



India is a democratic country of democracy. Our country has the largest democracy, and constitution has been drafted to govern the nation. The constitution is called the guideline for governing the country. India has the largest written constitution in the world. Many provisions have been made in the constitution for smooth management amongst language, caste, religion and economic differences.

Our country is such a vast and diverse country that it cannot be managed properly without special arrangements. In spite of economic, social and religious differences in our country, all those, who drafted our constitution have taken care to ensure that all get equal opportunity.

### What is equality ?

The constitution of India stipulates equal opportunity for all. This equality means all are equal and respectable. With the same intent the government is functioning according to the constitution. An equal right for all means equality before the law and equal protection of the law.

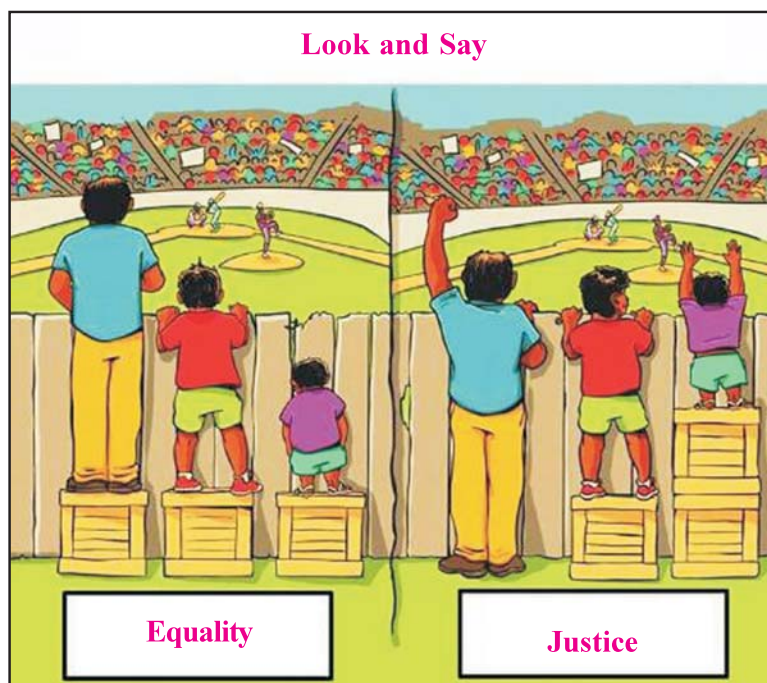
### Equality on the basis of law

Equality among individuals of different religions	Equality in personal development
Equality based on language or dialect	Gender based equality
Equality in getting education	Equality in expression of thoughts

A competition is held to reach any one place. At this point, if one player has to reach on bicycle, another on motorcycle and a third person by running, it cannot be called equality. For this, if all three are on bicycles, motorbikes or running, all are said to have got an equal opportunity. Only then it can be said that everyone has been given equal opportunity. Look at the given picture and discuss about the equality.

You must have easily understood about equality. Equality can be achieved only if it is implemented properly along with providing facilities and equal opportunities to all. Equality means everything is equal for all. The right to equality enshrined in the constitution of India is important for all those who desire to get education, development, business or employment.

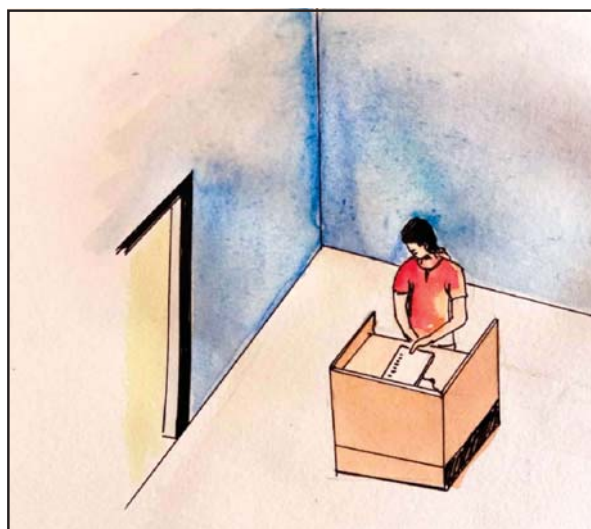
It is very important to give equal opportunities and to have holistic development of all. Right to equality is also necessary to maintain our self-esteem.



Equality and Justice

## Equality in Suffrage

We see that everyone is given various kinds of equality in the constitution. 'Democracy is the rule of the people by the people and for the people.' Democratic government is formed by the vote of the people. Starting from the smallest unit of democracy i.e. the Gram Panchayat to the largest Panchayat in the country i.e. the Parliament all elections are held through voting. Every citizen above the age of 18 years is given the right to vote. Any citizen registered in the electoral roll can vote.



Voting

Equality is given to all in the constitution amongst different religions, language, gender, dialect or economic differences. Each one has the right to cast vote. There are also interesting details about the right to vote. Voters are made aware of not to vote under fear, threat or intimidation. The Election Commission makes arrangements to explain the importance of voting and to ensure that voting takes place without any fear. Special efforts are made to ensure that as many number of people as possible vote during the election. Voters are made aware through advertisements and special arrangements. The Election commission conducts elections impartially and in a fair manner. Special arrangements are made so that all registered voters of India can cast their votes. There are special polling booths for women. Special facilities are provided for differently abled persons.

## Child Labour

The constitution provides specific guidance on some aspects of equality. Despite that, inequality is seen sometimes. Child labour is one such inequality. Child labour is a violation of the right to education. All citizens of our country from the age of 6 to 14 years have a right to free, compulsory and universal education. This right is equally granted. The practice of not educating daughters in higher education is still seen at some places in the modern times. It is considered a crime if children work at the age when they have to go to school. It is violation of law to employ children for any work under the age of 14 years.

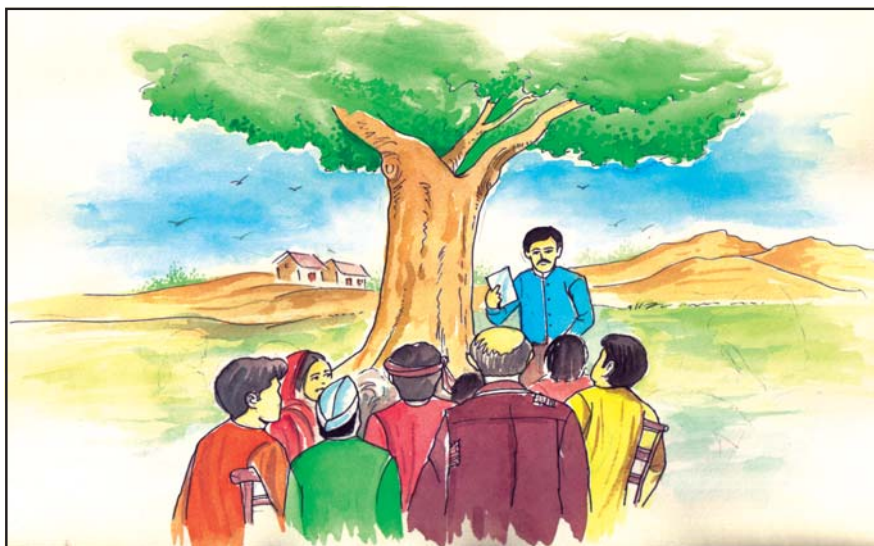
## Labour and Remuneration

Men and women doing the same work are discriminated in paying wages. Children are employed at some places and paid less. Differently abled people are intentionally employed to pay less. In a democracy, a number of schemes are implemented by the government to train and make them self-reliant so that they are not exploited. If there are a differently abled persons around us, it is our duty to co-operate with them. People with disabilities, women and small children are paid less. This is injustice.



## Equality in Democracy

Equality is given great importance in a democratic country. It is necessary for all to get right to equality. If we respect others, they will respect us. In the same way the importance of equality has been acknowledged in the constitution. Based on some observations, when a feeling of compassion arises



**Gram Sabha- Awareness of equality**

it is to be understood that the opposite person has not got equal rights. To understand many of these things, we need to think about what we can do. Wherever equality is not seen, we should try for it. I shouldn't think that I cannot do anything. This requires initiative. If we keep cleanliness, we can tell others for cleanliness. The same is true for equality. Here are some details. Based on this detail, what you can do about equality ? Make a note of that.

Sr.	Detail	What we can do ?
(1)	What if a woman is paid less ?	
(2)	What, if a person is financially exploited ?	
(3)	What if child labour is seen ?	
(4)	What if some-one else is sitting on the seat reserved for differently abled person in a bus ?	

## Inequality a Challenge

A small village.

Only two water wells in the village.

The whole village drew water in two parts. As time passed on, water in one well ran out. Now half of the villagers found difficulties in filling water. Fearing that the water would run out of the well, the people of one area were not allowed to fill water from another area. This is called inequality. Incidents that violate right to equality create an adverse impact on the harmonious society. For example sometimes in village, taking out

procession during personal celebrations, playing loud speaker in temples or mosques, one can see or hear such controversies. Such things are a challenge to equality. On such occasions, we should try to maintain peace and harmony, so that we can create the feeling of equality. Great efforts are made by the government to maintain harmony in the society. The constitution gives right to equality to every society and every individual. We must be aware, so that we can use our rights.

### Exercise

#### 1. Fill in the blanks :

- (1) ..... is the largest democracy in the world.
- (2) ..... is called the guideline for governing the country.
- (3) The constitution of India is ..... constitution of the world.

#### 2. Answer in short :

- (1) What is a democracy ?
- (2) In what matters have we been given the right to equality ?
- (3) What is necessary for the overall development of an individual ?

#### 3. Answer in one-two lines each :

- (1) Who gets a right to vote ?
- (2) What are the functions of the election commission ?
- (3) Why should child labour be stopped ?

#### 4. Write a short note on :

- (1) Equality in democracy.
- (2) Equality in suffrage.
- (3) Child labour and child rights.