

Chapter 6

Understanding Media

Q.1 In what ways does the media play an important role in a democracy?

Ans.: Media plays an important role in a democracy in the following ways:

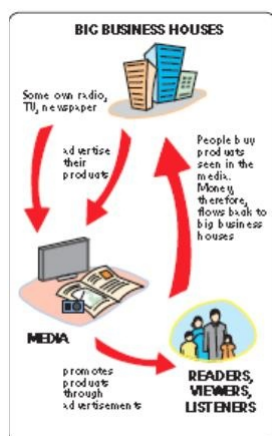
1) Media has brought people across the globe closer to each other. Now, people have access to world news and entertainment.

2) Media helps in forming public opinion.

3) It is through the media, people learn about the working and important programmes of the government.

4) Media is considered as the fourth pillar of democracy. It plays an important role in defining ideas and public views regarding day-to-day happenings at the national and international level.

Q.2 Can you give this diagram a title? What do you understand about the link between media and big business from this diagram?



Ans.: “Media: Under Corporate Influence” could be one of the suitable title.

Through this diagram, we could see that how media like newspapers, TV, radio etc. are being used by the big Business houses to promote their products, through the means of advertisements in the media. These advertisements influence the readers or viewers to buy products. Thus, money invested by the big houses in advertisements comes back to them by the sale of their products. Also, it shows that advertisements of product led to an increase in the cost of the product.

Moreover, the ownership of the media by the big business houses results in the publishing of the biased information. The stories which promote the interests of the business houses will be promoted through these media houses. The people never get the chance to hear the other side of the story.

Que. 3 You have read about the ways in which the media ‘sets the agenda’. What kind of effect does this have in a democracy? Provide two examples to support your point of view.

Ans.: Because of the significant role played by the media in shaping our ideas and thoughts, it is often said that the media “set the agenda.”

Thus, it is evident that the media plays a significant role in deciding what to stories to share and therefore decides what is newsworthy. This kind of influence can have both positive and negative effects in a democracy. If the media focuses only on one side of the issue, it will reflect a biased opinion on the public. The views of the masses will be based on only one side of the story. They will not be able to judge or form their own opinion. To avoid such kind of situation, the media always should present an unbiased and balanced report and let people themselves judge which party is wrong or right. Examples: In one of the published reports, media highlights the alarmingly high level of pesticides in cola drinks. It made us aware of monitoring these colas as per international standards and quality. On a positive note, media helped us focus on an issue which affects our lives. Also, if this would not have been in the news, we might not be aware of the situation. On the other hand, there are several instances



where media fails to raise awareness on significant issues in our lives. For example, drinking water is a significant problem in the country. Every year, thousands of people suffer and die because they do not get safe drinking water. However, we seldom find the media discussing this issue.

Q.4 As a class project, decide to focus on a particular news topic and cut out stories from different newspapers on this. Also watch the coverage of this topic on TV news. Compare two newspapers and write down the similarity and differences in their reports. It might help to ask the following questions—

- a. What information is this article providing?
- b. What information is it leaving out?
- c. From whose point of view is the article being written?
- d. Whose point of view is being left out and why?
- d. Whose point of view is being left out and why?

Ans.: This is a group-Activity based question which should be done in the class under the guidance of subject teacher.