

# **NCERT SOLUTIONS**

**CLASS - 12th**



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Class : 12th

Subject : English

Chapter : 5

Chapter Name : The Argumentative Indian

Q1 What is Sen's interpretation of the positions taken by Krishna and Arjuna in the debate between them?

[Note Sen's comment: 'Arjuna's contrary arguments are not really vanquished... There remains a powerful case for 'faring well' and not just 'faring forward'.]

Answer. The Bhagavad Gita portrays the message of 'faring forward' despite all the challenges. Krishna advocates this message saying that one should fare forward irrespective of consequences. However, Sen feels that in the contemporary world of wars and violence the message of Arjuna 'faring well' is a more sensible one. He supports his statement by providing the example of J.R. Oppenheimer (the physicist who led the American team that developed the nuclear weapon). Sen believes that simply 'faring forward' may not be judicious in this era of violence as it may result in a much disastrous consequence. Instead, judging the situation sensibly and then taking the appropriate steps would be the best solution in the present day. Therefore he supports Arjuna's decision of faring well and not just forward.

Page : 187 , Block Name : Understanding the Text

Q2 What are the three major issues Sen discusses here in relation to India's dialogic tradition?

Answer. The issues which Sen mainly talks about are the issues regarding gender, caste, and voice and breaking these barriers under the argumentative tradition in India. He also states that these barriers have previously been broken on numerous occasions, sometimes as early as the 8th century BCE.

Page : 187 , Block Name : Understanding the Text

Q3 Sen has sought here to dispel some misconceptions about democracy in India. What are these misconceptions?

Answer. The two major misconceptions about democracy in India that Amartya Sen has sought to dispel are:

1. The assumption that the concept of democracy was a gift to India from the western world and that it simply adopted democracy after its independence.
2. That India, due to its history, is particularly suited for democracy.

Page : 187 , Block Name : Understanding the Text

Q4 How, according to Sen, has a tradition of public discussion and interactive reasoning helped the success of democracy in India?

Answer. Sen believed that public discussion and interactive reasoning helped in the success of democracy in India. According to him, Indian politics was deeply influenced by this. It resulted in making heterodoxy the natural state of affairs in India. Sen states that persistent arguments are an inherent part of public life in India. Reasoning introduces multiple perspectives and as a result, there is no imposition of a singular perspective. The opinion of the masses is an inherent structure of democracy and the tradition of public discussion and interactive reasoning has helped in augmenting the success of democracy in India.

Page : 188 , Block Name : Understanding the Text

Q1 Does Amartya Sen see argumentation as a positive or negative value?

Answer. Sen sees argumentation as a positive value. Argumentation helped in inducing heterodoxy in the politics of India. Through argumentation, multiple perspectives are introduced at the forefront and thus there is no imposition. Through argumentation, the opinion of the masses is upheld and that is what helps in keeping the democracy intact in our country. Thus Sen believes that argumentation is extremely important for the proper functioning of democracy.

Page : 188 , Block Name : Talking about the Text

Q2 How is the message of the Gita generally understood and portrayed? What change in interpretation does Sen suggest?

Answer. The Gita is usually interpreted as the one-sided wisdom given by Krishna of faring forward inspite of the consequences. However, Sen believes that Arjuna's consequential and more sensible analysis of faring well should also be considered in the context of the contemporary world of violence. Sen suggests that the interpretation of the Gita requires supplementation by the broader argumentative wisdom of the Mahabharata.

Page : 188 , Block Name : Talking about the Text

Q1 This essay is an example of argumentative writing. Supporting statements with evidence is a feature of this kind of writing.

For each of the statements given below state the supportive evidence provided in the essay:

(i) Prolixity is not alien to India.

(ii) The arguments are also, often enough, substantive.

(iii) This admiration for the Gita, Krishna's arguments, in particular, has been a lasting phenomenon in parts of European culture.

(iv) There remains a powerful case for 'faring well', and not just 'forward'.

Answer. The supportive evidence provided in the essay:

(i) "Krishna Menon's record of the longest speech ever delivered at the United Nations (nine hours non-stop)".

(ii) "The famous Bhagavad Gita, which is one small section of the Mahabharata, presents a tussle between contrary moral positions".

(iii) - "It was spectacularly praised in the early nineteenth century by Wilhelm von Humboldt as 'the most beautiful, perhaps the only true philosophical song existing in any known tongue'. In a poem in Four Quartets, Eliot summarises Krishna's view in the form of an admonishment: 'And do not think of the fruit of action! Fare forward'. Eliot explains: 'Not fare well/But fare forward, voyagers'."

(iv) - "As we reflect on the manifest problems of our global world (from terrorism, wars, and violence to epidemics, insecurity, and gruelling poverty), or on India's special concerns (such as economic development, nuclear confrontation or regional peace), it is important to take on board Arjuna's consequential analysis, in addition to considering Krishna's arguments for doing one's duty."

Page : 188 , Block Name : Appreciation

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