



## Teacher's Guide

Gender, Religion and Caste

Part 3

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 (3/4) Part 3

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. Learn about the relationship between religion and politics.
2. Understand communalism and how communal politics leads to social differences and divisions.
3. Understand the need for secularism in a democracy like India.

#### Learning outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Understand that religion does have an active role in politics.
- Understand and analyse the challenges posed by communalism to a democracy and how secularism helps in addressing this challenge.
- Engage in initiatives that helps promote religious harmony amongst people of all religions.

#### Key Terms

Religion	Communalism	Communalist	Constitution	Secularism
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**Materials needed:**

1. Chart paper, post-its for introductory activity.
2. Chits of paper for activity on communalism
3. Projector

**Section II – How are we going to learn?****1. Opening Session: Making connections**

Time: 10 minutes

Materials required: Chart paper, square post-it, projector

Note to the teacher:

In this short activity students explore their earliest introduction to Religion and what they understand of it. For the materials, you will need to prepare a chart with following headings. At the top, write, **'When and What'** and then make four vertical columns. On the columns write, '0 to 5 years', '5 to 10 years', '10 to 15 years', 'Not yet'.

Facilitation notes:

- Begin the class with a quick check of student energy levels. Go on to say, "So, class let's do a quick check of your energy levels today. I would request all of you to stand up. Take a minute and stretch yourselves. If anyone is feeling sleepy, drink some water and keep standing for the next 2-3 minutes."
- Let's move forward to the objectives for the day. On the chart you see two big bold words, **What and When**.
- The activity is fairly easy. The question that I ask you is, **What** is that one element that you associate with your religion? You can identify with a symbol, or an idol, or a prayer, or a food item, or a dress, or habit, or just anything else. At any given time, you don't have to disclose your religion. Just the feature.
- Pick a post-it and write the answers on it. Please don't write your names. (give students 5 minutes to do this)
- Now go on to paste the post-it in the column space that reflects the age at which you were introduced to your religion. For example, if you remember that you got to know about your religion at age 8, then you paste the post-it in the second column of 5-10 years.

- (Once the students have pasted their post-its, look at the general trend).
- Looking at the chart, what is the 'range of age' in which most of you were informed about your religion?
- Take 1-2 responses.
- Read out a couple of responses to the question on 'What'.
- Do you see how religion is introduced to us at a very young age and in no time, it becomes a part of our identity? We begin to define ourselves with these symbols and the religion they signify. And most importantly, to reinforce the idea of religion, we have in-built systems constantly reminding us of it. If you see closely, it is hard to separate religion from the individual.
- As you may have often spoken to elders around you, there are some religious practices or traditions that they very sincerely follow. Be it a certain prayer or a fast or a festival, our religious identity is something that we deeply value.
- What's more? Most of us were introduced to it as little children. As we grow up, these ideas are bound to become stronger in our heads.

## 2. Communalism: What is it?

Time: 30 Minutes

Materials required: Projector, chits for role play

Note to the teacher:

Using role play, students engage in a conceptual inquiry on Communalism. For this make nearly 11 chits with the following identity description and fold them to keep them in a bowl.

Identity	Number of chits
Female, Rose, Doctor	2
Female, Rose, Teacher	2
Female, Sunflower, Doctor	1
Female, Sunflower, Teacher	1
Male, Rose, Doctor	2

Male, Rose, Teacher	1
Male, Sunflower, Doctor	1
Male, Sunflower, Teacher	1

Facilitation notes:

- I need eleven volunteers for the next activity. (Pick eleven students from the class and ask them to come in front for everyone).
- I have a bowl of chits with me and I am going to pass it around. Pick one and pass it on. Each chit describes a person with some identity parameters that define them. As you pick a chit, open it up and see who you are. Remember to play this very character for the rest of the activity. Do not subscribe to any other identity than mentioned on your chit.
- (Pass the bowl and let students pick one chit each).
- Please listen to the next set of instructions carefully. The eleven of you are all the people who stay in a particular society. I now want you to form communities/ groups within this society. You should see what the different identities you hold are.
- For everyone in class to understand, these students have three identities: a flower, a gender, and a profession. Now how can these students form groups?
- (Take about 2-3 responses from the eleven students. Most likely the students will say that they will use one or more of the parameters for division. They might also say that they don't want any division, and this is where you should remind them that it is highly unlikely that this will happen in a real society. You can go on to say that human nature is to divide and segregate entities and that is what we do all the time. You can further support this by using examples like, humans classify animals into species and even a specie into breeds (like in the case of dogs and cats), and we even segregate and classify clothes in our almirah).
- Great! So, you say that we can use one or more parameters for division. (Some students may have formed groups based on their profession, flower, or gender.
- Now, I want you to follow my instructions. I want you to create communities based on only one parameter from your identity slips. All of you decide. It will be either based on gender, or profession, or flower.
- What parameter have you selected to create these communities?
- Once the students respond, go on to ask them, "Is there any other way in which you can divide yourself?" Most likely the students will say yes. At this moment, ask them to show another way to do so.

- Time for the twist in the story! A bunch of people have stepped in your society. They believe that religion is the only way to divide you and any other society. According to them, religious division leads to better inter-personal relations, sense of belongingness, nationality, peace, opportunities etc. (the teacher can also get two students to role play as these new people in the society)
- So, now I am going to be one of these people and you have no choice, but to listen to me. The rose and the sunflower that you see in your identity map, are your religions. You were born with it and have no control on it whatsoever. Dear Sunflowers, you are far superior than the Roses, your religion is better than theirs. These little Roses are ugly and worthless. Sunflowers, you deserve a better life. If you come out with me, I promise I will double the resources for you. I will make reservations in all government agencies and colleges. You will have all that you ever wanted!
- If someone promises you a better life, what do you do? (Take about 2-3 responses).
- Remember, most of us are in a want of a better life. So, chances are that human societies will take this opportunity. Volunteers, can you show us how that might look, dividing on base of religion?
- Great! Just how I had expected. Now, to all the Doctors, imagine you were all on a surgery, a very difficult surgery. The man that you are operating on can only survive, if you all come and work collectively. What identity or identities do you think will help you conduct a successful surgery?
- The students will say their identity of profession, being a Doctor.
- So, you are giving preference to wear your Doctor hat and park your identity of gender and religion on the sides. Is that so?
- Now, I am going to go back to the person who had incited you to create communities based on religion. That person would say, 'No! The only important identity that you have even now is your Religion. Sunflower religion is superior that the Roses. And in that operation hall, the Sunflowers must show their superiority to the Roses. Don't respect them. In fact, if the man on the surgery table is a Rose, forget him. Don't operate him.
- Now if you were to do that and become religion centric, then you may end up killing the man over saving him and many more people later. Now all of you may go back to your seats. Thank you for being such great volunteers.
- In not more than 50 words, I want you to summarize what happened in the activity. You have about 5 minutes to do that.
- (As students complete the task, move around and see that everyone is completing the task.)
- So, class let's use some keywords and make notes. The man who was trying to tell the society that one religion is superior to the other is called a **Communist**, and what he is practicing is **Communism or Communal Politics**. Such people think that religion is the principal basis of social community. They also tell us that the needs and demands of one religion are different from that of the other, creating a sense of tension between different religious groups. The way they view religion is that there is always competition between religions, one has to win over the other and dominate the other. A **peaceful co-existence cannot exist.**"

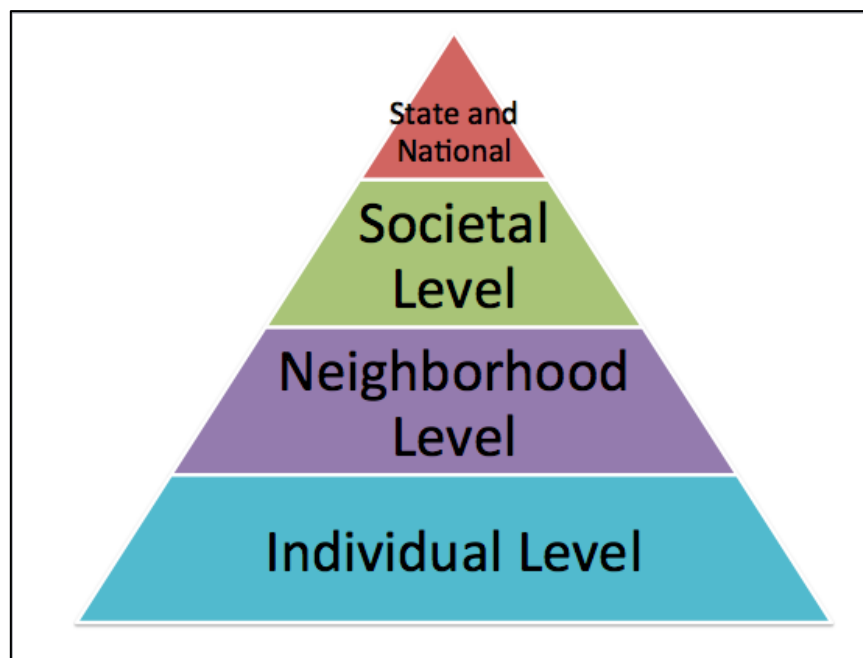
- According to them, if the followers of different religion have some commonalities, these are superficial and immaterial. For example, in this case a Sunflower and a Rose follower may have commonalities like profession or gender or nationality, but these commonalities are unreasonable and trivial. The religious identity is supreme.
- They sometimes use state power to establish domination of one religious group over the rest. This manner of using religion in politics is called communal politics.
- Encourage students to ask questions. If the students have questions, then you can remind them of the role play and associate ‘communalists’ and ‘acts of communalism’ in it.
- Ask students to open their NCERT textbook to page 47, read column 1 and 2 (right before Communalism can take various forms in politics) and complete the answers for the following questions. Give students about 10 minutes to complete it.
  - (a) What is the principal basis of Communal politics?**
  - (b) What are the governing thoughts and beliefs of Communalism?**
  - (c) What are your views on this belief? Support your answer with reasons.**
- To close the exercise, allow students to share their responses for part c.
- Communal politics sees people like you and me as only bearers and propagators of a religion and nothing else. The fact that we have other identities, some of which could be more important to us, does not excite communal politics.
- Now, let’s move ahead to see how Communal Politics manifests into the world we stay in. Read out the points on page 47, column 2, and provide these examples to support the points.
- Communalists may also go on to say that the other religion is going all the way to convert our people, something that is often said by Hindu communalists for Islam and Christianity. How do you think it might create tension between religions?
- There is a good chance that communalism creates a sense of marginalization and fear, unnecessary discomfort in the minds of people, provoking them to be aggressive and violent towards members of the other community.
- A communal mind often leads to a quest for political dominance of one’s own religious community. For those belonging to majority community, this takes the form of majoritarian dominance.
- There are areas and societies in India that do not welcome Muslims. And do not let them rent or buy property.
- This sort of communal politics does not just divide religions and creates tensions but also ignores any other identities that people have. It assumes that people of one religion will always have the same interests and demands. Any differences they have are trivial and unimportant.

- On the other hand, it also believes that two people of different religions can never have similar interests or demands. Any similarity is on the surface and pointless.
- For the next two points, engage the class and see if they can come up with some evidence. You may want to use some additional excerpts from the appendix section, attached below.

### 3. Expression of communalism in politics

Time needed: 15-20 minutes

- So far, we have understood what communalism does and the potential impact it can have.
- Now let's tap into our past knowledge and see how this focus on religion impacts our day to day lives and builds up to impact the entire nation.
- The activity is fairly simple, I want you all to copy this pyramid in your notebooks. (the teacher to draw the pyramid):





- We have raised these points in the previous discussion in parts. Let's detail them out.
- Think about the various ways in which you have seen religion and communalism play a role at all these levels in India. Also think about how this shows in politics
- (after 10 minutes) Okay now let's take a few answers on each of these levels:

Level	Expected points	Manifestation in politics
Individual Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have all seen religious stereotypes playing out in our lives.</li> <li>• People in neighborhoods often don't interact with people of other religions.</li> <li>• There are prejudices held against some religions etc.</li> <li>• Very often children are told not to make friends with other children from other religions etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Politicians often ask for votes on religious lines.</li> <li>• Religion is used to divide people.</li> <li>• Sacred symbols are used during campaigning.</li> <li>• Entire religious group is blamed for societal problems.</li> <li>• Tensions can also escalate into violence.</li> </ul>
Neighborhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very often people of one religion tend to stay together in neighborhoods.</li> <li>• People from different religions find it difficult to rent homes</li> </ul>	
Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On a societal level, these differences just become bigger.</li> <li>• Separate political parties may come up, people may begin to make religious demands.</li> <li>• Tensions may flare up in the form of violence etc.</li> </ul>	
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India has seen various forms of religious tensions.</li> <li>• Often religion is blamed for unrelated problems.</li> <li>• Riots, massacres also are often fuelled by religion.</li> </ul>	

De-brief:

- Religion has and always will play a role in politics.
- It starts with smaller differences on personal levels and finds effect in societies and communities.
- There are various political parties that fight elections only on religious lines
- Riots have happened across the country on the basis of religion.

- India paid the biggest price of communalism when we were divided into India and Pakistan on religious lines. We have all studied how tragic the partition was and how countless lives were lost on both sides.
- The question then is that if we know of these grave issues, how do we stop communalism from harming a democracy in the name of religion?

### 3. Fighting Communalism: Secularism

Time: 15 Minutes

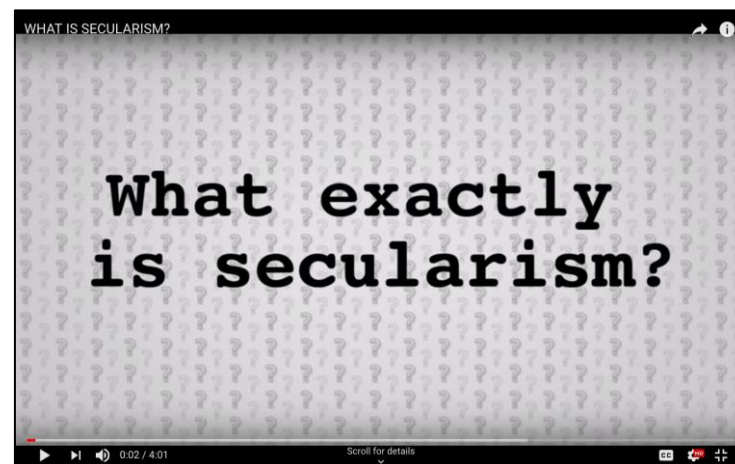
Materials required: Projector

#### Note to the teacher:

In this section, students find ways in which Communalism can be challenged. They study about Secularism as a tool to counter Communalism.

#### Facilitation notes:

- From our discussion, what it seems is that communalism will not lead us to a progressive and peaceful nation. Communalism was and continues to be one of the major challenges to democracy in our country. But the question is how do we challenge communalism, both at the local level and at the national level?
- Allow students to think about a minute, before beginning to discuss. Take about 3-4 points each for locally and globally. Encourage students to take notes.
- So, one such way is definitely by creating a secular state. Can someone tell me what they remember about secularism? What can the meaning of a secular state be?
- A state that has no religion but respects and treats them all equally. Let's watch a video to understand this better. Please take active notes."



Video: What is Secularism?

Link: [YouTube](#)

- What is the key take away from the video? Share it with your immediate partner.” Give about 3 minutes to students to do that.
- The 42nd Amendment of the Constitution of India enacted in 1976, asserted that India is a secular nation by including the word ‘secular’ in the Preamble. Indian government cannot promote any religion, and everyone is free to practice a religion of their choice. This is what being secular means.
- Unlike countries like Pakistan and England, there is no state religion in India. Neither does the constitution give any special status to any religion.
- The constitution prohibits discrimination based on religion.
- Another key point is that while the constitution does not allow the state to give preference to one religion, it provides that the state, through laws and policies can implement measures to promote equality among people of different religions. For instance, the constitution has banned untouchability in India, even though the caste system found its footing among those who identify themselves as Hindus.
- I want everyone to now turn to Pg 48 and read about the secular state.
- After the read, stress on the section, “These lines are very powerful, “A secular Constitution like ours is necessary but not sufficient to combat communalism.” Communal prejudices and propaganda need to be countered in everyday life and religion-based mobilisation needs to be countered in the arena of politics.”

#### 4. Secularism in daily lives: What stereotypes do I promote?

Time: 10 minutes

Facilitation Notes:

- In general, we close our lessons by understanding what we can do to fix a societal problem.
- In this closing, let’s turn things around a bit. So far, we have understood how religion plays a role in our lives and how it can become a huge problem when it is used as an instrument of division in politics. We then spoke about how the Indian constitution so skilfully and beautifully tries to tackle these problems.
- Now let’s turn the discussion around to us and see what we have been up to.
- Religion is so deeply entrenched in who all of us are that it is very often not possible to even identify when we start discriminating based on religion.
- Let’s think of two separate lines now:

- What is it that I do, or I see around me that promotes religious tension?
- How can I promote religious unity in my school/ neighbourhood?
- Take 5 minutes to think independently and come up with points
- (after five minutes, the teacher discusses these points and then closes the lesson)
- Potential points for discussion:

What is it that I do, or I see around me that promotes religious disunity?	How can I promote religious unity in my school/ neighborhood?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People are unaware about each other’s religions and assume the worst.</li> <li>• People talk negatively about each other’s religious practices.</li> <li>• People do not celebrate or even wish people from other religions during festivals.</li> <li>• People do not know anything about other religious sacred texts and often spread rumours.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the celebration of all festivals, at least in school.</li> <li>• Wish your neighbours during their festivals.</li> <li>• Be sensitive while talking about other people’s religions.</li> <li>• Understand that people have different beliefs and respect them.</li> <li>• Gently confront elders when they propagate religious stereotypes.</li> </ul>

### **Section III: Assessment**

Time: 5 minutes

1. Consider the following statements on the meaning of communal politics. Communal politics is based on the belief that:
  - a. One religion is superior to that of others.
  - b. People belonging to different religions can live together happily as equal citizens.
  - c. Followers of a particular religion constitute one community.
  - d. State power cannot be used to establish the domination of one religious group over others. Which of the statements is/are correct?
    - i. A, B, C, and D
    - ii. A, B, and D
    - iii. A and C

- iv. B and D
2. Mention any two constitutional provisions that make India a secular state.
  3. Which among the following statements about India's Constitution is wrong?
    - a. It prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion.
    - b. Gives official status to one religion.
    - c. Provides to all individuals freedom to profess any religion.
    - d. Ensures equality of citizens within religious communities.
  4. True/False: Religion does not show itself in politics

#### **Section IV: Closure**

**Time Needed:** 5 minutes

#### **Recap by the teacher and students**

- Religious differences are often expressed in the field of politics.
- Human rights groups in our country have argued that most of the victims of communal riots in our country are people from religious minorities.
- There are both advantages and disadvantages of intermixing religion and politics.
- It is often seen that needs, interests and demands of members of different religious communities are different, and therefore some form of religious representation is important.
- However, communalism can be very volatile. In it, one religion is shown superior to the other and often creates tension between religions.
- Communalists believe that followers of a particular religion must belong to one community and their fundamental interests are the same. Any difference that they may have is irrelevant and trivial for community life and any commonality they have with a member of another religious group is superficial.
- This can be very dangerous, and we often see it manifesting in form of communal violence, political dominance, political mobilisation, riots and massacre.
- One way to suppress and expel communalism is through secular state. India is a secular country i.e. does not have an official religion and respects and treats them all equally.

- While religion is very intricately involved in our day to day lives, it is important to understand that religion is a personal choice and should not be used to divide us or create tensions between communities. All of us, in our own small ways, should educate our friends and families and promote acceptance for other religions.

**Section V: Homework:**

This is a project that allows students to study the manifestation of religion and politics in their real neighbourhoods. This is a student driven project; however, teachers should facilitate and guide the students in designing the study, strategizing the execution plan, risk evaluation and managing timelines.

**Objective:** In this project, you will interview members of your society/community/locality and understand their religious fears, views on politicizing religion and that on the need of secular state.

**Timelines:** This is a three-week long project. One week for each part.

**Working Groups:** Make working groups of 4 students each, such that you can collaborate and work even after school hours.

**Process:****Part I**

In this part familiarize yourself to the different forms of communalism in your neighborhood.

Step 1: Read the section on 'Religion and Politics' from your NCERT textbook.

Step 2: Identify two incidents or practices of communalism in your city. Talk to your parents or search on the internet. If that becomes difficult, then find out any two instances in India. For example, think of a protest, movement, riot that broke in your city because of communalist ideologies. You can also study a party manifesto or a local rally that gives preferential status to one religion over other. Present your observations in the form of newspaper cuttings or as articles or maybe even as your personal blogs, write-ups.

**Part II**

In this part, identify the perceptions and opinions of your neighborhood on religion and politics.

Step 1: Draft a short interview with minimum of five questions to understand the following elements in your neighbourhood:

- a. Their religious identity/ associations: What is their religion? / what religion do they practice? (If any)
- b. Their religious fears: Does their religious identity scare them in any ways?
- c. Their views about religion in politics: Do they feel that religion and politics should be mixed? Why/ Why not.
- d. Their views on secularism: Should there be a religion of the area/ state/ country etc.? Why/ Why not?

Do remember to create a questionnaire that suits your audience. For example, if your audience is Non- English speaker, then interview them in the language they understand. Remember that your audience may not be as educated as you on the concepts of religion, identity, communalism and secularism. It is therefore very important to understand these concepts well before you begin designing the questions and interview. You might have to break these concepts into simpler, easy to understand words. Try using examples to explain your point.

Also, as part of the interview, interview at least 5 people. First collect their general data like Name, Age, Occupation, Education etc. To make your data richer, collect more data and collect it across different age groups, occupation, sex, education etc.

### Part III

In the part, analyse the data points.

Step 1: Look at all your data together.

Step 2: Try looking for associations and dissociations between your data points. Can you see some patterns between your data?

Step 3: Analyse the data to see what the general fears of people about religion are, what their views on intertwined nature of religion and politics are and the need of a secular state.

Present your data to your class/ grade/ school in an exciting and creative manner. Use graphic organisers, graphs, pie charts, any other interactive tools.

## Section VI: Additional resources

### **Resources for teachers:**

1. Hindustani Musalmaan - Hussain Haidry | The Storytellers  
This incredible slam poetry talks about how the muslim religious identity has taken so many layers in today's world  
Link: [YouTube](#)
2. Prime Time: Communalism in Indian politics  
The video talks about how communalism affects the Indian politics  
Link: [YouTube](#)

### **Resources for students:**

1. Diversity is the new nationality  
The video presents a very beautiful point: the Indian armed forces does not see it's officers as a particular religion. The India society sees each other as different religions.  
Link: [Youtube](#)
2. Secularism in India present only in poems  
The article shows how the Indian society despite all attempts is a long way from being secular.  
Article: [link](#)



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