Unit Eleven
The Pursuit of Wisdom

11.1 Knowledge

Knowledge is the most powerful tool in the hands of man. It influences the way man lives and interacts with nature. The developments in science and the transformations in technology have impacted greatly on social life. This transformation has brought a change in our conception of distance and time. Within seconds you can reach people in any corner of the world. Mobile telephone technology, for example, has reduced barriers of communication. This has facilitated effectiveness and productivity on a global scale. Places separated by great distances can be easily reached in hours as air travel has become more common.

Due to the technological developments, which are manifestations of knowledge, the world no longer seems such a huge place as had been thought in the past. Through knowledge, society continues to change. You even see a transformation in yourself as it has the power to effectively alter your social status.

Many great names in the world are linked to remarkable achievements. In Ethiopia there were great personalities whose achievements will long be remembered. We need to respect people with knowledge and follow in their footsteps to help change and transform our country.

11.2 The Significance of Knowledge

Humans have a natural tendency to want to know more about the world. They have an instinctive thirst for knowledge. Humans require knowledge to harness and reshape the environment they live in. It has given them power on earth. Humans improve actions of past

generations to make life better. The skills we have developed over the years have helped us to become masters of nature. Today, humans are conquering outer space and have explored the moon.

Knowledge has helped man develop the power of reasoning.

- **Reasoning** is a process of thought that helps to make objective **judgment.**
- Knowledge, reason and objectivity are related.
- When knowledge and reason are put together, they can give rise to objective judgment.
- So the basis of objective judgment is knowledge.
- With knowledge you make your life good.
- With knowledge you are powerful, but with ignorance you are weak.
- A democratic system benefits from citizens' knowledge, whereas ignorance weakens it.
- Democracy is based on itizens being knowledgeable and informed.
- In order for people to make good decisions, they need to gather as much objective infor on the issue as possible.
- Once you have ledge, then you can use reasoning to make a sound gment.
- Knowledge gives you power in any given situation.
- When you are ignorant you become weak.
- The development of Ethiopia is supported by the knowledge of its citizens

11.3 Knowledge and Data

Knowledge involves the gathering of ***information and data***.

- It is the sum total of what has been perceived, discovered, or inferred.

- It is about facts, ideas and skills that are shared through generations.
- Specific knowledge can be obtained through analyzing and interpreting data.

Data is figures obtained from observations or surveys.

- They serve as a basis for making calculations and drawing conclusions.
- The conclusions drawn from data about a specific area may become useful information.
- After sorting the raw data and analyzing it you can draw conclusions.
- The information obtained can help you make an informed decision.
- As a citizen you need to make choices from different viewpoints on public issues based on knowledge.
- This knowledge accelerates the development of the country.

11.4 Information as a Source of Knowledge

Information helps us to develop our knowledge.

- One of the methods through which we can gather information is through ***research***.
- In carrying out research you identify different sources of information and data in various formats such as books, journals and other written documents, and these would be available in libraries and also in other educational organizations.
- **Quantitative data,** in the form of statistics of grades achieved over previous years, could be found in your school and in other educational establishments including the Ministry of Education.
- Some data may be found on the internet.

- **Interviews** with teachers and students may provide qualitative data, and/or a survey of past and present Grade 12 students could reveal information that could also be appropriate.
- Other sources in written, numerical, oral and other formats such as practical work, art and music.
- Thus information can be communicated in a variety of ways

Once you have gathered your information you need to **interpret** it. This does not simply mean translating it into a language you understand. If the information is quantitative, you will need to identify trends from which you can draw conclusions from the facts and figures. If it is qualitative, you will need to consider how much can be relied upon, and what can or cannot be substantiated or supported by other evidence.

You need to carefully ***analyze*** the information to draw out that which you will need. At this stage you will evaluate what is important and what is not. You can then discard that which is misleading or superfluous. You can then use the remaining information to justify your study and come up with ***conclusions***.

11.5 Reading for more Knowledge

One way of obtaining knowledge is through reading. You can read for many different reasons;

- it could be for enjoyment,
- Learning or understanding.
- Reading is to get more knowledge. For instance, reading books about Mars will enable you to know more about Earth's neighbor.

In your Grade 7 chemistry textbook you have would have learnt about atoms. You have defined an atom as the smallest piece of a simple substance or element that, when combined with other substances.

forms molecules. You have also learned that it is made up of electrons, protons and neutrons. You can study it because scientists discovered the knowledge about atom. The many changes you see in the world and the development of technology are the results of efforts made by scientists. Scientists discover new knowledge because they are studying, observing and reading. Apart from what you read for knowledge, you should also read for pleasure.

When you read fiction you get pleasure and become more interested to read further. When we find a subject matter that interests us we want to find out more about it, often through reading on the topic. When we find a fiction author whose books we enjoy, we try to read all of their books. Reading for pleasure develops our reading skills in other areas. Developing a reading habit means to march on the great highway of knowledge. The habit of reading starts when you are committed to read and make it a culture. If you give more time to reading, then it indicates that you are on the right course to developing the habit. The more you read, the easier it gets.

Reading is one of the cornerstones of formal and informal learning. When you are able to cultivate the habit of reading you will become an informed person. A great reader is a person who does not waste his/ her time for no use but one who reads continuously to get ever new knowledge. Aim to be a great reader and aim to contribute to the development of Ethiopia.

11.6 Developing Reading Habits

The habit of reading is linked to the pursuit of wisdom. Developing a reading habit expands the frontiers of knowledge. Some societies in the world, particularly the industrialized countries, have developed the habit of reading. A widely read population is also an informed public

- Myths are unscientific stories that people would like to tell and believe.

Until the making of the globe and maps etc. there was a myth that the earth was flat. But, after the Great Discovery of the 16th Century, it was proved wrong. Until then this myth had obstructed the expansion of navigation and trade. Although myths are important, they should not be a barrier to develop our culture.

With knowledge, the world has transformed a great deal.

- Knowledge is key to improving the life of people.
- Knowledge, wisdom and truth are tools to a good life.
- Governments are making use of knowledge to improve the living conditions of people.
- Knowledge is truth. Knowledge creates the force that changes society.

Unit Eleven Review Questions

Part I – Multiple choices

1. What do you understand by the pursuit of wisdom?
   A. it means to be serious in life
   B. it means to be able to guide life on the basis of knowledge
   C. it means not to be rational on all things
   D. it means to do good to others
2. What are the components of knowledge?
   A. Information B. Truth
   B. Data D. All Of the above
3. The lowest level of awareness about something is
   A. Information C. Understanding
   B. Knowledge D. Wisdom
4. Which one of the following is an important data collection instrument?
   A. Television C. Radio
   B. Commonsense D. Observation
5. The skill of using information involves one of the following. Which one?
   A. Making generalizations from the information
   B. Checking reliability of the information
   C. Trusting the truthfulness of the source of information
   D. Keeping sources of the information in secret
6. Which one of the following could be a very important source of information for a Researcher who wants to study the impact of HIV/AIDS on the social life of Ethiopians living with the virus?
   A. Interviewing individuals living with the virus
   B. Reading international news papers
   C. Reading scientific medical journals
   D. Interviewing medical doctors and specialist

7. You have learnt from your civics lessons that more than 70 languages are spoken in Ethiopia. This form of knowledge is
   A. Concept C. Data
   B. Fact D. Generalization
8. In order to be a good citizen that can contribute to the development of your country, you should be
   A. Aggressive C. Powerful
   B. Knowledgeable D. Authoritative
9. Which one of the following groups of activities used in conducting scientific research is in correct chronological order?
   A. Problem identification, information gathering, information analysis, conclusion and suggestion
   B. Problem identification, information analysis, information gathering, w and suggestion
   C. Information gathering, problem identification, information analysis, conclusion and suggestion
   D. Information gathering, information analysis, problem identification and conclusion and suggestion
10. Which one of the following indicates the purposes of reading?
   A. Discouraging literacy
   B. Preserving dogmatism
   C. Promoting tolerance
   D. Searching for information.

Part II – True or false

1. Reason is related to knowledge.
2. Data helps to obtain knowledge.
3. There are myths that are important to know.
4. The habit of reading is essential for your life.
5. Man changed the world through knowledge.