



Teacher's Guide

What is Democracy? Why Democracy?

Part 4

Based on the NCERT Curriculum for Standard IX



JANAAGRAHA CENTRE FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

Janaagraha's initiative to improve citizen engagement in India's democracy through their civic learning program Developed in collaboration with Young Leaders for Active Citizenship (YLAC)

What is Democracy? Why Democracy?| Teacher's Guide (4/4)

Part 4

Class IX

Board – CBSE

Subject – Social Science

Textbook – Democratic Politics- I for class IX (NCERT)

Chapter 2 – What is democracy? Why democracy?

Number of parts – 04

Length – 55 minutes (estimated, for a class of 30-40 students)

Note: Teachers may divide the lesson plan into as many periods as they see fit

Section I – What are we going to learn and why is it important?

Learning objectives

Students will

- Understand that democracy is a way of life and a principle that can be applied to any sphere of life-the government, any organization/institution or family/friends.
- Understand that citizen engagement and participation is an important element for success of any democracy.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Relate personal experiences to a democratic way of life and learn to conduct day-to-day activities democratically.
- Appreciate the importance of active citizenship and that their participation is essential to making a democracy truly effective.
- Take steps/initiatives at their own level to bring about a positive change around them and in their community for a better quality of life.

Key Terms

Active Citizenship	Citizen Participation	Democratic way of life
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Materials needed

- Projector to show videos

Section II – How are we going to learn?

1. Introduction

Time: 10 minutes

Materials Required: Toffees (5-6 less than total number of students)

Facilitation notes:

Instructions for the facilitator

1. Get toffees (5-6 less than the total number of students) and keep it on the desk front of the class.
2. Ask the students to take the toffees without giving any further instructions.
3. Let them proceed to do it however they wish to, without interruptions and observe how they conduct themselves.
4. Ask them not to eat the toffees just as yet.

Discuss the following after all the chocolates are taken.

- 1) Did everyone get the toffees?
- 2) Did the people in the front rows have any advantage/disadvantage?
- 3) Did boys get more than girls or did girls get more than boys?
- 4) Did some take more than one?

Instructions to the facilitator

- 1) Ask the students to keep the toffees back on the table.
- 2) Ask them to think of a different way of doing the same activity by discussing among themselves.
- 3) Do not give any further instructions and do not interrupt their process.
- 4) Make the following observations
 - a) How did they go about resolving it?
 - i) Did they involve everyone in the discussion?
 - ii) Did someone take on the role of leadership and dictate how to do it?
 - b) What values did they exhibit?
 - i) Did they consider everyone as equal? Did they respect everyone's opinion?

Discuss the below questions

- 1) How was the 2nd time of doing the same activity different from the 1st?

Expected Response: During the 2nd time there was mutual agreement, if not all, but at least with the majority. This attempt was more democratic than the 1st.

- 2) Did everyone get equal number of toffees?

Everyone would not have gotten equal number of toffees because the number of toffees were less than the total number of students and not equally divisible. But some of them might have shared their toffees or some might have refused them. Conclude that even though the 2nd attempt was more democratic than the 1st, it did not solve the problem of less toffees. It just made the process of distribution more equitable and acceptable to more people. Similarly, even in real life, democracy does not solve all the problems, however it attempts to make the outcomes more just and equitable by making the process of decision making fairer.

2. Democracy as a way of life

Time: 10 minutes

Till now, we have been discussing about countries and democracy as a form of government. But on an individual level, do we follow a democratic way of life? Below are a few examples of everyday situations that you may face at school or at home. Is democracy a value that is adopted in these situations?

- 1) For the situations below, identify which do not have democracy as a value, how can they be changed to make them more democratic?
- a) The TV always plays the channel that one person in the family wants to watch.
 - b) Food is always prepared according to one person's wishes
 - c) Only few students always get chosen to take part in all school functions/programs
 - d) Decisions on which movie to watch is always taken by one person in the family/ by one friend.
 - e) The rules of the home are equal for everyone including your parents.
 - f) The men and women share equal responsibilities in kitchen work.

Answer Key

- a) Does not follow democratic values as the decision is made according to only one person's needs.
- b) Does not follow democratic values as the decision is made according to only one person.
- c) Does not follow democratic values because it shows a disparity in opportunities.
- d) Does not follow democratic values as the decision is made according to only one person's needs.
- e) It does follow democratic values as everyone is treated as equal.
- f) It does follow democratic values as everyone is treated as equal.

3. Active Citizenship and Democracy

Time: 15 minutes

Facilitation Notes:

- As we saw above, democracy is not just a system of government, but it is a way of life.
- As we have seen until now in this chapter, democracy is not a perfect system, yet it is the best form of government that we have as of today.
- We also discussed the essential features that makes a democracy a true democracy.
- Let's now discuss what is the one factor that makes some democracies better than others? Can you guess?
- You may have heard that Democracy is 'for the people, by the people and of the people', therefore people's participation in a democracy is the most critical indicator of the success of a democracy.

Activity:

Let's look at the following quote and focus on the phrases which are bold and underlined.

- Write the following quote on the board and underline the phrases indicated in bold.
- Ask each student to draw the following table in their notebook and write their interpretation.
- Discuss all points and then debrief the activity in the class after students have filled their worksheets.

*"**Active Citizenry** is an essential condition for democracy to succeed. Democracy involves **hardship of unceasing responsibility** of the active citizen. When the entire people do not take a **continuous and considered part in public life**, there can be no democracy in any **meaningful sense** of the term. Democracy is always a **beckoning goal, not a safe harbour**. For freedom is an unremitting endeavour, never a final achievement. That is why **no office in the land is more important** than that that of being a citizen."*

Phrase	Your interpretation
<u>Active Citizenry</u>	
<u>Hardship of unceasing responsibility</u>	
<u>Continuous and considered part in public life</u>	
<u>meaningful sense</u>	
<u>beckoning goal, not a safe harbour</u>	
<u>no office in the land is more important</u>	

Debrief:

1. Active Citizenry

Q: What does it mean?

Active Citizens are members of a society who take charge of the progress of their community. They take the initiative and the responsibility of changing things around them and in their community. They engage with the government and policymakers to create better living conditions in their communities, states and country. The following are stories of active citizenship. Here we can see how citizens take a stand and contribute towards change in society by taking ownership of their communities.

The Ugly Indian is an anonymous group of volunteers who came together and fixed garbage issues by cleaning up localities, roads and neighborhoods themselves. The group chooses small segments of roads each week, cleans and fixes the area. All tools and materials for cleaning are provided on the spot. The volunteers are requested to make contribution for the material, as all the work is self-funded. What is incredible is that once they were fixed, other citizens automatically started taking care and not littering those places. If anyone is interested, they can get in touch with The Ugly Indian through their email id or their Facebook page. To understand more about this project visit the website – www.theuglyindian.com or watch the [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tf1VA5jgmRo) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tf1VA5jgmRo>)

In Rwanda, a developing African country that was ravaged by genocide just 20 years ago, boasts of having the cleanest city in Africa- its capital Kigali. Here the government organizes a mandatory cleaning day on the last Saturday of every month, wherein every able citizen is expected to work towards cleaning the

city. It is not a volunteer project, all shops are shut, and all vehicles are banned from the roads so that every person can participate. Not participating in this cleanup can also attract substantial fines. Although this system is criticized by some as very strict and forced, many people of Rwanda consider it now as community service that is helping the country improve. To read more about this visit -

<https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2018/07/18/628364015/how-rwanda-tidied-up-its-streets-and-the-rest-of-the-country-too>

Q: What would its opposite mean?

When members of the society wait for changes and developments to happen without taking any initiative, they are passive citizens.

2. Hardship of unceasing responsibility

Q: What does unceasing responsibility mean? What makes unceasing such an important word in this phrase?

Any development or change within a community requires a lot of patience and continuous effort. The word 'unceasing' is important in this context because no development is a one-time affair. It requires small steps to be taken repeatedly before it becomes a permanent change. For example: If you want to make transport system better in your city, you will have to convince many different groups- the government, the contractors, the users of roads, etc. to come onboard with any change. It is difficult to get everyone on the same page together.

Q: Why is the unceasing responsibility being called a hardship? What is so hard about it?

It is hard to have that level of commitment and patience for citizens to bring about any change. Each citizen also has their own personal responsibilities and commitments, and it is difficult to have a high level of resolve to solve problems within the community.

3. Continuous and considered part in public life

Q: What does considered part mean in this phrase?

It means to participate in a deliberate and well-thought manner. It means that citizens should think critically about the issues confronting their society instead of falling prey to popular narrative. They need to know both sides of the arguments to be able to make an informed opinion.

4. Meaningful sense

Q: What is the 'meaningful sense' of the term democracy that is being referred to in this sentence?

The meaningful sense of the term democracy in this context refers to a model of democracy wherein the citizens are engaged in the ongoing public discourse. It is not sufficient to have voting rights and elected government for a state to be a democracy, but it requires its people to be active members.

5. Beckoning goal, not a safe harbour

Q: What does 'beckoning goal' mean? Why is democracy a beckoning goal?

A goal that is constantly calling out to be achieved. Democracy is being referred to as a beckoning goal as it requires relentless, continuous effort.

Q: What does a safe harbour mean? Why is it being said that democracy is not a safe harbour?

A safe harbour means a relief or refuge – a condition that protects the people from any injustice. Democracy is not a final achievement and not an end destination in itself, but it is a continuous process. It is easy for any country to slip from high ideals of democracy unless citizens keep those in power in check. For example: The government might be tempted to clamp down on freedom of speech from time to time, but it is up to citizens to protect it by petitioning against such actions in courts, voting the government out, etc.

6. No office in the land is more important

Q: What kind 'office' is being referred to in this phrase?

Government portfolios, positions held in ruling the country/state.

Q: Why is no other office as important as being a citizen?

Citizens have the highest responsibility of ensuring that the unrelenting process of democracy is being pursued. No position held in governing the land can do what the citizens of a democratic land can.

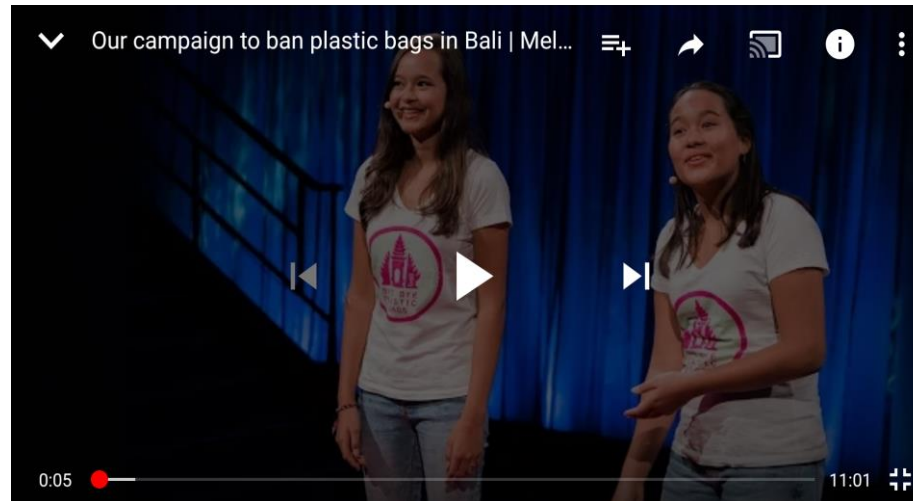
Conclusion: Through this quote we have understood that democracy requires active citizenship for it to succeed. It requires every single person to participate relentlessly to better their community. Democracy is a process and not an end result. It is only when every citizen participates can a land be truly known as a democracy.

4. An example of active citizenship

Time: 15 mins

Link: [YouTube](#)

There are many examples of people who have taken steps to be active citizens of their community. One such example is of these 2 school-going girls in Bali.



Show Video: TED Talk: An inspiring video of 2 sisters in Bali who have been campaigning to ban plastic bags

While watching the video, make a note in your notebook of

- *The different steps these 2 girls took as active citizens.*
- *The challenges they faced.*

Discuss the answers in the class after 2 minutes. Discuss the following debrief questions.

Debrief

1. Do you think the project undertaken by these 2 girls can be called 'Active Citizenry' as discussed in the previous quote? Why?

Yes, it is 'Active Citizenry'. They have been able to identify a problem that was affecting their community and taken democratic steps to solve the problem.

2. Do you think that this project entails ‘unceasing responsibility’? Do you think there is ‘hardship’ involved?

Something that the girls also mentioned in their talk is that they faced multiple obstacles in working towards the solution. The solution is not a one-time affair. They, along with other community members would have to take continuous efforts to ensure permanent change.

3. Discuss with your partner, if you wanted to run a similar campaign to change something, what would it be?

(Discuss a few answers, after giving them a couple of minutes to discuss)

As you can see through this video and many of your answers, everyone has an idea or a vision on how to improve the community in which they live. However, there are many personal commitments, time factor and resource availability that may deter us from taking these ideas ahead. But we have seen through the examples stated in this lesson, that there are always ways to make these ideas come true. Even if someone does not want to initiate a community project, they can always choose to join an existing project or support them occasionally. Along with this, a responsible and Active Citizen leads her/his day to day life being aware of the community around and participates in its development. Let us together make a commitment towards being active citizens. (Show the below pledge and read it out).

I,take the Active Citizenship Pledge.

I am a citizen of India and of the city I live in. I believe in democracy and the rule of law.

I care deeply about my rights and duties, both to the Government and to all my fellow citizens.

I pledge,

- To vote in all elections when I’m eligible
- To actively participate in civic matters in my neighbourhood
- To engage constructively with the Government and fellow citizens
- To care for and respect public spaces and in doing that:
 - To not litter
 - To dispose garbage responsibly
 - To follow traffic rules
 - To care for the environment and reduce wastage
 - To follow queues

- To never pay bribes and to pay any taxes that are due, to know and follow all other civic duties and obey the rule of law.

I pledge to be the change I want to see, in my neighbourhood, my city and my country.

Section III - Assessment:

- 1) State whether the following statements are True or False
 - a) A democracy may exist on paper, but may not give freedom to its people.
 - b) Democracy is not just a form of governance, it is also a way of life.
- 3) Are the following statements in keeping with democracy as a value? Why?
 - a) Father to daughter: I don't want to hear your opinion about your marriage. In our family children marry where the parents tell them to.
 - b) Teacher to student: Don't disturb my concentration by asking me questions in the classroom.
 - c) Employee to the officer: Our working hours must be reduced according to the law.
- 4) Do you think it is possible for every person to be actively involved in developing their community? Why? What are some of the ways and what could be the possible challenges one might face in being an active citizen?

Solutions:

1.

- a. True
- b. True

2.

- a. Not a democratic way of life, as there is no equal participation in decision-making.
- b. Not a democratic way of life, as the opinions of the participants of the class are not heard.
- c. Yes, it is democratic of the employee to ask for reduced work hours, as the employees are able to share their concern.

Section IV –Closure

A democratic way of life means to treat everyone around us the way we like to be treated – with equality and respect. Even if we do not want to actively involve ourselves in politics, we can make changes within us and around us, no matter how small. What distinguishes democracy from other forms of government is that, other forms of government like monarchies, dictatorships, and one-party rule do not want citizens to take an active role in functioning of the government and the society. Whereas, democracy depends on active citizenship for its development. The actions of citizens is what makes a country more or less democratic.

Section V – Homework

- 1) Talk to your parents and grandparents about India as a democratic country and ask them the following questions.
 1. According to them, what are the successes or failures of democracy in India?
 2. Do they feel that the meaning of democracy has changed since they were young? If so, how?
 3. According to them, in the future, what are the changes that they wish to see in the democratic nature of India?
 4. In their opinion, should citizens engage and participate in their democracy. Why/why not? If yes, then how?
- 2) Find organizations who work on promoting active citizenship in the country and the world. Why are they doing this work? Write two paragraphs about their vision and goals.

Section VI - Additional Resources

Resources for teachers

1. Website: [Gapminder](#)

Gapminder is an initiative by Ana Rosling Rönnlund, Hans Rosling, and Ola Rosling. This is a teacher's guide to explain facts about the world around us. This will help students become active global citizens

2. Video: TED Talk: Mara Mintzer: How kids can help design cities

Link: [YouTube](#)

Resources for students

1. Video: TED Talk: Adora Svitak: What adults can learn from kids

Link: [YouTube](#)

2. Video: TED Talk: Arunachalam Muruganantham: How I started a sanitary napkin revolution!

Link: [YouTube](#)

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1. Open the Camera on your phone.
2. Scan the QR code provided.
3. If you are using an iOS phone, tap on the instructions that appear above.

If you are using an Android phone, tap on 'View QR code details'. Click 'Go to Website'

And you are ready to fill up the form!

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