




Student Text, Section B – Knowledge and Understanding

Unit 7.3 (Year 3, Spring Term 1)

Week 1: The Triguna (3 Qualities of Matter)

This table (below) shows some of the features of the three gunas. We are all made of a mixture of the three modes, so please do not use this table to criticise others.

	Sattva	Rajas	Tamas
Animal	 Cow or Bull	 Lion	 Monkey
Function	Maintenance	Creation	Destruction
Deity in charge	Vishnu	Brahma	Shiva
Results	Wisdom	Greed	Illusion, madness
Destination at death (next life)	Higher planets	Human being	Lower planets and lower species
Personal Qualities	Serenity, self-control, purity and cleanliness, happiness, foresight, concern for others, fearlessness	Desire, ambition, action, attachment, over-endeavour, desire to enjoy and control; courage and audacity	Laziness, hopelessness, intoxication, madness, sleeping too much, dirtiness, refusal to see the consequences; fear
Seeing others	Seeing the good in others; kind and friendly to all.	Tending to view others either as a friend or an enemy.	Always complaining and criticising. Hating the world.
Knowledge	Sees all living creatures equally, and treats all with kindness	Sees the living being, but treats various people and animals differently	Does not understand that others have pain and pleasure (cruel and harmful)
Happiness	Lasting happiness and contentment. Sometimes difficult at first, happy later on.	Extremes of jubilation or sadness, depending on circumstances; happy first, sad later	Always unhappy and morose.
Food	Healthy, juicy, balanced, pleasurable; vegetarian; taken in moderation and with care.	Too rich, too hot, too sweet; extravagance and over-eating; may cause sickness.	Old, rotten and tasteless; products made by fermentation and through violence.
Work	Work steadily and in a relaxed way to get lasting results	Works too hard, may be unsteady; results don't always last.	Lazy, procrastinating and avoids responsible work.
Sleep	Goes to sleep and gets up early (and at the same time each day); gets enough sleep; gets up well before work or school; wide awake during day.	Gets up just before work or school; goes to sleep a little too late; not at the same time every day; sometimes tired in day.	Always sleeps far too much; goes to bed and gets up very late; sleeps mainly in the day. Almost always feels groggy and lethargic.