

Teacher's Guide

Our Constitution

Part 1

Based on the Karnataka State Board Curriculum for
Standard VII



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)

Our Constitution | Teacher's Guide (1/2) Part 1

Class VII
 Board – Karnataka State Board
 Subject – Social Science
 Textbook – Social Science Textbook for Class VII (Karnataka State Board)
 Chapter 18 – Our Constitution
 Number of parts – 02
 Length – 100 minutes (estimated, for a class of 40-45 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 what a Constitution is.
- Understand how and when the Indian constitution was drafted, and the key persons involved.
- Understand the preamble to the constitution and the ideals it embodies.

Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Understand the importance of a constitution for our nation.
- Understand the complex nature and process of drafting a constitution for a diverse country such as ours.

Key Terms-

Constitution	Rules	Rights	Duties	Drafting Committee
Principles	Ideals	Constituent Assembly	Preamble	

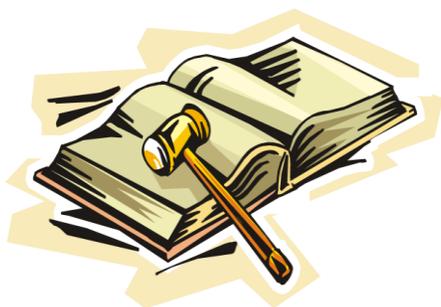
Materials Needed

- Blackboard, pen and paper

- Printed copies of Worksheet A

Section II – How are we going to learn

1. What is a Constitution?



Time: 5 minutes

Note to the teacher:

This is a class discussion to get students to think about the need for rules. Please initiate the discussion and use the board to note down responses. Conclude the discussion with a de-brief.

Facilitation Notes:

- We'll start by understanding what a Constitution is and why it is needed.
- A Constitution is a written document that contains the set of rules and ideals that people in a society agree to live by.
- Let's try to understand this by thinking about our school first. Are there any rules in this school? What are some examples of such rules? Why do you think we need these rules?

Likely responses:

- *Rules that prevent you from running inside the class or in the corridors — to prevent students from falling and getting hurt & to ensure that there is discipline.*
- *Raising your hand before you speak — to allow only one student to speak at a time.*
- *Silence in the classroom — to ensure that students can hear the teacher and learn.*
- *No copying in the exams — to accurately reward students who work hard.*

De-brief:

- Do we all agree that these rules are required? Can we run a school without these rules?
- Just like in this school, there are rules that are required to govern a society.
- In modern countries, the most fundamental/ important rules are usually written down in a document called a Constitution.

- These rules define the type of government a country has and are formulated through an agreement among the members of the society.
- Thus, **EVERYONE** has to follow these rules, no matter their stature in society – even the PM, president and other important people (just like everyone has to follow classroom rules!)
- All citizens are equal, and everyone’s rights and duties are equally protected and enforced (more on this in the next lesson). In a classroom setting, it means that no one can copy in an exam- it is never like some can and some cannot!
- Constitution is also a reference guide for the government and serves to improve the relations between individual and the government.

2. The Drafting of Our Constitution

Note to the teacher:

This section will help students understand the drafting process of the constitution as well as understand key dates and historical events that led to the adoption of the constitution. This lesson plans provides you with a script and an activity that will be used for this part. While you will use the script to describe key historical events (in the form of storytelling), your students will be simultaneously noting down key events with you. Feel free to read out aloud the model script provided or make your own amendments to match your style.

Activity – The Story of Our Constitution



Time: 15 minutes

Materials required: Blackboard, chalk

Approach:

Ask the students the following questions:

- When is the Indian Independence Day?
- When is Indian Republic Day?

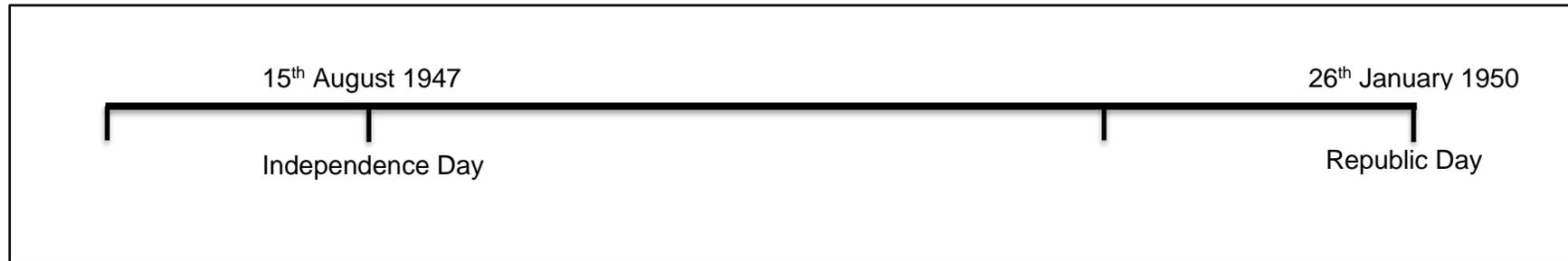
Write down the correct answers (15th August and 26th January) clearly on the board.

Source: business.com

Ask the following:

- We love holidays and that's why we perhaps remember these dates. But does anyone know what years these fall on?

Collect responses and write the correct years down on the board next to the dates. Draw a line between the two to make a rough timeline as shown below. Ask students to copy it in their notebooks.



Next write down these numbers on the board:

12	299	2473	3954
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And finally write down these names:

Dr. Rajendra Prasad	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
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Explain to the students the following:

- The timeline, the numbers and the names are a part of a really important story regarding Indian Independence.
- As you narrate the story, the students will be required to note down important dates and events on the timeline.
- They will note down what the numbers refer to, and write what role the two persons mentioned played in the story.
- You can narrate the story twice if needed.
- At the end of the narration, you will be able to discuss it with the rest of the class.

Tip: Emphasize on important dates and make the storytelling lively!

The following script will be used to guide students with the activity:

(Story begins here)

“Imagine India’s on its way towards independence, but before forming an independent country, the country needs to have its basic rules and ideas written down on paper, right? Just like before a school is formed, the school and its classroom need rules. India wanted independence from the British and we wanted it fast, but we needed a plan! This plan would be recorded by the constitution, a document that would record what will define India once it becomes an independent nation. Therefore, a constituent assembly was formed which would be the key body that would prepare our important Constitution. The first assembly meeting was held on the **9th of December 1946**, just a few months before the Day of Independence on the 15th of August, the following year!”

“There were **299** members and the assembly was headed by **Dr. Rajendra Prasad** – he was the president of the assembly. **299** people is a lot of members, and one can imagine how **Dr. Prasad** might have found it difficult to progress with so many voices and inputs. And remember, we wanted to step up the pace as we approached Independence! Therefore, the **299** members were divided into many committees. Amongst all those committees, there was a Drafting Committee which was the committee responsible for writing the constitution. **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar** was the chairman of this drafting committee. He played a major role in the shaping of the constitution, and therefore was also the Law Minister of India from the Independence Day in 1947 and Republic Day in 1950!”

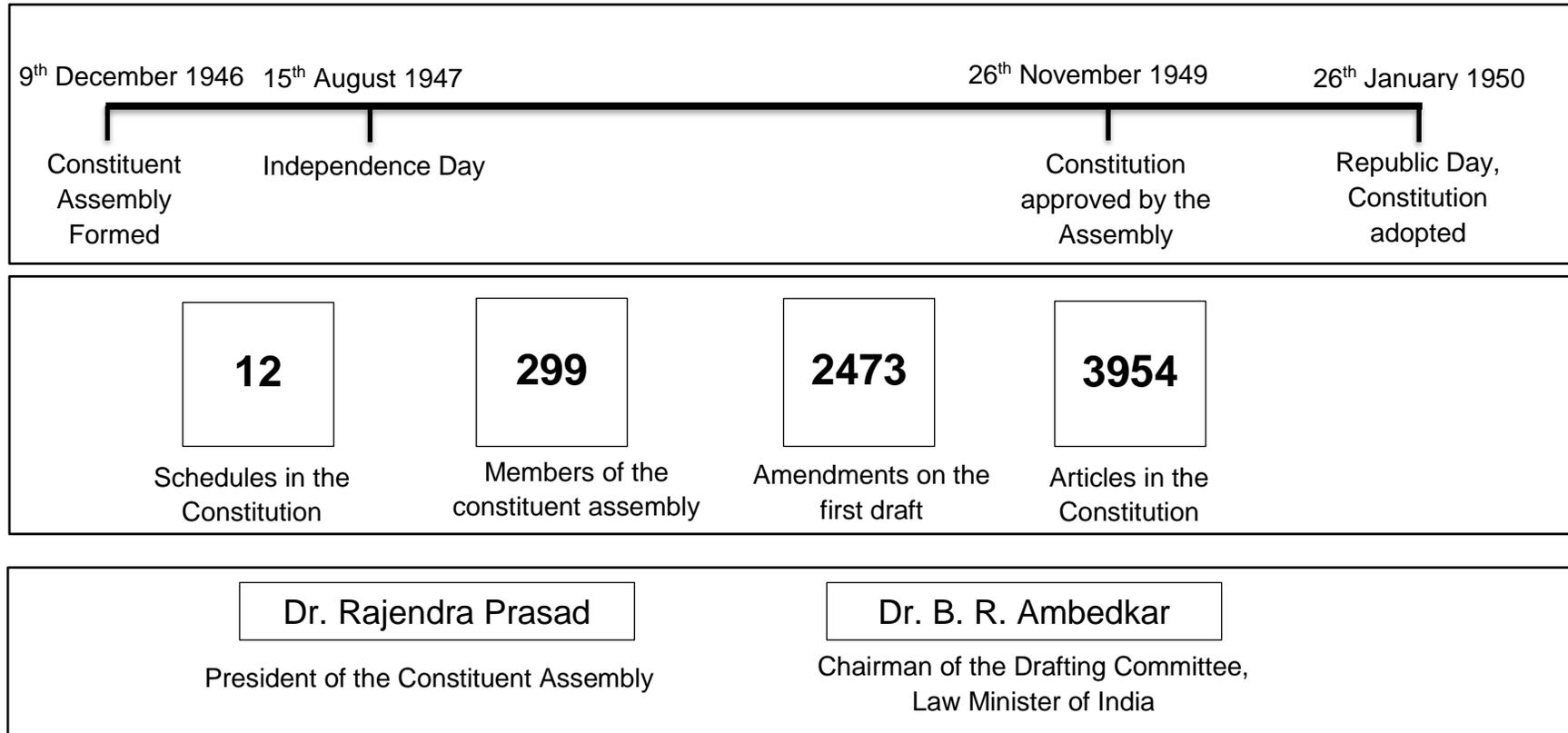
“The draft prepared by Dr. Ambedkar and his team had to be approved by the 299 other members. So, Dr. Ambedkar handed the first draft of the constitution. The members verified the first draft but also came up with **2473** amendments, which is basically suggestions to change parts of the constitution. Imagine how long it must have taken the drafting committee to work on the **2473** amendments and incorporate them into the constitution! Hence, it took 3 years to fully shape the final constitution. The Constitution was finally approved by the assembly on the **26th of November 1949**. But it was only adopted two months later on the **26th of January 1950**, which is when India was declared as a Republic – hence **Republic Day!** What is a republic? A system where there is no king and citizens elect representatives to rule the country.”

“It also took 3 years because that the Indian Constitution is the lengthiest constitution in the WORLD! It contains **3954 articles** and **12 schedules!** Dr B.R. Ambedkar truly took on this incredible feat as our law minister and the president of the drafting committee. A new independent India had finally had its rule book – its constitution that would guide it’s republic for years to come!”

De-brief:

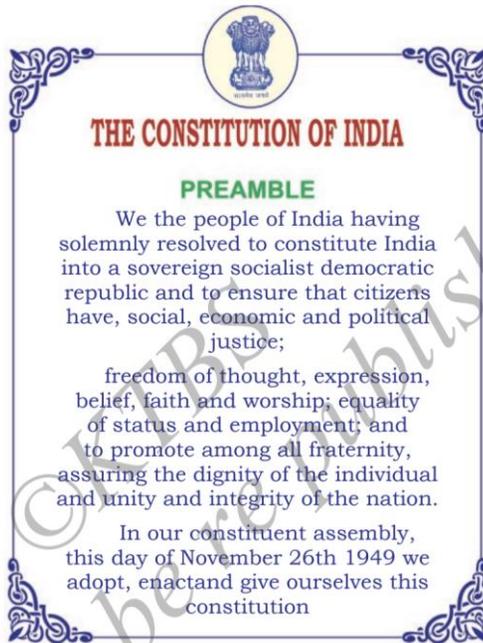
- Provide correct responses to the timeline, numbers and names.
- Clarify any doubts or questions.
- Reinforce the chronology of the events.
- Emphasize on the scale of the task.
- Recall the importance of a constitution to a new and independent nation.
- Remember that as times change, changes to the Constitution can be made. However, the basic structure of the Constitution cannot be changed.
- Thus, the Constitution sets limits to power by preventing leaders from misusing their authority and tampering with its basic structure.

Solution Sheet:



3. The Preamble

Time: 10 minutes



What is the Preamble?

The Constitution of India begins with a Preamble.

The Preamble is considered as the heart of the Constitution as it represents the dream and ideologies of the people of India.

All the provisions in the constitution must be in line with the spirit of the Preamble.

Activity: Dreams and Ideals

Using the worksheet in Appendix A, ask students to match the terms from the preamble to their appropriate definitions. If printing facilities are not available, copy the worksheet text on the board and guide students accordingly.

Debrief by teacher: Remember these ideals well. In the next class, you will be assigned a fun activity that will require you to think about how these ideals apply outside of the Indian constitution. Is it important that these ideals are followed by everyone, every organization or institution? Think deeply and we'll find out more in the next class.

Appendix A: Dreams and Ideals (Worksheet)

Match the term to its appropriate definition

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| A. Equality | I. feeling that one is behaving with honour and dignity |
| B. Self-Respect | II. power or right to act, speak, or think as one wants. |
| C. Integrity | III. state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities |
| D. Justice | IV. friendship and mutual support within a group |
| E. Freedom | V. state of being whole and undivided |
| F. Fraternity | VI. quality of being fair and reasonable |

Answer key:

- A – III,
- B – I,
- C – V,
- D – VI,
- E – II,
- F – IV.

Activity: Design your preamble

Divide the students into groups of four or five students. Hand out copies of the Preamble of the Indian Constitution to each group. Ask them to read the Preamble and identify the ideals that the Constitution wishes to promote. Note these down on the board.

Now ask students to write down a preamble if their classroom had a constitution. Do this activity in groups (ideally groups of 4-5 students each) What kind of ideals would they like and would want their classmates to follow? Let students read aloud their preamble as well as question and discuss what principles and ideals appear in their preamble.

Section III: Assessment

Time: 5 minutes

Note to the teacher: Hopefully by now, students will be able to recall the need for a constitution and key historical dates that led to the formation of the same. Recap the lesson by asking students about key dates and events. Divide the class into two groups and score the groups to make it lively and competitive. You could also reward the group that wins.

For example:

- Who was the president of the constituent assembly?
- Why do we need a constitution?
- Why did it take 3 years for the final constitution to take shape?
- Who was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar?
- Why do we celebrate Republic Day?

You can add more questions as per your need.

Homework:

- Ask your parents / senior family members about the significance of the Indian Republic Day. Do they know when is it celebrated? Do they know why is it celebrated?
- Using your knowledge from this lesson, explain to your parents / senior family members the historical significance of this day. Why did it take 3 years from the Independence Day in 1947? Why is it called the 'Republic' Day?
- Surprise them with your new knowledge. Note down their reactions, responses and comments as you go through this activity with them.

Section IV: Closure

Time: 5 minutes

Recap by the student (2 minutes)

Recap by the teacher (3 minutes)

A Constitution is a written document that contains the set of rules and ideals that people in a society agree to live by.

The Constitution is necessary for three major reasons:

- Firstly, it helps us identify the ideals that we as a society wish to uphold and strive for.
- Secondly, it provides guidelines on how decisions can be made by our political leaders.
- Thirdly, it creates safeguards to prevent leaders from misusing their authority. It also contains a basic structure that cannot be modified.

The Indian Constitution wasn't formed in a day:

- After creating a constituent assembly, drafting and amending multiple times, the lengthiest constitution of the world was created. Some extremely important persons helped the country achieve this.
- The preamble to the constitution is the heart of the Indian Constitution as it represents the dreams and ideologies of the people
- The Constitution was written by the *Drafting Committee* (which was a part of the *Constituent Assembly*) under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and presidency of Dr. Rajendra Prasad.
- It is the longest Constitution in the world.

In the next lesson we will learn about the unique features of the Indian constitution and understand an overview of the contents of the constitution.

Section V – Additional resources

Resources for students:

1. Article: Celebrate the Supreme Law

The article talks about the purpose and history of the Indian Constitution

Link: [The Hindu](#)

2. Article: The Story behind the Indian Constitution

The article details out a chronological story on the making of the Constitution

Link: [YourStory](#)

3. Video: Making of Indian Constitution

The video details how the Indian constitution was drafted, who all was a part of the drafting process, what all deliberations were made and so on.

Link: [YouTube](#)

Resources for teachers:

1. Article: Why the Indian Constitution was ahead of its time

The article describes, with examples, how the Indian Constitution was forward looking

Link: [Times of India](#)

2. Article: How informed are you about the Constitution of India?

The article describes the relevance of the constitution for today's India.

Link: [The Hindu](#)

Appendix A: Dreams and Ideals (Worksheet)

Match the term to its appropriate definition

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