

# Unit 11

## The Pursuit of Wisdom

### Introduction

This unit on the pursuit of wisdom is an important part to equip you with the knowledge and wisdom you need in life. You will learn the basis of knowledge and wisdom and the way to acquire them. You will also learn about the importance of knowledge and learning. You will understand that knowledge helps make wise decisions, overcome poverty and avoid harmful traditional practices. Finally, you will learn about information and data and their use in knowledge.

### Lessons

1. The Basis of Knowledge and Wisdom
2. Information and Data
3. Reading and Studying
4. The Pursuit of Truth

### Key words and concepts

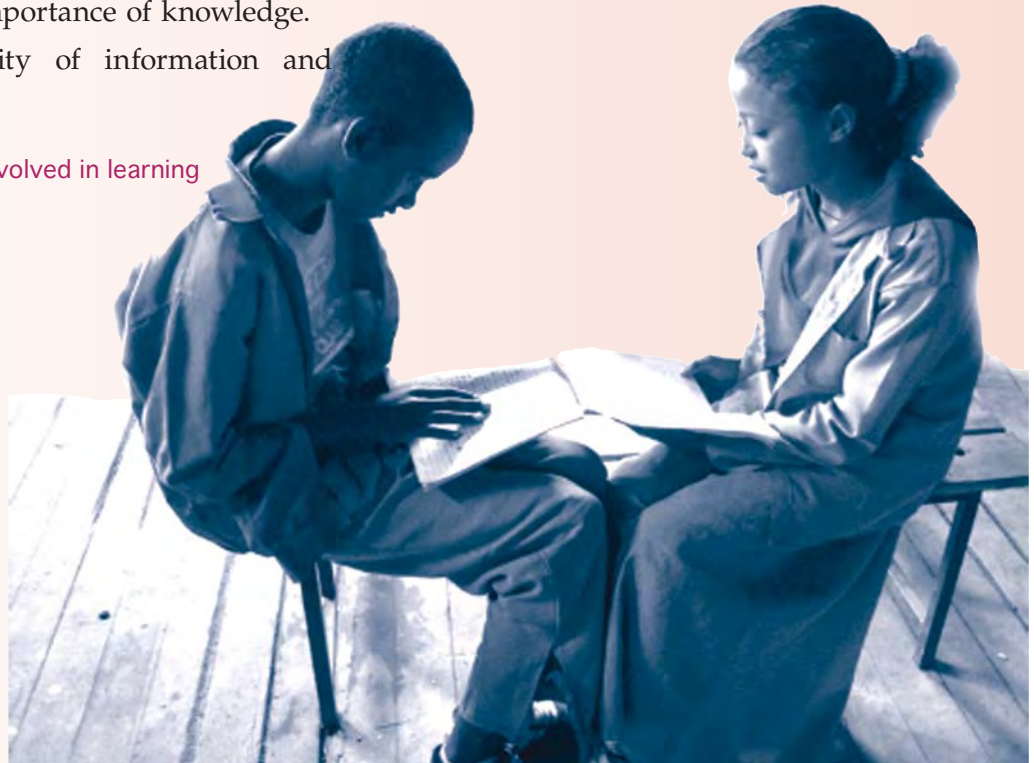
- Concepts
- Data
- Facts
- Generalization
- Harmful Traditional Practices
- Information
- Knowledge
- Learning
- Poverty
- Studying
- Truth
- Truthfulness
- Wisdom

### What you will learn

#### You will:

- acknowledge the importance of knowledge.
- realize the necessity of information and data.

Young students involved in learning



# 1

## LESSON

# The Basis of Knowledge and Wisdom

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- define what knowledge is.
- explain the methods of acquiring knowledge.
- describe the necessity of knowledge.

Can you say something about wisdom? In groups discuss what makes a person wise.

**Knowledge** can be defined as understanding or learning that which is known. The purpose of knowledge is to know about things around us. **Wisdom** means to be wise in handling acquired knowledge for good use. Knowledge is acquired when you start to question what exists around you. This question led man to discover many things. It is this question that opens up the highway of knowledge. More knowledge will be obtained as you keep on exploring.

Knowledge is acquired through learning. **Learning** is a life-time process, and knowledge is accumulated, stored and carried through generations. It is as old as man himself and will continue to exist as long as man exists. Learning is a purposeful and conscious activity that man practices. He has two ways of doing it. One way is through formal learning and the other is through informal learning.

**Formal learning** is acquired in institutions. This involves teachers and students. One such place of learning is your own school. Schools ranging from kindergartens to universities form the formal learning establishments. But these are not the only places and ways of learning.

The second form of learning is **informal learning**. It is called informal because unlike formal knowledge, what is obtained here may not be structured knowledge. It is called informal because you get the learning throughout your life time without having to go to school. Unlike the formal learning process, there are no teachers whose task is to teach you. You are not formally a student. In this process you simply learn as you live and interact with others.

Your first experience of informal learning is within your own family. The teachers are your own parents and other family members. They instruct you in what to do and what not to do.

Outside school and home you may read advertisement billboards and posters on the road side written in English. You may read words you don't know. When you go home you look at a dictionary to know the meaning of those words. This is one way of learning informally.

## The Basis of Knowledge and Wisdom

Copy this table. Form groups and discuss the contribution of formal and informal learning in your life. On the copy, list types of learning taking place in each activity.

	Activity	Formal learning	Informal learning	Combination of both
1	Reading newspapers			
2	Attending biology class			
3	Taking advice from parents			
4	Meeting a friend during vacation			
5	Sitting for a national examination			
6	Sitting for an aptitude examination			



### Reading

Knowledge obtained through inquiry and research is vital for social development. Inquiry means to find out the reason for something or how something happened. Research is to learn new facts or scientific laws. In order to do this you need to conduct surveys and make investigations to get new findings. This is the way that the sciences have developed.

You need knowledge in order to understand more about yourself and your surroundings. The



People gathering to discuss issues of concern (informal learning)

knowledge you obtain will serve as a compass to guide you in the right course of life. Knowledge is an instrument that serves to avoid Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) such as female genital mutilations or cutting, abduction, early marriage or teeth extraction. Such practices have a negative effect on health and could cause social problems. You can teach people to avoid such practices as they are obstacles for development. Through knowledge, there are many ways in which you can help yourself and your country.



Students learning in class room (formal learning)

## The Basis of Knowledge and Wisdom

**?** Form groups to discuss the ways that enquiry and research help in the development of Ethiopia. Group leaders should present their ideas to the class for discussion.

### CASE STUDY

#### A story of a girl who faced genital mutilation

There was a girl in Grade 4 who was a good student and at the same time very active. She lived in an area where genital mutilation had been widely practiced. In recent years, people living in the area had learnt the harmful effects of such a practice and agreed to stop genital mutilation. However, there were a few families who wanted to retain this harmful practice. The girl unfortunately belonged to such a family. When she was eleven, this girl faced genital cutting. She was morally and physically damaged to such an extent that she was unable to continue her education. Her dream to become a medical doctor could not happen due to the wrong decision her parents made.



The suffering of a child during FMG

**?** Female genital mutilation (FMG) is still practiced. Form groups to discuss how knowledge is instrumental to stop this practice. Group leaders should present the ideas to the class for further discussion.

### REMEMBER

- ❑ Knowledge can be defined as understanding or learning that which is known.
- ❑ The basis of knowledge and wisdom is man's effort to explore and change his surroundings.
- ❑ Exploring man's surroundings leads to knowledge, and the effort to change it requires wisdom.
- ❑ Wisdom means to be wise in handling acquired knowledge for good use.
- ❑ Formal learning is acquired in institutions of learning like schools.
- ❑ Knowledge obtained through enquiry and research is vital for social development.
- ❑ Informal learning strengthens knowledge obtained through formal learning.

# LESSON 2

## Information and Data

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- define what information is.
- explain the purpose of information.
- define what data is.

What can you say about information and data?

Knowledge consists of information and data. Information and data are important to develop wisdom. In turn, wisdom helps develop the techniques of acquiring knowledge. **Information** can be knowledge about a specific subject or situation. When a given information is true, then it becomes knowledge.

In order to know about anything you need to have correct information. If you plan to go to Sodere over the weekend for pleasure, you may need meteorological information to help you make a decision. Information can be obtained from different sources. TV and radio programs could serve as sources of information. The internet is another source of information. However, you may need to be careful to make use of the information obtained from any source. The first thing to do is to determine whether it is a fact or not.

One of the principles of democracy is making information available for its citizens. So, access to information is easier in democratic societies because democratic governments are relatively

transparent. The people have the right to know how their government handles matters. Living in a democratic society enables citizens to obtain the information they need for research and other uses.

For the dissemination of information, freedom of the press must be respected.

The FDRE Constitution Article 29 (4, 5) states:

4. *In the interest of the free flow of information, ideas and opinions which are essential to the functioning of a democratic order, the press shall, as an institution, enjoy legal protection to ensure its operational independence and its capacity to entertain diverse opinions.*
5. *Any media financed by or under the control of the State shall be operated in a manner ensuring its capacity to entertain diversity and the expression of opinion.*

But it should be noted that these rights cannot be used to propagate war or injure human dignity.

When we say data we mean facts or information on specific issues. Data is the information gathered from surveys etc. used to make decisions. It is therefore important, for it enables policy makers to make decisions. For example, experts in the field of geography could conduct a survey regarding the rain distribution patterns in Ethiopia. The data collected might suggest that, every three

# Information and Data

years drought affects some parts of the country (this is knowledge or information). Based on such a survey, the government could formulate a policy to conduct a national afforestation program and construct water reservoirs to help agriculture.

So, you need to have the right quality and quantity of data for a purpose. Data has to be collected and put together in a certain way to help formulate correct interpretations to reach decisions.

Form groups to discuss the use of data and information.

Conduct research through gathering information and data about students in your own section to determine their future desires. List the information you gather on a chart like this one.

	Student's name	Male	Female	Future goal
1		x		Medical doctor
2			x	Mathematician
3			x	Military
4		x		Historian
		x		Artist
			x	Farmer
			x	Geologist
		x		Engineer
			x	Anthrapologist



Books are one of the sources of knowledge

Form groups to analyze the information and data shown in the table to determine the following:



- > How many students would like to become medical doctors, militaries and farmers?
- > Which profession is most preferred and which is least preferred? Based on this sample, is the result indicative of a wider trend?

## REMEMBER

- ❑ One of the principles of democracy is making information available for citizens.
- ❑ Data is information gathered through surveys etc about specific cases.
- ❑ The quality and quantity of data gathered is important to make valid judgements.

# LESSON 3

## Reading and Studying

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- explain the purpose of reading.
- describe the purpose of studying lessons.
- describe how to study in a lesson.

What do you think about developing studying and reading habits?

**Reading** involves the reader and the materials to be read. The materials you read could be books, magazines, newspapers or leaflets. You can read them for a given purpose. It can be for pleasure or enjoyment. It can be to widen your scope on different issues. You can read books on science fiction, music, literature, etc. When you read you get more knowledge about many things. Reading is an important source of knowledge. Those who are widely read are persons who have great knowledge.

If you have the desire, you can develop the habit of reading. Developing the habit of reading may take some time. You will need to select different types of books and manage your time. You need to select what to read because it is not possible to read everything.

The rational use of time needs planning. You plan your time to develop effective reading and do other things you want. Spending more time reading helps develop a reading habit.

**Studying** means a thorough enquiry into a subject area. As a student, you usually study your subjects, not for pleasure or enjoyment, but for a purpose. You study to acquire knowledge and to perform well in examinations. In school you may compete with your classmates to get good grades. If you are not performing well, you may not even pass to the next grade.

As students you can work together to get more knowledge on topics you have discussed in class. During group discussions, members should be active to contribute to their own learning. The role of teachers is to facilitate the learning process. The main actors in the learning process are students themselves. You learn in class through interactions with other students. This is a modern way of learning. A day in school must be a day where you learn new things. The time that you spend outside school, can also be a time for studying. To do this, you need to plan your time.

? Form groups to discuss why you should read and study. List the benefits you can achieve.

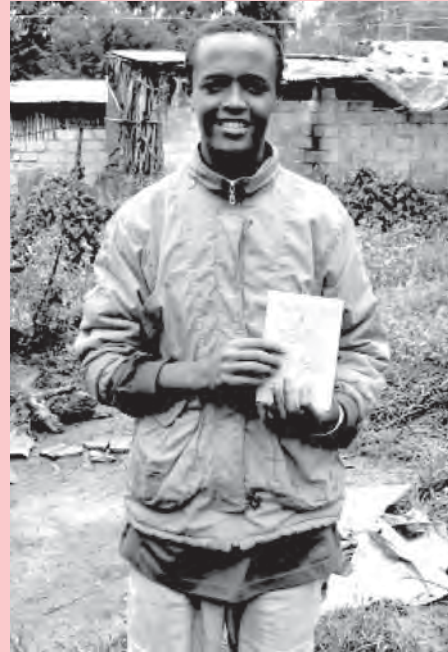
አወይ አስተማሪ ያለበት አባዜ  
የተማሪ አስተዋይ በጠየቀ ጊዜ።  
? What is the relevance of this poem to reading and studying?

## Reading and Studying

### CASE STUDY

#### The story of a bright student

Years back there was a certain student who was learning in high school. He finished elementary and junior high school studies within four years, and was first all through his schooling until joining university. He spent most of his time studying and reading books because he had developed the habit of reading early on. His friends were saying that he read even when he was on his meal breaks. Most of his teachers appreciated his unique qualities; through them he got the information about an international literature competition in London. The competition was for English speaking students across the world. In the competition, his work was selected to be first. This had been possible because of his continuous effort in reading different materials and studying.



A proud student showing his results



Form groups to discuss how you can study. Group leaders should present their ideas to the class for further discussion.

### REMEMBER

- Spending more time reading helps develop the habit of reading.
- Developing the habit of reading may take some time.
- Studying means a thorough enquiry of a subject area.
- You can develop the habit of reading if you have the desire to know about things.
- Reading involves the reader and the materials to be read.
- Those who read a lot are those who have great knowledge.



# 4

## LESSON

# The Pursuit of Truth

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- explain what truth is.
- adhere to truth not falsehood.

Can you explain how telling lies is harmful and telling the truth is helpful?

**Truth** can be defined to mean that which is true. You have to learn to discover what is true about things. You should uphold the truth because it is the right thing to do. When you speak the truth you gain the respect of others. Based on their behaviour, individuals can be labeled as liars, vagabonds, drunkards, honest or truthful.

Everyone should desire to be **honest, respected** and **truthful**. In the future, when you establish your own family you have the responsibility to

teach your children to be truthful. But, you do this provided that you are a truthful person. If you are not truthful, you cannot teach others the way to become truthful. Social norms and religions uphold truthfulness.

The law punishes people who tell lies. A witness in front of a court is expected to tell only the truth. Courts punish people who tell lies because it is an obstacle to delivering justice. Telling lies could help the offender but harm the innocent. Knowledge is a tool to differentiate between what is true and what is false.

**?** Form groups to discuss why it is necessary to tell the truth; and what will happen when we choose to tell false stories. Group leaders should present their ideas to the class.

## CASE STUDY

Witnesses in court rooms put their hands on the Holy books of their religions to be sworn in to tell only the truth. A certain person who appeared before a court fabricated a story to favour the defendant whom he knew. In the process the judges were able to discover that his statements were all false. They proved this by asking him questions which revealed his falsity.

Unable to get away with his lies, the person admitted his crime. The court sentenced him to prison for six months on the charge of obstruction to justice.

**?** Form groups to discuss why the court penalized this person. Do you think that the decision of the court was right? Why?

## The Pursuit of Truth

### REMEMBER

- Truth can be defined to mean that which is true.
- You have to uphold the truth.
- The law punishes people who tell lies.
- Our social norms uphold truthfulness.
- Knowledge can enable one to identify liars from truthful persons.

## UNIT SUMMARY

In this unit, you learnt about the basis of knowledge and wisdom and the relationship they have with each other. You have explored formal and informal learning processes. The use of information and data for knowledge has also been examined. Through reading and studying you will build up your knowledge. The habit of reading is the gateway to success in life. In society, not all persons are truthful. Knowledge helps to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

## GLOSSARY

<b>Concept:</b>	A general idea, thought, or understanding.
<b>Data:</b>	Information/facts.
<b>Facts:</b>	Information regarded as being true.
<b>Generalization:</b>	A general statement, principle, or opinion based on facts.
<b>Harmful Traditional Practices:</b>	Cultural practices which are harmful.
<b>Learning:</b>	A purposeful and conscious activity.
<b>Poverty:</b>	Inability to fulfill basic needs for life.
<b>Pursuit:</b>	Following an activity to achieve excellence.
<b>Truthfulness:</b>	The habit of telling the truth.
<b>Wisdom:</b>	The quality of being wise.

## UNIT REVIEW EXERCISES

Do these review exercises in your exercise book.

### Part I – Multiple choice

- Which one of the following statements defines knowledge?
  - to be wise in handling acquired knowledge for good use
  - understanding or learning that which is known
  - using data for a purpose
  - to be informed
- Information means:
  - that which helps to conduct a survey
  - knowledge about a specific subject or situation
  - that which is obtained only through the internet
  - the technique that helps to acquire knowledge
- Which one of the following statements is correct?
  - reading and studying are the same in all aspects.
  - when you study you read textbooks for pleasure or enjoyment.

- (c) reading and studying are sources of knowledge
- (d) you learn only for your own personal benefit not for parents and the country
4. Which one of the following does not go together with truth?
- (a) honesty (b) truthfulness
- (c) knowledge (d) none
5. What will help you most in life?
- (a) reading (b) studying
- (c) observation (d) all

**Part II – Matching**

Column A	Column B
1. Wisdom	A. Applying knowledge for good use.
2. Learning that which is known	B. Obtained in schools
3. Formal learning	C. Knowledge
4. Life time process	D. Dangerous established belief
5. Harmful Traditional Practices	E. Informal learning

**Part III – Short answers**

1. What do you understand by knowledge?
2. How can you have wisdom?
3. Why should you tell the truth?
4. Why do you have to study your subjects?