do."



### Frame 5

Buddharam stops to think. Buddhiram's comment that he is foolish, has stung him. He wants to prove that he does not give up so easily. He looks around him and sweeping his arms, points to the peaks behind him, challenging, "What about these mountains?"



Buddhiram replies, "Now you need a lesson in history and geography. Haven't you learnt that the Himalaya are among the youngest of the mountains on earth? They got pushed up when the piece of land we now call India ran into the continent of Asia, just a few million years ago. From that time onwards many changes have occurred. Great forests have grown on their slopes, and it hasn't taken human beings long to cut them down. Look at all those bald patches. And see those gaping holes where the mountains have been cut open for their wealth. Oh yes young man, mountains change too."

### Frame 6

Buddharam looks around desperately. He sees a jug of water and pouring some into his palm, he holds it out to the guru. "Water, Guruji, water? It is the same everywhere!"



Buddhiram now looks very annoyed. "You are trying my patience. Don't you know that water changes to ice and steam. Water from the seas evaporates; clouds are formed; it rains; lakes fill and flow into the sea in a constant cycle of change that even an idiot like you should recognise as the rain cycle."

### Frame 7

Buddharam looks crestfallen. All things material do seem to change with time. But what about other things? He suddenly has an idea. He smiles broadly and says, "Guruji, they say man's greed never changes."



Buddhiram strokes his beard. He is beginning to like this boy - at least, he is persistent and he is beginning to think. Buddhiram says, "On the contrary, man's greed constantly changes. He wants new and varied things all the time. While some are greedy for food, others want wealth and fame. Greed, my son, constantly feeds on itself - it grows and grows."

### Frame 8

Buddharam speaks almost immediately - but this time the guru's words have put a further thought in his head. Buddhiram has the next question ready. "Wise one," he says triumphantly, "Can there be anything in the world as constant as a mother's love?"



Buddhiram laughs out loud. He really likes this boy! "You tell me," he says. "Isn't your mother's love for you today different from what it was when you were born? Wasn't her love then totally giving and protective? Didn't it change into pride in your achievements as you started growing up? Today, as she grows old and you are young and vigorous, can you deny that her love is tinged with respect and dependence? Isn't your mother's love ever-changing, yet ever-flowing?"

Buddharam thinks. He closes his eyes and thinks long and hard. It is true. Everything does change ! The holy man's words are indeed deep.

### Frame 9

He feels a change come over himself. He prostrates himself in front of Buddhiram and says, "Bless me, holy one, that one day I may be as wise as you."

"Tathasthu," says Buddhiram with a smile, and closes his eyes.



At the end of the story, ask the class whether they agree with Buddhiram that everything changes all the time. Give them a few minutes to respond, then move on to the next activity.

## **Activity 2** **Discussion**

*What I know  
about change*

Encourage children to talk about the changes that they see around them. Spend about 7 - 10 minutes on the activity. You could get them to talk about changes in the following :

- in personal appearances, relationships, feelings
- in their homes and families
- at school
- in fashions and social customs
- in the political life of the country like elections and changes in governments
- in the economy - like factories closing down or the rising cost of living
- in world events
- in the natural world - like changing seasons or the cutting of trees.

Encourage children to comment freely during this activity. Do not try to categorise their answers but do prompt them if necessary.

Sum up the discussion by making the following points.

This discussion showed us that many changes are taking place all around us. Some of these changes relate to people - the way they look or behave or think. Some of these changes relate to the world around us, to our society and to Nature. What Sudhisham said in the story is therefore true - everything does indeed change all the time.

One change that will affect all of us immediately is that we will now be starting a new kit of **Sangati** ! But before we talk about it, let us try to and remember what we have discussed in the kits so far.

### **Activity 3**

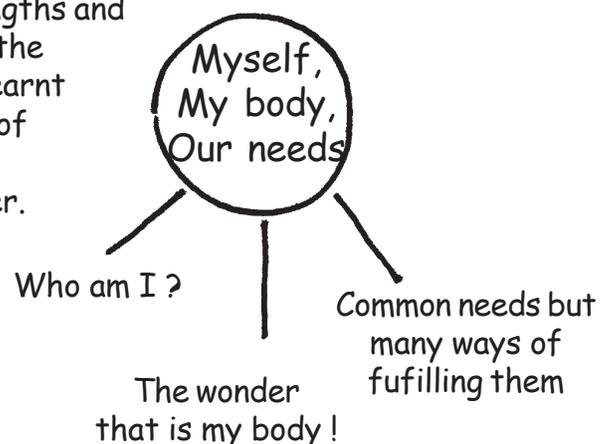
#### **Recap**

*The last four kits*

Remind the class of the four **Sangati** kits that they have done so far. Ask them to talk about the topics, games, stories, activities etc. that they remember from these kits. After they have come up with whatever they can, you could write the names of these kits and their themes on the blackboard in the graphic way shown here and tell them what was covered therein in more detail. End the discussion by telling the class a little bit about the theme of the current **Sangati** kit. The following points may help you in the recap.

#### **Kit 1 : Myself, My body, Our needs**

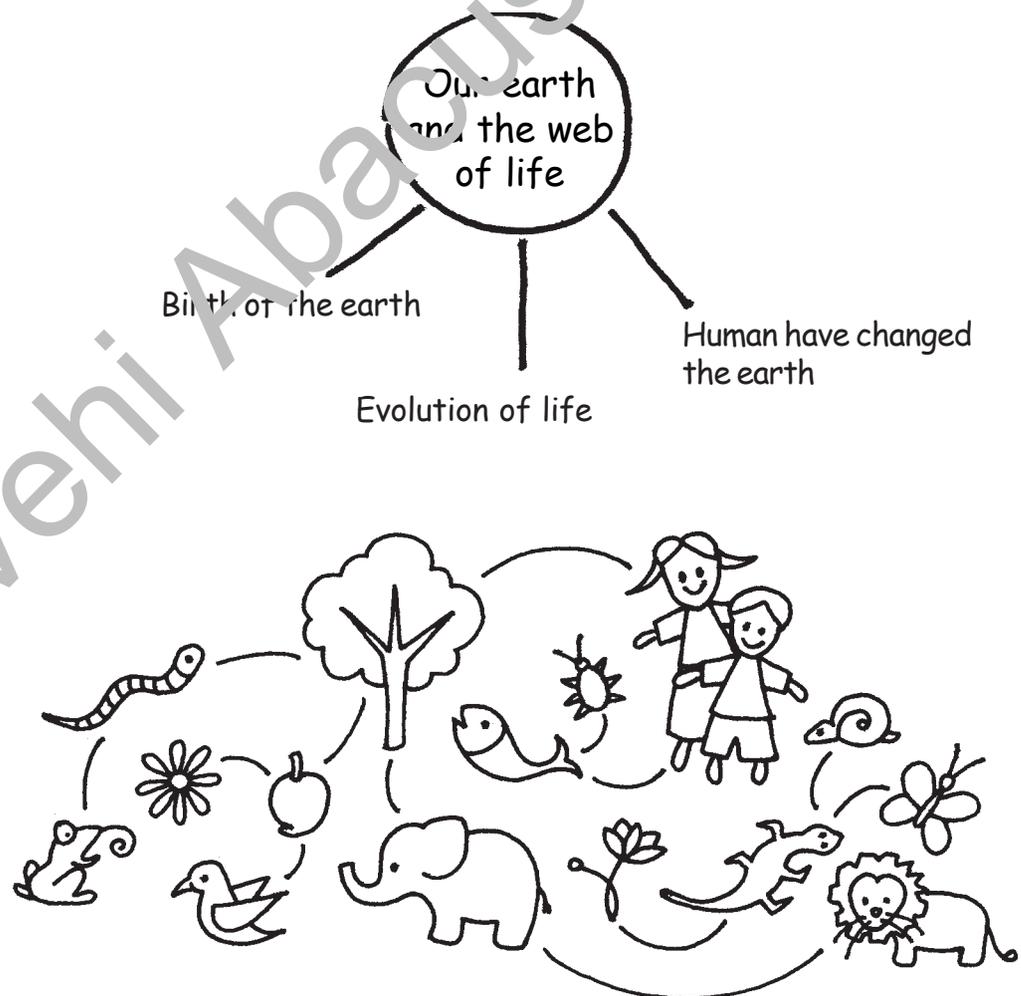
In this kit we learnt about ourselves - our likes and dislikes, strengths and weakness, our feelings and the influences on us. We also learnt to understand the working of our bodies and the changes that occur, as we grow older. Then we saw how all of us have the same needs but fulfill them in many different ways.



### Kit 2 : Our earth and the web of life

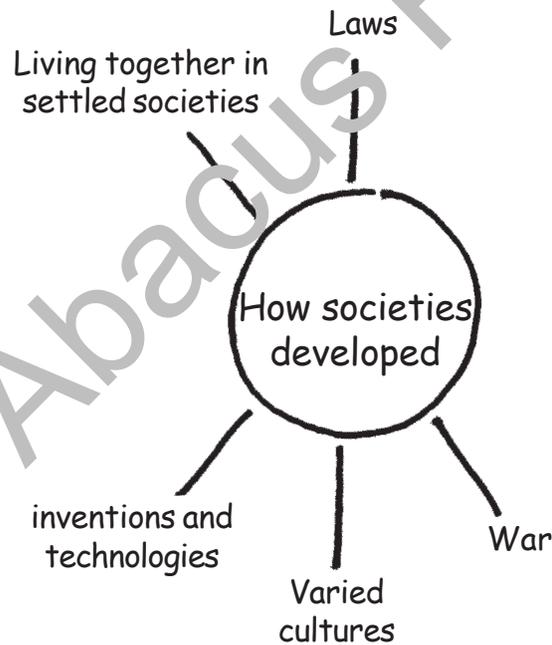
This kit told us the story of the birth of the universe and our earth, and the evolution of life on this wonderful planet of ours. We learnt how our solar system was born, how the earth's atmosphere developed, how life began in the warm, shallow seas of that time. We learnt about the hundreds of different animals and plants that lived and changed and evolved and disappeared from the earth and finally how humans evolved and changed so that you are all sitting in this class here today wondering about this miracle !

We also saw how humans have changed the earth in order to make their lives easier. We saw some of the wonderful things and also some of the horrible things that we humans have done to our earth.



### **Kit 3 : How societies developed**

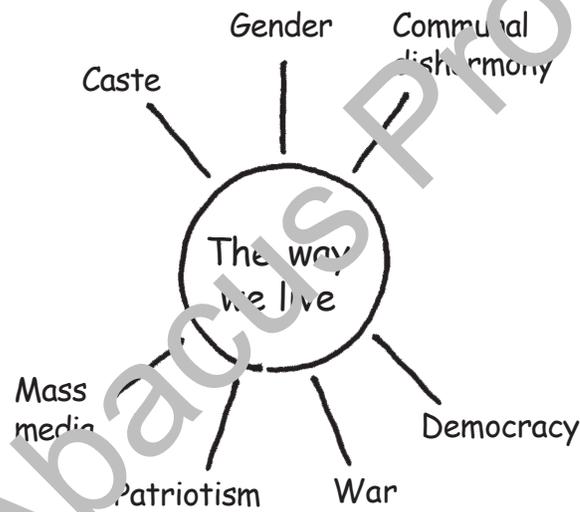
In this kit we saw how people have lived and worked together in many different ways throughout history. Thousands of years ago human beings learned to use the wealth of the earth to make things to fulfill their needs. Over time they made rules and laws that helped them to live together. Their discoveries and inventions, their wars, their art, music, drama and literature, all these put together show us how people in the past created societies and also how they interacted with each other. What they made and the ways in which they made them, all these changed their lives and also the earth itself.



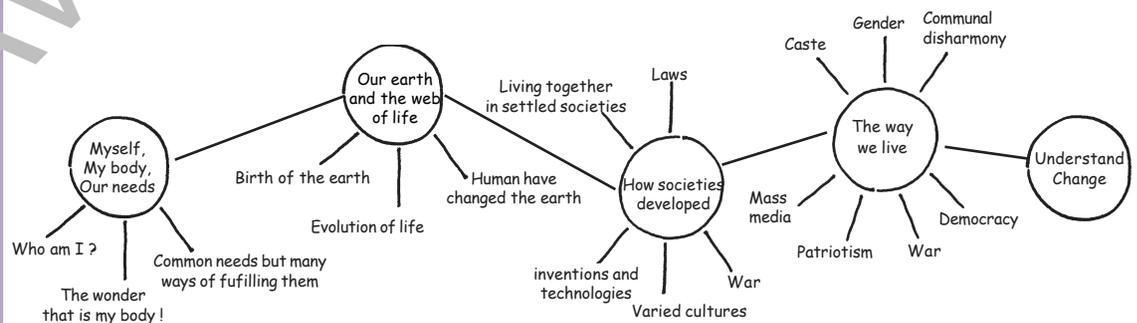
### **Kit 4 : The way we live**

In this kit we talked about our society today, that is, we learnt about some of the problems that our society faces and how different people (some famous and well respected, and some ordinary people like you and me) have tried to resolve such problems and create a better society. We saw how our society has changed over time and also the changes that are still taking place.

One thing that is common to all these kits is that they talked about change in some form or other. For example, we saw how our body changes in adolescence; how the dinosaurs disappeared; how the invention of the printing press changed the world; how the status of women is changing in today's society. In fact if you go through your file and read your worksheets, you will be able to see how you yourself have changed in this period.



Things around us change all the time and these changes affect all of us, so in this kit we will try to **Understand Change** in some detail. We will try to study the kinds of changes that happen to all of us, how we react to them, how we deal with them and also how we need to critically assess every change.



# 1

## Activity 4 Game

*The chain of  
change*

This is a fun game and shows how things keep changing. It is mainly a verbal game and must be played quickly. The game is to be played like this :

You have to start the game by saying a sentence with the word **change** in it; for example, "I **changed** my mind about buying the new shoes that I saw in the shop." Now write this first sentence on the blackboard. The next player (one of the children) has to use any word from the previous sentence and the word **change** to form a new sentence, for example, "The shop next door has **changed** from a grocer's to one selling mobile phones." The next player has to use any word from this sentence and the word **change** to form his / her own sentence.

While saying the sentence aloud, each player also has to change his / her **expression** or **gesture**.

Continue the game in this way until all the children (or at least those who want to play the game) have had a chance to play. The sentences need not be connected to each other in any way, except as described. There is no need to build up a story or an idea, but if that happens naturally, do not prevent it. If the children get stuck at any point, help them out by making up a sentence of your own.

When the last child has made up her sentence, write that one on the board as well. There is every chance that there will be no connection between the first sentence and the last. This will immediately show how much has changed and how far the class has travelled while playing the game !



## Home activity Worksheet 1

*Challenge !*

Distribute copies of Worksheet 1 to the class. Ask the children to complete it at home and file it in their personal folders.

