



## Teacher's Guide

Gender, Religion and Caste

Part 4

Based on the NCERT Curriculum for Standard X



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)

## Gender, Religion and Caste | Teacher’s Guide (4/4)

### Part 4

Class X

Board – CBSE

Subject – Social Science

Textbook – Democratic Politics-II for class X (NCERT)

Chapter 4 – Gender, Religion and Caste

Number of parts – 04

Length – 70 to 90 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:

1. Understand the origin and evolution of caste system in India.
2. Begin to understand caste inequalities in India and their consequences on the lives of people.
3. Understand how caste manifests in politics.

##### **Learning outcomes:**

Students will be able to:

- Understand the implications of caste politics.
- Articulate ways to reduce caste-based discrimination in their day to day lives.

##### **Key Terms**

Caste	Caste System	Jati System	Stratification	Varna System
Caste Politics		Urbanisation	Occupational Mobility	

Materials needed:

1. Projector for videos.
2. 5- prints of graphic for opening activity (printable version in the appendix)
3. Print outs of the poem and diary entry for the activity life of a Dalit.
4. 2 boxes and stick notes for the activity how does caste manifest in my life.

## **Section II – How are we going to learn?**

### **1. Opening Session: Building hook, Making connections**

Time: 15 minutes

Materials required: Projector, Print out of Cartoons, Cartoon 1 file, Power point presentation on Caste

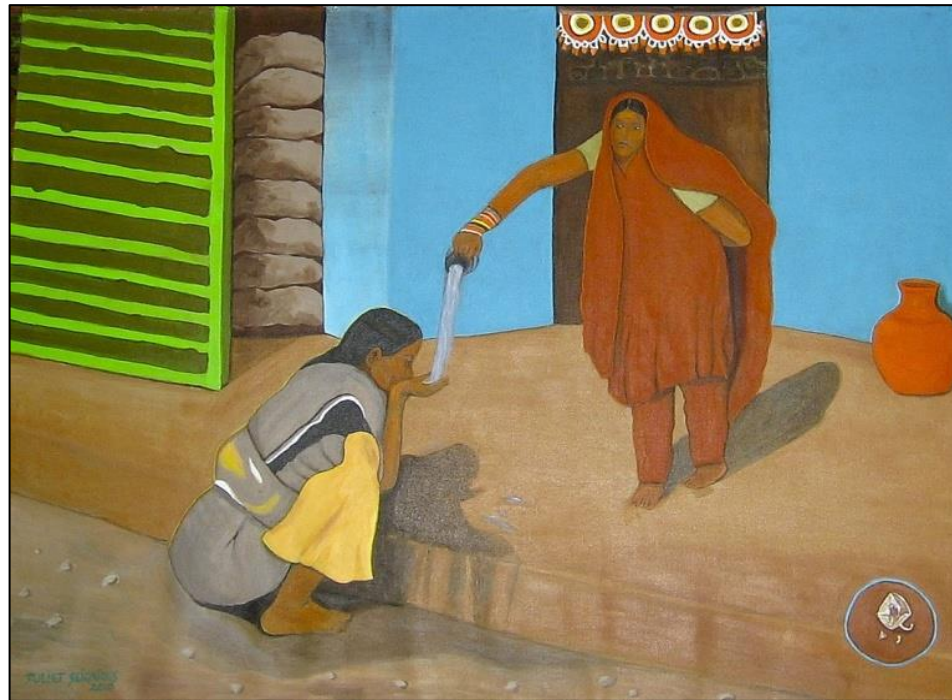
Note to the teacher:

This section is intended to be a small introduction to the caste system in India, followed by a video and de-brief on how the caste system evolved. At the beginning of this lesson, it is assumed that students have an idea of what untouchability is.

Facilitation notes:

- Good morning everyone. How is everyone feeling this morning?
- Let's start the day with a quick 60- second meditation. We are studying some very interesting ideas today but these will only make sense if your brain is willing to take them in. So, for the next sixty seconds, everyone will be silent and try to calm their heads.
- (After 60 seconds)
- Okay, let's jump right into today's discussion, I have circulated 5 sheets in class. Everyone should look at the sheet, understand what it says and pass it on. Let's quickly make sure everyone has seen these graphics. (circulate the graphics in class).





- (After everyone has seen it, ask the students) Okay, so I am sure it is clear to everyone, but let's quickly see, what is the main topic for today? (Caste system).
- What else do you think these cartoons are talking about? Or more importantly, how many of you think that the caste system is old and does not really impact our day to day lives. As you may know, the constitution has outlawed untouchability. Then why do we even need to pay attention to the caste system? (take 2- 3 responses)
- Caste continues to play a huge role in our societies and politics. For reasons too complicated, society is still divided or **stratified** based on caste.
- Before we talk about these things, let's understand how the system came into being in India and why it still exists around us.

## 2. Caste System: Where did it really originate?

Time: 15 minutes

Materials required: Projector

### Note to the teacher:

In this part, students will understand the evolution of Caste System in India. Begin the class by watching a video. This video lays down aspects of caste system.

### Facilitation Notes:

- Let's watch a video on the historical evolution of Caste system. Please make running notes to capture important points. Write the keywords from the video. Draw pictures wherever required. Write down any questions that you may have.
- Video: History of caste system in India  
The video explains how the caste system works in India.  
Link: [YouTube](#)
- After the video, have a discussion on the following points:
  1. What is the Caste system?
  2. When does a person's caste get decided?
  3. How did it impact the bigger decisions people took for themselves?
- The earliest mention of caste system is in the Vedas, 1500 BCE. Vedas are Sanskrit Language texts that guided Hindus. The mention appears in the Rigvedic *Purusha Sukta*. (Purusha meaning a cosmic man or self-conscious man). Let's not go into too much detail of the religious texts that defined the caste system. But here is what happened:
- This caste system divided people into sections of society. And all Hindus followed it.
- The responsibilities of each of these castes were later defined in Manuscript.



- As mentioned, the four primary castes are **Brahmin**, the priests; **Kshatriya**, warriors and nobility; **Vaisya**, farmers, traders and artisans; and **Shudra**, tenant farmers, and servants. Some people were born outside of (and below) the caste system. They were called the ‘untouchables’.
- Can anyone tell me who was the most privileged in this system? (The Brahmins)
- While the caste system was intended to create a system in society where there was peace and order, what happened was that it became a rigid system that everyone had to follow, from the time of their birth. This implied that the son of a Brahmin was automatically a Brahmin and the son of a Shudra would always be a shudra. What’s more?
- People’s jobs were decided based on their castes. And there was no fluidity in movement between jobs. So, for instance, if you were from a lower caste, you were supposed to do only the jobs designated for the lower caste.
- Can anyone tell me how caste and income became related? And how it is safe to assume that a person from a lower caste would have also been poor? (take a few responses).
- This system inherently meant two things: a huge section of people from the lower caste would always perform lower paying, less respected jobs and that there was no way they could do anything about it. Who thinks this is fair?
- As time passed, society began to see the problems with this system. Especially during the British rule, this system began to crack down and by the time of Independence, our leaders understood the glaring problems with this system.
- Therefore, after independence, the caste system was abolished in the hope that everyone can fight for a better life and is not bound by something so old and unjust.
- But, did it really happen, is something we will see in the course of lesson.

### 3. Life of a Dalit and a Brahmin.

Time: 20-25 Minutes

Materials required: Print outs of the ‘Life is Hard! Harder than the Hard’ poem in annexure (one per 3 students)

#### Note to the teacher:

- In this section, students look at a story of a Dalit girl through a poem and predict what is in store for her. The section is intended to show that even as the caste system was abolished decades ago, it continues to have major repercussions on the lives of countless people even today.
- To make this part more engaging, the teacher can pick a student who is very good at recitation.

Facilitation Notes:

- For this section, I want three people to sit together.
- Now (the student you have selected) will come up and read out a poem (please turn to annexure for the poem) to you. I will also pass on the photocopies of this to you. Take one per group, and pass on the rest.
- I am passing on a poem to you, take one, and pass the rest. Spend two minutes reading the poem. This poem has been written just a week before Indian Independence from the point of view of a young girl.
- Once the poem ends, have a discussion on the following, ask students to make the following table in their notebooks:

Who was the lead character in the poem?	
How is this person treated by everyone?	
What do you think is her financial situation like?	
Once the caste system was abolished, what do you think would have changed in her life?	
What do you think her education would have been like?	
What kind of people, opportunities and jobs would she have had access to?	
Now this woman is about 80 years old. Write 5 things about her imagined reality.	

Possible talking points:

Who was the lead character in the poem?	A ten-year-old Dalit girl.
How is this person treated by everyone?	She mentions instances of how people from 'higher castes' treat and her community. They make fun of her, abuse her etc.
What do you think is her financial situation like?	She and her family are poor. They do not own any land or assets. Their jobs are also not very well paid or respected.
Once the caste system was abolished, what do you think would have changed in her life?	The government would have given some facilities to them. She would not be forced to only do certain kinds of jobs. Her life may have become less humiliating.



<p>What do you think her education would have been like?</p>	<p>She most likely went to a low-income school. The quality of education wasn't great. She may find it hard to keep up in school since she is anyway from a poor background.</p>
<p>What kind of people, opportunities and jobs would she have had access to?</p>	<p>She will not get very high paying jobs. The competition in jobs would ensure she gets low paying jobs.</p>
<p>Now this woman is about 80 years old. Write 5 things about her imagined reality.</p>	<p>She is probably still poor in life. She lives in a small home. Her children do not have good quality education. She does not have access to proper health care. She is still viewed as 'lower or lesser' than others.</p>

- Okay, now let's take the case of a boy called Harish. He writes a diary. A few days before Independence, he writes a diary entry. I am passing on these sheets. Take one per 3 students and pass on the rest.
- (Ask a confident student to read this case. Printable version in appendix):

June 21, 1947

Dear Diary,

I write to you once again to pour out my heart's worries. Situations at home or anywhere around do not seem to be calming down. Father regularly goes for meetings in the village hall about the ongoing 'Quit India Movement'. He is certain that we will get freedom from the British. Last time, he heard some distressing news. There are talks that the caste system is soon going to be abolished. Brahmins will no longer be the topmost caste and Shudras will be free to do any jobs! Anyone who follows the fold system will be punished with possible jail time! Father was furious. He came home and started shouting 'Kamla'. Pack up all the good cutlery. Very soon, those lowly shudras will be dining in our homes. I am shocked'.

Suddenly things look very different. I am now being sent to Delhi to study in Delhi University. My parents want me to be an accountant and get a government job. They say that there are many perks of a stable job and my father will call his Brahmin friends at the Ministry to get me a good posting. All I need to do is study hard and keep up my grades. He also told he how there is a chance of reservations coming up for those low castes. I may have to study in the same class as them!

I have been given strict instructions not to talk to 'those people' or become friends with them.

'It's very easy bacha.' Father said, 'you can look at a man and tell his caste'.  
I am a little worried. I want to make sure all the money spent on my education is worth it in the end.

- Let's discuss this diary entry:

Who is the writer of this entry and which caste does he belong to?	
What has he heard that worries him?	
How is his family responding to these changes and what does this tell you about other families from his caste?	
Do you think his family is willing to accept these changes	
What are his future plans?	
At 80 years old, write 5 things on what you think his life would look like.	

- Possible discussion points:

Who is the writer of this entry and which caste does he belong to?	Harish, the son of a Brahmin (and a Brahmin himself)
What has he heard that worries him?	He is worried that the caste system will be abolished.
How is his family responding to these changes and what does this tell you about other families from his caste?	His father is very angry. He tells his son not to talk to 'the lower caste'
Do you think his family is willing to accept these changes	No
What are his future plans?	He will study in Delhi and then get a government job.
At 80 years old, write 5 things on what you think his life would look like.	He is probably living comfortably with his family. He has a lot of savings from his job. His children are settled and well off. He spends his time with his friends and is respected in the community. He goes to the best hospitals for his check ups.

Debrief:

- So one thing is already clear- the caste system has been abolished by the Indian Constitution. Both these people are no longer bound. They are free to do whatever they want to.
- How did their lives turn out then?
- The Brahmin man went to study in Delhi and got a government job. He probably spent his life working hard and earned money. He got married, had children, gave them a good education and lived a comfortable life.
- The Dalit girl was extremely optimistic about the abolishment of the caste system. But did that change her life? The caste system was abolished by law, but society continued to see her as lesser. She was poor to begin with. On top of that her schooling, higher education etc must have been poorer than a Brahmins. She was not welcomed in society as readily as a Brahmin.
- Her economic condition may not have changed much. Wealth builds on wealth. She did not have access to opportunities. The government may have outlawed caste discrimination but in many ways, people still viewed others as lesser.
- Simply changing policies or giving legal support to a cause is not enough. The caste system and its atrocities are so heavily engrained in our heads, that even today we see it play out.
- There is also a lot of evidence that poor people are often from lower castes and they continue to be treated such.
- How many times have we seen domestic help being asked to sit on the floor or not to eat in the same utensils as everyone else?
- With **urbanisation, occupational mobility** and education, caste system has become less prevalent in urban areas. But the picture in rural areas is not much different.
- People still do not marry outside their castes.
- Forget marriages, people from supposedly 'lower castes' are not made friends with and associated with.
- In rural areas especially, people from particular castes continue to live in particular neighbourhoods and do certain jobs.
- Caste system may be outlawed but even today it exists in the way people see each other. It continues to impact how their lives turn out.
- These initial disadvantages of caste have now taken the form of disadvantages of income and opportunity among people.
- If there is enough time, the teacher can play this optional episode on the projector for students to understand how caste system plays its role in India, even today.



- Optional video: Satyamev Jayate

Link: [YouTube](#)

#### **4. How does caste manifest in my life**

Time: 5 Minutes

Materials required: Post-Its, 2 boxes labelled as ‘problem’ and ‘solution’.

#### Note to the teacher:

In this section, student share an honest manifestation of caste system that they have seen, practice or practised.

#### Facilitation Notes:

- Here is something for all of us to consider. As we continue to study about the ruthless caste system, and how it has disrupted many lives, there are still people, including us who are practicing it. We still treat lower castes differently; we treat them as no human. So, now let’s do an honest sharing. How does Caste manifest in your life? Do you or someone you know practices it? You can be honest and anonymous as you share your experience. You could also be at the receiving end, where someone else is practicing against you.
- I have put two empty boxes here. One states problem and the other states solution.
- Every student takes two post its and answer one question on each of them. (the teacher to write these questions on the board):
  - When have I observed caste system manifest around me?
  - What can I do to change it?
- (Give students 5 minutes to come up with points and drop the slips in the boxes.)
- Let’s now open a few of these slips and discuss how we on our level can fight against this incredibly unjust system.
- (Potential points of discussion may include:

When have I observed caste system manifest around me?	What can I do to change it?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housemaids are often asked to sit on the floor.</li> <li>• People from lower caste are served in different (steel) utensils.</li> <li>• Very often, certain people are not allowed inside temples.</li> <li>• Parents ask their children to be careful of the kind of people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage our parents to be more open to all castes.</li> <li>• Have discussions at home about the injustices of the caste system.</li> <li>• Serve food in uniform utensils to everyone.</li> </ul>

<p>they are befriending.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The elders in the family talk with disrespect about certain caste.</li> <li>• Inter caste marriages are looked down upon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Campaign in school about caste equality.</li> <li>• Talk to neighbours about caste equality.</li> <li>• Perform a street play about caste equality.</li> <li>• Get friends from different castes to meet your parents.</li> </ul>
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### **5. Caste in Politics**

Time: 20 Minutes

Materials required: Power point presentation, Projector, Power point presentation on Caste

#### Note to the teacher:

In this section, students understand how Caste can influence and impact Politics. Use a series of cartoons and videos to establish that.

#### Facilitation Notes:

- But all is not sad. Things have changed now. Partly due to the Government efforts and partly due to other socio-economic changes, castes and caste system in modern India have undergone great changes. With economic development, large scale URBANISATION, growth of literacy and education, OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY and the weakening of the position of landlords in the villages, the old notions of CASTE HIERARCHY are breaking down. Now, most of the times, in urban areas it does not matter much who is walking along next to us on a street or eating at the next table in a restaurant.
- In light of these shifting changes across society, let's move on to see how Caste impacts Politics. (Pause for a while.)
- On the screen, you see a cartoon ( Project the following cartoon- also in appendix):



Source: [deshdoot](http://deshdoot.com)

- Spend a minute to analyse what is it trying to communicate and then jot down your points. As you analyse, think of all the possible points that you can gather from the picture, some very obvious and others more hidden.
- (The teacher to guide the discussion towards these points: politics continues to be majorly impacted by the caste system. Parties choose candidates based on their castes. Since certain castes are very prevalent in some constituencies. Parties often try to take advantage of this. Very often caste is used to get support for particular candidates by parties.)





Source: [News18](#)

- (The teacher to guide the discussion towards these points: caste is a huge part of politics because universal adult franchise has ensured that every person gets to vote. So, both the voters and the politicians realise that it is not possible for them anymore to simply ignore certain groups of people)
- Have you ever heard people talk about their 'caste or community'?
- People are so closely associated with caste and community that they view this as one of their most important identities. This leads to other consequences as well:
  - No parliamentary constituency in the country has a clear majority of one single caste. So, every candidate and every party need to win the confidence of more than one caste and community to win elections.
  - No party wins the votes of all the voters of a caste or community. When people say that a caste is a 'vote bank' of one party, it usually means that a large proportion of the voters from that caste vote for that party.

- Many political parties may put up candidates from the same caste (if that caste is believed to dominate the electorate in a particular constituency). Some voters have more than one candidate from their caste while many voters have no candidate from their caste.
- The ruling party and the sitting MP or MLA frequently lose elections in our country. That could not have happened if all castes and communities were frozen in their political preferences.

## **6. Impact of caste politics on caste**

Time: 20 Minutes

Materials required: projector for video

### Facilitation Notes:

- So far, we have talked about how caste impacts politics. We have understood how different efforts are made to include different castes, serve their needs and win their votes.
- Now let's look at how politics affects caste. And how the political situation of India has led to a shift in the existing caste structure in India and the way they see themselves.
- Let's start by watching a video: Jat protests in Haryana  
The video shows snippets of the destruction that took place due to Jat protests in Haryana.  
Link: [YouTube](#)
- Has anyone heard of the Jat protests that happened in Haryana in 2016?
- What were they about? (The Jat community demanded reservation in government jobs)
- What followed? (When the government did not agree to their demands, widespread protests were held across the city. Crores worth of properties were damaged. Some people were also killed)





- Can anyone tell me how the Jat community managed to get so much support? I mean this was a case where people from across castes must have revolted right. This is a very interesting phenomenon that is seen in Indian politics. Sometimes to get greater advantage, groups will include other smaller groups to become bigger and get attention.
- In India, caste system has now taken the form of backward and forward caste. People from various castes have come together in this umbrella caste to get greater political advantage.
- So, we understand that caste affects politics and we also understand that in India, excessive amount of attention is paid to caste. How does this impact communities? Can you think of the negative and positive consequences of this importance of the caste system?
- Discuss how politicisation of caste can have negative and positive consequences. Cover the following points:
  - Positive consequences: This focus has helped people from backward communities to raise their issues. Several political and non-political organizations have been demanding and agitating for an end to discrimination against particular castes, for more dignity and more access to land, resources and opportunities.
  - Negative consequences: At the same time exclusive attention to caste can produce negative results as well. We saw how the Jat community in Haryana came together and believed that they have been wronged. They demanded reservations and then staged angry protests. As in the case of religion, politics based on caste identity alone is not very healthy in a democracy. It can divert attention from other pressing issues like poverty, development and corruption. In some cases, caste division leads to tensions, conflict and even violence.

### **Section III: Assessment**

Time: 10 minutes

- True or false and give reasons: Caste politics alone cannot win an election in India
- State one advantage of focus on castes in politics.
- Caste politics have taken an ugly turn in India. Justify.
- Mention 3 things you see in your surroundings that lead you to believe that the caste system is still prevalent in India.

#### Section IV: Closure

Time: 5 minutes

##### **Recap by the teacher:**

- Caste system is a social system that initially began with an intent to arrange people from different abilities together. There are four castes, also called the ‘Chaturvarna’ system: Brahmin, the priests; **Kshatriya**, warriors and nobility; **Vaisya**, farmers, traders and artisans; and **Shudra** castes.
- The people who don’t fit into this system are addressed as untouchable, Dalit. These have been severely marginalised.
- Over time, caste has become more rigid and despite many efforts by the Government and many NGOs, still persists in our Nation.
- Caste and Politics are intertwined. Both impact each other, something that we saw in all the case studies. It has its own pros but also has its cons.
- While politicians are increasingly paying attention to castes as a ‘vote bank’, caste groups have been changing their form to gain political advantage.
- This focus on caste is essential to correct decades of wrong doings against certain people, it is also important to know that caste should not dictate how we treat each other in our daily lives.
- As citizens, we must continuously fight for a just society, where equality is paramount. We must educate our parents and families, create awareness about caste and its injustices, gently correct people wherever we can, and understand and reduce our own biases.
- An equal society doesn’t just mean a better environment for the lower caste. It also means a more open minded and accepting society for the upper caste. It benefits everyone.

#### Section V: Homework

1. In what forms, can one see ‘Politics in Caste’? (Approx. 70 words)
2. State how caste inequalities are continuing in India. (Approx. 100 words)
3. State two reasons to say that caste alone cannot determine election results in India. (Approx. 50 words)
4. How can you as an individual contribute to making the country Caste Hierarchy?

## **Section V: Additional resources**

### **Resources for teachers:**

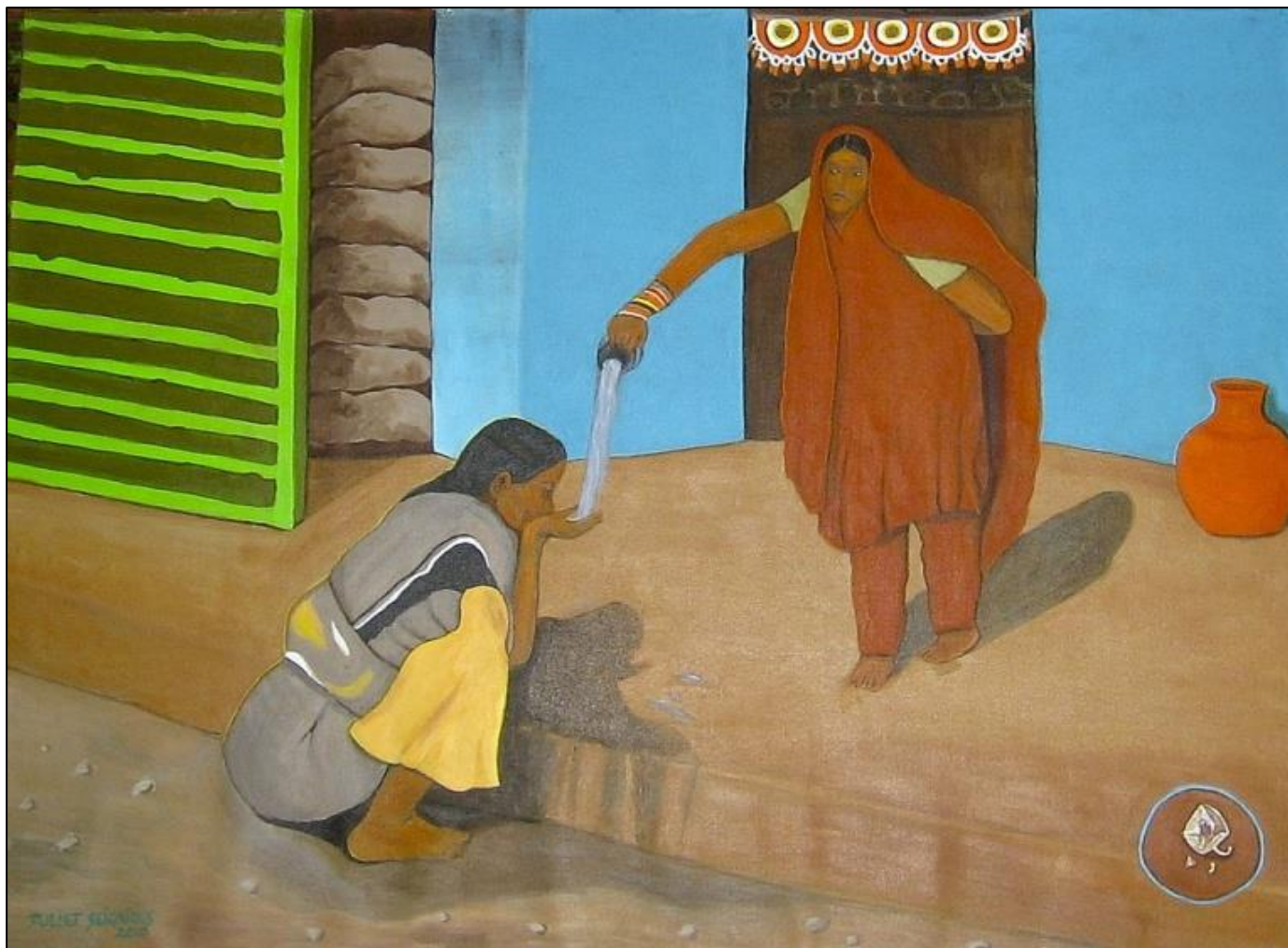
1. India Untouched: Stories of People Apart.  
The documentary shows how caste system is still rampant in rural India  
Video: [YouTube](#)
2. Article: the caste politics curse  
The opinion article talks about how, even after years of abolition, caste politics is so rampant in India  
Link: [the conversation](#)

### **Resources for students:**

1. Video: Is India's Caste System Still Alive?  
The video talks about how the abolishing of the caste system in India has not change ground realities.  
Link: [YouTube](#)
2. Resource: What is India's caste system?  
The article explains the caste system in India in easy to understand terms.  
Link: [Article](#)

## **Appendix**

The following are printable version of the sheet for the opening discussion





## Life is Hard! Harder than the Hard

By Raina

<p>My name is Jaya I am Ten year old I live in the outskirts of a village, That you don't know.</p> <p>I am an 'untouchable', A Dalit, an outcaste. And Life for me is hard! Harder than the hard.</p> <p>They call me rude names, As they play their stupid games Hey! You! Dirty girl! Yes you! Filthy girl!</p> <p>Stay away from our lands Cross no paths, touch no hands look down when you cross Stoop little and bow till you drop</p> <p>With no privilege We continue to live our lives With the belief That this is the best on our side! Sometimes like the quiet meadow, Sometimes like the chatter of the untouched land! But, life is Hard! Harder than the hard.</p> <p>There is never enough to eat, There is never enough to cover, There are times that we nibble Little bits of their left overs! Life is hard! Harder than the hard.</p> <p>People like my own Do menial little jobs, Threatened, abused, Tortured and Bruised</p>	<p>We sit as we heal our deepest thoughts. Spit at occasionally, Laughed all time! Sometimes I wonder, why God created my type? Dehumanized it is, wrathful my whole life. Life as a Dalit is hard! Harder than the hard.</p> <p>Those people don't sit with us, they don't share their food or water, don't let us enter our own temples, Push us out of the order. We can never walk our heads up, And dare to meet them in the eyes. I have never stepped in a school, Nor seen one from the side.</p> <p>It is hard being a Dalit! And I don't know what else to say.</p> <p>Sometimes I question, who am I? What I want to do? Not a gutter cleaner, Nor a grave digger Like my generations do. It can't be too hard to break from this farce After all, I am a human Like all of you are It is hard being a Dalit! Harder than the hard.</p> <p>But, they tell me it will get better, Independence it is! Free you from the British Raj, And me from this caste barrage. We will too get a chance We will too go to school I will too Sit in a clean uniform Like my life was never true.</p>
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**Diary entry by Harish on June 21, 1947**

Dear Diary,

I write to you once again to pour out my heart's worries. Situations at home or anywhere around do not seem to be calming down. Father regularly goes for meetings in the village hall about the ongoing 'Quit India Movement'. He is certain that we will get freedom from the British. Last time, he heard some distressing news. There are talks that the caste system is soon going to be abolished. Brahmins will no longer be the topmost caste and Shudras will be free to do any jobs! Anyone who follows the fold system will be punished with possible jail time! Father was furious. He came home and started shouting 'Kamla'. Pack up all the good cutlery. Very soon, those lowly shudras will be dining in our homes. I am shocked'.

Suddenly things look very different. I am now being sent to Delhi to study in Delhi University. My parents want me to be an accountant and get a government job. They say that there are many perks of a stable job and my father will call his Brahmin friends at the Ministry to get me a good posting. All I need to do is study hard and keep up my grades. He also told he how there is a chance of reservations coming up for those low castes. I may have to study in the same class as them!

I have been given strict instructions not to talk to 'those people' or become friends with them.

'It's very easy bacha.' Father said, 'you can look at a man and tell his caste'.

I am a little worried. I want to make sure all the money spent on my education is worth it in the end.



Cartoon 1





Cartoon 2





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## The Dharmapuri Caste Violence of 2012 | #DalitHistoryMonth

In 2012, *Paataali Makkal Katchi* (PMK) party MLA, Kaaduvetti Guru, instigated enmity through a fiery speech at a Vanniyar youth meeting held in Mamallapuram by candidly insisting that the men from other community intending to marry a Vanniyar\* girl should be killed, which sent shock waves across the state.

On 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2013, Ilavarasan, a Dalit youth belonging to Scheduled Caste (SC) from Naickenkottai village, was found dead near a railway track behind the *Dharmapuri Government Arts College*, hardly hours after his wife Divya, a Vanniyar girl belonging to Most Backward Class (MBC) told Madras High court and the media that she would never go back to him and would instead live with her mother.

The speculations doing the rounds were that he had jumped before the *Kuala Express* that was running from Coimbatore to Mumbai and had suffered a fatal head injury, which caused his death. Ilavarasan's parents and relatives, however, strongly denied that it could be a suicide and claimed that he was, in fact, murdered and thrown on the railway track by the dominant Vanniyar caste group. It was strongly suspected to have been a foul play and the death presumed to have happened because of caste enmity between two groups – the hegemonic Vanniyar community and subaltern Dalit.

There were speculations that the political party *Paataali Makkal Katchi* (PMK) have had a hand in this riot, but PMK leader Dr. Ramadoss has denied these allegations. However, the media reports and visuals have clearly provided proof that suggested the involvement of PMK in this caste violence.

\* Vanniyar is in the category of Most Backward Caste (MBC), majority in Madras

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