

**Topic:** What is Democracy? Why democracy?

**Subject:** Social Science

**Class:** IX

## SOCIAL SCIENCE

### CHAPTER 01: WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? WHY DEMOCRACY?

(Extra Q&A)

**1. Define democracy? Write its features.**

**Democracy:** Democracy is the form of government in which the rulers are elected by people. Its features are as follows:

- (i) **Major leaders elected by people** -In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by people.
- (ii) **Free and fair electoral competition**-A democracy must be based on a free and fair elections, where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.
- (iii) **One person, one vote and one value**- In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote one value and each vote must have one value.
- (iv) **Rule of laws and right of citizen**- A democratic a government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizen right.
- (v) **Government based on the will of the people**- Democracy is based on the will of the people and its function according to their consent. The government cannot ignore the people.

**2. Who said these lines “Democracy is government of the people, by the people and for the people”.**

Abraham Lincoln said these lines.

**3. What is the meaning of the word ‘Democracy’ and write its origin?**

Democracy came from Greek origin. In Greek ‘demos’ mean people and ‘kratia’ means rule it came from the word ‘demokratia’. The full meaning of democracy is people rule.

**4. “In a democracy the final decision-making power must rest with those elected by the people.” Explain.**

- (i) Modern democracy is involving such a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together and take a collective decision.
- (ii) Even if they could the citizen does not have the time, the desire or the skills to take part I all decisions.

**5. “A democracy must be based on a free and fair election where those currently in power have a fair chance of losing.” Explain.**

- (i) In China elections are regularly held after every 5 years for electing the country’s parliament but the government is always formed by communist party.
- (ii) Since its independence in 1930, Mexico holds election after every 6 years to elect its president. But until 2000 every election was won by a party called PRI (Institutional Revolutionary party). Opposition parties did contest elections, but never managed to win.
- (iii) The ruling party and the sitting MP or MLA frequently loose elections in India whereas it is not true in China and Mexico.

**Topic:** What is Democracy? Why democracy?

**Subject:** Social Science

**Class:** IX

**6. “In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote and each vote must have one value.” Explain.**

In a democracy, each adult citizen must have one vote, and each vote must have one value, but this principle is not being followed in Saudi Arabia, Estonia and Fiji:

- (i) In Saudi Arabia, women do not have the right to vote.
- (ii) In Estonia, people belonging to Russian minority and it difficult to get the right to vote.
- (iii) In Fiji, the electoral system is such that the vote of an indigenous Fijian has more value than that of an Indian- Fiji.

**7. “A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizen’s rights.” Explain.**

In a democratic country, all the citizens have been given some basic rights. A democratic government rules within limits set by constitutional law and citizen’s rights. But in Zimbabwe this rule is not applicable.

- (i) Zimbabwe attained independence from white minority rule in 1980. Since then the country had been ruled by the party ZANU-PF. Its leader Robert Mugabe, has been ruling the country since independence.
- (ii) Elections have been held but always by ZANU-PF party by unfair means.
- (iii) Robert’s government changed the Constitution several times to increase the power of the President.
- (iv) Opposition party workers are often harassed and their meetings disrupted.
- (v) Public protests against the government declared illegal.
- (vi) Broadcasting media is under the control of the government.

**8. Explain major arguments against democracy?**

- (i) **Instability:** leaders and political parties keep changing. This leads to political instability.
- (ii) **Low Morality:** democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.
- (iii) **Delays in decision making:** all the decisions are to be proved and discussed in the Parliament, and many people are to be consulted. This leads to delay in decisions.
- (iv) **Bad decisions:** as most of the leaders do not know the interest of the people, it leads to bad decisions.
- (v) **Corruption:** As the democracy is based on electoral competition, it leads to corruption.
- (vi) **Illiterate and unconscious voters:** In most of the developing countries, voters are illiterate and politically unconscious, so they elect wrong people.

**9. Explain major arguments in the favour of democracy?**

- (i) **Accountable government:** democracy is better than any other form of government because it represents the need of the people.
- (ii) **Improves the decision-making quality:** democracy is based on consultation and discussions. As such many mistakes can be corrected in time.

**Topic:** What is Democracy? Why democracy?

**Subject:** Social Science

**Class:** IX

- (iii) **Deals with differences and conflicts:** democracy provides a peaceful solution to every problem. As India is a diverse country and democratic also, so there is no permanent winner or permanent loser. Democracy keeps the country united.
- (iv) **Political equality:** democracy ensures equal rights, both for the rich and the poor, the educated and the illiterate. Thus, it enhances the dignity of citizens.
- (v) **Allows us to correct our own mistakes:** if in one election the wrong candidate has been selected, who does not serve the society, then people have the chance to correct their mistake by changing the ruler in next elections.

**10. "A democratic government is a better form of government because it is a more accountable form of government." Explain.**

- (i) It is responsible for its actions, decisions and policies including the administration. The government is answerable to the people. If government is not working according to the needs and expectations of the citizens the Parliament can move a no "Confidence" motion against the government.
- (ii) More than three crore people lost their life in 1958-61 famine in China but India, whose economic condition was poorer as compared to China, did not have a famine of the kind China had.
- (iii) This existence of democracy in India made the Indian government respond to food security in a way that the Chinese government did not.

**11. How democracy improves the quality of decision making?**

- (i) Democracy is based on consultations and discussions.
- (ii) A democratic decision always involves many persons, discussions and meetings.
- (iii) As most of the decisions are taken by discussions, this reduces the chances of irresponsible decisions.
- (iv) If the decision is not in the favour of people, they have the right to protest. And even can force the government to withdraw it.

**12. "Democracy provides a method to deal with differences and conflicts." Explain.**

- (i) Democracy provides all the citizens some basic rights through which they can give their opinion.
- (ii) In democracy no one is a permanent winner or loser.
- (iii) In diverse country like India, it is difficult to reside all together. But democracy keeps our country together by giving equal opportunity to all.

**13. How democracy enhances the dignity of citizens?**

- (i) Democracy is based on the principle of political equality. So, all the citizens whether have or rich or poor, educated and uneducated have the same status.
- (ii) People are not subject of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves.

**Topic:** What is Democracy? Why democracy?

**Subject:** Social Science

**Class:** IX

**14. “Democracy allows people to correct their own mistakes.” Support the given statement with three points.**

- (i) There is no guarantee that mistakes cannot be made in a democracy. No form of government can guarantee that.
- (ii) The advantage in a democracy is that such mistakes cannot be hidden for long.
- (iii) There is a space for public discussions on these mistakes. And there is a room for correction.
- (iv) Either the rulers have to change their decisions, or the rulers can be changed.

**15. Why do we need a democratic government?**

Modern democracies involve such a large number of people that it is physically impossible for them to sit together, and take a collective decision. Even if they could, the citizen does not have time, the desire or the skills to take part in all the decisions. So, the best form of the democracy is the representative democracy, where majority of the people rule through their elected representative.