Teacher's Guide

Key Elements of a Democratic Government

Period 2

Based on the NCERT curriculum for Standard VI

JANAAGRAHA

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)

Key Elements of a Democratic Government | Teacher's Guide (2/3)
Period 2

Class VI
Board – CBSE
Subject – Civics
Textbook – Civics Textbook for Class VI (NCERT)
Chapter 4 – Key Elements of a Democratic Government
Number of periods – 03
Length – 70 minutes

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

Learning objectives
Students will:
- Understand how conflicts happen between individuals and groups of people
- Understand how democratic institutions mediate the process of conflict resolution and intervene in contentious issues

Learning outcomes
Students will be able to understand and appreciate the role played by the government in resolving disagreements in society

Key terms

Conflict	Conflict Resolution	Peace

Section II: How are we going to learn?

Conflict: A role-play

Time: 20 minutes

Note to the teacher: This lesson will start with a role-play. The subsequent sections will refer to this role-play to talk to students about conflict and mediation.

- Please read out the scenario presented below.
- Take four volunteers from the class to play the following roles: Headboy (Akash); Headgirl (Naina); Representative of the School Management (Mr. Roy); Teacher (Ms. Rita). The remaining students in the class can continue playing their regular roles as students.
- Please issue special instructions to the following, in private: (1) Akash and Naina – Ask them to confront Mr. Roy and push for extra-curricular time for students; (2) Mr. Roy – Ask him to challenge Akash and Naina and push for the management's decision; (2) Ms. Rita - Ask her to try and diffuse the situation and help find a solution that comforts all parties.
- Give 5 minutes to the four students to work together to prepare a role-play. Give them another 5 minutes to enact it out.
- Ask the other students to act regularly as students, and participate if needed.
- Once the role-play is complete, debrief for 5 minutes.

Scenario:

Your school is a prominent school in this city. It is known for adopting a well-rounded approach to education. Students are not only encouraged to study well but also excel in extra-curricular activities. In fact, several hours in each week are allocated to extra-curricular activities and students spend this time either on the field playing some sport or in special classes for music, dramatics, poetry, design etc.

Unfortunately, due to severe weather issues this year and other problems in the city (including protests and bandhs), the school has had to remain shut on several days. This has made it difficult for the teachers to complete their syllabi. As a result, the school management has decided to scrap all extra-curricular hours for the remaining part of the semester and devote this time to teaching the curriculum.

The management's decision has led to an uproar. Students are strongly against the decision and want to continue their extra-curricular activities. Many students who had signed up to participate in intra and inter-school competitions definitely need the extra-curricular hours to practice. The teachers are trying hard to bring the management and students to a consensus.

The student representatives, the Headboy Akash and the Headgirl Naina, have decided to meet the representative of the school management, Mr. Roy to talk about the decision. Their teacher Ms. Rita has decided to accompany them.

Improvise and role-play the conversation that will take place between the Akash, Naina, Mr. Roy and Ms. Rita. Feel free to introduce more characters in the role-play or ask the broader class to join in.

Note to the teacher:
Ask the following two questions to students to debrief the activity
- Did you observe any disagreements between the actors in the role-play?
- How did the conversation pan out? What role did the teacher play?

Facilitation Notes:
- Please keep this discussion in mind. We'll refer to this role-play at different points during the class today and try to link it to new ideas and concepts.

Understanding the meaning of conflict
Time: 10 minutes

Facilitation notes

Conflict is a serious disagreement or fight between two people or groups of people.

- Do you know what **conflict** is? *[Take a few responses from students, note down all keywords and share the basic definition]*
- What we saw in the role-play above, was a conflict playing out between the school authorities and the students.
- Conflict appears in every society. At a very basic level, conflict occurs when interests differ. This is true for individuals and groups.[1]
- Conflicts usually occur when people of different cultures, religions, regions or economic backgrounds do not get along with each other, or when some among them feel that they are being discriminated against.
- People may use violent means to settle their differences. This can lead to fear and tension among others living in the area.
- Let's think of examples of different types of conflict around us *[Please write the two headers on the board and ask students to suggest examples; add examples from below if needed]*

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[1] While there are conflicts between countries too, we are leaving those out of the purview of this chapter. This chapter focuses on the conflicts within democracies and the institutions in democracies that can help resolve those conflicts.
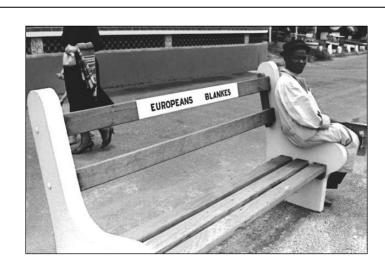
Conflict between individuals/ Interpersonal conflicts	Conflict between groups/ Community conflicts
This includes conflicts or disagreements or fights between two people. Examples: • Property disputes between families • Fights that emerge as a result of bullying	This includes disputes that happen between two or more ethnic, religious, regional or other groups. Examples: • Conflicts between white and people of color in the US [which also led to the civil war earlier] • Fights between people of different religions.

Case studies

Time: 15 minutes

Facilitation Notes:

- Now let's look at three case studies and discuss causes as well as solutions. *[Please show students the pictures below and set context using the accompanying text]*

Case 1: Apartheid

Source: The Spectator	Source: Biography.com

Apartheid was a system of racial segregation in South Africa from 1948 until the early 1990s. It was characterised by a culture that encouraged the repression of the Black South African and Asian South African races for the benefit of the white population. Blacks and Asians were not allowed in public spaces reserved for whites. They were not allowed the same job opportunities and were often subjected to harsh laws. Apartheid triggered strong opposition that eventually lead to the anti-apartheid movement that brought democracy to South Africa.

Case 2: Water sharing

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Source: The Wire (Bandh in Karnataka)

Water, a natural and key resource for the sustenance of life on earth has been the root cause of many conflicts. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have been in dispute over the ownership of Cauvery river water. The dispute is not new and but dates back to 200 years ago! Cauvery originates in Karnataka and flows through Tamil Nadu into the Bay of Bengal. A large percentage of agriculture in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu depends on Cauvery and for years, these states

have fought to receive their fair share of the river's water. The fight over water has also led to strikes and other violent behaviour by the residents of both states.

Case 3: Religious celebrations and processions

Source: Hindustan (Kanwar Yatra)	Source: Zee News (Kanwar road rukus in Delhi)

The Kanwar Yatra is an annual pilgrimage of devotees of Shiva to pilgrimage places in Haridwar, Uttarakhand and Bihar to fetch holy waters of Ganges River. Millions of devotees gather water from the Ganga and carry it across hundreds of kilometers to offer it in specific Shiva temples. The yatra used to be a small affair till about the 1980s but it has now increased massively in scale. Often Kanwars can be seen walking on the roadsides in cities and on highways. In cities such as Delhi, this has often led to huge traffic jams and become a major source of conflict.

Facilitation notes:
Debrief questions for the case studies
- Share your understanding of the issues: why do you think these conflicts exist?
- How do these conflicts affect society?

Understanding how conflict resolution works

Time: 10 minutes

Facilitation Notes:

- In our discussion so far, we have looked at several examples of conflict – we started with the conflict in school between the students and the management. Then we looked at the case of apartheid in South Africa, river water sharing issues between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, and conflicts caused due to religious processions such as the Kanwar Yatra.

- Let's start with a role-play first. How was the conflict resolved? *[Take a few responses from students: Likely answers – (1) the teacher stepped in and tried to bring a compromise; (2) the fighting parties calmed down and came to a mutually agreed solution]*

Exactly! Conflicts are usually resolved either by listening to each other and coming to an agreeable solution, or by taking help from a neutral outsider, such as the teacher in this case. When the fighting parties are not able to agree, they usually argue their case in front a neutral party and then let that party take a decision.

Source: LA Progressive

- In democracies, it is the government that usually plays the role of this neutral party. Because it represents all citizens, it tries to take everyone's interest into account and help resolve conflicts.

- For example in the Caurvey water sharing case, the central government listens to both states and helps take a decision. It decides the amount of water that will be used by Karnataka and also by Tamil Nadu. In the Kanwar Yatra case, it is the government's police that steps in to resolve the fight between city-dwellers and the yatris.

- Democracies also try to make the process of conflict resolution easier by pre-deciding rules and laws that must be followed by everyone. This prevents conflicts from arising in the first place and it also makes it easier to decide who is right. For instance, if the law says that no one can organize a religious procession and block roads without permission from the police, then this prevents inconvenience to road travelers and avoids conflict.

- Unfortunately, the same provisions are not available in countries that are not democracies. For instance, at the time of apartheid, South Africa was not a democracy. The government was controlled by the white population that did not care for the interests of the non-white Africans; it was very biased in its outlook. The non-white Africans could not represent their interests to the government and the laws continued to be discriminatory. That is why the non-white Africans protested and overthrew the government to create a democracy in South Africa.

Section III: Assessment

Time: 10 mins

Note to the teacher: This exercise is meant to encourage students to think about the different ways in which they can resolve conflict basis the discussions in class today. Please read out the scenario and distribute worksheets to students and ask them to fill these out in groups of five.

SCENARIO

The number of cars in your neighbourhood has increased significantly over the past couple of years and this has led to conflicts between neighbours. Cars are often punctured if parked in the wrong place and windows have also been broken in a few instances. Due to these parking disputes, neighbours have become very cold to each to other. To find solutions to the conflict, the elders in the neighbourhood have called for a community meeting. You are one of the representatives attending the meeting and are required to present a proposal. Please use the worksheet below to think of different ways in which these conflicts can be reduced, and resolved.

What role you can play as citizens?	What role can the government play?

Debrief:

[Please ask students to share their suggestions under each category. Add to the points from the list below]

- What can people do to resolve these conflicts?
  - Create community guidelines on parking; clearly allocate parking slots and respect each other's space.
  - Create a community managed helpline that may be called in case of conflict to avoid things from getting out of control
  - Push the government to create additional parking spaces in the neighbourhood
- What can the government do?

- Create rules on the number of cars each household can park. Charge fees for extra car parkings.
- Fine people for parking on the roads. Get the traffic police to patrol the area.
- Encourage residents to create parking space within their houses
- Invest in building a community parking nearby

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.

Recap by the teacher

Time: 5 minutes

Recap with the following key points:

- Conflict appears in every society.
- At a very basic level, conflict happens when interests differ. It occurs when people of different cultures, religions and regions or economic backgrounds do not get along with each other or when some among them feel they are being discriminated against.
- In democracies, it is the government and its organs like the police that often act as the neutral third party to resolve conflicts. It also makes laws and rules to prevent conflicts from happening. This may not be possible in non-democratic setups because the government may be biased.
- Apart from the government, individuals can also aid conflict resolution by listening to each other and accommodating concerns.

Section V: Additional resources
Resources for teachers
1. Reading: All facts you need to know about the Cauvery Water Dispute
   Link: The Quint
2. Reading: Case study of conflict resolution: Nelson Mandela
   Link: UPF.org

Resources for students
1. Video: Apartheid – 46 years in 90 seconds
   Video briefly explains what is Aparthied movement and how it led to civil conflict
   Link: Youtube

2. <u>Video:</u> History of the Cauvery Water Dispute
   Video briefly explains the reasons behind cauvery water dispute
   Link: Youtube

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