

## **BLOCK 1**

Knowledge is a relation between two beings: the known and the knower. Through this relation the knowing subject (knower) opens oneself to the world. The one who knows leaves oneself and turns to the surrounding world. However, in knowledge one returns to oneself as the known being 'penetrates' into the subject in some way since knowledge takes place not outside, but inside the subject. In knowledge an object makes itself present to the subject. The known 'reproduces' itself in the knower, e.g., when the colour blue is known, the blue of the thing penetrates into the subject. This process takes place immaterially. For we cannot observe the intentional presence of colour in a subject, as the blue colour in a flame is observed. The intentional presence is an unobservable and absolutely private fact. Epistemology is the theory of human knowledge in so far as it contemplates on the origin, process, nature, structure, validity and truth value of human knowledge. This block, consisting of four units, deals with the definition, nature, history of epistemology and various epistemological concepts.

**Unit 1** begins with the Definition and Nature of Epistemology. It studies the concept of knowledge along with its traditional definitions and probes into how knowledge is different from belief. One of the important movements that has challenged epistemology is skepticism and it is in the face of this challenge that epistemology has developed. Rationalism and empiricism are the theories that have been put forward to discuss the origin of knowledge.

**Unit 2** deals with a Brief History of Epistemology. The discussion has begun from the very ancient time itself, period of Ancient Greek Philosophy, Medieval Epistemology, Rationalism, Empiricism and Synthesis in Kant, Post-Kantian Epistemology, and Phenomenological Epistemology of late 19th Century, Realism of 20th century and recent Developments in Epistemology.

**Unit 3** studies some of the Basic Concepts and Assumptions. Epistemology is a science which deals with knowledge and hence it has some important concepts like belief, justification, truth, certainty, skepticism and foundationalism which need to be clarified.

**Unit 4** highlights the Theories of Truth put forward by various thinkers. This unit begins by disclosing the problem of truth that has been discussed for a long time. Along with this we have the nature and criteria that tells what truth is, the various perspectives on truth, classical theories of truth, and the importance of studying the concept of truth.

This block becomes introductory note to what is to follow in the following units and makes us well equipped with the terminologies that are used in this discipline. Notions like belief and truth which have a highly ambiguous connotation are clearly dealt in these units.

