

Teacher's Guide

On Equality

Period 1

Based on the NCERT 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)

On Equality | Teacher’s Guide (1/3)

Period 1

Class VII
 Board – CBSE
 Subject – Social and Political Life
 Textbook – Social and Political Life Textbook for Class VII (NCERT)
 Chapter 1 – On Equality
 Number of periods – 03
 Length – 90 minutes

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

Learning Objectives

In this lesson, students will:

- Understand whether all citizens are equal and the kind of inequalities that exist in the society.

Learning outcomes

Students will understand:

- The five major kinds of inequalities that exist in Indian society.
- The various disadvantages of living in an unequal society.

Key Terms:

Universal Adult Franchise	Secular	Political Equality	Economic Equality	Religious Equality
Caste System	Gender Equality	Discrimination		

Section II: How are we going to learn

Opening Session

Time: 3-4 min

Note to the teacher: To introduce the lesson in a manner that students are engaged, begin with a short story and discussion.

Facilitation Notes:

- You all may know that in olden times, very few girls were allowed to go to school and pursue education. However, there were no such restrictions on men. Girls were also expected to get married early.
- However, now at least in the cities and many villages, both girls and boys go to the school and get almost equal access to education.
- Can a few of you take a minute and tell me what have you seen or heard from your parents and grandparents on how society has changed compared to what it was earlier?
(Likely Answers- Men now help around the house, a lot more women go out and work, girls go out to play, girls are married much later, girls work and earn outside the house, etc.)
- So how many of us agree that as we are moving forward, society at large is becoming a lot more equal and progressive?
(A few students raise their hands).
- Now we will be starting the first lesson of our political life book- it's called 'On Equality.' Before I start the lesson, I would like to ask everyone, what do you think is equality? And when we talk of an entire country or society, what does equality really mean?
(Likely responses- Everyone gets opportunities, boys and girls are equal, men and women are equal, all religions are treated equally etc.)
- So, a common way to understand equality is 'the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities' (write definition on the board)
- Before we progress with our definition of equality, Let's watch this video:



Video: The Rich Vs The Poor

The video shows how the lives of two children from similar age groups are so different because of the economic backgrounds they were born in.

Link: [Youtube](#)

Before we discuss the video, I want us to do an activity and then we will summarise this together.

Activity

Time: 5 mins

Facilitation Notes

Now, everyone will close their eyes and I will read out a few statements. If you agree with a statement, you raise your hand and then keep it raised till the end of the activity. Please **do not** open your eyes till I ask you to.

Read aloud the following statements:

1. You have seen or heard that poor people are not able to pay for good hospitals when they are sick.
 2. You have seen or heard that a few castes or communities get reservations in jobs and educational institutes.
 3. You have seen or heard people laughing at other people because of their poor english.
 4. You have seen or heard that girls are not allowed outside the home alone after dark as it is considered unsafe for them.
- I want everyone to now keep their hands raised, open their eyes and look around. (Nearly the whole class has their hands raised)

- While we all agree that we are progressing forward, we also agree that we have all seen incidences where people are treated unequally and that we still have a long way to go before we can call our society equal. As you saw in the video, there are countless children in India and the world, who are forced to live in extremely poor conditions. Not just the schools that they go to, but their access to basic facilities and opportunities is impacted by their poor economic status. At the same time, there are people who get to enjoy the best of the facilities- schools, homes, cars etc. just because of where they were born.
- Since we discussed what it means to be equal, can someone tell me the definition of **Inequality**.
- Definition to be given/written on the board: A state when every person does not have equal access to resources or opportunities in society, or is being treated differently on the basis of his caste, religion, gender etc.

1. Equality: The various forms it takes

Time: 15 mins

Facilitation Notes:

- We have been talking so far about how society is unequal and how we have seen plenty of cases where people continue to face various disadvantages for various reasons that are beyond their control.
- While inequality can take various forms, I want everyone to understand the few aspects of equality that our society aspires for.
- Everyone will now look at these pictures and guess what kind of equality is each of these talking about?

Note to the teacher: Each picture has a source mentioned below it. Please visit the source to download the higher resolution picture for projection



Political equality: This means that every citizen has the same political rights, eg. the right to vote, the right to stand in elections and hold elected office. In India, every citizen has equal rights to vote, that is, every citizen gets only one vote irrespective of their caste/ religion/wealth etc. This is known as **Universal Adult Franchise**.

[\(Image Source\)](#)



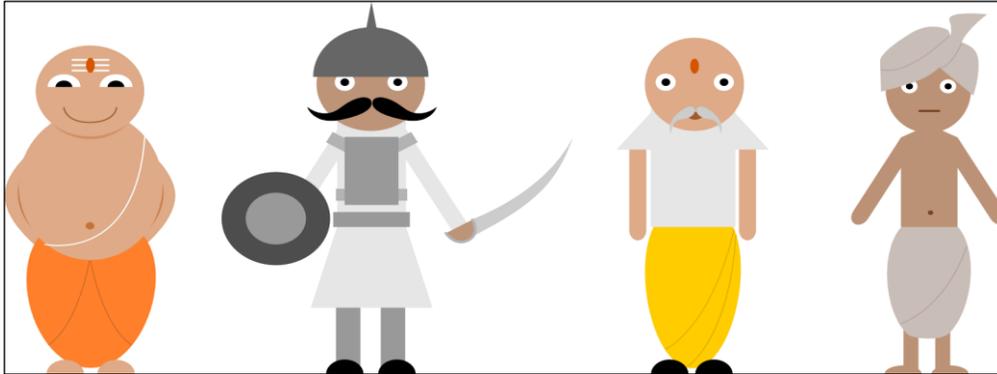
Economic Equality: This is a state where everyone gets access to equal opportunities and facilities irrespective of their economic status. Do you think there is economic equality in India? Give examples: (Likely answer- No. Examples- poor people must access much poorer facilities like government schools, hospitals etc.)

[\(Image Source\)](#)



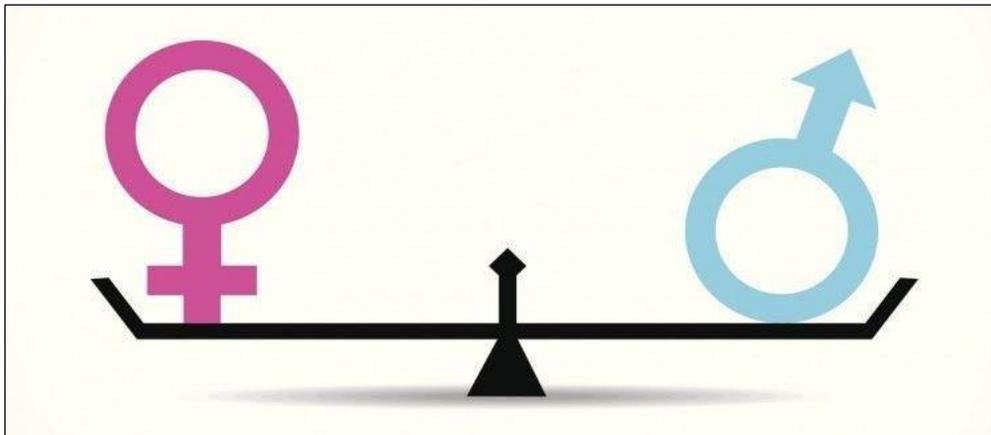
Religious Equality: This is a state where everyone is treated equally irrespective of the religion they belong to. For instance, no one is given preference for being Hindu or Muslim or Sikh etc. In India, the constitution gives equal rights to people of all religions to practice their faith.

[\(Image Source\)](#)



Caste Equality: This means that everyone is treated equally irrespective of which caste they belong to. As we know, in the old times and even today in some places, the **caste system** gives people ranks according to their castes. Some people were even considered untouchables and they were not allowed to enter temples, draw water from the same wells as others, etc. However, these practices are now criminal offence under the Indian law.

[\(Image Source\)](#)



Gender Equality: This means that everyone is treated equally irrespective of their gender and there are equal opportunities available for men and women.

[\(Image Source\)](#)

Other forms of Social Equality: Everyone is treated equally despite other factors such as disability, community background, regional differences etc.

So far, we have covered all major types of equalities that the Indian society aspires for, I want everyone to go through them again and ask me your doubts and then we will start with our next activity.

Activity: Role Play

Time: 15- 20 Mins

Materials Needed: 5 chits labelled with one inequality each

Facilitation Notes:

1. Divide the class into 5 groups.
2. One member from every group will come and pick a chit and there is one type of inequality written on the chit. Do **not** tell anyone apart from your own group the inequality you have got.
3. Every group will then take 10 mins and prepare a small skit demonstrating an example of their inequality that we get to see in society today. The rest of the children will then guess what type of inequality the group demonstrated. Give the group instructions that the skit cannot be more than 5 dialogues. So, it needs to be very simple in which a particular inequality is evident from the conversation that happens between two-three people.
4. Everyone now send one group rep and pick your chits.
5. Chits will have these inequalities written on them: Political, Caste, Gender, Religion, Economic

Conduct the activity and then do a debrief:

1. Does anyone have any thoughts on the kinds of inequalities that exist in India even today?
2. Do you think these are inequalities that we can completely do away with? We will also discuss this in detail in some time.

2. Why should equality be promoted/ why should inequality be discouraged?

- We started today's lesson by understanding what equality means and what are the different ways in which inequality takes shape in our lives.
- But while this conversation is amazing, the really important thing is- why are we even bothered about equality or inequality. I want you all to take 30 seconds and discuss with your partner 'Why is it important to promote equality in society?'

Activity

Time: 5- 10 mins

Note to the teacher: Through this activity, the teacher needs to highlight that no one has control on where they are born and this uncertainty of being born in any part of society should make us want an equal society. Each picture has a source mentioned below it. Please visit the source to download the higher resolution picture for projection.

Materials Needed: No. of chits equal to the number of students in class, each labelled as rich or poor, with a much larger number of chits labelled as poor than rich.

Facilitation Notes:

1. The teacher first shows the students pictures of an equal society. In such a society, no one has more or less than each other and all facilities are of decent standards and accessible to everyone.
2. The teacher then shows the students pictures of the super rich in an unequal society. Looking at their fancy homes, schools, hospitals etc., everyone would naturally want to be rich in an unequal society. If given a choice, everyone would choose to be rich in an unequal society than an equal society altogether.
3. The teacher then shows everyone pictures of the poor in an unequal society. The poor live in such bad conditions that no one would want to be a part of that society.
4. The students then open the chits they were earlier given. Only a small percentage have rich written on their chits while most of the class is poor. Now in this situation, all the poor will prefer an equal society over an unequal society.
5. But an important thing to note is that no one really has control over where they are born. They could be rich or poor. So, to ensure that they at least have the basic facilities at birth, everyone would prefer an equal society over an unequal society.
6. The conclusion remains that an equal society by and large is good for everyone.

Activity Progression:

The teacher has chits of paper, labelled as rich or poor. Distribute one folded chit to each student (and tell them not to open them till you have finished explaining)

1. Now, make the following table on the board:

Equal Society	Unequal Society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is no one who is very rich or very poor. ● The government schools are good for everyone and most children go there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The rich people living in absolutely beautiful homes. The rich drive amazing cars and some also own planes. Their schools have A/Cs. Their clothes are branded and their

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hospitals do not have the best world technology but are able to treat most ailments. Sometimes, the government pays for international trips for treatment. ● Taxes are equal for everyone. 	<p>hospitals look like hotels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The poor people live in slums. Their homes are tiny and sometimes water and electricity supply is not proper. They go to government schools and government hospitals, which are extremely poorly maintained.
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Here are a few sample photos of the two societies:

Equal societies:

In an equal society everyone gets access to more or less similar facilities.

 <p>Good Schools for Everyone (Image Source)</p>	 <p>Decent Hospitals for Everyone (Image Source)</p>	 <p>Homes for Everyone (Image Source)</p>
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Unequal Societies:

In an unequal society, there are rich people and there are poor people. The rich have a lot of money, often way more than they can spend, and the poor have so little money that they cannot even get access to their basic needs.

Society for the rich:



Homes for the rich
[\(Image Source\)](#)



Homes for the rich
[\(Image Source\)](#)



Homes for the rich
[\(Image Source\)](#)



Schools for the rich
[Image Source](#)



School Facilities for the rich
[\(Image Source\)](#)



Hospitals for the rich
[\(Image Source\)](#)

Society for the poor:



Homes for the poor
([Image Source](#))



Hospitals for the poor
([Image Source](#))



Schools for the poor
([Image Source](#))

De-brief

- You have no control whether you are born as either rich or poor. Therefore there is an equal chance of being born as rich or poor.
- In a very unequal society, once someone is born poor, they get access to lower quality education, homes, hospitals etc. This in turn determines what kind of jobs they get. This in turn many times means that they continue to stay poor and their children are born in poverty.
- Therefore, it is important to strive for a society where everyone has equal opportunities so that their life is not just determined by the circumstances they were born in.
- Currently in the world, a much larger percentage of people are poor than rich. They do not have the same access to facilities.
- Apart from not being fair to people who are born in poor conditions, this may also lead to widespread anger in the society eventually.
- Many countries have witnessed civil wars, when the gap between rich and poor was very wide. The marginalised people eventually get pushed to get their rights through violent means.
- Therefore, it is important for the government to make sure that all communities have access to similar opportunities.
- We have all seen that people are **discriminated** against for reasons that are beyond their control, and we can imagine how bad it feels.
- We should all work to promote equality in society along with the government. We will discuss this in detail in the upcoming lessons.

For now, let's recap what we have learnt.

Oral Quiz: 3 minutes

Pick students randomly and ask them to give the following examples:

1. Political Inequality
2. Religious Inequality
3. Caste Inequality
4. Economic Inequality
5. Gender Inequality

Section III: Assessment

1. Which of the following are instances of an unequal society and what type of inequality or equality is being highlighted and give reasons for your answer?
 - a. In a country X, Buddhism is the national religion and only Buddhists are allowed to vote.
 - b. In country Q, people who support political party 'HHP' get free water supply from the government.
 - c. In United Kingdom, everyone is given free healthcare.
 - d. In India, only students who take expensive private tuitions do well in boards.

- e. The government has abolished the caste system in Nagaland.
- f. Women and men are paid the same salaries in Kerala for manual labour.
- g. In Singapore, men are paid higher than women in banks.
- h. Special reservations are made for people of Punjab in bank jobs in Amritsar.
- i. In Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to go outside the house without being accompanied by a male relative.
- j. In France, everyone has the right to vote irrespective of their caste, religion, color.

2. Make a list of 5 possible actions you can take to promote equality in society and in your homes.

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 session is important.

Recap by the teacher:

There are different types of inequalities in our society, mainly religion, political, based on case, economic and gender. People often have no control over the kind of inequality they face in life. Since we cannot choose the circumstances that we or anyone will be born in, a more equal society is good for everyone.

Section V: Additional Resources

Resources for Students:

1. Video: Inequality in sports

The Video talks about how the abolition of gender discrimination has impacted the overall participation of women in sports in the United States. It is a good example of how government laws can be essential to promote some kinds of equalities.

Link: [Youtube](#)

2. Video: Muskaan Animated Short Film

The short film made by the department of women and child development talks about equality of the girl child, female foeticide and infanticide in an easy to understand, animated way. The video shows how every household needs to be changed for the country to change.

Link: [Youtube](#)

3. Video: Why poor countries are poor

The video explains the basis of developmental inequalities among nations- what are the reasons for poor nations to stay poor and what are the most important areas nations should focus on to achieve overall development.

Link: [Youtube](#)

Resources for Teachers:

1. Reading: Equality in Pay for Men and Women:

The article talks about how already existing wage gaps are made even worse when employees get salaries which are only increments from their last pay. This makes sure that if women were making lesser money in their previous jobs then they get raise on that salary, ensuring that the wage gap doesn't close.

Link: [Vox](#)

2. Reading: Equality in India

The article talks about the stark inequalities of Income in India and the ripple impact this inequality is having on society at large.

Link: [The Hindu](#)

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