



Teacher's Guide

The Indian Constitution

Period 3

Based on the NCERT curriculum for Standard VIII



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)



The Indian Constitution | Teacher's Guide (3/3)

Period 3

Class VIII
Board – CBSE
Subject – Social and Political Life
Textbook – Social and Political Life Textbook III for Class VIII (NCERT)
Chapter 1 – The Indian Constitution
Number of periods – 03
Length – 80 minutes

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

Lesson overview

The lesson introduces students to the Fundamental Rights enumerated in the Indian Constitution. It also introduces the concept of civic duty and talks about its importance.

Learning objectives

Students will:

- Learn what citizenship is and what being a good citizen means.
- Understand the six broad categories of Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Constitution to its citizens.
- Understand the Civic Duties that can help the students make their neighbourhood, city, and country better.

Learning outcomes

Students will

- Understand their important rights and duties as citizens of India.

Key terms

Citizen	Rights	Civic Duties	Fundamental Rights
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Section II – How are we going to learn

1. Citizenship

Time: 10 minutes

Note to the teacher:

This section introduces students to the term “citizen” and the associated concepts of rights and duties.

Facilitation Notes:

In the last two classes, we discussed why we need a Constitution. We also looked at some of the key features of our Constitution.

Today, let us discuss two more features of our Constitution—Fundamental Rights and Duties. But first, let us understand who a citizen is!

A citizen is a person who is a legally recognized member of a country or region. All of you are, for example, citizens of India.

However, citizenship is more than just a legal recognition. It is about participation in the working of the country.

How do citizens participate in a country’s working? Any ideas? *[Take a couple of responses from students and write them on the board; Add from the list below, if required]*



How do citizens participate?

In a democracy, citizens usually participate by voting in elections to elect leaders to represent them.

Some citizens may also decide to stand for elections and become a representative in order to take decisions on behalf of other citizens.

In addition, citizens also participate by taking part in debates and discussions and in the decision-making process. This involves even criticising the government when required.

If you are a citizen of a country, you are entitled to several **rights** within that country. At the same time, you are also required to fulfill several **duties**. Let's understand this in more detail.

Rights and duties

- **Rights** are essential for protecting citizens against the arbitrary exercise of power by the government.
- Most Constitutions of democratic countries guarantee their citizens a set of these essential, or fundamental, rights. The Indian Constitution too guarantees all Indians a set of *Fundamental Rights*.
- In addition to rights, citizens also have certain **duties**. A duty is something that someone is expected to do. Rights only have meaning if citizens do their duties and help in running the country better. Would you agree?

2. Fundamental Rights

Time: 30 minutes

Note to the teacher:

This section will introduce students to the Fundamental Rights enshrined in the Constitution and help internalize their meaning through an activity.



Introduction

The Indian Constitution guarantees all Indian citizens six broad Fundamental Rights. These rights are:

1. Right to Equality
2. Right to Freedom
3. Right against Exploitation
4. Right to Freedom of Religion
5. Cultural and Educational Rights
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies

[\(Image Source\)](#)

Note to the teacher:

Ask the class to open page 14 of the textbook and go to the blue box on Fundamental Rights (you can also distribute print outs of the Fundamental Rights included at the end of this lesson plan). Pick six students to read each Fundamental Right out loud. After each right is read out, ask the students if they have any questions about the text and clear their doubts.

In case needed, please explain the meaning of the following terms used in the text:

- **Discrimination:** treating a person or particular group of people differently, especially in a bad way, because of their skin colour, gender, religion, language, etc.
- **Untouchability:** a form of discrimination where some people are kept at a distance from others and are denied equality because they are considered to be impure and dirty.
- **Exploitation:** treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work.
- **Human trafficking:** buying and selling of human beings, usually by using force.

Activity – Frozen tableau

Objective:

This activity involves students acting out situations where Fundamental Rights are enjoyed by citizens and where they are denied. Students must create a still picture (or a frozen tableau, as in the image on the left) to communicate the meaning of each Fundamental Right through its presence as well as absence. Students must communicate it using physical poses, gestures, and facial expressions rather than words. They can also use notebooks, pens, desks, and chairs as props.

Approach:

Divide the class into six teams, and ask each team to pick a chit that contains the Fundamental Right that they will enact (these chits can be found at the end of the lesson plan). Please ask the teams not to share their information with others.

Each team will have to form a frozen tableau that represents two situations:

- Where people enjoy the Fundamental Right mentioned on the chit i.e. a scene representing a situation where the Fundamental Right is guaranteed by the Constitution.
- Where people are denied the Fundamental Right on the chit i.e. a scene representing a situation where the Fundamental Right is being violated.

Give each team 5 minutes to discuss how to enact these two situations. Once the time is up, call each team to the front of the class. Count “3-2-1-Freeze!” at which point the team must create the frozen tableau for the first situation. After 30 seconds, say “Relax” and then count “3-2-1-Freeze!” again, at which point the team must create the frozen tableau for the second situation. After 30 seconds, say “Relax” again.

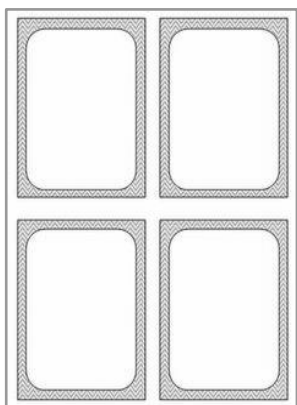
Ask the other students to guess which Fundamental Right was being displayed. Allow the students to discuss how the right was enacted by the team.

3. Understanding your Duties

Time: 15 minutes

Note to the teacher:

This section talks about the importance of citizens fulfilling their duties. It aims to emphasize that rights and duties are two sides of the same coin. It uses a group activity to get students to think about some important duties as citizens.



Facilitation notes:

- As you saw, the Constitution gives us many important rights and allows us a lot of freedom and opportunity to explore our potential.
- But, with rights also come responsibilities and duties to make the country a better place to live in.
- What are some of these duties and responsibilities? And why are they important? Let’s discuss this in groups.

Activity: Civic Responsibility/Duty Cards

Note to the teacher:

Divide the class into 6 groups. Hand out one Civic Responsibility/Duty Card to each group (these are available at the end of this guide) Ask each group to deliberate over the duty written on their card and think of reasons why that duty is important?

The cards read as below:

1. Voting in all elections when eligible.
2. Engaging constructively with the local government officials, both elected and administrative, in addressing civic issues.

3. Segregating waste, not littering.
4. Respecting and obeying traffic rules.
5. Conserving resources such as water, power in order to conserve and nurture the environment.
6. Being responsible in consumption habits, again to conserve the environment.

De-brief

- Ask each group to share their thoughts with the broader class.
- Conclude by saying that a responsible and active citizen is someone who properly fulfills their civic duties/ responsibilities.
- They are actively involved in the community and work for the betterment of their fellow citizens.

Reading the Active Citizenship Pledge together

The pledge is available at the end of this guide and may be projected on to the screen

4. The power of Active Citizenship

Time: 15 minutes

Note to the teacher:

This section is meant to help students appreciate the power of active citizenship. Please play the video (link below) and engage the students in a discussion to bring out the key messages.

Video: Water Warriors of Podapathar

The video tells the story of the women of Podapathar village in Himgir panchayat in Odisha who, through their collective efforts, managed to improve the drinking water situation in their village.

Link: [Youtube](#)

De-brief:

- Ask students to highlight the key points/ messages from this video.



- Emphasize that democracy, by its very origin, was meant to be participatory i.e. the people were meant to be in power, whether directly or indirectly.
- This also means that the success of any democratic system depends largely on its citizens because democracy is a two-way road where government and citizen behaviour reinforce each other.
- When we fulfil our civic responsibilities, we help build the communities around us and make the authorities sit up and take notice. This allows us to influence government decision making and bring about the much needed change.
- However, there isn't enough awareness or interest among a large number of our citizens about these basic principles. While we are used to questioning the government about what it is doing for us, rarely do we ponder upon what WE are doing for the nation as citizens.
- Let's learn from the experiences of these *Water Warriors of Podapathar* and do our part. Let's all be *Active Citizens*!



Video: Who is an Active Citizen?

The video very simply points out what it means to be an active citizen. An active citizen is involved in all aspects of his/ her personal and community life.

Link: [Youtube](#)

Section III – Assessment

Time: 5 minutes

Note to the teacher:

Read out the situation in the left column and ask students about the right or duty that is being violated

Which Fundamental Right is being violated?

S. No	Situation	Right that is violated
1.	Girl students are asked to sit inside the class and study, while boy students are allowed to go outside and play	Right to equality
2.	A group of people are not given permission to open a Telugu-medium school in Kerala.	Cultural and educational rights
3.	A political party is not given permission to hold a public meeting to criticise the government.	Right to freedom
4.	A ten-year old is cleaning tables in a restaurant.	Right against exploitation
5.	The government bans a religion	Right to freedom of religion

Which Duty is being violated?

S. No	Situation	Duty that is violated
1.	The percentage of voting turnout in an election was 66%.	Not all eligible voters have voted! It is our duty to vote in all elections.
2.	A person on a bike was injured when he met with an accident driving at a speed of 120 kmph in the city limits	The person was violating traffic rules. Following traffic rules is important for our own safety and that of others.
3.	The park was littered heavily after a political rally	Attendees did not throw rubbish in dustbins. Respecting public spaces is an important duty.

4.	800 trees were to be cut for the construction of a flyover	Taking care of our environment is a civic duty. Before any such actions are taken, efforts must be made to assess if this is unavoidable.
5.	India produces 1,00,000 metric tons of waste per day.	Reducing wastage as much as possible should be a goal. We should be responsible in our consumption habits.
6.	Leakage in sewage lines on the main road was filling up the road	Members of the community failed to engage with government officials to fix the problem. Constructive engagement is an important duty.

Homework

1. Group Activity: Create a Citizenship Book

Work in groups and have students create a Citizenship Book. Get them to collect newspapers, magazine articles, or pictures throughout the month that show good citizenship.

2. Individual Activity: Create a Good Citizenship Charter for your school

3. Civic Survey:

Ask students to visit 10 families in their neighbourhood and find out whether citizens are aware of their Fundamental Rights and Civic responsibilities (they can use the survey appended to this guide). Ask students to analyse whether citizens are unaware of their rights and duties, and if so, what actions would they take to create awareness on the same.

Section IV – Closure

Summary by students

Note to the teacher:

Select a student at random to summarize the key points of the session and why this particular session is important. *[Add to the summary from the recap below, if required]*

Recap by the teacher

Time: 5 minutes

A citizen is a member of a country who can participate in the political life of that country. He or she actively engages in debates and discussions and in the decision-making process. The constitution gives each citizen rights to protect them against the arbitrary exercise of power by the government. It also expects citizens to fulfill their duties.

The Indian Constitution guarantees all Indian citizens six broad Fundamental Rights. These rights are:

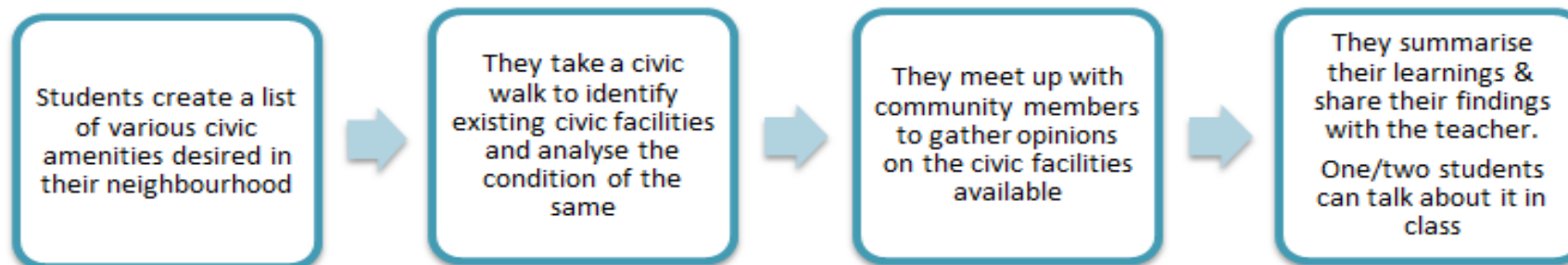
1. Right to Equality
2. Right to Freedom
3. Right against Exploitation
4. Right to Freedom of Religion
5. Cultural and Educational Rights
6. Right to Constitutional Remedies

With rights come duties - both are two sides of the same coin. When citizens are given rights, they are also expected to fulfill duties. Some important duties of citizens such as yourself are:

1. Voting in all elections when eligible.
2. Engaging constructively with the local government officials, both elected and administrative, in addressing civic issues.
3. Segregating waste, not littering.
4. Respecting and obeying traffic rules.
5. Conserving resources such as water, power in order to conserve and nurture the environment.
6. Being responsible in consumption habits, again to conserve the environment.

Section V: Field Visit

(1) Civic Walk:



Section VI – Additional resources

For students

1. Video: What is Responsible Citizenship?
The video shows how responsible citizenship means different things to different people and how everyone needs to raise their voice for causes they believe in because only then will society progress.
Link: [YouTube](#)
2. Article: A Closer Look at the Fundamental Rights
The article mentions all the fundamental rights as guaranteed to every citizen of India by the Constitution.
Link: [India Today](#)
3. My Fundamental Duties under the Constitution of India – Justice Kurian Joseph
The document mentions the fundamental duties of every citizen of India and explains them in detail.
Link: [The Hindu](#)

Appendix

Fundamental Rights in the Indian Constitution

The Fundamental Rights in the Indian Constitution include:

- 1. Right to Equality:** All persons are equal before the law. This means that all persons shall be equally protected by the laws of the country. It also states that no citizen can be discriminated against on the basis of their religion, caste or sex. Every person has access to all public places including playgrounds, hotels, shops etc. The State cannot discriminate against anyone in matters of employment. But there are exceptions to this that you will read about later in this book. The practice of untouchability has also been abolished.
- 2. Right to Freedom:** This includes the right to freedom of speech and expression, the right to form associations, the right to move freely and reside in any part of the country, and the right to practise any profession, occupation or business.
- 3. Right against Exploitation:** The Constitution prohibits human trafficking, forced labour, and employment of children under 14 years of age.
- 4. Right to Freedom of Religion:** Religious freedom is provided to all citizens. Every person has the right to practise, profess and propagate the religion of their choice.
- 5. Cultural and Educational Rights:** The Constitution states that all minorities, religious or linguistic, can set up their own educational institutions in order to preserve and develop their own culture.
- 6. Right to Constitutional Remedies:** This allows citizens to move the court if they believe that any of their Fundamental Rights have been violated by the State.

Note: The word *State* can be understood as referring to the *Government*

Source: Page 14, Textbook - Social and Political Life III (NCERT), December 2014

Activity – Frozen Tableau – Chits

Right to Equality	Right to Freedom
Right against Exploitation	Right to Freedom of Religion
Cultural and Educational Rights	Right to Constitutional Remedies

Active Citizenship Pledge - Civic Responsibility/ Duty Cards

Voting in all elections when eligible	Engaging constructively with the local government officials, both elected and administrative, in addressing civic issues
Segregating waste, not littering	Respecting and obeying traffic rules
Conserving resources such as water, power in order to conserve and nurture the environment	Being responsible in consumption habits, again to conserve the environment

Active Citizenship Pledge

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.

Fundamental Duties

It shall be the duty of every citizen of India –

- a) to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the National Flag and the National Anthem;
- b) to cherish and follow the noble ideals which inspired our national struggle for freedom;
- c) to uphold and protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of India;
- d) to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so;
- e) to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood amongst all the people of India transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities; to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women;
- f) to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture;
- g) to protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures;
- h) to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform;
- i) to safeguard public property and to abjure violence;
- j) to strive towards excellence in all spheres of individual and collective activity so that the nation constantly rises to higher levels of endeavour and achievement;
- k) who is a parent or guardian, to provide opportunities for education to his child, or as the case may be, ward between the age of six and fourteen years.

New terms:

Sovereignty: the authority of a country to govern itself without any interference from another country.

Scientific temper: a way of thinking that emphasises reason, logic, critical thinking, and evidence over superstition.

Humanism: a way of thinking that emphasises the welfare and dignity of human beings.

Civic Survey

Do you know your rights and duties?

1. Which of the following are Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Constitution?

- ☐ Right against exploitation
- ☐ Right to vote
- ☐ Right to freedom of speech and expression
- ☐ Right to constitutional remedies
- ☐ Right to free housing

2. Which of the following civic duties do you practice?

- ☐ Have you voted in every election so far? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Do you engage with civic issues facing your neighbourhood such as lack of street lights, broken swings in the playground, potholes on the roads, etc? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Have you written letters/ spoken to the editors of newspapers or politicians or government officers with your opinion on political issues? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Have you ever given time for volunteering for any cause close to your heart? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Do you segregate your waste? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Do you recycle all paper and plastic waste? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Have you ever refused to pay a bribe even if it was convenient to do so? [Yes/No]
- ☐ Do you pay all applicable taxes in time? [Yes/No]

Civic Walk: Survey**Do you know your rights and duties?****Answer sheet**

Note: Correct answers for Question 1 are marked below. All sub-questions under Question 2 are Yes/ No questions. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Students should simply analyse the gathered data.

1. Which of the following are Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Constitution?

- ☒ Right against exploitation
- ☐ Right to vote
- ☒ Right to freedom of speech and expression
- ☒ Right to constitutional remedies
- ☐ Right to free housing

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