Democracy

a civic education course
for Myanmar

Student's Book

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How to use *Democracy*

Before you use this book, read the information on these pages. It will help you find your way around the book more easily, and help you to understand the goals and learning strategies used in the book. The aim of this book is to help you develop the knowledge, skills and values that are important for democratic citizenship. To help you practice these, there are four kinds of questions:

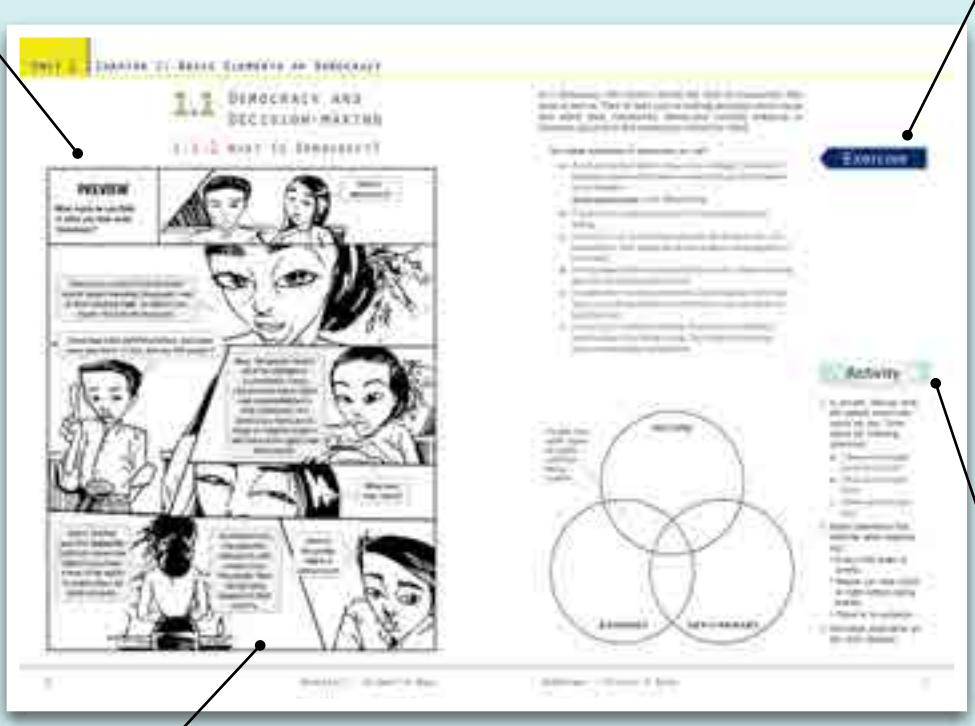
- **Exercises** focus on increasing your *knowledge* about democracy.
- **Activities** focus on developing and practicing important *skills* such as problem solving, teamwork, compromise, presenting, debating, planning and critical thinking.
- **Discussions** focus on how the issues and ideas in the book relate to your community. They encourage you to develop your understanding by expressing your opinion and listening to the views of others.
- **Reflections** focus on reflecting on and evaluating your own *values* and how they relate to the ideas and issues in the book.

Structure

This book is divided into three themed units. Unit 1 focuses on the basic elements of democracy, Unit 2 on the role of rights and responsibilities in a democracy and Unit 3 on the role of government in a democracy. Each unit has two chapters which explore the theme. Each chapter is subdivided six sub-sections. Each subsection contains exercises, an activity, discussion and reflection questions.

Every subsection starts with a *Preview*. These encourage you to think about the topic you are going to study. They focus on what you already know and think about the topic.

Exercises develop your ability to work with information. They ask you to find and think about information in texts by answering questions about them.



Dialogues are conversations between different Myanmar people. These conversations focus on key questions about democracy, and introduce the main ideas in a section.

Activities are designed to help you practice the skills you need for civic participation. These include teamwork, problem solving, debate and critical thinking.

Discussions encourage you discuss the ideas in the text and how they relate to important or controversial issues affecting your community.

Reflections ask you to think about your feelings about the ideas in the text and how these relate to your personal values.

Before and After Each Unit:

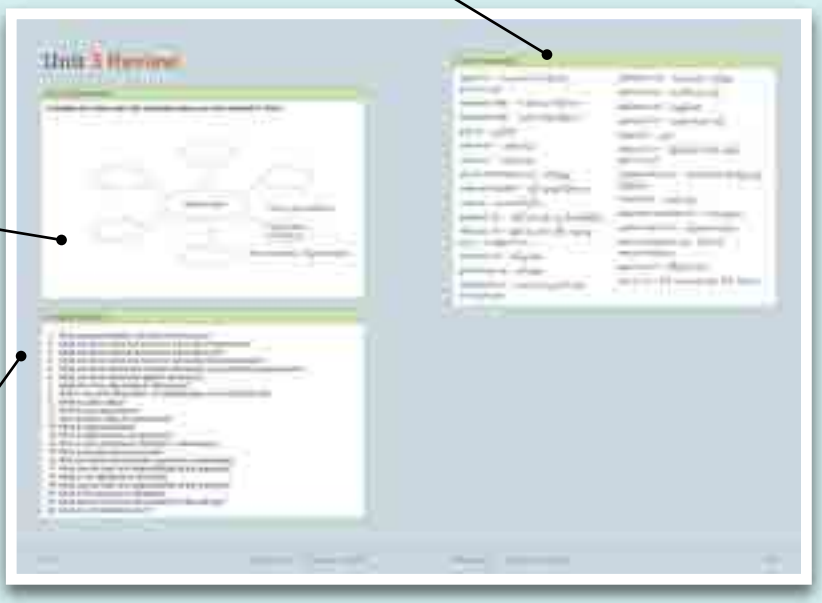
Look at the *Learning Goals*. These will help you to identify the most important knowledge, skills and values covered in the unit. These will also help you to evaluate your progress through the course.

Read the *Unit Themes* to prepare you for the main ideas in each chapter.

When you see a word in **bold** in the text, there will be a translation of the word or idea in the *Glossary*.

Each *Review* section has a blank mind map. Use this to remember and revise the most important information from the unit. Write down everything you can remember about the chapter without looking back.

Comprehension Questions help you revise the information in each unit. Try to answer all the questions from memory. After writing the answers, go back through the unit and check them.



Unit 1:

Elements of Democracy

Unit Themes

Unit 1 introduces democracy and democratic decision-making.

Chapter One looks at the most basic requirements for a democracy: *political equality* and *free and fair elections*.

Chapter Two looks at five other elements that are necessary for a full democracy (accountability, transparency, participation, tolerance and compromise and the rule of law).

These seven elements of democracy will be revisited throughout the book to help learners analyse the role of rights in a democracy (Unit 2) and the nature of democratic government (Unit 3).

Unit 1: Learning Goals

Knowledge
(Exercises)

By the end of this unit you will have increased your understanding of:

- the idea of democracy;
- the role of decision-making in a democracy.
- the difference between direct and indirect democracy.
- the importance of equality;
- the importance of elections;
- the characteristics of a free and fair election;
- the importance of accountability;
- the importance of transparency;
- the importance of participation;
- the importance of tolerance and compromise;
- the importance of the rule of law.

Skills
(Activities)

By the end of this unit you will have developed your ability to:

- use a Venn diagram to envision your perfect society;
- compare and contrast different decision-making systems;
- create a list of criteria for a candidate;
- plan and carry out a debate about who should be allowed to vote;
- identify the values of an ideal political candidate;
- role-play a political debate;
- analyse accountability in local institutions;
- discuss the pros and cons of limiting transparency;
- evaluate the class's views on participation;
- use a win-win quadrant to resolve a conflict;
- role-play a mock trial;
- use pyramid ranking.

Values
(Reflections)

By the end of this unit you will have reflected on:

- the idea of the *rule of the people*;
- whether all decisions should be made democratically or not;
- the decisions you allow others to make for you;
- taking money from the rich to end poverty;
- the importance of voting;
- whether elections lead to the best government;
- the importance of personal accountability;
- the importance of being honest and open;
- ways to participate in your community;
- views and beliefs that should not be tolerated;
- reasons why people do and do not obey the law;
- the most important elements of democracy.

1.1 Democracy and Decision-making

1.1.1 What Is Democracy?

In a democracy, the citizens decide the kind of community they want to live in. They all take part in making decisions about issues that affect their community. Democracy includes everyone in decisions about how the community should be ruled.

Exercise

Are these examples of democracy or not?

a. A group of armed fighters takes over a village. The leader of the group makes all the decisions about what should happen to the villagers.

   Example answer: *not democracy*

b. A sports club meets every month to make decisions by voting.

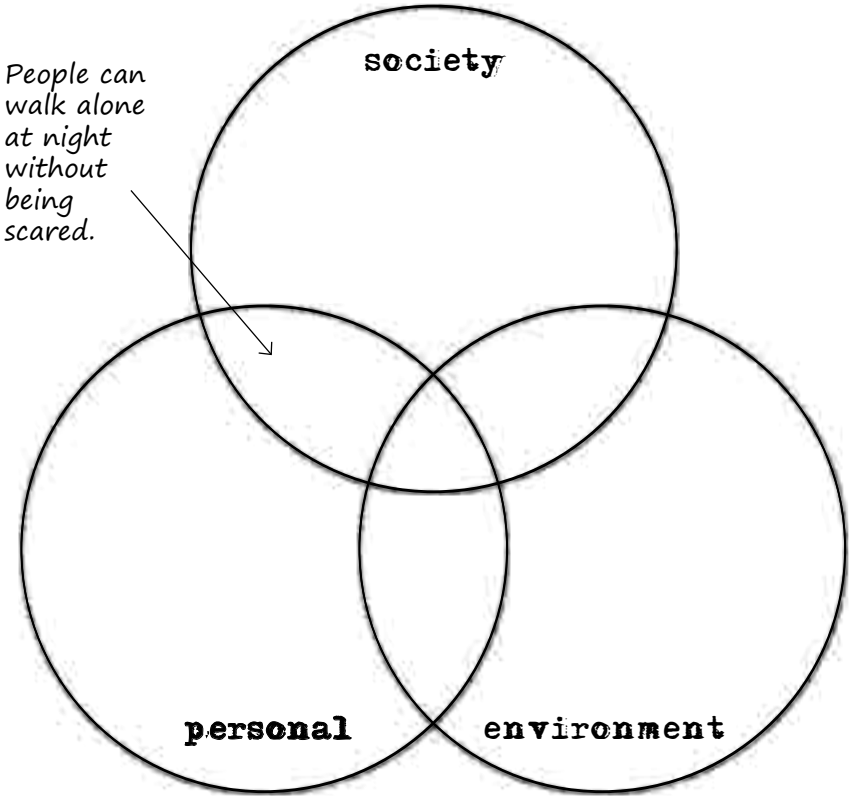
c. A school is run by a principal who has the power to hire and fire teachers. She makes all decisions about what happens in the school.

d. A king makes all the decisions for the country. When the king dies, his son takes over from him.

e. A small town is making a decision about building a new road. They invite all the members of the town to discuss where to build the road.

f. A country is creating a new flag. They hold a competition where anyone can design a flag. The whole country then votes on which flag they like best.

Activity



1. In groups, discuss what the perfect community would be like. Think about the following questions:
   a. How would people treat each other?
   b. How would people feel?
   c. What would it look like?
2. Make statements that describe what happens, e.g.
   - Every child goes to school.
   - People can walk alone at night without being scared.
   - There is no pollution.
3. Put these statements on the Venn diagram.

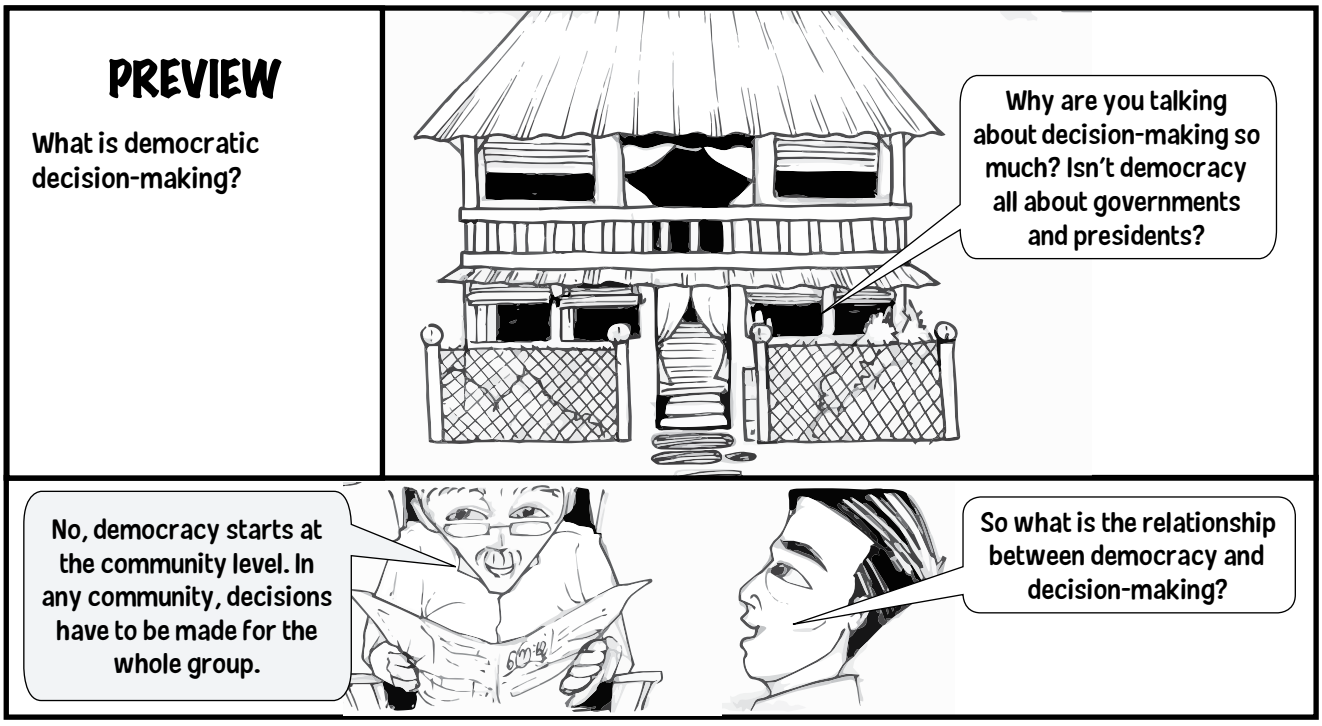
Discussion

1. Who has the power to make decisions in your community?
2. Choose one of the statements in your Venn diagram. What kinds of decision need to be made for this to happen?

Reflection

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the idea of 'rule by the people'?
2. Do you think it is a good idea for everyone to **participate** in decision-making in their community?

1.1.2 DEMOCRATIC DECISION-MAKING



The most basic questions that communities face are:

- How should decisions be made?
- What **rules** should be followed?
- What should our goals be?
- How should we distribute work and resources?

Almost all group decisions have one thing in common: people disagree about them. People have different needs and ideas, so there will always be some conflict when making group decisions.

Every group decision involves winners and losers. When communities make decisions about how to share resources and opportunities, some groups benefit more than others.

For example, there is a community that has a lot of sick people and a lot of uneducated people. However, this community only has enough money to build a school or a clinic. If the community builds a school, the uneducated people will benefit but the sick people will not. If they build a clinic, the sick people will benefit but the uneducated people will not.

The decision-making process affects which groups benefit. Including a group in decision-making makes them more likely to benefit. Excluding a group makes them less likely to benefit.

There are four kinds of decision-making.

1. **Autocratic**: One person makes group decisions alone.
2. **Participatory**: The leader of a group collects ideas and suggestions from everyone. The group discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each idea. The leader then makes a decision after considering everyone's input.
3. **Majority Vote**: Everyone gets the chance to express their ideas about what to do. Everyone then votes. The idea that gets the most votes wins.
4. **Consensus**: The group tries to find a decision that everyone can support. Everyone has a chance to express their ideas and opinions before a decision is made. **Consensus** happens when all group members agree with the decision.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Group decisions usually involve some disagreement.
b. The type of decision-making process can affect which groups benefit from a decision.
c. **Participatory** decision-making requires leaders to talk to other people before they make a decision.
d. Consensus decision-making is the same as **majority** voting.
e. To reach consensus, it is necessary to discuss until everyone agrees with the decision.
f. **Autocratic** decision-making includes more people than consensus decision-making.

Exercise

Match the statements to the four kinds of decision-making.

1. autocratic
2. participatory
3. majority vote
4. consensus

a. A doctor decides the best treatment for an injury.
Example answer: *autocratic*

b. All the teachers in a school meet to decide where they will go for a school trip. They discuss all the options until they reach an agreement.

c. A teacher decides what to teach to her fourth grade maths class.

d. Students vote on whether to spend their class budget on new chairs or new fans.

e. The local governor invites all community members to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of building a new bridge before he makes a decision.

f. A country votes to decide which of two people will become the leader of the country.

g. All members of a band decide which songs they will play at a concert. Each band member suggests three songs and then they discuss until they have a final list.

Democracy is a way of resolving conflicting interests, ideas and opinions in a group without using force or violence. There are two important features of democratic decision-making that support this:

1. All members have an equal right to express their opinions. Those who are not powerful have the same input in the decision as those who are powerful. This avoids the situation where the interests, ideas and opinions of weaker or smaller groups are ignored.
2. All members have an equal right to participate in decision-making. A democratic decision involves the people who are affected by that decision. People are not then negatively affected by decisions that they could not take part in.

Desert Island Role Play

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

You were on a boat journey. Your boat sank, but you all swam to a nearby island. Now you need to decide how and where you are going to live. You need to find water, food and shelter very quickly. However, you also need to agree on the rules about how you are all going to live together.

Someone suggests that as the first step, the whole group needs to agree on a way to make decisions.

1. Get into one of these four groups:
   - majority vote for all decisions (majority vote);
   - one leader makes all decisions alone (autocratic);
   - one leader makes all decisions after **consulting** with others (participatory);
   - decision-making requires everyone to agree (consensus).
2. Make a presentation that argues for your group's decision-making process. Outline the advantages of this decision-making process to the rest of the class.
3. Discuss the disadvantages of the other decision-making processes. Decide which is the best decision-making process.
4. Which decision-making process would you choose? Why?

Discussion

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of democratic decision-making?
2. How are decisions made in your community? Do you think they should be made more or less democratically? Why?

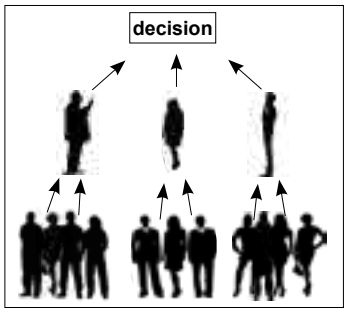
Reflection

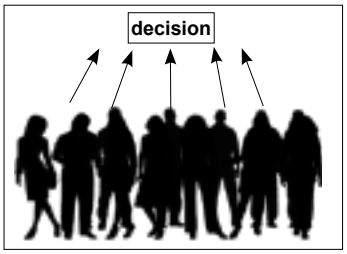
1. Do you think there are some decisions that should not be made democratically? Why?
2. Think of a time when you were part of a group that made a really good decision. Was this decision made democratically? If not, how was the decision made?
3. Think of a time when you were part of a group that made a really bad decision. Was this decision made democratically? If not, how was the decision made?

1.1.3 DIRECT AND INDIRECT DEMOCRACY

PREVIEW

Look at the diagrams. Which is direct democracy and which is representative democracy?





In a direct democracy, decisions are made by all the members of a community. However, direct democracy is not practical in communities with millions of people (like a country). This is because:

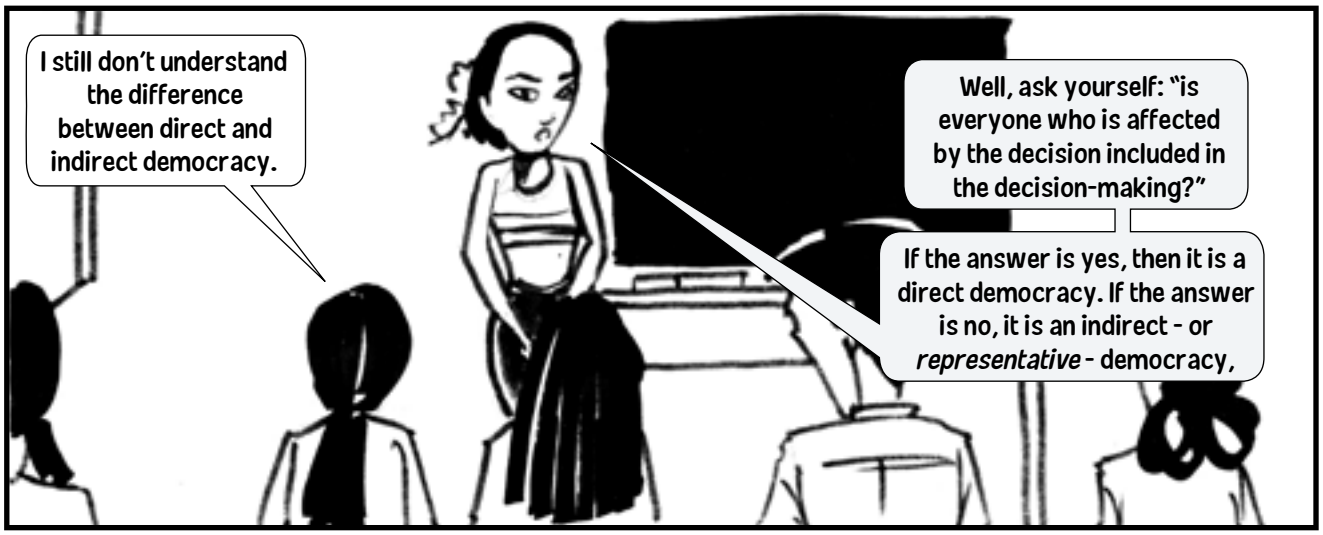
1. modern democracies involve such a large number of people that it is impossible for them to gather together to make decisions;
2. most citizens do not have the time, the interest or the knowledge to take part in every decision made in a community.

For these reasons, indirect democracy is the most common form of democracy in the world today.

Exercise

Which of the following are reasons why indirect democracy is used in large communities?

a. Direct democracy is hard to do with large numbers of people.
b. Citizens don't have the time or knowledge to take part in all decisions.
c. Direct democracy is unfamiliar to most people.



Exercise

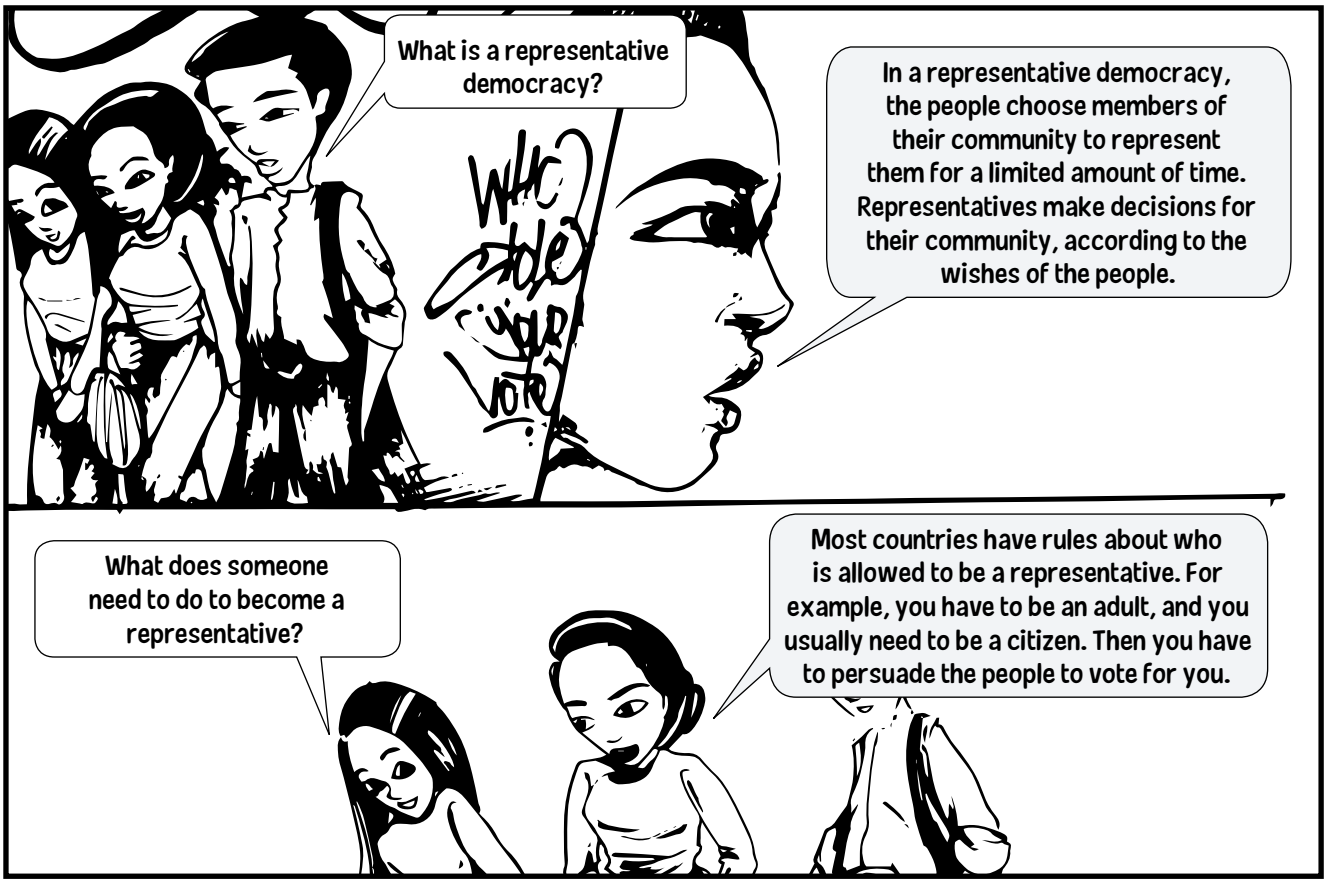
Read these situations. Are they direct or indirect forms of democracy?

In a community...

a. decisions are made by a community council. They have a meeting once a month to decide on issues that affect the community. Any member of the community can join the council;

   Example answer: *direct*

b. the people elect representatives to make laws for the country. There is one elected person for every 100,000 people;
c. any community member can call a vote on any issue. When they do, all other members of the community have the responsibility to vote;
d. all important decisions are made by a president who is elected by the people in a vote every five years;
e. there is a group of people who are responsible for dealing with community issues. However, they cannot make any decisions without consulting the rest of the community. They call a meeting every time they need to make a decision. All community members have the right to attend these meetings;
f. important decisions are made by the leader of a group of elected representatives. The leader is chosen by all the representatives in a vote. Representatives are elected by the people every five years.



Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

In a representative democracy...

a. the government is made up of citizens;
b. the government chooses the representatives;
c. citizens give the government the authority to make decisions on their behalf;
d. the government's authority comes from the people;
e. any citizen can be a representative;
f. the requirements to be a representative only apply to some citizens.

The government is the group of people who lead the country and make decisions about national issues. Governments have the authority to make decisions about laws, **budgets** and the way that society functions. In a democracy, this authority comes from the people. They give the government permission to make decisions for them. In a representative democracy, governments are made up of representatives chosen by the people.

To become a representative, first a citizen must satisfy the country's requirements for being a representative (e.g. a representative must be at least 25 years old). These requirements apply to all citizens equally.

The next step is to explain why they want to be a representative, and why they would do a good job. Citizens then choose representatives based on who they think will be the best.

This group of representatives (often called a **parliament**) then form the government. These representatives are known as 'members of parliament'.

Focus on Myanmar

How is the Government Formed in Myanmar?

Parliament buildings, Naypyidaw

There are three steps to forming the government in Myanmar.

Step 1

Citizens vote for candidates to represent their community in government. In each township, the candidate with the largest number of votes will be chosen to join the parliament. This means that that candidate wins a seat in the parliament. They can then take part in decision-making on national issues.

The Myanmar parliament has two 'houses' (groups of representatives): the Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw. Together they are known as the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. The voters choose 75% of the representatives in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. The military appoints the other 25%.

Step 2

After the representatives have been elected, all the members of parliament vote to choose the president. They choose one of three candidates – one chosen by the Pyithu Hluttaw, one chosen by the Amyotha Hluttaw and one chosen by the military. The candidate with the highest number of votes becomes the president.

Step 3

After the president is elected, he or she forms the government. He or she chooses the ministers who will be responsible for making decisions in specific areas (health, education etc.) and other important positions. The new government is then given authority to rule the country.

Exercise

1. What percentage of the members of parliament are chosen by the military?
2. How is the president chosen in Myanmar?
3. Who chooses the ministers in the Myanmar government?

Activity

1. You are part of a group of experts who are deciding who should have the right to be a representative. Read the list of criteria, Do you agree with them all? Cross off the criteria you disagree with.
2. Add other criteria to the list.
3. What are the requirements for people to be a representative in your country?
4. What are the differences between the criteria that you chose and the criteria for people to be a representative in your country?

Criteria for Being a Representative

Criteria

a. Only high school graduates will be allowed to be a representative.

b. Only experts will be allowed to be representatives for positions that they know about (economists on economic matters, doctors on medical matters, etc.).

c. Representatives must be at least 18 years of age.

d. Representatives must be at least 40 years of age.

e. Only people who have never committed a crime will be allowed to be a representative.

f. Only those with democratic values will be allowed to be a representative.

g. Only those of the majority ethnic group will be allowed to be a representative.

h. Only people who are not religious leaders (e.g. monks, nuns, priests, imams etc.) are allowed to be a representative.

i. Only women will be allowed to be a representative.

j. Only persons who own property will be allowed to be a representative.

k. Only the mentally healthy will be allowed to be a representative.

l. Only the physically healthy will be allowed to be a representative.

m. Only people who have never been **bankrupt** will be allowed to be a representative.

Discussion

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of direct democracy?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of representative democracy?
3. What examples of direct democracy can you see in your community?
4. What examples of representative democracy can you see in your community?

Reflection

1. Is there anyone to whom you give permission to make decisions for you?
2. What things do they make decisions about?
3. Why do you give them permission to decide for you?
4. How do you feel when they make decisions that you do not agree with?

1.2 Elements of Democracy: Equality and Elections

1.2.1 Equality

Equality is necessary for a representative democracy. Democracy cannot work if people with good ideas and commitment are **excluded** from decision-making, and people with bad ideas and little commitment have special decision-making powers.

In a democracy, each adult citizen has one vote, and each vote has equal value. This right should only be limited for a very good reason, such as if someone has a serious mental illness that prevents them from making decisions.

If some citizens are given less chance to choose their representatives, then the government will not reflect the whole community. For example:

- In Saudi Arabia women do not have the right to vote.
- Until 1994, black South Africans were not allowed to vote.
- In the 1980s, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo didn't allow citizens from the Banyarwanda ethnic group to be representatives.

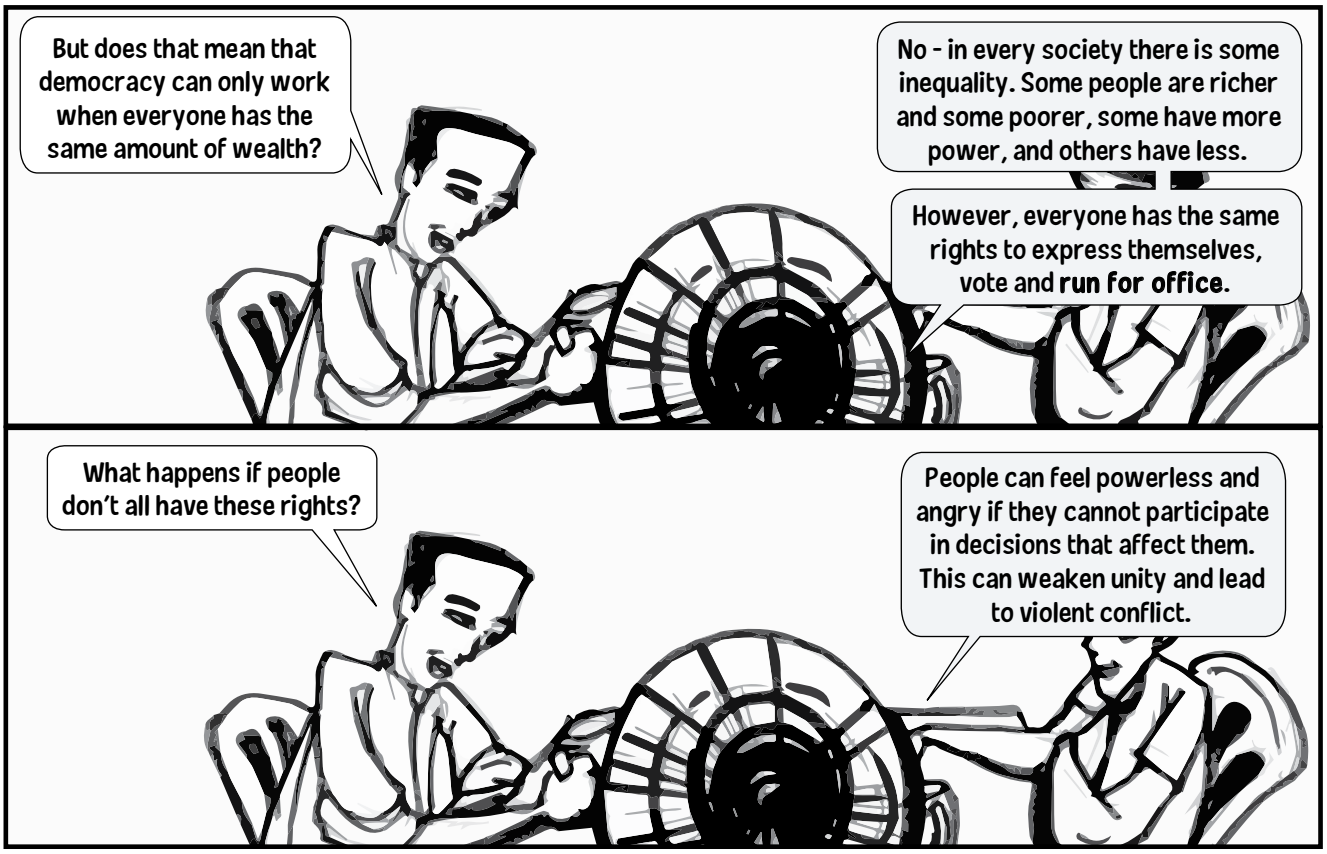
These cases are not examples of 'the rule of the people', because many of 'the people' are excluded from decision-making.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

In a democracy...

a. only highly educated people are allowed to make decisions;
b. there are no good reasons for stop someone from voting;
c. the 'rule of the people' means that **minority** groups can be excluded from decision-making.



Activity

Debate – Choosing a Ruler

Read the text then follow the instructions.

A suggestion has been made to only allow 5,000 of the wisest, most educated people to vote. These people would be chosen based on their age, intelligence, and professional experience. There is now a debate between supporters and opponents of this new idea.

1. Work in groups of three. In each group:
   - one person represents the supporters of this idea;
   - one person represents the opponents of this idea;
   - one person is a journalist. They ask questions to the two representatives at the end of the debate.
2. Have the debate and question session.
3. As a class, discuss the main points for and against the suggestion.
4. Have a class vote on whether to support this suggestion or not.

Focus on Myanmar

Equality and Representation

Phyu Phyu Thin is a Member of Parliament (MP), She is also a well-known supporter of people with HIV/AIDS. She is one of only 20 women in the Myanmar parliament.

Q: You are rare as a young female MP. Do you have any difficulties in parliament because of your age?

A: In the Myanmar Parliament, there are more older MPs. Their age shows you that they are experienced. On the other hand, we need more strength from the youth as well. Myanmar needs both elders' experience and the young people's force for the country's development.

Q: How do male MPs behave around women?

A: I've seen that all are acting equally, like siblings. But some people do not take female politicians very seriously. I feel that men are still disrespectful towards women in politics. This can make it difficult for female MPs to participate as equals.

Q: What are the challenges that women face?

A: Some women have less chance to be successful in business or politics. Myanmar culture can limit them. For example married women have to do jobs around the house. It's the same with political jobs — many women are limited by their families and environment. So there are challenges that stop female representatives from achieving everything that they could.

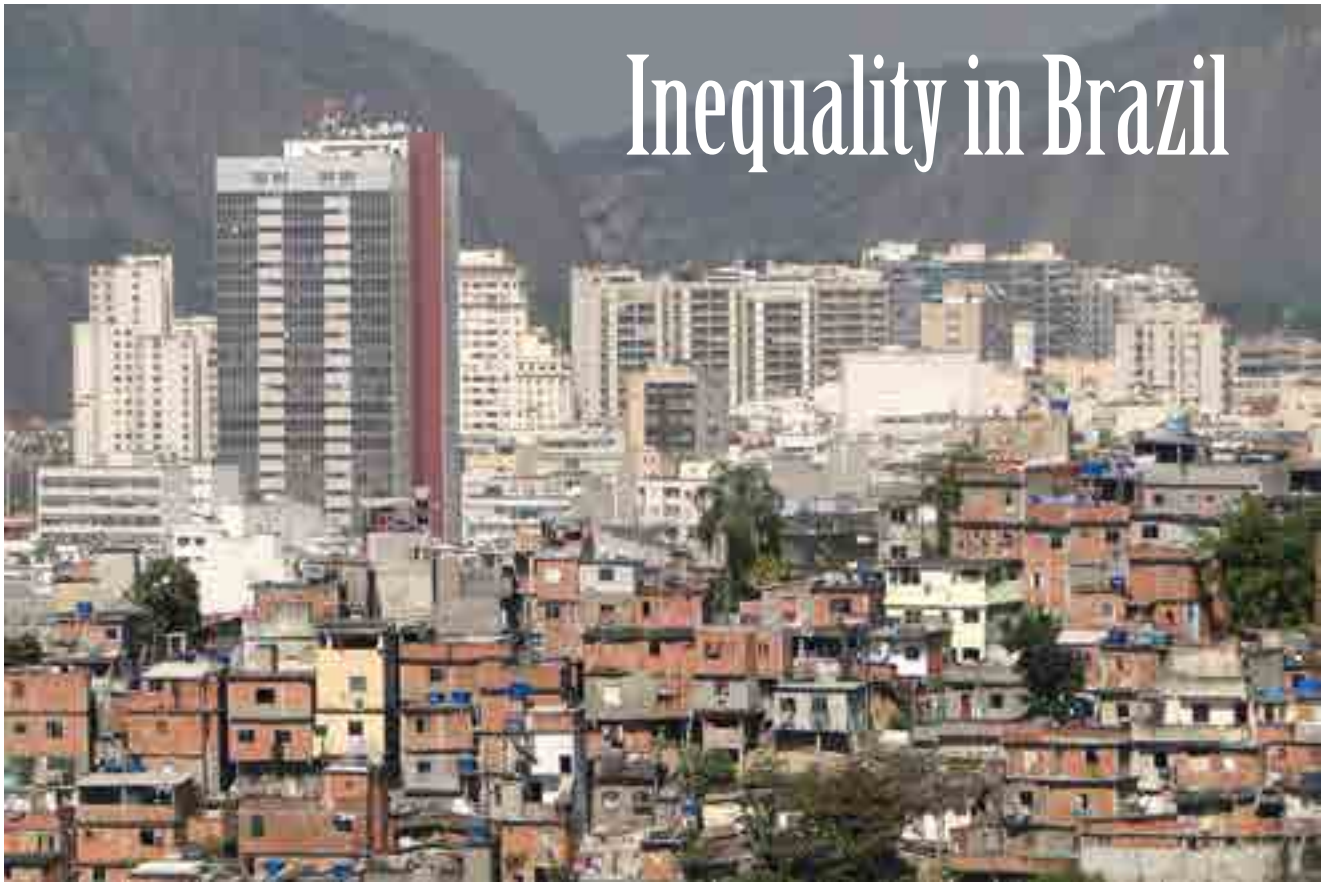
Adapted from: http://www.irrawaddy.org/interview/pushing-limits-burmese-women-politics.html

Exercise

1. Why is Phyu Phyu Thin unusual for an MP?
2. What problems does she face as an MP?
3. According to Phyu Phyu Thin, why can it be difficult for women in politics?

Discussion

1. Why is equality important for democracy?
2. What are the challenges of making sure that citizens are equal in a democracy?
3. Are people equal in your community? Why or why not?
4. What kinds of inequality are there in your community?
5. How does inequality affect your community?



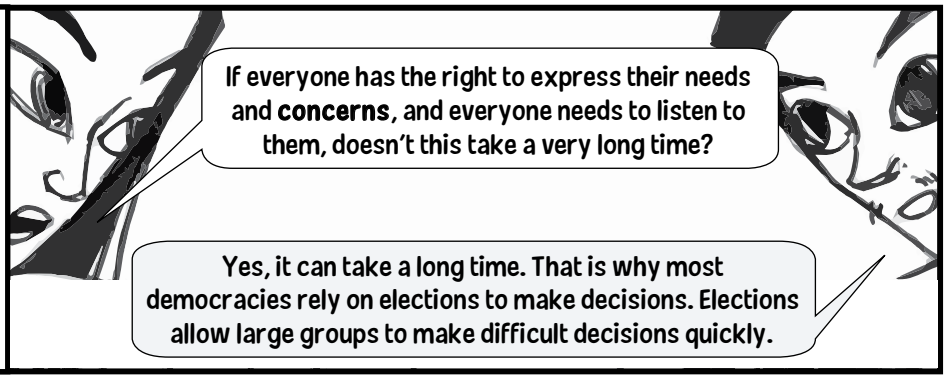
Reflection

1. How do you feel about inequality in your community?
2. If you could end poverty in your community by taking from the rich and giving to the poor, would you do it?

1.2.2 ELECTIONS

PREVIEW

What is an election?



Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Referenda are a way to include citizens in decision-making.
b. Referenda are used to choose representatives.
c. When people choose a representative in an election, this is an example of direct democracy.

A. WHY VOTE?

Elections provide people with the opportunity to decide what happens in their communities. Sometimes people vote for or against specific issues. This kind of vote is called a **referendum**. For example, if a community was deciding whether to build a new road in their town, the people might vote *yes* or *no*. This is an example of direct democracy.

Most elections are an example of indirect democracy. Members of a community usually choose representatives who will be responsible for making decisions for that community. In Myanmar, this is done by majority vote – the person who gets the most votes becomes the representative for their community.

The individuals who want to represent their community in government are called candidates. Before elections, people have an opportunity to learn about the views and values of different candidates. They think about which candidate best represents their own views and values. They then can vote for that candidate.

B. Who to Vote for?

Most candidates in an election are members of a political party. Political parties are groups of people who have similar opinions about politics. They often share interests, identity or values, and work together to achieve their political goals.

Political parties try to gain power by having their party members elected to the government. They aim to be the party with the most representatives in the parliament. If they succeed, they become the *ruling party* and control the government. All the other parties are called ***opposition*** parties.

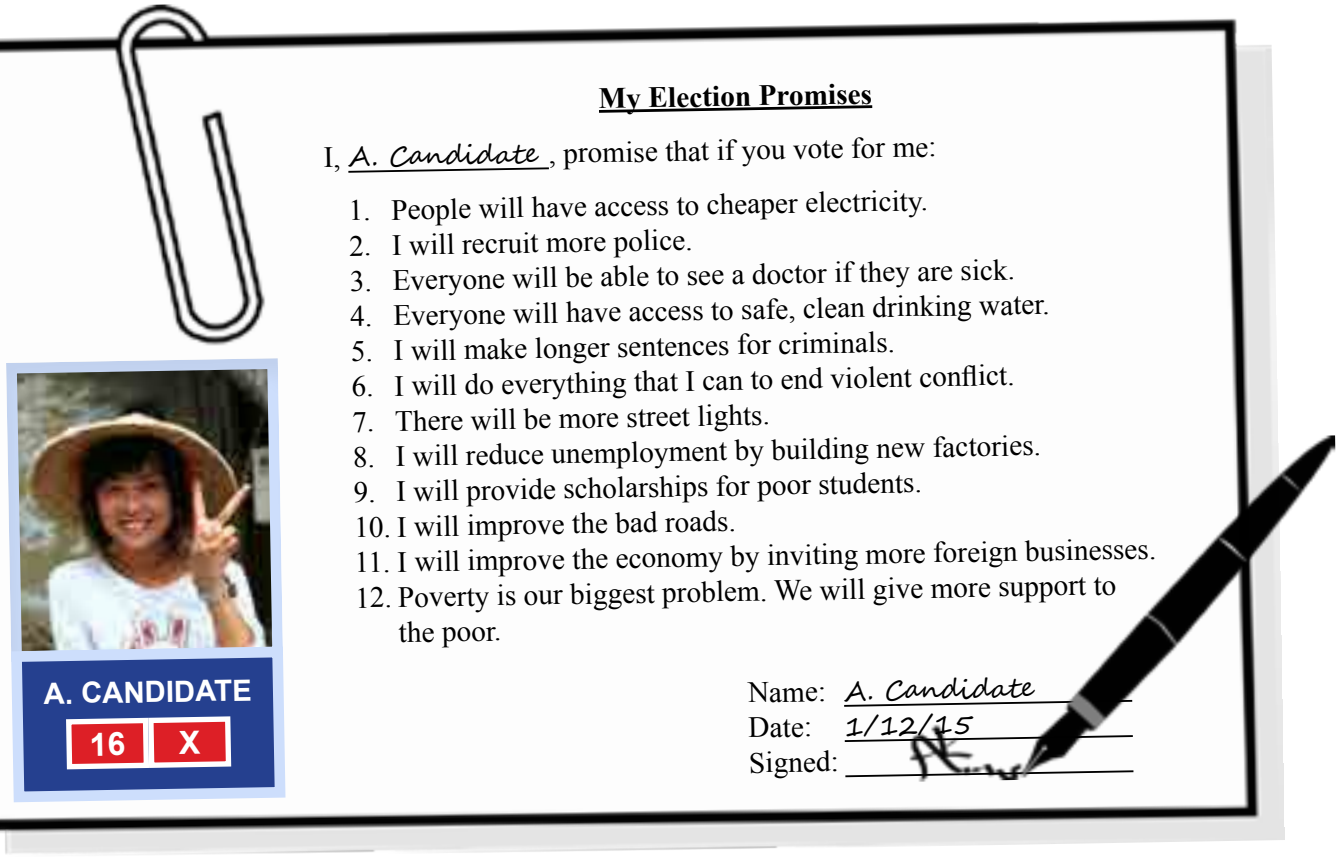
Political parties usually present promises about the actions and decisions that they will make if they get into power. They explain how these actions and decisions will benefit the people they are speaking to. Voters should think carefully about these promises and the values of a party before deciding who to vote for.

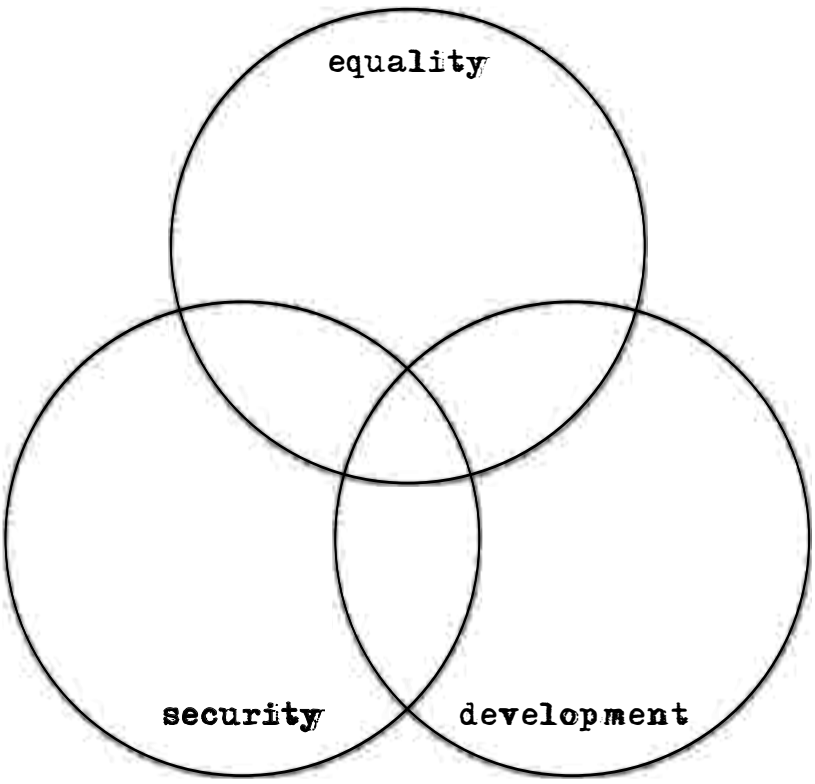
There are two important reasons why people choose to vote for a candidate or party.

- The promises that the candidate or party makes about what they will do if they win the election. Examples include improving security (e.g. making people feel safer), development (improving facilities or creating jobs) or equality (improving the conditions of **marginalised** groups).
- The values and character of the candidate. For example, honesty, commitment or fairness.

Exercise

Here are some promises made by a candidate in a recent election. Put them on the Venn diagram.





Your Perfect Political Candidate

Activity

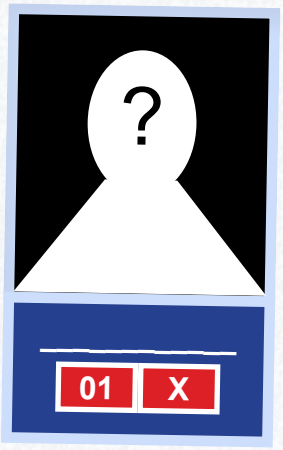
1. What qualities would you like to see in a candidate for public office?

The Perfect Political Candidate

What qualities do you want to see in a politician?

Tick ☑ the boxes that you agree with and add some of your own.

1. ☐ honest
2. ☐ good at public speaking
3. ☐ fairness/justice
4. ☐ hard working
5. ☐ strong/powerful
6. ☐ experienced
7. ☐ brave
8. ☐ kind
9. ☐ **patriotic**
10. ☐ **cooperative**/inclusive
11. ☐ decisive
12. ☐ committed to the community



2. Add any other important qualities that are not on the list.
3. In groups, agree on six qualities that the candidate should have.
4. Groups present the qualities of their perfect candidate for office, and explain why they think these qualities are important.

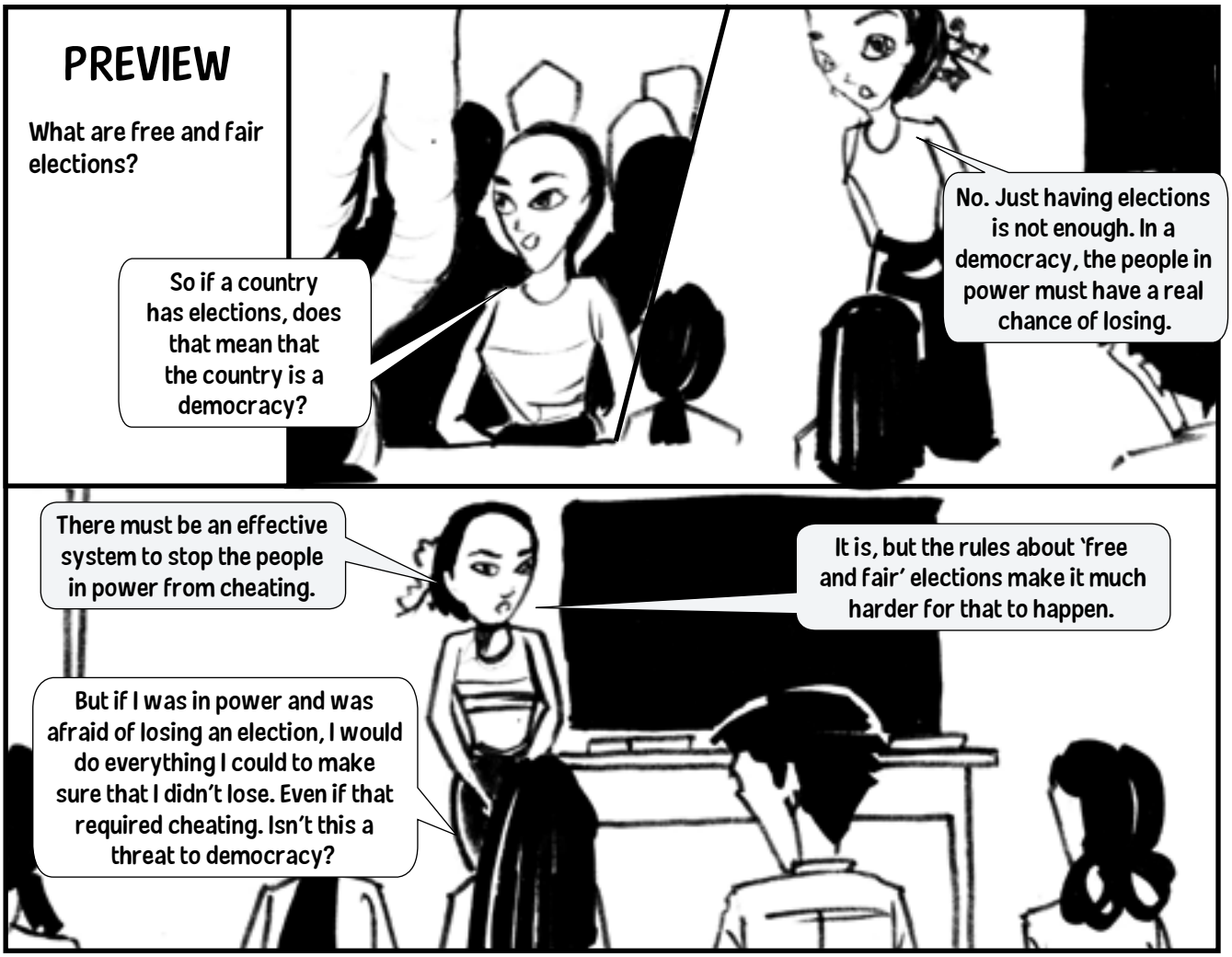
Discussion

1. How are leaders or representatives chosen in your community?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of elections?
3. Which political parties are there in your community? What are their values? What promises do they make?

Reflection

1. Have you ever voted?
2. Do you think that voting makes a difference? Why or why not?
3. Is it important to you? Why?

1.2.3 FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS



In a democracy, representatives need to have the **consent** of the people. If they lose it, the people can replace them in the next election. On the other hand, if representatives make good decisions for their community, the people will vote for them again.

This is why elections are so important in a democracy. Elections give citizens the chance to express their consent. They also make sure that representatives can be replaced if they ignore the needs and concerns of the people.

However, if elections are not carried out properly, then people will lose their ability to remove bad leaders and choose good ones. This is why it is important that democratic elections are free and fair.

In a *free* election, there are no threats to citizens during or before an election.

In a *fair* election, there is no cheating (such as **vote-buying** or bribing officials) and votes are counted in a systematic way.

Free and fair elections mean that:

- all citizens have one vote, and every vote has equal value;
- all candidates are free to stand in an election;
- all candidates have the same opportunities to inform voters about their ideas and suggestions;
- the candidate or party who gets the most votes in an election actually gains power;
- citizens are free to vote for the candidate they want without fear of violence or **intimidation**;
- elections take place regularly (e.g. every four or five years) so that leaders or representatives cannot stay in power for too long.

In a community...

a. a village headman does not like the views of one of the candidates. He stops that candidate from making any speeches in his village;
Example answer: The candidate is not free to express their ideas and suggestions.

b. a candidate gets the most votes in an election, but the previous representative refuses to leave his position;

c. an unpopular government cancels several elections because the country "is not ready for an election";

d. supporters of the current representative steal and destroy all the pamphlets and posters of an opposition candidate;

e. a man tells his wife "I want you to vote for my brother, he will help us most. Vote that way or you will be in trouble";

f. the votes of some people were not counted because the vote counters didn't like them;

g. an employer says "This candidate is best for the company. I want you to vote for them or go and work somewhere else";

h. citizens from an ethnic minority can't vote because they can't read the voting paper.

Exercise

Why are these examples of elections that are not free and fair? Give reasons for your answers.

Activity

Read the text and follow the instructions.

1. Work in groups of four to six. Two people are the party leaders at a village meeting. The others are members of the audience.
   - The leader of the Equality Party explains why free education and healthcare should be paid for by taxing the rich.
   - The leader of the Freedom Party explains why free education and healthcare should not be paid for by taxing the rich.
   - Members of the audience ask questions to the two leaders.
2. In groups, discuss. Which party do you agree with? Why?

Election Debate Role Play

A country is having an election. It is a country with two very strong political parties, the Equality Party and the Freedom Party. They are currently debating whether there should be free healthcare and education for all citizens.

The Equality party says that these services should be paid for with high taxes on rich people.

The Freedom Party argues that it is unfair if rich people have to give up money that they worked for.

Equality Party

we promise

FREE HEALTHCARE FOR ALL

We will make all healthcare free. We will make rich people pay lots of tax to pay for it.

If you want free healthcare, vote for the Equality Party on election day.

If we win the election, we will not tax some people more than others. We are the Freedom Party. Vote for us. Be free.

Focus on Myanmar

The New Myanmar Foundation and Voter Registration

One of the first steps in an election is preparing a voters list. This is a list of all of the citizens who are **eligible** to vote in a township. Citizens are responsible for checking the list to make sure their name is on it.

However, there can be many challenges to make sure that voter lists are **accurate**. Sometimes, dead people and people who moved to other townships are included on lists. Sometimes, people who have just had their eighteenth birthdays are not included. It is very important that lists are accurate, or some citizens will not be able to vote on election day.

The New Myanmar Foundation organises voter awareness programs. They run workshops, give out pamphlets and put up posters to inform people about the **registration** process.

The aim of these projects is to inform citizens about their responsibility to check the voters list, and to give advice on what they can do if their name is not on the list.

Exercise

1. Why is it important for voters to check that their name is on the voters list?
2. What is the aim of the New Myanmar Foundation's project?
3. What are some of the activities that they carry out?

Discussion

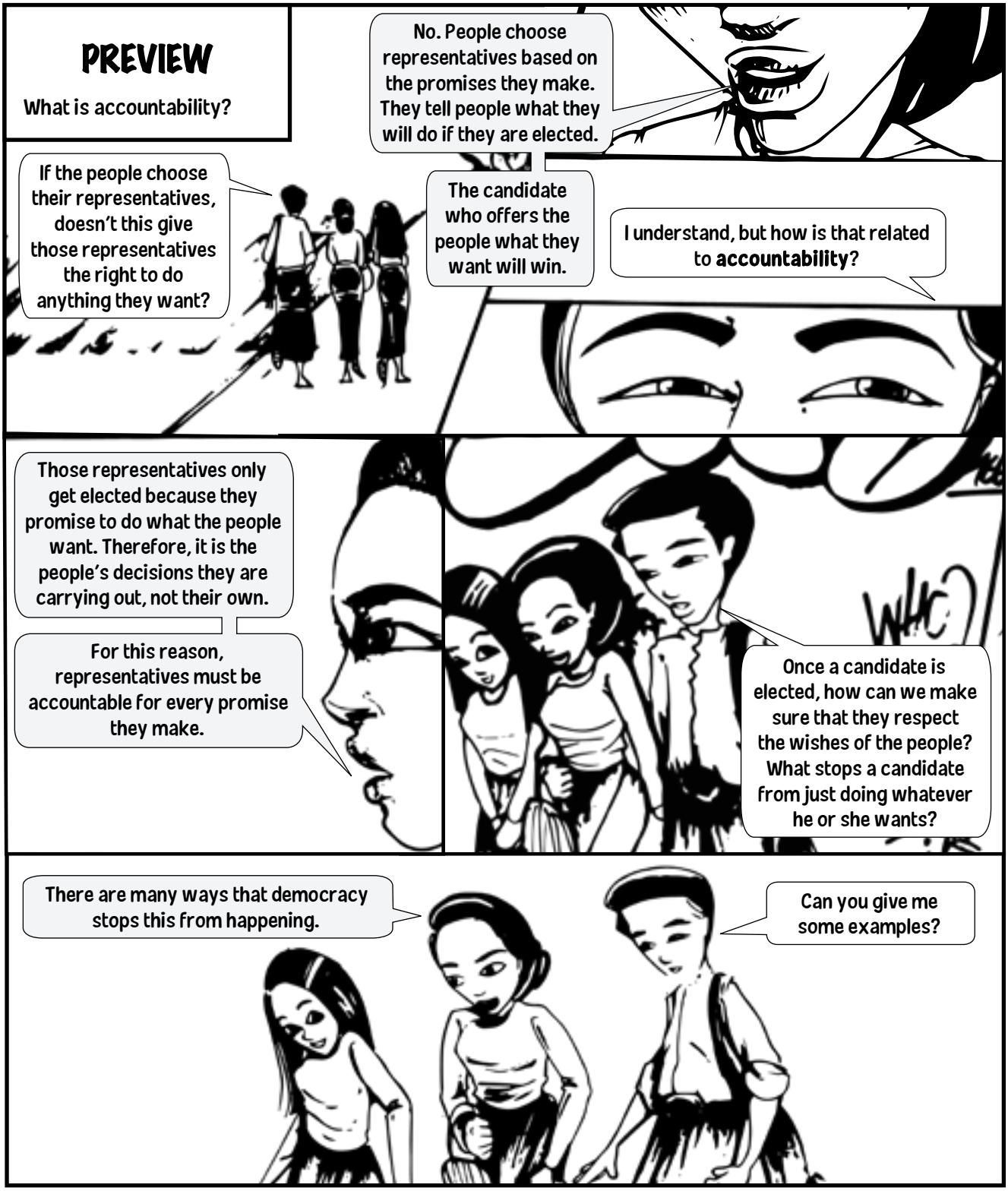
1. Why are free and fair elections important for democracy?
2. What problems are there if elections are not free and fair?
3. What can be done to make sure that elections are more free and fair in your community?

Reflection

1. In your experience, do elections always lead to the best decisions?
2. Have you ever voted for something and later discovered that you made the wrong choice? What would have helped you to make a better decision at the time?

2.1 ACCOUNTABILITY, TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION

2.1.1 ACCOUNTABILITY



In a democracy, the main responsibility of leaders and representatives is to serve the people. This means that they are given specific duties and commitments that they must keep. Accountability means that leaders and representatives are held responsible if they don't perform those tasks or keep those commitments.

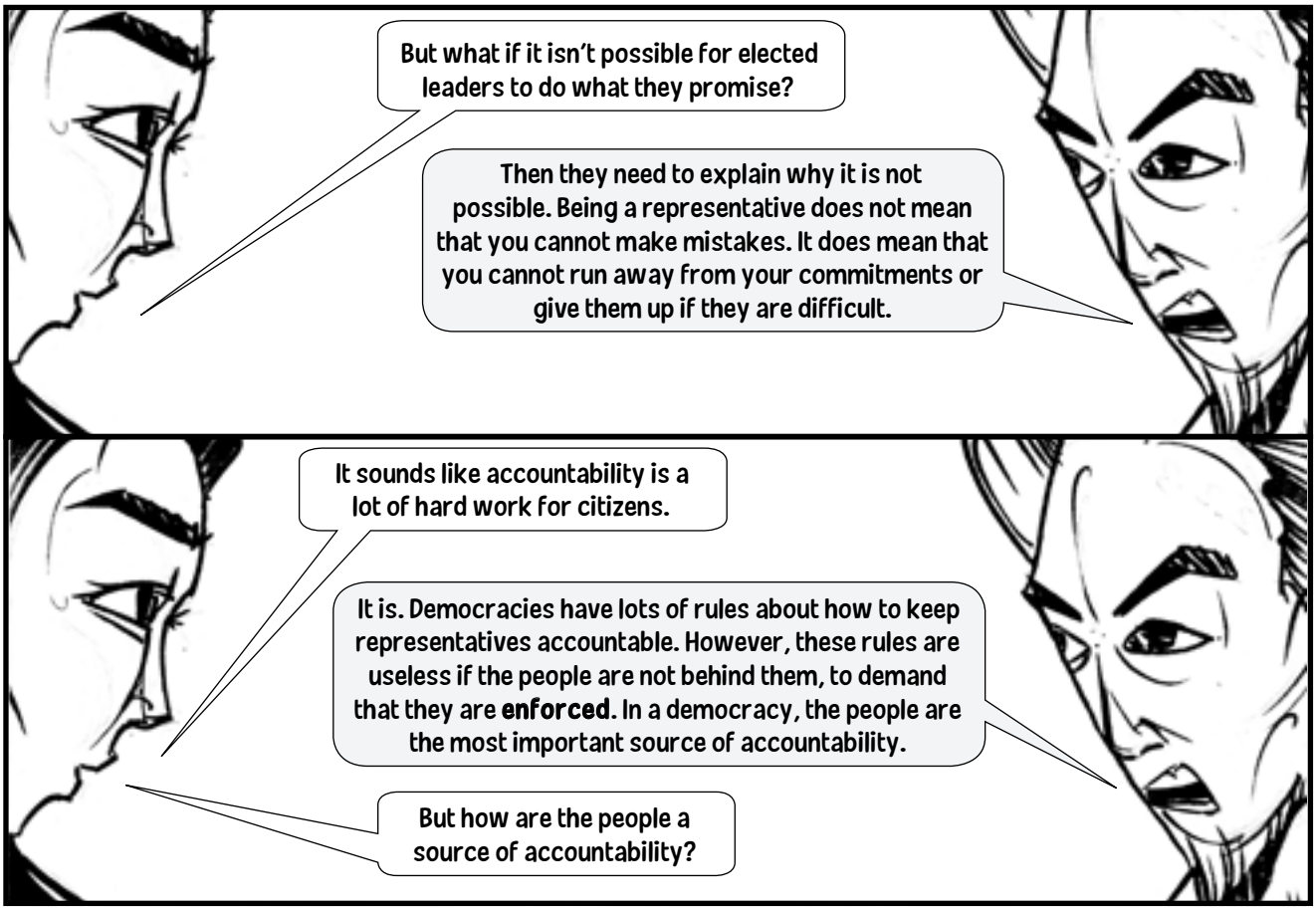
Accountability requires punishments for failing to fulfil these responsibilities. These punishments might be legal (like going to prison), professional (like losing a job) or political (losing the support of the people).

Democratic elections (where bad leaders can be replaced) are the most important way to make sure that leaders are accountable to the people. This is why people say that democracy is good at meeting the needs of the people. People will only vote for representatives who meet their needs. If a representative ignores the needs of the people, they won't stay in power.

Exercise

Choose the best answer.

1. Which of the following is NOT an example of democratic accountability?
   a. a representative being arrested for **corruption**
   b. a representative losing an election
   c. a representative being shot
2. Which of the following is NOT a reason why democracy is good at meeting the needs of the people?
   a. There are regular, free and fair elections.
   b. People choose representatives on the promises they make.
   c. Representatives do not need to listen to the people.
3. Which of the following is NOT a responsibility of a representative in a democracy?
   a. to be accountable for every promise they make
   b. to explain themselves if they do not do what they promised
   c. to never make any mistakes



In a democracy, public officials have a responsibility to answer to the public for their actions and decisions. Accountability is a key requirement of democracy. As well as the government, businesses and citizens' groups must also be accountable to the public.

Different organisations and different parts of the government should be accountable to each other. For example, the police should obey the government, but government workers must be accountable to the police (e.g. if they commit a crime).

Accountability can be seen in the following ways:

1. Citizens remove unpopular leaders or governments from power (e.g. voting in free and fair elections).
2. Citizens make sure that representatives keep their promises (e.g. citizens are informed about actions and decisions of representatives, and complain if those actions do not match with the promises that they made).
3. Citizens make sure that representatives' decisions reflect citizens' own needs and concerns (e.g. citizens communicate with representatives to let them know their concerns).
4. Citizens challenge unpopular policies and **abuses of power** (e.g. citizen groups or the media put pressure on representatives to explain their actions or decisions).

a. ***A businessman*** **bribed** a representative to make decisions that were good for his business. A local journalist wrote about this, The representative became so unpopular that she lost the next election.

b. An organisation writes a newsletter called ***'Election Promises'.*** It gives information about promises that representatives made before the election and looks at whether they are keeping those promises.

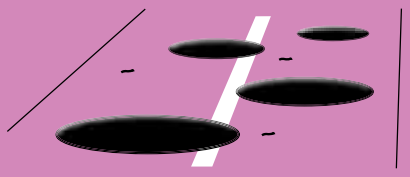
Exercise

Match the situations with the types of accountability from the previous text. There can be more than one answer for each statement.

Example answer:

A – *1. remove unpopular leaders or governments from power; 4. make sure that representatives make decisions that reflect needs and concerns.*

c. **A representative has ignored the problems of holes in the road for many years. During an election, his opponent promises to fix the roads. Lots of people support this idea so she wins the election.**



d. **Citizens can call a telephone number to report government workers' bad behaviour. They do not give their name, so no-one knows who made the call.**

e. The local government creates a 'complaints office'. People can go there if they are not getting the goods or services that they were promised.

f. Some citizens had concerns about the government. They talked to a community group about them. The group organised a meeting and the township representative explained the government's decisions to the people.

g. Local government invites citizens to give their suggestions on how the government should spend MONEY.

h. The government gives evaluation forms to citizens. The citizens can then let the government know what they are unhappy about.

Focus on Myanmar

Child Soldiers

In Myanmar, it is illegal for a person under the age of 18 to join the army. However, soldiers often trick or force young boys to join the army because they get extra money for recruiting new soldiers.

In June 2012, the government of Myanmar developed an action plan to stop children from joining the national army. This included punishments for soldiers who recruited children into the army. From 2007 to 2014, 312 soldiers were punished, including 48 officers. Punishments included warnings, reduced salary, and imprisonment of up to three months.

In one case, a soldier came to a woman's house. He said that her 15 year old son had run away from the army. He wanted to find her son so he could take him back.

A few days before, a general from the army made a speech. He said that the national army does not take child soldiers. In the speech, the general said that any soldiers who bring children in to the army will be punished. This was on the front page of the *New Light of Myanmar* newspaper.

The child's mother had the newspaper in her house when the soldier came. She showed the newspaper to the soldier. When he read the front page, he left her house and did not look for her son any more.

Between 2012 to 2014, a total of 364 children and young people were released from the army.

Exercise

1. Why did some soldiers try to get boys to join the army?
2. Why did the soldier stop looking for the woman's son?
3. How did the government's action plan improve accountability?

Activity

The Phone Tower

Read the text then follow the instructions.

A township has elected a Township Representative Council (TRC). One important issue is that a lot of children live a long way from the school. These children have to travel for hours every day, or not go to school.

The TRC agreed to build dormitories for these students in the empty space next to the school.

However, after this decision was made, representatives from a telecommunications company met with the TRC about building a telephone tower in the township. They claim that this will allow everyone in the township to have access to the phone network and the internet. The only place available for this tower is the same land that was planned for the dormitories.

The TRC agreed to build the phone tower. They spent all of their budget paying for the construction of the phone tower.

You are at a community meeting about this situation.

1. In groups, discuss the questions.
   a. Did the TRC have the right to make this decision?
   b. If you were an TRC member how would you have handled the matter?
   c. What can the people do If they are unhappy with the TRC's actions?
2. Make a presentation to the class explaining your answers.

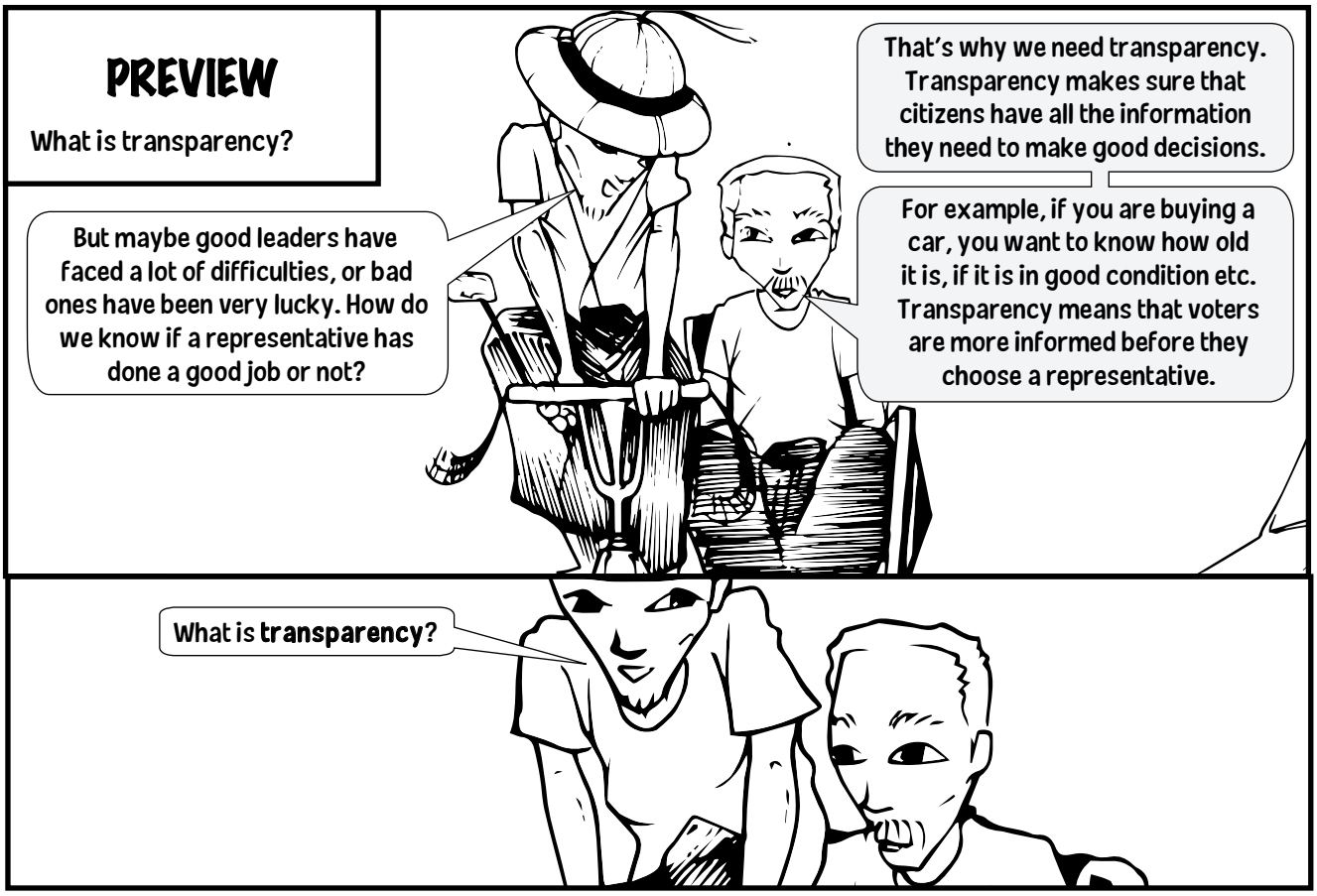
Discussion

1. Why is accountability important in a democracy?
2. Who is accountable to whom in your community?
3. In what ways are leaders accountable to the people?
4. What can individual citizens do to make sure that government is accountable?

Reflection

1. In which ways are you accountable in your family, school or community?
2. What are you accountable for (what are your responsibilities?)
3. Who are you accountable to?
4. What do you do to make sure that leaders in your community are accountable for their actions?

2.1.2 TRANSPARENCY



Before citizens make decisions, it is important that they know the facts about their leaders and the decisions they make.

Transparency means that the government has a responsibility to share information with the people. Citizens must be able to access information about decision-making. They need to know who is making decisions, how, and why.

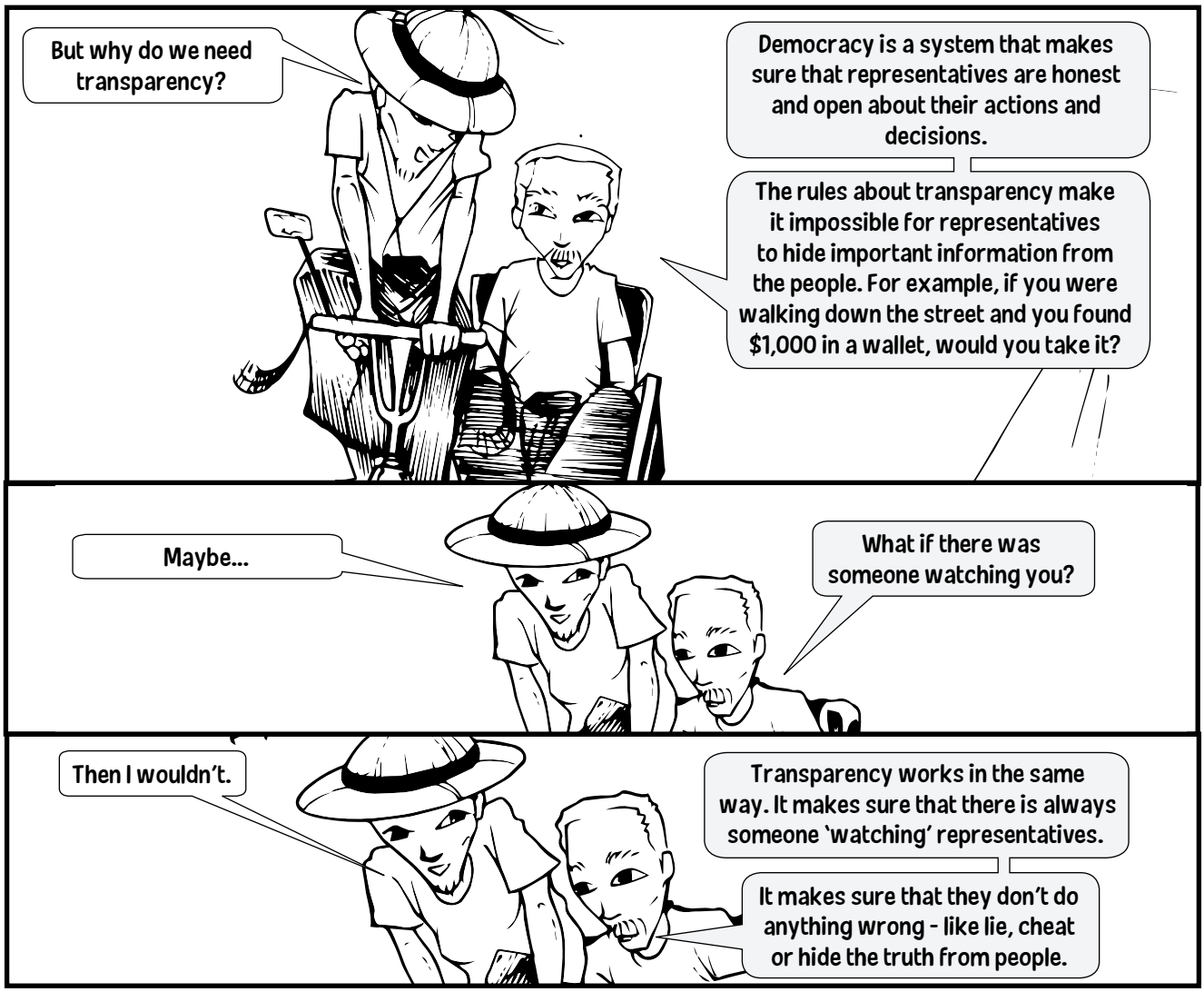
This information needs to be freely available to people affected by these decisions. It should be easy to access and understand.

The responsibility to provide this information (and the laws related to it) is often called *freedom of information*.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Transparency means that citizens have access to information about the government's decisions.
b. It is the responsibility of citizens to provide any information that the government asks for.
c. 'Freedom of information' refers to the government's responsibility to make information available to the people.



Transparency makes sure that:

1. authorities cannot secretly abuse some citizens' rights without the people knowing. Transparency means that abuses can not be hidden, because the people have access to information about them;
2. the government must follow its own rules and **regulations**. It is harder for government workers to break the rules if everyone knows about them;
3. the government needs to work hard because information about the quality of their work is freely available. Transparency means that information about budgets, spending and achievements of the government is freely available. Any mistakes, waste or laziness will be visible to everyone. This can encourage the government to work harder so they are not embarrassed;
4. officials have to release information. This makes it harder for governments to lie to the people or hide the truth.

Exercise

Match the situations below with the four benefits of transparency from the previous text (1 – 4). There can be more than one answer for each statement.

Benefits of Transparency

1. Authorities cannot secretly abuse some citizens' rights without the people knowing.
2. The government must follow its own rules and regulations.
3. The government needs to work hard because information about the quality of their work is freely available.
4. Officials have to release information.

a. There is public education available on the roles and responsibilities of government officials.

Example answer: *2. The government must follow its own rules and regulations.*

b. The government's rules and procedures are available to the public.

c. There are strong laws about freedom of information and media freedom.

d. There are laws to protect citizens who report the bad or illegal behaviour of government workers.

e. Representatives and political parties must release information about all the donations they receive, to show that they are not taking bribes.

f. The work of government is regularly reviewed by independent experts.

g. The government publishes its goals, budgets, and reports on how well it is achieving its goals.

Focus on Myanmar

Karen Community Leaders Call for Transparency

In May 2013, more than 150 citizens from 40 Karen community organizations took part in a five-day meeting. They called for transparency and accountability in economic and development projects.

Naw Susanna Hla Hla Soe, a spokesperson for the Karen National Unity Seminar (KNUS) Organizing Committee, said: "We asked the Karen National Union (KNU) to publicly explain their ideas to Karen civilians before making a final decision."

She said some business projects, such as power plants and **dams**, can be damaging to local communities.

"We only find out about the projects after they're already having a negative impact on civilians. We don't want such incidents to happen in the future," she added.

After the meeting, she said: "The KNU told us about their business **policy**. It is quite positive. It included businesses that don't harm local communities, but benefit the communities".

The KNUS said they planned to "widely distribute [information] and educate the people about the economic policies of KNU".

Adapted from: http://www.irrawaddy.org/refugees/karen-community-leaders-call-for-transparency-on-business-deals-amid-peace-talks.html

Exercise

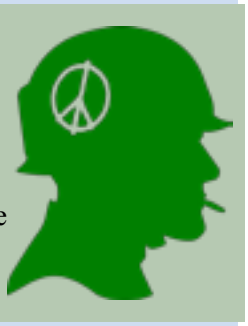
1. What was the aim of the meeting?
2. Why does Naw Susanna Hla Hla Soe want there to be more transparency?
3. What actions will the KNUS take as a result of the meeting?
4. How did the meeting improve transparency?

Citizens are responsible for making sure that the government is open about its decisions and putting pressure on the government if it does not.

However, there are some situations where the government does need to limit transparency. For example, in the interests of national security, or if peoples' lives or human rights are at risk. However, it is very important that the government does not **abuse** this.

Limiting Transparency

a. The government is having peace talks with one of the country's ethnic armed groups. The people who live in the conflict area are worried that the government and the ethnic leaders are making deals that they will not agree with. However, both the government and the ethnic armed group says that the issues they are discussing are so sensitive that they cannot release any information about it.



b. There is **communal violence** in one part of the country. The government is worried that if reports about this violence are made public, members of these two groups in other parts of the country would start fighting too. Therefore the government is not allowing journalists to travel to the region.

c. A private company is building several factories in a part of the country that has very high levels of unemployment. This is creating many jobs. However, this company has been accused of violating workers' rights. A citizens' organisation wants to publish a report on these violations. The government has said it is not allowed to publish this report.

d. The government is carrying out a mission to find and arrest a group of human traffickers. They are not releasing any information about this because they don't want the traffickers to leave the country before they can arrest them.

e. A few weeks before an election, the government discovers that one member of the ruling party has been taking bribes. Because they do not want this information to affect the election, they tell the police not to act until after all the votes have been counted.

Activity

1. Read these situations. Do you think the government should limit transparency?
2. Form five groups. Each group chooses one of these situations. Within your group, divide into:
   - a 'for limiting transparency' group;
   - an 'against limiting transparency' group.
3. Prepare a list of reasons about why you either support or oppose limiting transparency. Use these questions as guidelines for your presentation:
   - Should the government release information? Why or why not?
   - Is the government acting in a transparent way? Why or why not?
   - Is the government acting in an accountable way? Why or why not?
4. In your groups, have a short debate.
5. Present your debate to the class.

Discussion

1. Why is transparency important in a democracy?
2. Are there any situations when transparency should be limited? What are they?
3. Can you think of any examples of these situations from your country/community?
4. Why is freedom of information important for transparency?
5. What can citizens do to make sure that government is transparent?

Reflection

1. Are you always transparent about your actions and decisions? Why or why not?
2. Think of a time when someone was not transparent with you about a decision that affected you.
   - How did that make you feel?
   - What did you do in that situation?
   - If you were in the same situation again, what would you do differently? How?

2.1.3 Participation

Participation is the most important role of citizens in a democracy. It is both a right and a responsibility.

Citizen participation takes many forms, including voting in elections, becoming informed, debating issues, volunteering, paying taxes and protesting.

Civic participation is important for several reasons:

1. Participation means that citizens take an active role in politics. This includes the participation of men and women, old and young, minorities and poor people. It gives all citizens the same chance to make their voices heard. This helps to prevent minorities and disadvantaged group from being marginalised.
2. Participation can help citizens to know what the government is doing. Citizens become more informed by reading newspapers, attending meetings or actively seeking information from the government. Participation helps citizens to understand the issues that are facing their community and make decisions based on accurate information.
3. If citizens do not express their needs and concerns, the government will not be able to make decisions that match the needs of the people. This is why citizens should vote. Voting is one of the most important ways that citizens can take part in decision-making.
4. Participation includes making sure that representatives work hard, and keep their promises between elections. If they don't, citizens have a responsibility to demand an explanation. This makes sure democracy works all the time, not just when an election is happening.

Exercise

Match these four reasons with the four elements of democracy discussed so far:

a. equality

Answer: *1. participation of men and women, old and young, minorities and poor people.*

b. elections

c. accountability

d. transparency

Democratic government cannot work without the participation of its citizens. Democracy is a partnership between a government and its citizens. Both must be active to keep a democracy healthy. A strong democracy requires its citizens to take part in decision-making. To do this, citizens must be informed, active and responsible.

Participation can mean that:

- citizens support and work together with the government;
- citizens point out the government's mistakes, and suggest ideas for change.

Both are important forms of civic participation. Participation happens when a high number of citizens:

- vote in elections;
- are aware of, and interested in, issues affecting their community;
- understand how the government works and pay attention to the actions of the government;
- volunteer with community based organisations (including NGOs and religious groups).

Participation: Waiting to vote, USA.

Activity

Participation Pyramid

1. Rank these ways that citizens can participate in a democracy, in order of importance. Choose the six most important ways of participating, and put them in a pyramid. The most important should go at the top.
2. In pairs, decide on a ranked list.
3. Join with another pair, and decide on a group list.
4. Join with another group, and agree on a list.
5. Make a class list.

becoming informed by learning about issues and leaders

educating other people about issues and leaders

debating issues

working in the community to support a cause

forming or joining political parties or community organisations

attending political or community meetings

becoming a leader of a community organisation

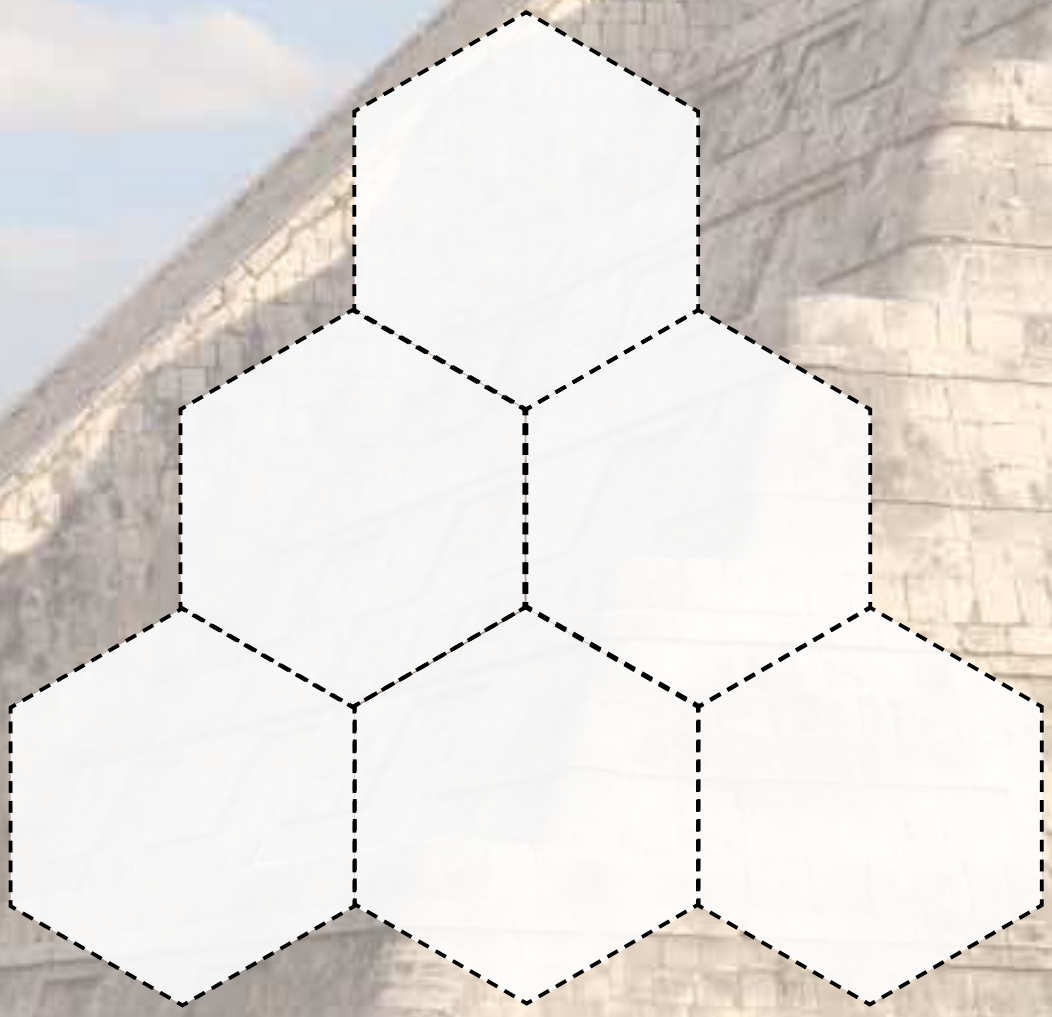
voting in elections

running for office

paying taxes

serving in the military

protesting against government action



Focus on Myanmar

The Women's Party (Mon)

A group of politically active women in Mon State recently formed a party to take part in the general elections in 2015. Their goal is to win more seats for women in Myanmar's Parliament.

Party chairperson Layaung Mon talked to The Irrawaddy about Myanmar's first ever Women's Party.

Q: Why was the Women's Party (Mon) started?

A: Some Mon women were interested in politics and wanted to start a political party. We think that the role of women in Myanmar's parliament is very limited.

Q: What is the main objective of the party?

A: We aim to participate in the general election in 2015, for the advancement of women. In some areas, women do better than men – in education for example. However, women do not often have the chance to take part in national decision-making. Women will be able to prove their importance if they enter politics. We will work to promote gender equality.

Q: Was if difficult to start a party for only women?

A: There were many difficulties. We received no assistance from any organisation. There is no financial support for us. We run the party with the money from our businesses. Only a few [people] have helped us with forming the party. Perhaps they think women can't do it. But we will show how much women are capable of through this party.

Adapted from: http://www.irrawaddy.org/interview/will-show-much-women-capable-party.html

Exercise

1. What are the goals of the Women's Party?
2. What challenges does the Women's Party face?
3. Where does the Women's Party get its finances from?
4. How does the Women's Party promote participation?

Discussion

1. Why is participation important in a democracy?
2. In what ways do citizens participate in your community?
3. What are the challenges to civic participation in your community?
4. What would happen if citizens didn't participate in a democracy?
5. How can participation be encouraged in your community?

Reflection

1. In what ways do you participate in your community?
2. Why do you participate?
3. What challenges stop you from participating? How could you overcome those challenges?

2.2 TOLERANCE, COMPROMISE AND THE RULE OF LAW

2.2.1 TOLERANCE AND COMPROMISE

Democracy requires the different groups in society agree to work together. Different groups must reach agreement about what is best for the whole community, not just for their own group. This is sometimes called the *common good*.

This means that groups (and the government) need to think about the future. For example, cutting down forests might have short-term economic advantages. But in the long term, it could cause many environmental problems. It also means thinking about the needs and interests of other citizens.

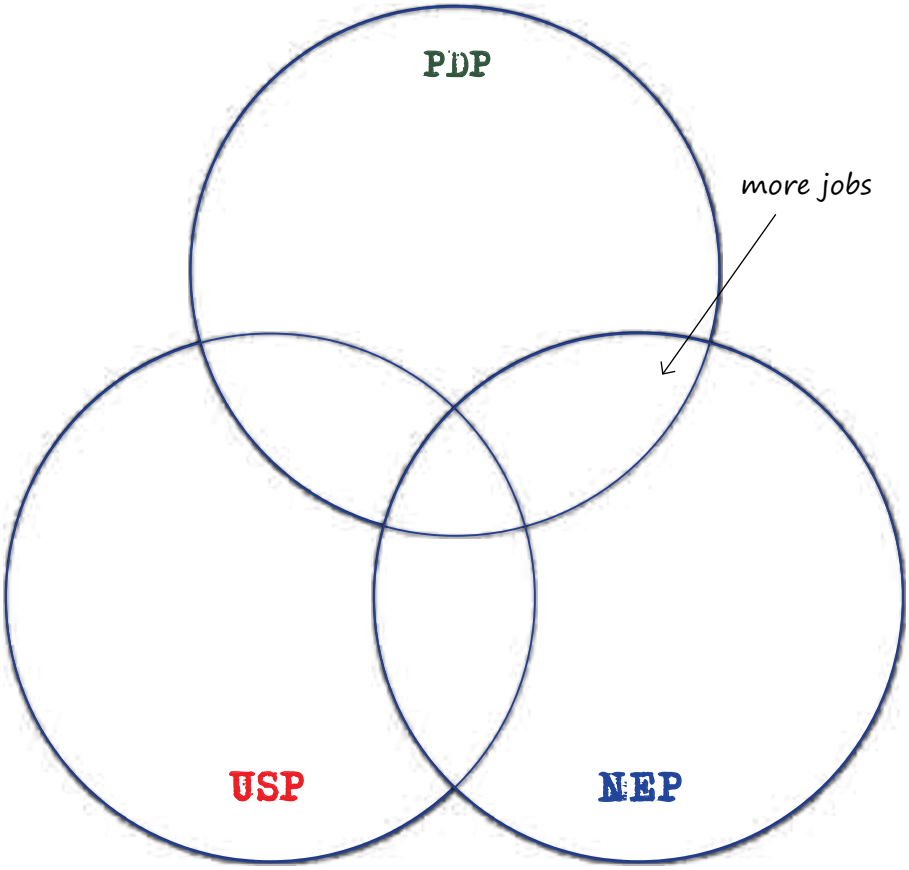
Tolerance is accepting feelings, habits, or beliefs that are different from your own. Examples of tolerance are when people from different political parties, religions or ethnic groups work together.

Compromise is a way to reach agreement where each person or group gives up something they want. They do this to end an argument or find a solution. When representatives agree on the solution that is best for the whole country (even if it is not the best for their specific community), this an example of compromise.

Democracy requires different groups to agree on the most important shared goals and values. This builds a foundation for cooperation about smaller, more practical issues.

Tolerance and compromise can be seen in the following ways:

1. People find ways to manage their different interests and ideas, and can live together peacefully.
2. People understand that no single group can/should get everything they want.
3. Minorities respect the decisions of the majority, and the majority respects the rights and interests of minorities.



Exercise

There are three political parties in the parliament. They all have policies about what the government should do.

People's Development Party (PDP):
- ~~more jobs~~
- more schools in rural areas
- lower taxes
- more police

The Unity and Security Party (USP):
- more police
- larger army
- improve the education system
- higher taxes

The National Equality Party (NEP):
- free healthcare
- free education
- higher taxes
- ~~more jobs~~

1. Put the policies in the Venn diagram.
2. Which of the following policies would be the best compromise for the three parties?
   a. Reduce taxes to create more jobs in rural areas.
   b. Raise taxes to pay for a stronger army and police.
   c. Have cheaper, better education in areas that need it most.

Democratic citizens manage their needs and opinions through tolerance. Tolerance means respecting other people's ideas and beliefs, even if you disagree with them.

Democracy is based on the free exchange of ideas. In a democracy, citizens have the right to express their ideas freely. However, citizens must also allow other people to do the same. People who have unpopular views – or views that go against those of the government – must be allowed to organise, participate and express their ideas and opinions.

When citizens practice tolerance, different ideas and opinions can be peacefully shared in public debates. Public debates give citizens a chance to hear and understand the views of others. Citizens often oppose an idea without really understanding it. Listening and asking questions can help citizens to understand the needs and concerns of other groups. This helps democratic citizens to manage conflicts better, and to find solutions to common problems.

If there is tolerance and compromise, decisions are more likely to be accepted, even by those who oppose them. This is because citizens have a better understanding of the reasons for those decisions.

Tolerance in Myanmar

Exercise

Choose the best answer (or answers).

1. Which of the following is NOT a requirement of tolerance?
   a. respecting opinions that you disagree with
   b. allowing people who you disagree with to express their views
   c. making sure that no-one criticises the government
2. Which of the following are benefits of tolerance?
   a. Listening to everyone's ideas often leads to the best solution.
   b. Opponents are more likely to accept different ideas if they listen to the reasons for them.
   c. It leads to quicker decisions .

Fishing for Compromise

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

Laketown is famous for two things: its beautiful water forests, and its even more beautiful rainbow fish.

80% of the people of Laketown are poor fishermen. They fish with nets around the edges of the lake. Every winter, they go hungry, but this winter is even worse. They do not have enough food for the cold months and are very worried about starving.

The other 20% of the people own hotels and restaurants by the lake. They make their money from tourists who came to see the water forests and the rainbow fish. Business is good. They have enough money to send their children to good schools, they have nice houses and new cars and they always have enough food.

Now some of the fishermen are proposing a solution to the town council. They want to cut down the water forest to build boats. These boats will help them catch more fish. They will have enough food and sell some fish at the market. This will make sure they never go hungry again.

The hotel and restaurant owners are very against this idea. They say that cutting down the water forests will stop the tourists coming. They also say that more rainbow fish will get caught in the fishermen's nets if they fish from boats.

Now the town council needs to decide what to do...

1. Put the possible outcomes of the scenario in the table. The first one is done for you.
   a. The fishermen cut down all the trees and catch lots of fish, but the hotel people all go poor because there are hardly any tourists.
   b. The fishermen are prevented from cutting trees and building boats so many of them starve during the cold months.
   c. The fishermen burn down the hotels then get sent to jail.

	Fishermen lose	**Fishermen win**
Hotels lose	*c – The fishermen burn down the hotels then get sent to jail.*	
Hotels win		

2. Your group is sent to Laketown to help. You must try and find a win-win solution to the problem. In your group, develop a solution and present it to the class.

Focus on Myanmar

The Panglong Agreement

From February 7 – 12, 1947, leaders from many of Myanmar's ethnic groups gathered at Panglong to discuss the idea of joining together in a **union**. **Interim** Burmese government representatives and Shan, Kachin, and Chin leaders participated in the conference, and Karen leaders attended as observers.

At this conference, Bogyoke Aung San told the ethnic representatives that joining the union would be good for their people. He made two statements that became famous: "If Burma receives one kyat, you will also get one kyat," and that Burma without the Frontier Areas was "like curry without salt."

Some ethnic leaders were concerned about agreeing to something that would go against their interests. They were afraid that joining a union would mean that they would lose their independence and culture. Some government representatives were concerned that too much separation would make the country unstable.

The leaders discussed these issues until they reached a compromise. This compromise included:

- ethnic minority states would have control over their own administration;
- ethnic minority citizens would enjoy basic democratic rights;
- the rights, traditions, and religions of ethnic citizens would be protected.

On February 12, which is now celebrated as Union Day, the leaders signed the Panglong Agreement.

Exercise

1. What were the concerns of the ethnic leaders at the conference?
2. What were the concerns of some of the **interim government** leaders at the conference?
3. What was the compromise that they agreed to?
4. In which ways was tolerance and compromise important in the Panglong Agreement?

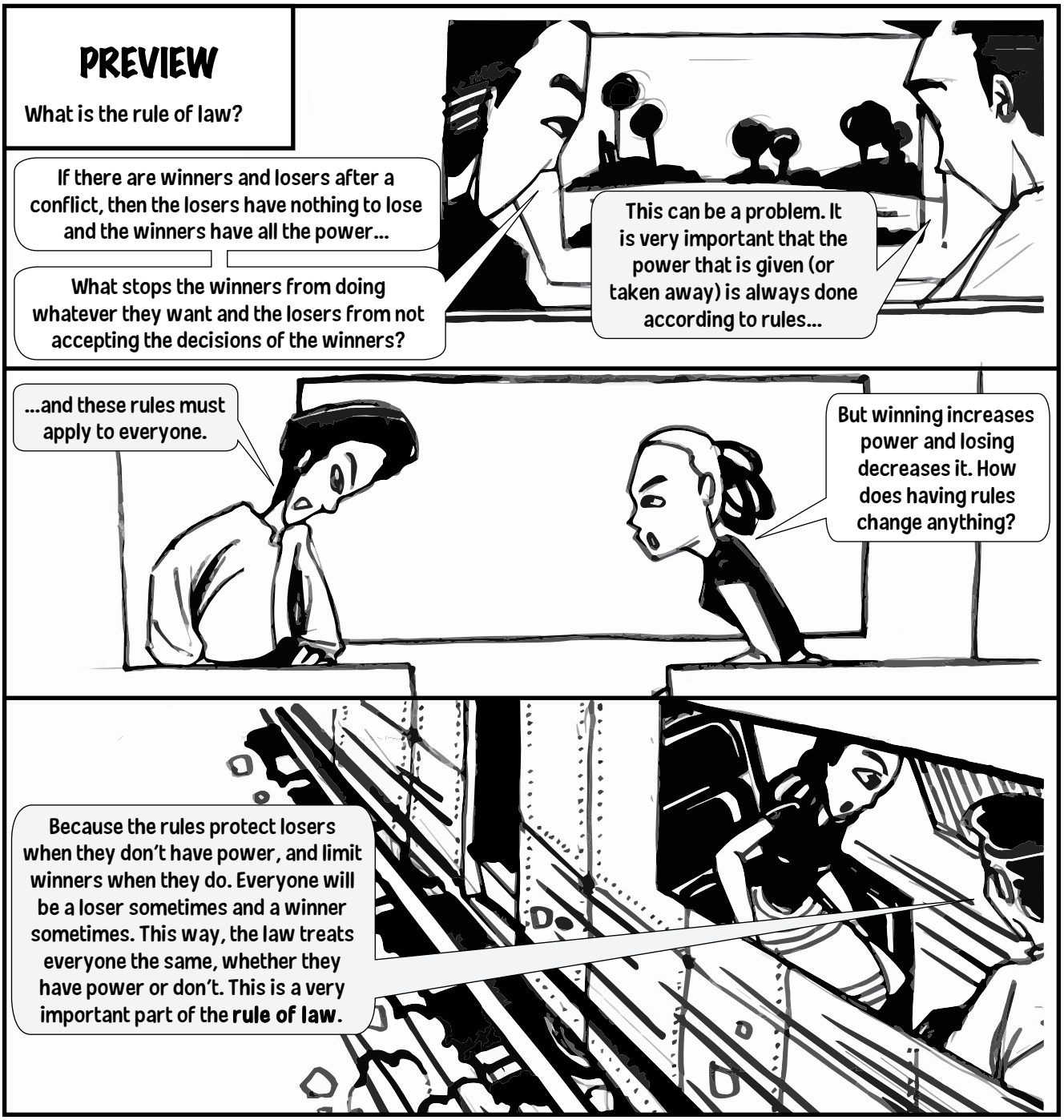
Discussion

1. When might citizens have to put the common good above their individual interests?
2. What are the most important goals and values that people share in your community?
3. What stops people from compromising in your community?
4. What happens if people cannot reach a compromise in your community?
5. How does intolerance negatively affect democracy?

Reflection

1. Think of a time when you could not reach a compromise with someone. What stopped you from compromising? What could you have done differently?
2. Are there some things that you would not be willing to compromise on? Why?
3. Are there some views and ideas that should not be tolerated? Which ones?

2.2.2 The Rule of Law



In an effective democracy, government and citizens must respect the rule of law.

This means the law is enforced equally, fairly and consistently. There are three important aspects of the rule of law in a democracy:

- No-one is above the law.
- Everyone must obey the law.
- Everyone is equal before the law.

A. No-one Is Above the Law

The rule of law means that no-one is above the law. This includes the president, ministers and all other government workers.

In a democracy, the people agree to give the government power and the government rules on their behalf. However, the government cannot do whatever it wants. Part of the agreement between the government and the citizens is that the government must to use its power within the limits set by the law.

When power is used for personal gain or in illegal ways, it is called an abuse of power. Abuse of power is when government officials use more power than the law gives them. For example, if a representative used their position to protect one of his relatives from being arrested. Preventing abuses of power is one of the most important principles of the rule of law.

B. Everyone Must Obey the Law

The law applies to everyone. This includes the government, military, police officers and judges as well as ordinary members of society. It does not matter if the person is very powerful or wealthy; they must obey the law.

One of the biggest challenges to this is corruption. Corruption is when an official uses their power for personal gain. For example, a government official`s job is to issue licenses to citizens, but she requires that citizens pay extra money (a bribe) to her before she gives the license.

Corruption is very dangerous in a democracy because it reduces people's trust in government officials. Working for the government means that you have a responsibility to serve the people. If people think government workers are not serving them (but only serving themselves) then they will not obey the laws themselves. This can weaken the rule of law and have a negative effect on democracy.

Exercise

Read the following situations. Decide if each is an abuse of power or correct use of power. Give reasons for your answer.

a. A government worker, responsible for medicine deliveries to local clinics, is selling some of the supplies.
   Example answer: *Abuse of power, because she is taking money for medicines that should be given to clinics.*
b. After a long **drought**, the government limits the use of water to four hours a day.
c. The local government closes a vocational training centre because they think that the facilities are too unsafe.
d. A government worker asks people to pay him extra money to do administrative tasks more quickly.
e. A local leader gives a contract for a big development project to one of his friends.

C. Everyone Is Equal Before the Law

The principle of rule of law also means that everyone is equal before the law. Equality before the law works in two ways.

First, everyone must obey the same rules and regulations, and everyone gets the same punishment if they break the law. It does not matter if it is a poor or wealthy person who breaks the law – everyone must be treated the same. For example, if the punishment for stealing is up to five years in prison, that punishment should apply to everyone.

Secondly, all rules and regulations must be followed in every case. No steps or processes can be skipped or ignored. This often means that processes are longer and more complicated. However, it reduces the chance that citizens will be ignored, treated wrongly, or abused. This is often called ***due process***.

The rule of law works in the following ways:

1. The actions of leaders and government workers are limited by the law.
2. All citizens are protected from crime, abuse and violence.
3. All citizens have exactly the same rights and **privileges** as all other citizens.
4. All citizens are treated equally by the law, including the rich and powerful.
5. All citizens who break the law are treated according to the same rules and regulations.

Exercise

Benefits of the Rule of Law

1. Actions of government workers limited by law.
2. All citizens protected from crime, abuse, violence.
3. All citizens have same rights and privileges.
4. All citizens treated equally by the law.
5. All citizens who break laws treated according to same rules and regulations.

Match the violations with the five benefits of the rule of law (1 – 5) in 2.2.2.

a. After injuring a child in a car crash, a wealthy businessman pays a judge and gets less punishment.
Example answer: *4. All citizens treated equally by the law.*

b. Local authorities use violence to move homeless people when they find them sleeping on the street.

c. It is much easier for government workers to get a passport than other citizens.

d. A prisoner is held without trial for two months, even though the law says he should be tried no within 24 hours of his arrest.

e. A leader builds a house on land that does not belong to her.

Activity

Rule of Law Role Play

Read the text then follow the instructions.

A poor community has a problem with drug abuse. Many young men are addicted to drugs. They sometimes steal to pay for their addiction.

The community planned a big festival that many important people were going to attend. The mayor ordered the chief of police to deal with the drug problem. The mayor said that he was told to deal with the drug and crime problem before the festival or he would lose his job.

The police arrested 20 young men who had a record of drug use and crime. Some of the men were released because their families paid money to the police. However, one of the young men had a heart disease. He died while he was in the prison. After this, the chief of police was accused of this young man's death.

1. In groups, role-play the trial. Each group should have these characters:
   - lawyers for the chief of police, to give arguments for why he is not guilty;
   - lawyers against the chief of police, to give arguments for why he is guilty;
   - judges to listen to the arguments and give their judgment.
2. First the lawyers argue the case. The judges listen, then decide whether the police chief is guilty or not guilty.
3. Judges present their opinions to the rest of the class.
4. As a class, decide what you think should happen to the chief of police.

Focus on Myanmar

Paralegals

Poor people in Myanmar face many challenges with the legal system. They often have little knowledge about laws or the legal system. Most cannot afford to pay for legal advice or lawyers to represent them.

The rule of law says that every person accused of a crime has the right to be represented by a trained lawyer. However, this is impossible if people cannot afford to pay.

To address this issue, the Myanmar Legal Aid Network is establishing centres for legal aid around Myanmar. One of these legal aid centres is the Yangon Justice Centre. The Yangon Justice centre trains community-based 'paralegals' who can give legal advice and educate citizens about the law. Paralegals are people who are trained to give legal assistance, even though they are not lawyers. The activities of paralegals include:

- education to increase public awareness of the law;
- advising people on the legal process, and their options if they are accused of a crime;
- helping people to communicate with the authorities;
- resolving conflicts;
- advocacy;
- doing research on legal issues.

Exercise

1. What are some of the challenges faced by poor people in the legal system?
2. What is a paralegal?
3. What do paralegals do?
4. How does the Yangon Justice Centre improve the rule of law?

Discussion

1. Why is the rule of law important in a democracy?
2. What are the challenges of making people follow the rule of law?
3. How strong is the rule of law in your community?
4. What could be done to improve the rule of law in your community?

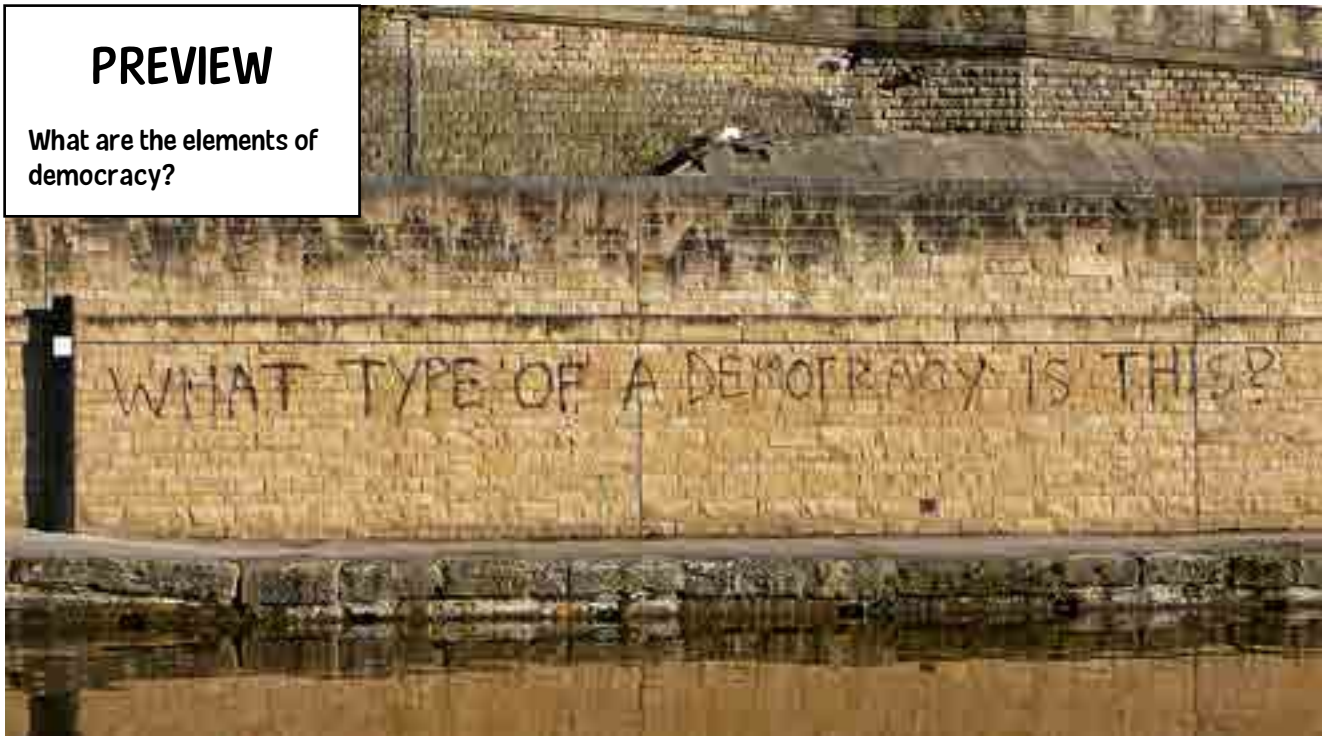
Reflection

1. Do you always obey the law?
2. What are some reasons why you do or do not obey the law?
3. Have you ever been a victim of a violation of the rule of law? How did this make you feel?

2.2.3 DEMOCRACY: ELEMENTS IN ACTION

PREVIEW

What are the elements of democracy?



A simple definition of democracy is *rule of the people*. In a representative democracy, the people choose the rulers (representatives) in elections.

However, representative democracy only works if the following seven elements of democracy are in place:

1. **EQUALITY:** Democracy only works if all people have the same rights to vote and to run for office.
2. **FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS:** Representatives must have the consent of the people to make decisions on their behalf. Free and fair elections make sure that there is a system for citizens to choose or remove representatives.
3. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** If governments lose the consent of their people, they can be removed in an election. Democracy makes sure that they are accountable to the people through regular elections.
4. **TRANSPARENCY:** The people must be aware of what is happening in the country. To make good decisions, citizens must understand the actions and decisions of the government. The media and the people must be able to get information about what decisions are being made, by whom and why.
5. **PARTICIPATION:** All citizens have a right and responsibility to take part in democracy. This includes voting, expressing their opinions, debating issues and attending meetings. Citizen participation helps to keep government accountable.

6. **Tolerance and Compromise:** Democracy manages **diversity** by working together to find solutions that all citizens can agree with. Being tolerant of ideas or beliefs that you disagree with is a very important part of democracy.
7. **The Rule of Law:** Everyone must obey the law and be punished in the same way if they break it. This applies to all citizens, no matter how rich or powerful they are. Democracy requires that the law is enforced equally, fairly and consistently.

Exercise

Match these situations to the elements of democracy that they are violating. There can be more than one element for each example.

a. The ruling party uses threats of violence to make people vote for them.

   Example answer: *free and fair elections, the rule of law*

b. A minister steals government money and sends it to a foreign bank. No-one knows about this because the ministry does not release its budgets to the public.
c. Supporters of a political party uses violence to protest against a government decision that they disagree with.
d. The media is prevented from reporting on corruption in the police.
e. A government official is not punished for wasting public money because he is the brother of a member of parliament.
f. Government school teachers miss their regular classes to give paid tuition to richer students.
g. There is an area of a town where squatters are living. These people cannot vote because they need to provide addresses on the registration forms.
h. A powerful person gets a lighter sentence than a poor person for the same crime.
i. The local government refuses to **investigate** who was responsible for a construction accident that killed several people.
j. Many people in remote areas do not know where or how to vote in an election.
k. The ruling party refuses to accept the results of an election that they lost. They say the winning party is bad for the country, and there will be another election in four years.
l. The police use force to stop local organisations from protesting against the construction of a new dam.
m. The government makes it illegal for minority groups to form political parties.
n. Ethnic minorities and women are not represented in parliament.

CASE STUDY

Brazil – Participatory Budgeting

Porto Alegre is a city in Brazil. It is famous for the 'participatory budgeting' system that it used from 1991 to 2004. Participatory budgeting allows local citizens to make decisions about how the government spends money in their city. It is now being used in over 1,500 cities around the world.

In the Porto Alegre system, each of the 16 townships in the city held two meetings every year. The first meeting was very big. In some townships, over 1,000 people participated. In these meetings, the people elected representatives to discuss their township's budget.

After this meeting, these representatives held several smaller meetings with other citizens who lived in their township. They discussed the needs and concerns of the local citizens and made suggestions for the next year's budget.

Three months later, each township had a second meeting. In the second meeting, they chose the best suggestions that the representatives collected. They also voted to elect councillors, who were on a municipal council for their township.

The Municipal Council then developed a budget based on citizens' suggestions. They sent this budget to the city government. The city government could approve the budget straight away, or send it back to the Municipal Council to make changes. However, if over 66% of the Municipal Council voted to accept the budget without changes, then it had to be accepted by the city government.

About 20,000 people participated in this process every year. It also included marginalised groups (e.g. women, poor and uneducated people) in decision-making. This method made sure that money was not only spent in rich neighbourhoods.

This system had positive results. From 1991 to 2004:

- buses started running to the poor areas;
- the number of citizens with **running water** went from 75% to 98%;
- the number of local government schools nearly tripled.

Exercise

1. Order the stages of the participatory budgeting process.
   a. Hold a big meeting to choose the best suggestions and elect councillors.
   b. Hold several smaller meetings between representatives and citizens to collect suggestions.
   c. The councillors create a budget based on the best suggestions.
   d. Hold a big meeting to choose representatives for each area.
2. What are some of the results of participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre?
3. Which of the seven elements of democracy can you see in this case study?

CASE STUDY

Nigeria – The 2007 Movement

Nigerian law says that the most that anyone can be president is two terms (one term is four years). However, president Olusegun Obasanjo wanted to stay in power for a third term. He made plans to change the law so that he could stay in power for another four years.

Poverty and ethnic conflict were serious issues in Nigeria at that time. President Obasanjo said that if the president changed too quickly, the country would become poor and unstable. He said they needed strong leadership. He thought that he should stay in power to ensure the development of the country.

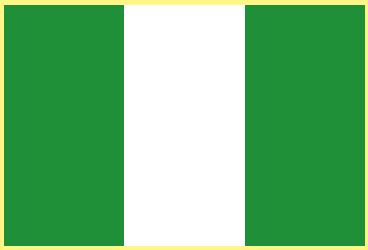
He needed the support of the government to change the law. He put his friends in powerful positions. Many people said that he offered money and promises if people would support his plan to change the law.

This made many representatives afraid to challenge the president. They thought it would be impossible to oppose the change because many of Obasanjo's supporters were in powerful positions.

However, some representatives opposed the plan. They worked together with citizens' groups, ethnic and religious leaders to oppose the plan. The got the support of many citizens – including street children and other marginalised groups. All these citizens put pressure on their representatives to vote against the plan to change the law.

As a result of this, the parliament of Nigeria voted against the plan. After this, Nigeria's anti-corruption organisation started to investigate the money and promises that were offered to Obasanjo's supporters.

President Obasanjo stopped being president after the election in April 2007.



Exercise

1. What reasons did president Obasanjo give for extending his presidency?
2. What challenges did the 2007 movement face?
3. Which of the seven elements of democracy can you see in this case study?

CASE STUDY

Exercise

1. What is a grama panchayat? How are they chosen?
2. What is a grama sabha? What are their responsibilities?
3. Which of the seven elements of democracy can you see in this case study?

Local Government in India

There are two important organisations in each village (or group of small villages): the *grama panchayat* (village council) and *grama sabha* (village gathering).

The Grama Sabha

The grama sabha is the place where all the voters in a village come together, discuss and make decisions for their village. Anyone who is 18 years or older and who has the right to vote is a member of the grama sabha. The grama sabha meets up to four times per year. The grama sabha is responsible for electing the grama panchayat.

The Grama Panchayat

Grama panchayats are responsible for economic development and social justice in their village. A grama panchayat has between seven and 17 members. One third of these people must be women (although there are plans to make this 50% soon). There are also rules to make sure that ethnic minorities are represented.

The Responsibilities of the Grama Sabha and the Grama Panchayat

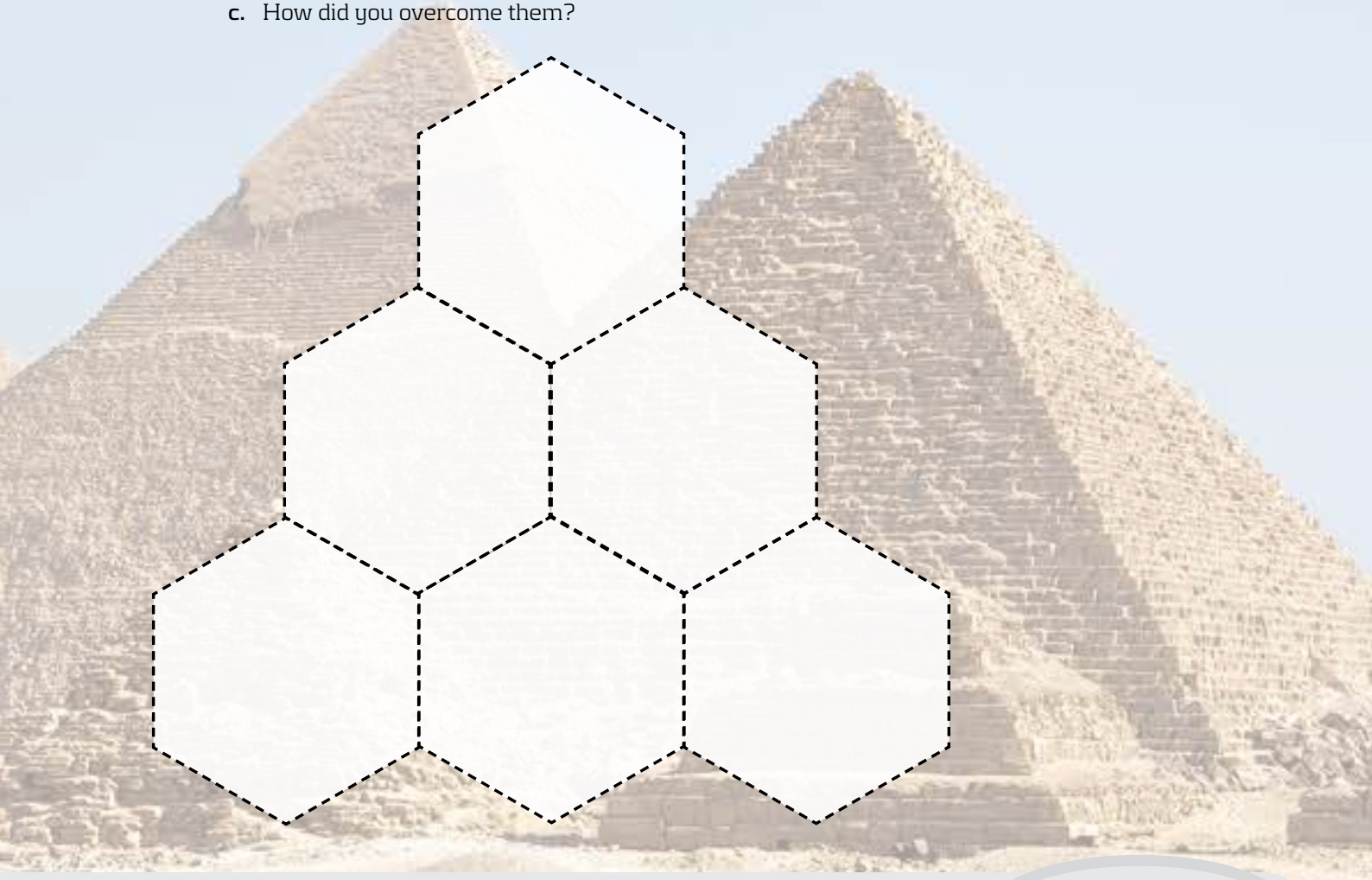
Grama panchayats are responsible for building and repairing water resources, roads, school buildings and other public facilities (libraries, playgrounds, street lights etc.) and collecting local taxes.

The grama panchayat is accountable to the grama sabha for all of its activities. grama sabhas take part in planning of local development activities. They also check that the grama panchayat is spending money in a responsible way. Grama sabhas are responsible for making sure that the village level panchayats are doing their jobs correctly and keeping their promises.

Values Pyramid

Activity

1. In pairs, make a 'values pyramid' that ranks elements of democracy (equality, free and fair elections, accountability, transparency, participation, tolerance and compromise, the rule of law) in importance.
2. Join with another pair. As a group, make a values pyramid that you all agree on.
3. Join with another group and make a values pyramid. Continue joining groups and making pyramids until there is only one (class) group. Make a values pyramid that the whole class agrees on.
4. Discuss:
   a. What does your class pyramid tell you about the values of the class?
   b. What difficulties did you experience in this exercise?
   c. How did you overcome them?



Discussion

1. How democratic is your community?
2. What could be done to make your community more democratic?

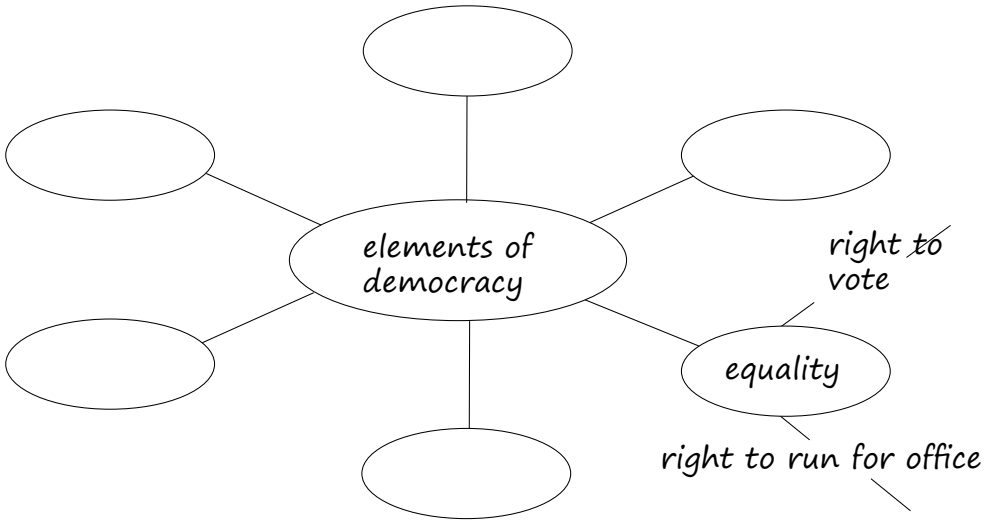
Reflection

Which elements of democracy do you consider to be most important? Why?

Unit 1 Review

Unit 1 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 1.



Comprehension

1. What does the word ‘democracy’ mean?
2. What is a democracy?
3. What are the four kinds of decision-making mentioned in this unit?
4. What is democratic decision-making?
5. What is the difference between direct and indirect democracy?
6. What is a representative and how are they chosen?
7. In what way are citizens equal in a democracy?
8. Are there any reasons why someone should not be allowed to vote?
9. Why are elections important in a democracy?
10. What is a political party?
11. What does it mean that an election is ‘free’?
12. What does it mean that an election is ‘fair’?
13. Why is accountability important in a democracy?
14. In which ways are leaders accountable in a democracy?
15. Why is transparency important in a democracy?
16. Are there any reasons why transparency should be limited?
17. Why is participation important in a democracy?
18. In which ways can citizens participate in a democracy?
19. Why is tolerance and compromise important in a democracy?
20. What is ‘the common good’?
21. What is the rule of law?
22. Why is the rule of law important in a democracy?

Unit 1 Glossary

abuse (v, n) – အလွဲသုံးစားလုပ်သည်။ လွဲမှားစွာသုံးစွဲခြင်း ဆောင်ရွက်ခြင်း။

abuse of power (n) – အာဏာအလွဲသုံးစားပြုမှု။

accountability (adj) – တာဝန်ခံမှု။

accurate (adj) – မှန်ကန်သော။

authority (n) – လုပ်ပိုင်ခွင့်အာဏာ (တစ်စုံတစ်ခု လုပ်ဆောင်ရန် အခွင့်အာဏာရှိခြင်း။)

autocratic (adj) – သက်ဦးဆံပိုင်ဖြစ်သော၊ အာဏာပိုင်ဖြစ်သော။

bankrupt (adj) – လူမွဲဖြစ်သွားသော။

bribe (n, v) – လာဘ်ပေးလာဘ်ယူပြုခြင်း။ လာဘ်ပေးလာဘ်ယူပြုသည်။

budget (n) – ရသုံးမှန်း ခြေငွေစာရင်း။

citizen (n) – နိုင်ငံသား။

communal violence (n) – လူအုပ်စုလိုက် အကြမ်းဖက်မှုများ။

compromise (n) – အလျော့အတင်းပြုလုပ်ခြင်း၊ ညှိနှိုင်းမှု။

concern (n, v) – စိုးရိမ်ပူပန်မှုများ။ စိုးရိမ်ပူပန်သည်။

consensus (n) – အားလုံးအကြွင်းမဲ့သဘောတူခြင်း။

consent (n) – သဘောတူညီမှု။

consult (v) – ဆွေးနွေးတိုင်ပင်သည်။

cooperate (v) – ပူးပေါင်းဆောင်ရွက်သည်။

corrupt (adj) – အကျင့်ပျက်ခြစားသည်။

dam (n) – ရေကာတာ၊ ဆည်။

diverse (adj) – ကွဲပြားစုံလင်သော။

drought (n) – မိုးခေါင်ရေရှားမှု။

due process (n) – မဖြစ်မနေ ဆောင်ရွက်ရမည့် လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်။

enforce (v) – အသက်ဝင်စေသည်။

eligible (adj) – တရားဝင်သော၊ စံနှုန်းမီသော။

exclude (v) – ဖယ်ထုတ်ထားသည်။

interim (adj) – ကြားဖြတ်ယာယီဖြစ်သော။

interim government (n) – ကြားဖြတ်အစိုးရ။

intimidation (n) – ခြိမ်းခြောက် ခိုင်းစေခြင်း။

investigate (v) – စုံစမ်းစစ်ဆေးသည်။

majority (n, adj)- အများစု။ အများစုဖြစ်သော။

marginalised (adj) – ပစ်ပယ်ခံထားရသော။

minority (n, adj) – အနည်းစု။ အနည်းစုဖြစ်သော။

opposition (n, adj) – အတိုက်အခံ၊ အတိုက်အခံဖြစ်သော။

parliament (n) – လွှတ်တော်။

participate (v) – ပါဝင်ဆောင်ရွက်သည်။

party (n) – နိုင်ငံရေးပါတီ။

patriotic (adj, n) – မျိုးချစ်စိတ်ရှိသော။ မျိုးချစ်စိတ်။

policy (n) – မူဝါ။

privilege (n) – အခွင့်ထူး၊ ခံစားခွင့်။

referendum (n) – ပြည်သူ့ဆန္ဒခံယူပွဲ။

(voter) registration (n) – မဲစာရင်း။

regulation (n) – စည်းမျဉ်းဥပဒေ။

representative (n) – ကိုယ်စားလှယ်။

rule (v, n) – အုပ်ချုပ်သည်။ စည်းမျဉ်း။

rule of law (n) – တရားဥပဒေ စိုးမိုးမှု။

run for office (v) – ရွေးကောက်ပွဲများတွင် ဝင်ရောက်ယှဉ်ပြိုင်ခြင်း။

running water (n) – သောက်သုံးရေ ရရှိခြင်း။

tolerance (n) – နားလည်သည်းခံမှု။ မတူကွဲပြားမှုအားလက်ခံနိုင်မှု။

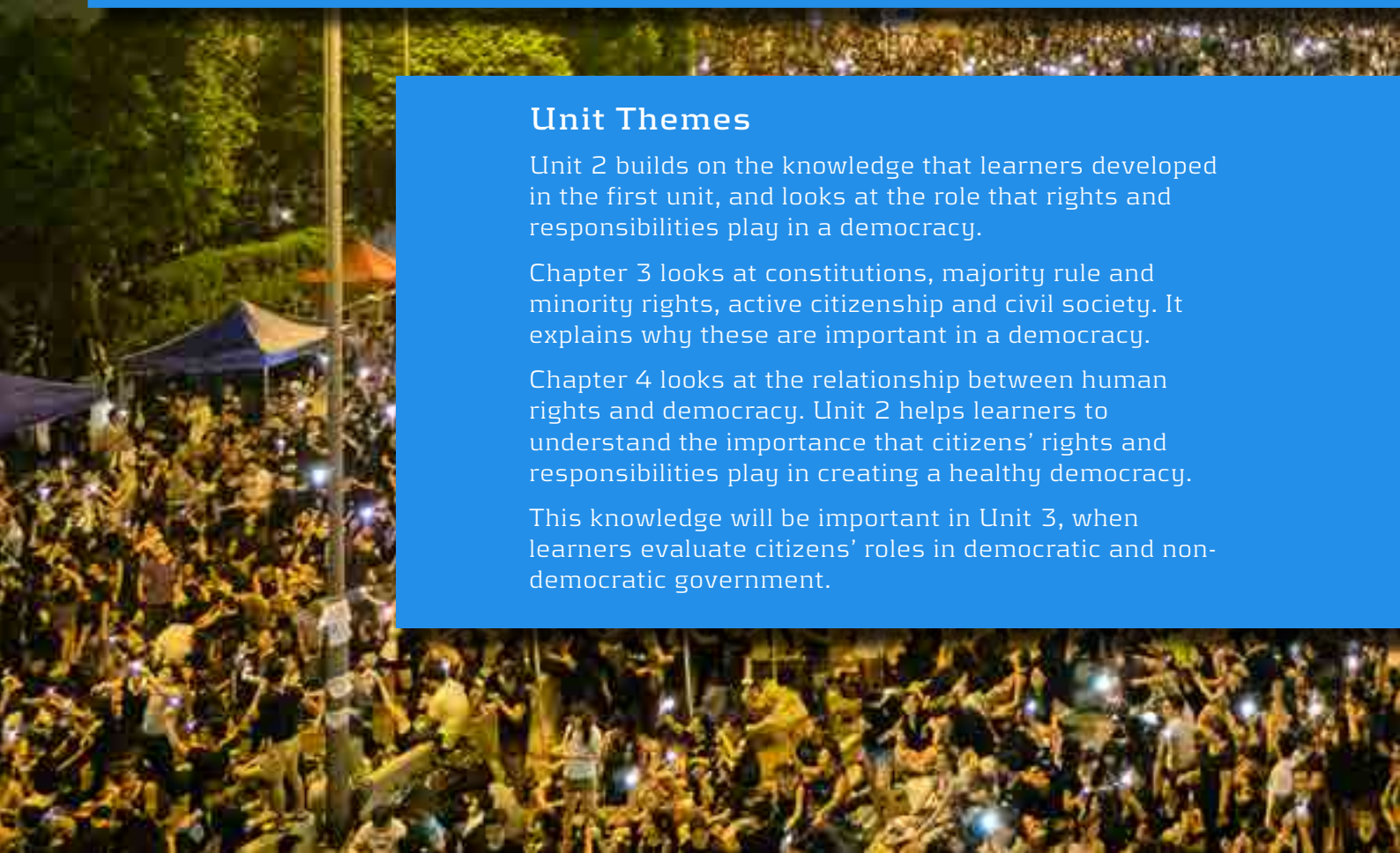
transparency (adj) – ပွင့်လင်းမြင်သာမှုရှိသော။

union (n) – သမဂ္ဂ။ အဖွဲ့အစည်း။

vote-buying (n) – မဲဝယ်ခြင်း။

Unit 2:

Rights in a Democracy



Unit Themes

Unit 2 builds on the knowledge that learners developed in the first unit, and looks at the role that rights and responsibilities play in a democracy.

Chapter 3 looks at constitutions, majority rule and minority rights, active citizenship and civil society. It explains why these are important in a democracy.

Chapter 4 looks at the relationship between human rights and democracy. Unit 2 helps learners to understand the importance that citizens' rights and responsibilities play in creating a healthy democracy.

This knowledge will be important in Unit 3, when learners evaluate citizens' roles in democratic and non-democratic government.

Unit 2: Learning Goals

Knowledge
(Exercises)

By the end of this unit you will have increased your understanding of:

- the importance of rights;
- the importance of constitutions;
- the importance of majority rule and minority rights;
- the importance of responsibilities;
- the importance of active citizenship;
- the importance of civil society;
- the idea of human rights;
- how human rights relate to basic needs and freedoms;
- why human rights are important in a community;
- why human rights are important in a democracy;
- the importance of freedom of speech;
- the importance of freedoms of association and assembly;
- the importance of rights to equality.

Skills
(Activities)

By the end of this unit you will have developed your ability to:

- use a values pyramid to analyse rights;
- create a community constitution;
- create rules to protect minority rights in an organisation;
- compare the responsibilities of citizens and leaders;
- use a responsibility matrix to analyse a problem;
- make an action plan to address a local issue;
- match needs and freedoms with the rights in the UDHR;
- use community mapping to analyse human rights;
- use posters to discuss human rights;
- discuss the limits of freedom of speech;
- discuss the limits of freedom;
- debate the limits of the right to equality.

Values
(Reflections)

By the end of this unit you will have reflected on:

- your experience of rights;
- the relationship between rules and rights;
- conflicts between minorities and the majority;
- the consequences of ignoring responsibilities;
- the values of active citizens;
- your experience of civil society;
- your most important needs and freedoms;
- your contribution to human rights in your community;
- your experience of empowerment;
- abusive or hateful speech;
- your experience of freedom of association and assembly;
- your experience of discrimination.

3.1 Rights in a Democracy

3.1.1 Rights and Responsibilities

All people deserve to live happily, without fear, violence or cruel treatment. For this to happen, it is necessary for people to behave in a way that does not harm or hurt other people.

Rights are like rules. They show us how people should be treated in a community. They also show us how an individual should be treated by other individuals, their community and/or their government.

Rights give people:

- permission to do/have something;
- protection from something or someone;
- **entitlement** to do/have something.

Responsibilities are obligations or promises to do something. Civic responsibilities require citizens to actively contribute to their communities. The quality of a community affects all of its members. If citizens want to benefit from a community, they need to help develop it.

Exercise

Classify these into rights and responsibilities.

a. to be safe
b. to respect other people
c. to choose the person who you marry
d. to keep your environment clean
e. to help those who are in need
f. to live where you want

1. Equality

In a democracy, everyone has an equal right to take part in the decisions that affect them. In a society where people are not equal, some people might not have the right to participate. This is very bad for democracy.

2. Free and Fair Elections

The right to vote and stand in regular elections is probably the most important right in a democracy. This right guarantees that all citizens can directly take part in deciding who their leaders are and what happens in their community. Some other specific rights related to elections include:

- voters have the right to vote in secret;
- voters have the right to vote for the party or candidate of their choice, without fear of intimidation or violence.

3. Accountability

In a democracy, elected representatives are accountable to the people. If they make decisions that are not good for their community, or if they fail to perform their duties according to the wishes of the people, then people have the right to vote them out of power in the next election.

Citizens also have the right to ask their representatives – and the government – to explain their actions and decisions. Accountability cannot work if citizens and political parties do not have the right to question or criticise the government.

4. Transparency

Freedom of information laws give people the right to know about what the government is doing. In a democracy, the people have the right to access information about the decisions and actions of the government.

Freedom of the press gives journalists the right to seek and publish information about the government. Citizens can use this information to evaluate how well the government is doing its job. This is an important part of making sure that the government is accountable to the people.

5. Participation

A strong democracy needs its citizens to effectively take part in political decision-making. Therefore, they must be informed, active and responsible.

Civic participation takes many forms. It includes running for office, voting in elections, joining and forming citizens' groups, attending community meetings, volunteering, and even protesting against the government. In a democracy, all of these ways of participating are protected by specific rights.

Citizens must have the right to be free from fear, violence and unjust actions that stop them from participating. Having these rights gives citizens the confidence to participate in democracy .

6. Compromise and Tolerance

Democracy is based on the free exchange of ideas. If citizens want the right to express their ideas freely, then they must accept the right of others to do the same.

Democratic governments are made up of representatives from many different communities. Representatives need the right to promote their communities' beliefs, ideas and values. If they cannot do this, representative democracy will not work.

Limiting minorities' rights to take part in democracy can lead to marginalisation and even violent conflict.

7. The Rule of Law

In a democracy, the government cannot deny or abuse citizens' legal rights. The rule of law makes sure that all citizens can challenge rights violations and punish abusers.

It is important that there is a fair and independent justice system. This means judges follow and enforce the law, not the wishes of powerful people or the government. A democracy needs this to decide whether citizens' rights have been abused, and punish abusers.

Important rights related to the rule of law include:

- the right to a fair **trial**;
- the right to be told the charges against you;
- the right to a lawyer;
- the right for citizens to be considered innocent until there is proof they are guilty.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. The right to vote is not very important in a democracy.
b. In a democracy, it is important that all citizens have the right to freely express their opinions.
c. Democratic rights make sure that citizens can freely gather and form groups.
d. Elections are the only way that leaders are accountable in a democracy.
e. Freedom of information laws give citizens the rights to access documents and information from the government.
f. In a democracy, some citizens are given more rights than others.
g. The rule of law makes it harder for rights abuses to happen.

Focus on Myanmar

About Rights – From *Civics for High Schools*, 1953

In a democracy, the power of the government comes from the people. We can say that 'the people' make laws. Therefore, citizens have responsibility to protect and follow these laws. However, if a law goes against the citizens' interests, the citizens have the right to change or cancel that law through parliament.

Voting is very important in a democracy. If citizens use their right to vote effectively, they will get a civilized and responsible government. If they don't, they will get bad representatives. This will not lead to a good government.

The role of each citizen is very important in building a democratic society. Democracy cannot succeed unless citizens have democratic values, right behaviour and active participation.

To get the changes we need in Burma, a revolution must take place in each individual life, heart and mind. Those revolutions should be started by individuals before being started in associations, political parties and other organisations.

Ba Pe (1953), 'Civics for High Schools', KEM Burma Pg 18-20 (Myanmar Version)

Exercise

1. What rights does U Ba Pe refer to in this text?
2. What responsibilities does he refer to in this text?
3. What does he think is important in a democracy?
4. What does he think needs to happen first?

Exercise

Match these seven rights with the elements of democracy on pages 67-69.

1. equality
2. free and fair elections
3. accountability
4. transparency
5. participation
6. tolerance and compromise
7. rule of law

From the South African Bill of Rights:

a. Every citizen has the right to free, fair and regular elections for any **legislative** body.
   Example answer: *2. free and fair elections*

b. Everyone is equal before the law and may not be unfairly **discriminated** against.

c. For the protection of your rights, you may access any information held by the state.

d. You have the right to peacefully assemble, demonstrate and protest.

e. You have the right to say, read and study whatever you choose but **hate speech** [speech that causes violence or hatred] is not allowed.

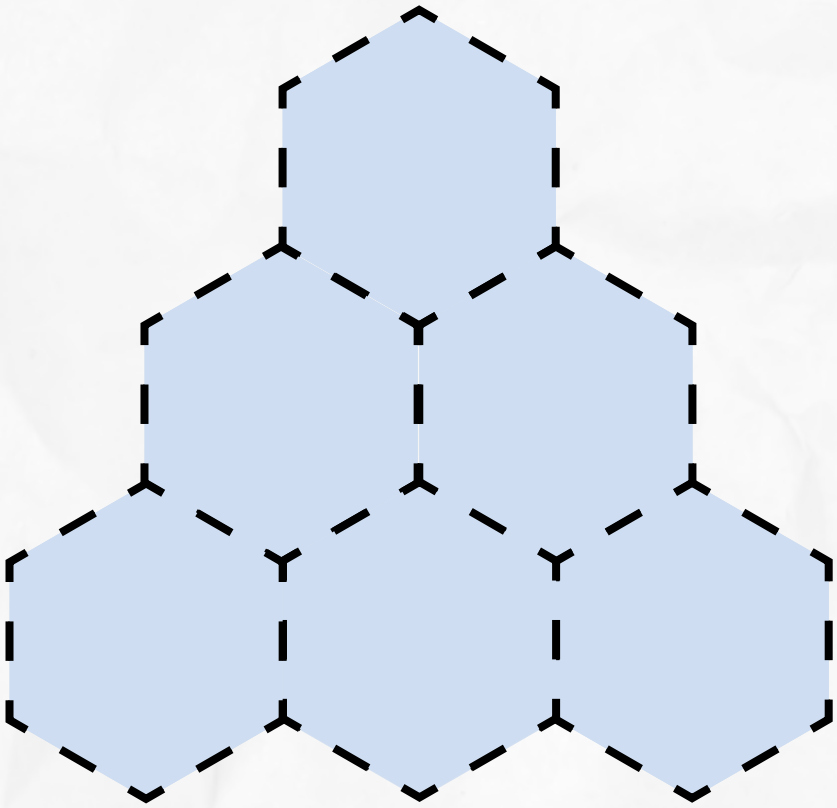
f. You have the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair [due process].

g. If a **provincial** [state or regional] government votes to fire the premier [chief minister], the premier and the other members of the Executive Council [Cabinet] must resign.

Activity

Rights Pyramid

1. Rank the rights that citizens have in a democracy. Put the most important right at the top, and the less important rights at the bottom.
2. In pairs, decide on a rights pyramid.
3. Join another group, and agree on a rights pyramid.
4. Agree on a class rights pyramid.



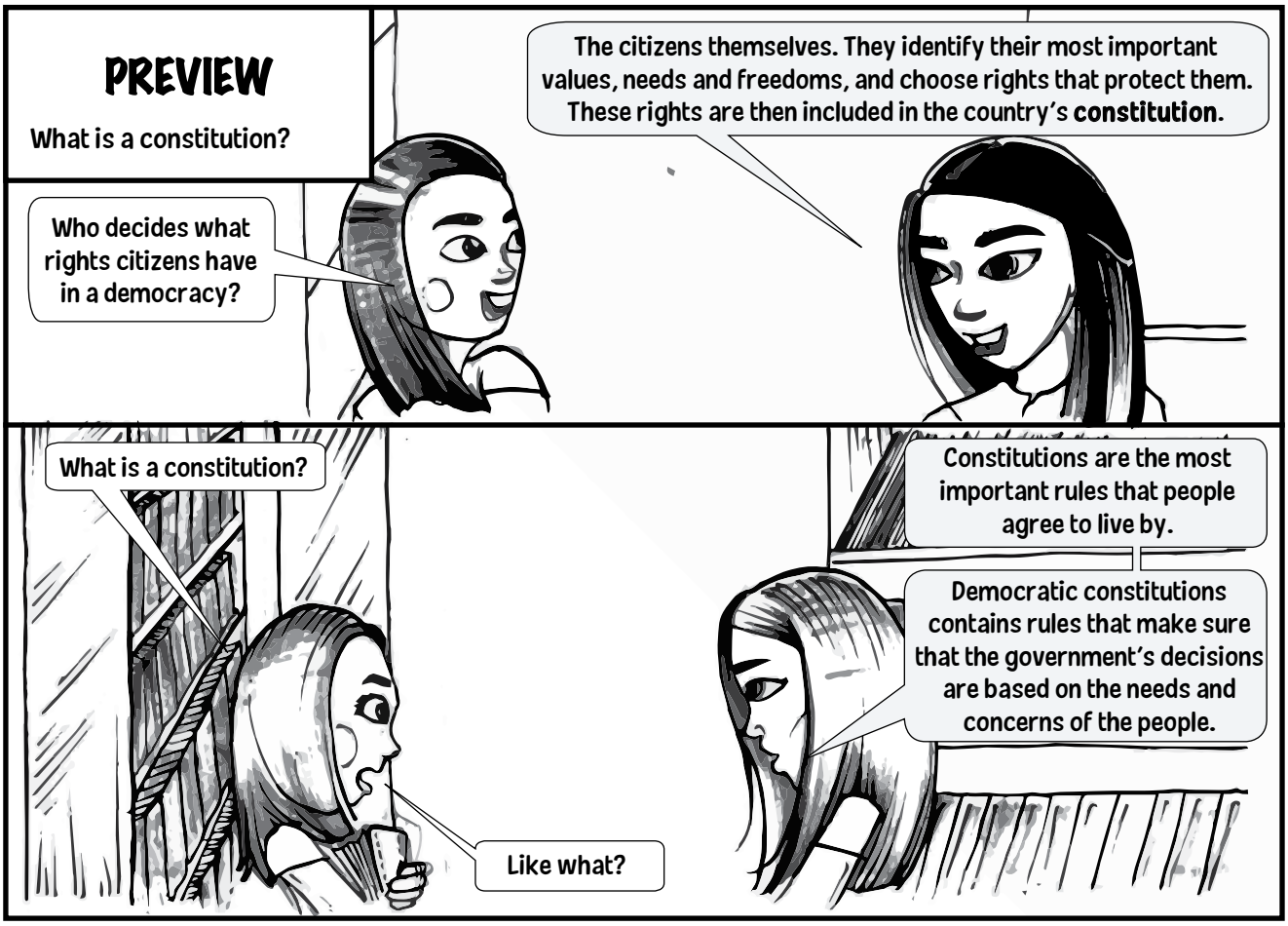
Discussion

1. Why are rights so important in a democracy?
2. Which rights do you have as a member of your community?
3. Does everyone in your community have the same rights?

Reflection

Has anyone ever violated or limited your rights? How did that make you feel? Give examples.

3.1.2 Constitutions



A. What Is a Constitution?

A constitution is the basic law of a country. It is a set of written laws that are the foundation of the legal and political system. The constitution describes the relationship between the people and government. Important functions of constitutions include:

1. promoting trust and **stability**;
2. putting limits on the powers of the government;
3. listing the rights of the citizens;
4. describing the rights of minorities;
5. outlining the roles and responsibilities of the different parts of the government.

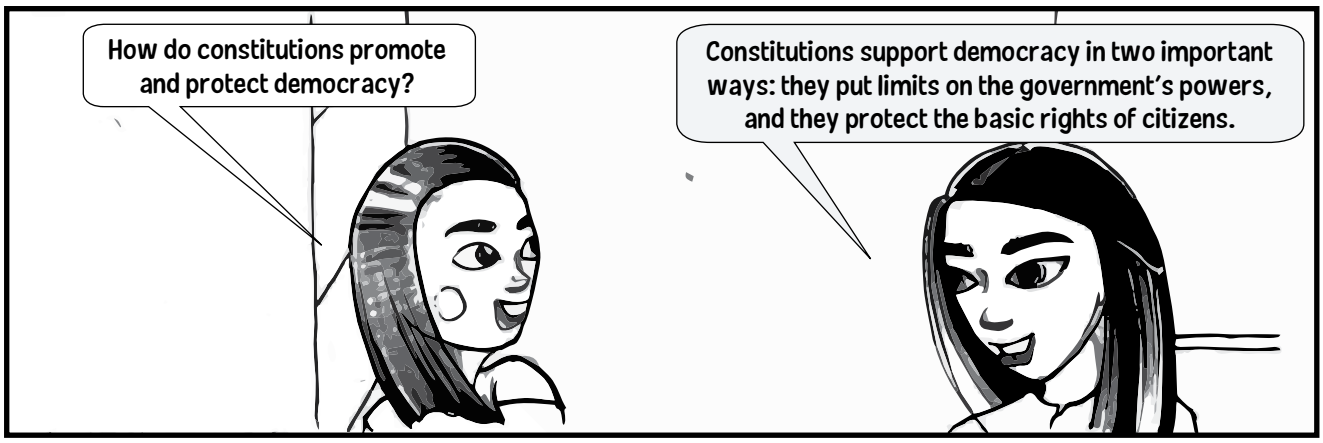
B. Why Do We Need Constitutions?

Constitutions establish the country's most basic laws and all other laws are based on these. These laws outline the relationship between citizens, as well as the relationship between citizens and the government.

No other laws can go against the constitution. For example, if the constitution says that everyone has the right to basic education, the government cannot make laws that stops some groups from attending

government schools. When citizens know that there are some basic laws that must always be respected, this can increase trust.

These rules only work if they cannot be changed easily. This is why it is very hard for constitutions to be changed. This stops new governments from making very big changes every time they come into power. Constitutions promote stability by limiting the size and speed of changes that new governments can make.



Exercise

Which of the following is NOT a function of constitutions in a democracy?

a. Constitutions set out the relationship between citizens and the government.
b. Constitutions set the most important laws in a country.
c. Constitutions decide which children are allowed to go to school.
d. Constitutions stop governments from making big changes too quickly.

C. CONSTITUTIONS ENSURE LIMITED GOVERNMENT

Constitutions put limits on government power. They clearly outline the powers that a government has and does not have.

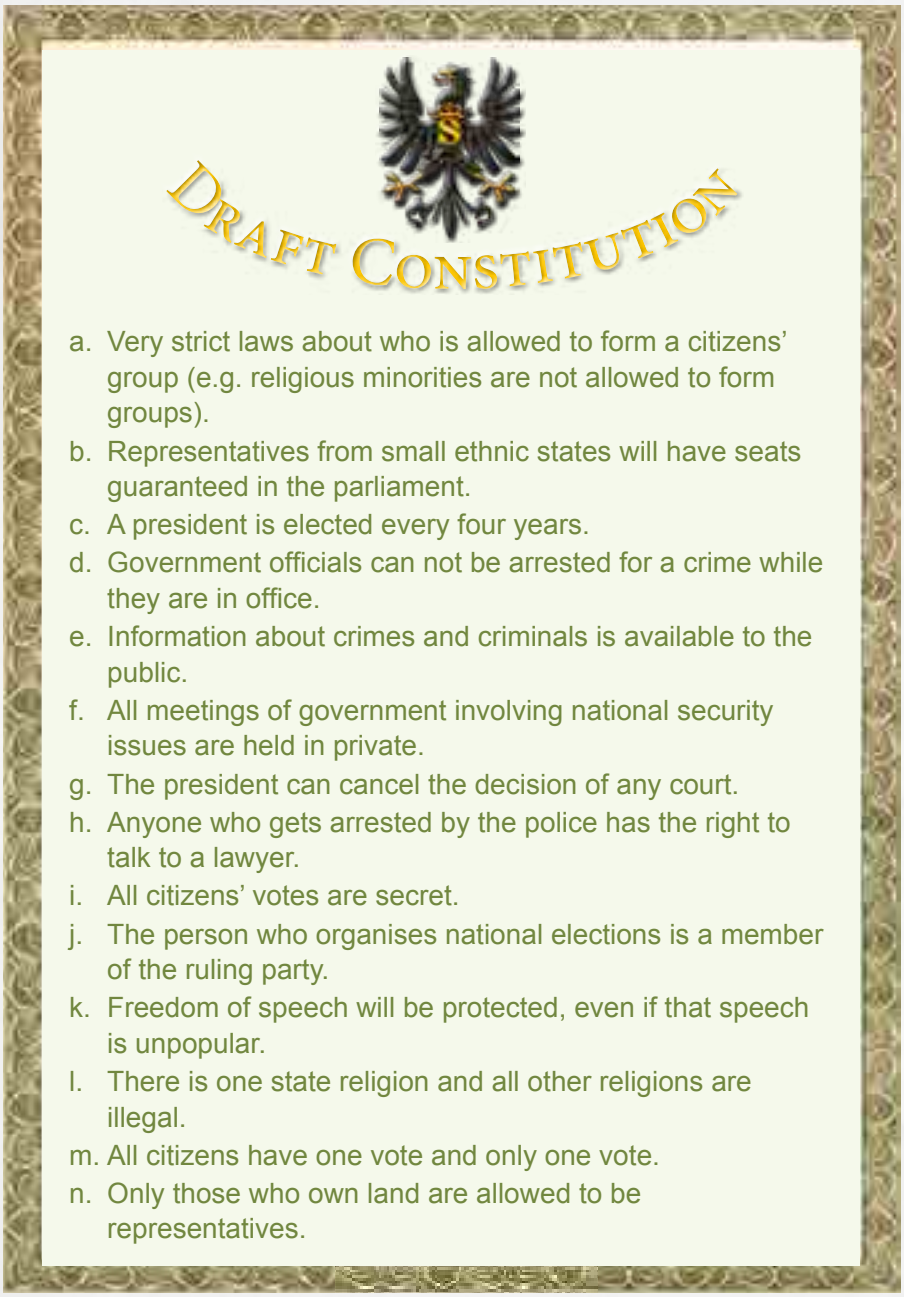
A democratic government cannot do everything it wants, even if it wins power through a free and fair election. It has to respect some basic rules. These rules usually include:

- rules that protect the rights of minorities;
- rules that make sure every major decision has to go through a series of steps (votes, meetings, reviews etc.);
- rules about the rights and responsibilities of representatives and other members of the government;
- rules about who is accountable to who.

Exercise

Which of the following is NOT an examples of the kind of limits that constitutions put on government power?

a. Constitutions stop government from ignoring the needs of minorities.
b. Constitutions stop representatives from abusing their power.
c. Constitutions make sure that important decisions don't get made without following the correct process.
d. Constitutions make sure that elections always lead to strong governments.



a. Very strict laws about who is allowed to form a citizens' group (e.g. religious minorities are not allowed to form groups).
b. Representatives from small ethnic states will have seats guaranteed in the parliament.
c. A president is elected every four years.
d. Government officials can not be arrested for a crime while they are in office.
e. Information about crimes and criminals is available to the public.
f. All meetings of government involving national security issues are held in private.
g. The president can cancel the decision of any court.
h. Anyone who gets arrested by the police has the right to talk to a lawyer.
i. All citizens' votes are secret.
j. The person who organises national elections is a member of the ruling party.
k. Freedom of speech will be protected, even if that speech is unpopular.
l. There is one state religion and all other religions are illegal.
m. All citizens have one vote and only one vote.
n. Only those who own land are allowed to be representatives.

Exercise

A new country is writing their first democratic constitution. They want to include laws to make the country more democratic.

1. Read the draft constitution and decide which constitutional laws support or work against democracy.
2. Look at the seven elements of democracy in 3.1.1:
   - equality
   - free and fair elections
   - accountability
   - transparency
   - participation
   - compromise and tolerance
   - rule of law

Which element (or elements) do each of the laws relate to?

Example answers:

A – 1. against
2. equality, participation

D. CONSTITUTIONS PROTECT FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Democratic constitutions set out the basic laws that protect people's rights and the elements of democracy. These include laws that prevent the government from abusing its power and the human rights of its citizens.

In order to protect citizens rights, constitutions usually include a **bill of rights**. A bill of rights is a document that sets out citizens' rights and freedoms. It lists the most basic rights that must be respected and protected.

Democratic constitutions protect the basic rights that democracy needs to survive. They contain very strong laws that stop the government from abusing its power (e.g. ignoring the results of an election) and abusing citizens' rights (e.g. **banning** peaceful demonstration or limiting the right to a fair trial).

Rights are not useful if people or governments don't respect them. They are also not useful if there is nothing that citizens can do if their rights are abused. The basic rights in the constitution are important because they are enforceable.

If a citizen's rights are violated by other citizens, businesses or by the government, they can seek justice through the **courts**. The courts have the power to enforce citizen's rights. They can also assist the victims (e.g. making sure they get paid back for any damages or loss), and punish the people who violated those rights.

The constitution also protects citizens from unfair actions of the government. No law or action of government can violate the laws in the constitution. If the government does anything that takes away or limits those rights, the courts can declare it to be illegal.

Exercise

Which of the following is NOT an example of how democratic constitutions protect fundamental rights?

a. Constitutions can include a list of the basic rights that citizens have.
b. Constitutions make sure that citizens can challenge rights violations through the courts.
c. Constitutions stop governments from making laws that go against the basic laws in the constitution.
d. Constitutions create peace by banning demonstrations.

Exercise

Read the list of rights in Myanmar's 2008 constitution and match them with the seven elements of democracy. There can be more than one answer for each right.

- free and fair elections	- accountability	- tolerance and compromise
- equality	- transparency	
	- participation	- the rule of law

Example answer:

347. equality before the law – equality, accountability, rule of law

Focus on Myanmar

Rights in Myanmar

347.equality before the law;

348. non-discrimination (based on race, birth, religion, status, official culture, sex and wealth);

349. **equal opportunity** (in public employment, occupation, trade, business, etc.);

350. equality of salary and rights at work for women and men;

351. equal rights for mothers, children and pregnant women;

352. non-discrimination in the **civil service** (except for "positions that are suitable for men only");

353. right to life and personal freedom ("unless the person has broken other laws");

354. every citizen has the right to do the following, unless their action goes against other laws related to Union security, law and order, community peace or public order and morality:

(a) freedom to express and publish their beliefs and opinions freely;

(b) freedom to assemble and march peacefully without arms;

(c) freedom to form associations and organisations;

(d) freedom to develop their language, literature, culture, religion, and traditions without discrimination;

355. freedom to settle and live anywhere;

356. protection of property;

357. privacy and security of home, property, correspondence and other communication;

358. prohibition on enslaving and trafficking in persons;

359. prohibition on forced **labour** (except hard labour for convicts and public-interest duties);

360-64. freedom of conscience and religion (subject to public order, morality, and health; the "abuse of religion for political purposes" is forbidden);

365. right to develop literature, arts, customs and traditions;

366. right to education and to receive free **compulsory** basic education;

367. right to health care ("in accord with health policy laid down by the Union");

369. right to elect and be elected to Hluttaws (subject to the Constitution and relevant laws);

370. right to freely conduct business; the right to private invention and **patent**;

373. right to only be punished according to the law;

375. right of an accused to a defence;

376. prohibition on any person being held in **custody** for more than 24 hours without permission of a court (except "**precautionary** measures taken for the security of the Union or prevalence of law and order…");

380. right to seek protection of the Union in relations with foreign countries;

381. right to a fair trial (except in time of foreign invasion, **insurrection** or emergency).

Constitution of The Republic of The Union of Myanmar, (2008), Pg 149-156

Activity

Community Constitution

1. If you had to write a constitution for your community, what rights would you include? Are there any rights that you would not include? Why?
2. Would you include rules to limit the power of leaders? What limitations would you include in a constitution for your community?

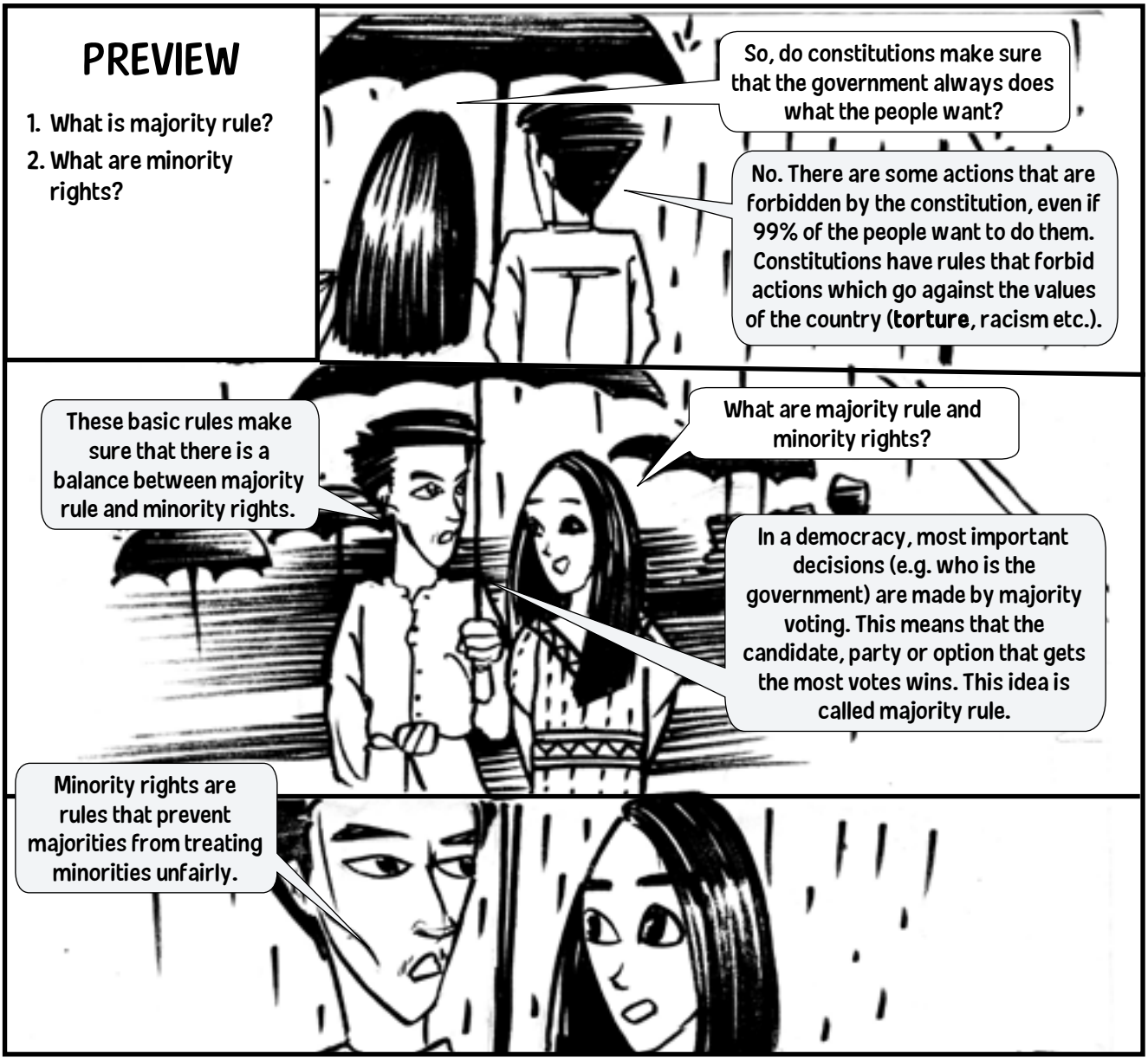
Discussion

1. Do you think that constitutions are necessary? Why or why not?
2. Are there any limits on leaders' power in your community? If so, what are they?
3. Are people aware of their constitutional rights in your community?
4. What kind of problems might happen if people are not aware of their constitutional rights?

Reflection

1. Think of a time when rules or laws have protected your rights. How did you feel?
2. Think of a time when rules or laws have failed to protect your rights. How did you feel?
3. Have you ever experienced a time when rules or laws have stopped you from doing what you wanted to do? What happened? How did you feel?

3.1.3 Majority Rule and Minority Rights



Democracies put limits on what the majority can do. For example, if the majority of the population wants to violate the human rights of a minority, this would not be allowed. The rights that protect minorities from the abuse of the majority are called minority rights.

Minority rights make sure that the majority cannot make decisions that:

- cannot be changed in future (e.g. creating a **dictatorship**);
- deny minorities the right to take part in the decision-making process;
- lead to discrimination or human rights abuses against minority groups.

All individuals in a minority group have the same human rights as everyone else. It does not matter if they are a minority because of their ethnicity, religion, political beliefs, or their sexuality.

One of the most important ways that minority rights are protected is by making them a part of the constitution. Constitutions are very difficult to change. Therefore, it is hard for a government to take away the rights of minorities, even if the majority want this.

Minority rights are often included in a country's constitution. Some of the most common forms that these rights take are:

1. **Autonomy:** Rules that allow minorities to make decisions for their own community. For example, a national government allows local governments to make decisions about hospitals and schools in their area.
2. **Power-sharing:** Rules that make sure that minorities are represented in government. For example, a government makes a rule that 50% of MPs must be from one ethnic group and 50% from another.
3. **Cultural diversity:** Rules that protect minorities' cultural identity, language and culture. For example, a government allows schools in ethnic areas to teach in their ethnic language.
4. **Affirmative Action:** Rules that give minorities more opportunities (than majority people) to be in government, or access employment and educational opportunities. For example, a government makes a rule that at least 30% of all new government workers must be from a religious minority.

Exercise

Match the examples with the four kinds of minority rights.

a. In the Northern Ireland government, there are two First Ministers, one from Northern Ireland's Catholic community and one from its Protestant community. They both have equal powers. One cannot be in position without the other.
   Example answer: *1. Autonomy*
b. In India, the Tamil Nadu government gives 3.5% of the seats in parliament to Muslims and 3.5% of the seats to Christians.
c. The Åland Islands is a region in Finland. The Åland Islands' government makes its own health, education, job, housing and security policies.
d. Belgium has 'community governments'. Each language community (Dutch, French and German-speaking) elect their own community government. These governments make decisions about cultural, educational and language issues.

Focus on Myanmar

Shalom Foundation

Shalom Foundation is a local NGO in Myanmar with the vision of creating a **just** and peaceful society for all people in Myanmar.

Shalom Foundation was founded in May 2000. They are committed to "peace and harmony between the many ethnic races and the Bamar". Shalom believes that "only with peace and mutual respect and understanding between the races living in the Union of Myanmar, our nation can grow and develop for the benefit of all citizens".

Main Activities

Stopping Violence

Promoting dialogue at all levels in society as an alternative to violence. Dialogue builds trust among government and ethnic leaders. This trust allows diverse communities to find a way to balance their needs and interests and live together peacefully.

Building Trust

Working with groups both within society (e.g. within ethnic and religious groups) and across society (at the **grassroots**, middle and top leadership levels). Building trust between the majority group and minorities helps them to better understand each other and find solutions.

Empowering People

Providing knowledge and skills for people at community and regional leadership levels to exercise their constitutional rights. This helps minorities to be aware of their rights and what they can do to defend them.

Promoting inclusive decision-making

Working with decision-makers to create systems that promote equality and participation. This helps minorities and marginalised groups to take part in decision making so that their needs and concerns are considered.

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What are the goals of the Shalom Foundation?
2. What does the Shalom Foundation do to try and achieve its goals?
3. How do these activities help to balance majority rule and minority rights?

Activity

The Sports Club

Read the text then follow the instructions.

In the Central Sports Club, 75% of members are football players and 25% are chinlone players. Football and chinlone teams participate in competitions, and new members join the teams each year. Each member pays 20,000 kyat per year to the club.

Once a year, the club has a budget meeting. All members decide by majority vote how to spend the club's money.

The football players want to buy uniforms, new equipment and to improve the club's football field. The chinlone players also need uniforms, equipment, and to improve the club's chinlone courts.

Every year, the chinlone group loses the vote, so all the money goes to the football players. Now the chinlone players are getting angry. Their money is being spent on football and they get nothing. They feel that the system is unfair, and some chinlone players are talking about forming a separate chinlone club.

Most footballers don't understand these concerns. They say that majority rule is democratic. However, some of the football players feel that this is not fair. They argue that if the chinlone players' needs are not considered, then it is not a real democracy.

1. Work in groups. You are the Sports Club Committee. Discuss these issues:
   a. How should the funds be distributed between the groups?
   b. Who should decide how the funds will be distributed?
   c. How should decisions be made?
   d. Should the groups be given rights of **autonomy** (i.e. the right to form their own group or raise their own money)?
   e. What rules are necessary to protect the rights and interests of the majority and the minority?
2. Write a set of rules that address these issues.
3. Present your rules to the class.

Discussion

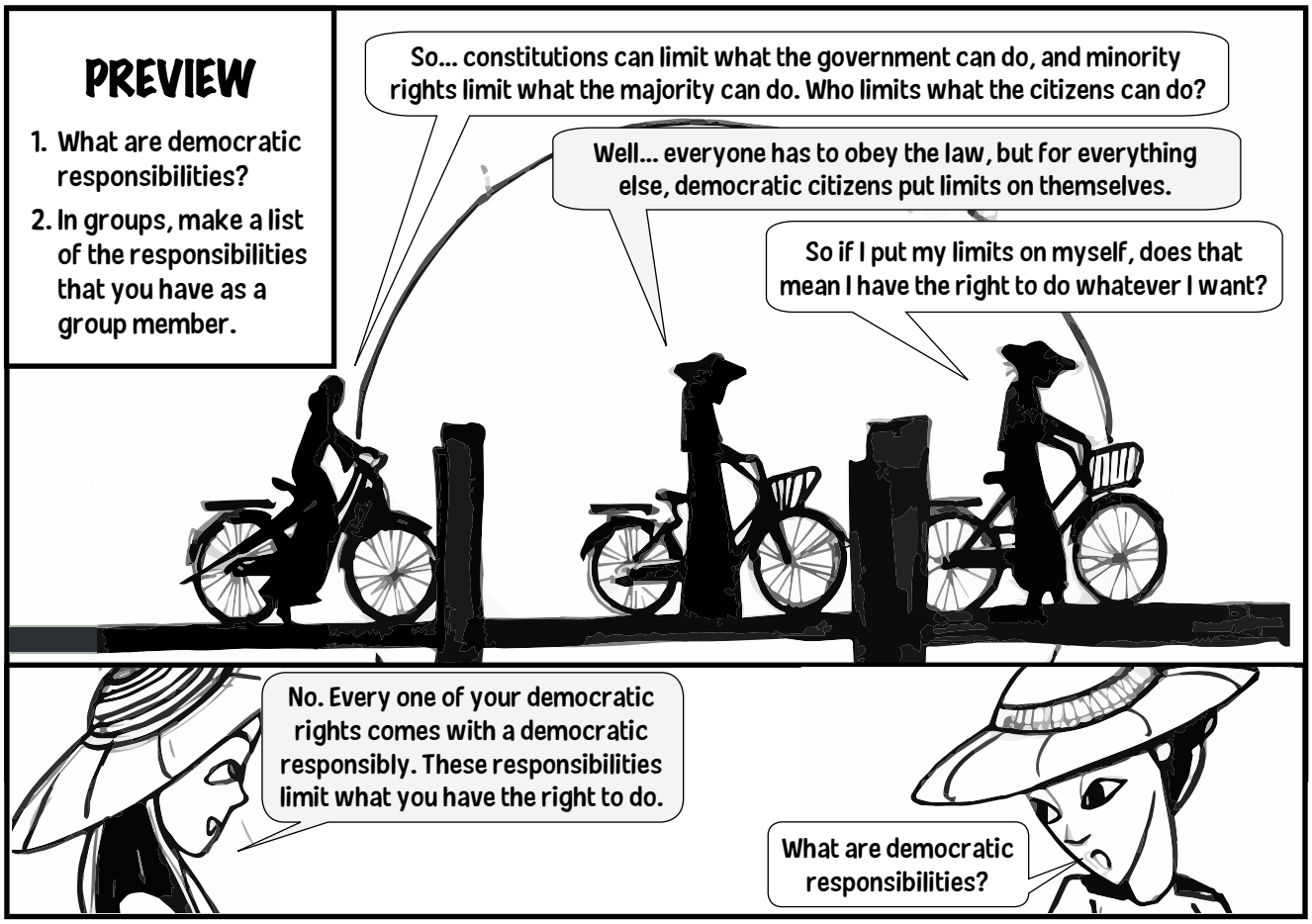
1. Why is majority rule important in a democracy?
2. Why are minority rights important in a democracy?
3. Are there any limitations on majority rule in your community?
4. Can you think of any conflicts between the decisions of the majority and the rights of minorities in your community? How were those conflicts resolved?

Reflection

1. Think of a time you were involved in a conflict between a minority and the majority. What happened? Give examples.
2. Is there anything you would have done differently if you had another chance?

3.2 Responsibilities and Democracy

3.2.1 Responsibilities in a Democracy



Rights and responsibilities cannot exist without each other. If someone has a right, they also have a responsibility to respect other people's rights.

Democratic rights are a benefit of being a member of a democratic community. If citizens want to receive these benefits, they have a responsibility to actively participate in their community. This includes:

- contributing to the development of the community;
- taking part in decision-making about issues that affect the community;
- respecting the rules and laws of that community.

A community is shaped by the decisions that its members make. Democratic citizens have a responsibility to make good choices and think about the other members of their community.

Exercise

Match the elements of democracy with the responsibilities. There can be more than one element of democracy for each responsibility.

a. Vote and encourage others to vote.
Example answer: 1, 3

b. Respect the opinions and beliefs of other people.

c. Take part in democracy through forming and joining organisations, associations and other groups.

d. Be informed about different candidates in an election.

e. express your opinions and ideas.

f. Be informed and think critically about social and political issues.

g. Take part in activities that develop and improve the community.

h. Volunteer to support a candidate in their campaign.

i. Accept that there are political ideas that you disagree with.

j. Do not break the law.

k. Seek information and express your concerns to keep the government accountable.

l. Run for office.

m. Don't limit the political rights of others through violence, intimidation or threats.

n. Don't discriminate against people because of race, ethnic background, sex, religion, sexual orientation or disability.

o. Be aware of your legal rights and responsibilities.

p. Speak out against corruption when you see it.

q. Make sure that elections are carried out in a free and fair way.

r. Treat others with respect, regardless of their views.

Rank the Responsibilities

Activity

1. Choose the ten most important activities from the list and rank order of importance for:
   - all citizens
   - leaders
   - you
2. Compare the three lists (all citizens, leaders, and you). Which items are the same and which are different?
3. Compare your list with the list of responsibilities you made at the start of 3.2.1. Which are the same and which are different?

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY

20 of the most important responsibilities of citizens

a. Become informed by learning about issues and leaders.
b. Protect and respect public property.
c. Educate others about issues and leaders.
d. Debate issues.
e. Volunteer in your community.
f. Work in the community in support of a cause.
g. Form or join political parties or community organisations.
h. Preserve your culture and traditions.
i. Promote peace.
j. Attend political or community meetings.
k. Promote unity.
l. Vote in elections.
m. Stand to be a representative for your community.
n. Pay taxes.
o. Become educated.
p. Take care of the environment.
q. Serve in the military.
r. Protest against the government by demonstrations, strikes, etc.
s. Respect the rights of other citizens.
t. Obey the law.

Focus on Myanmar

Myanmar Citizens' Responsibilities – Two Views

Text 1: *Civics for High Schools*, 1953, talks about five main responsibilities of citizens:

1. **Respect the nation's laws.** An important responsibility for democratic citizens is to obey the laws... The duty of citizens is not only to follow the laws of the country. They must also persuade other citizens to follow the laws.
2. **Pay tax.** Elected governments have a lot of work to do for citizens' **welfare**. To do all these tasks the government needs a lot of money. Therefore, government has responsibility to take tax from citizens. Citizens have a responsibility to pay both state tax and local **municipal** taxes.
3. **Citizens and Voting.** In a democratic country the basic responsibility of a citizen is voting. We should value this voting power and use it effectively... People who do not vote are not fulfilling their duties as citizens.
4. **Basic education.** Every citizen has the responsibility to get good education... One objective of education is to participate and grow peacefully with other citizens. Education is not only for career development.
5. **Civil service.** There are two different kinds of **civil service**. The first is 'the civil service', and the second is volunteering. If civil servants do their work generously, honestly and dutifully, people will see them as good workers with honour. Volunteers will also have this honour.

Text 2: The 2008 Constitution states that citizens of Myanmar have the following duties to their country:

- to keep the country whole and independent and to keep a spirit of unity in the country
- to follow the laws of the constitution
- to participate in military training and military service to defend the country
- to increase unity and promote peace
- to help to develop the country
- to pay taxes
- to preserve and keep safe national culture
- to keep the environment safe
- to develop human resources
- to protect public property

Exercise

Compare these texts with the ten responsibilities that you chose in the activity on page 85.

1. What is the same?
2. What is different?

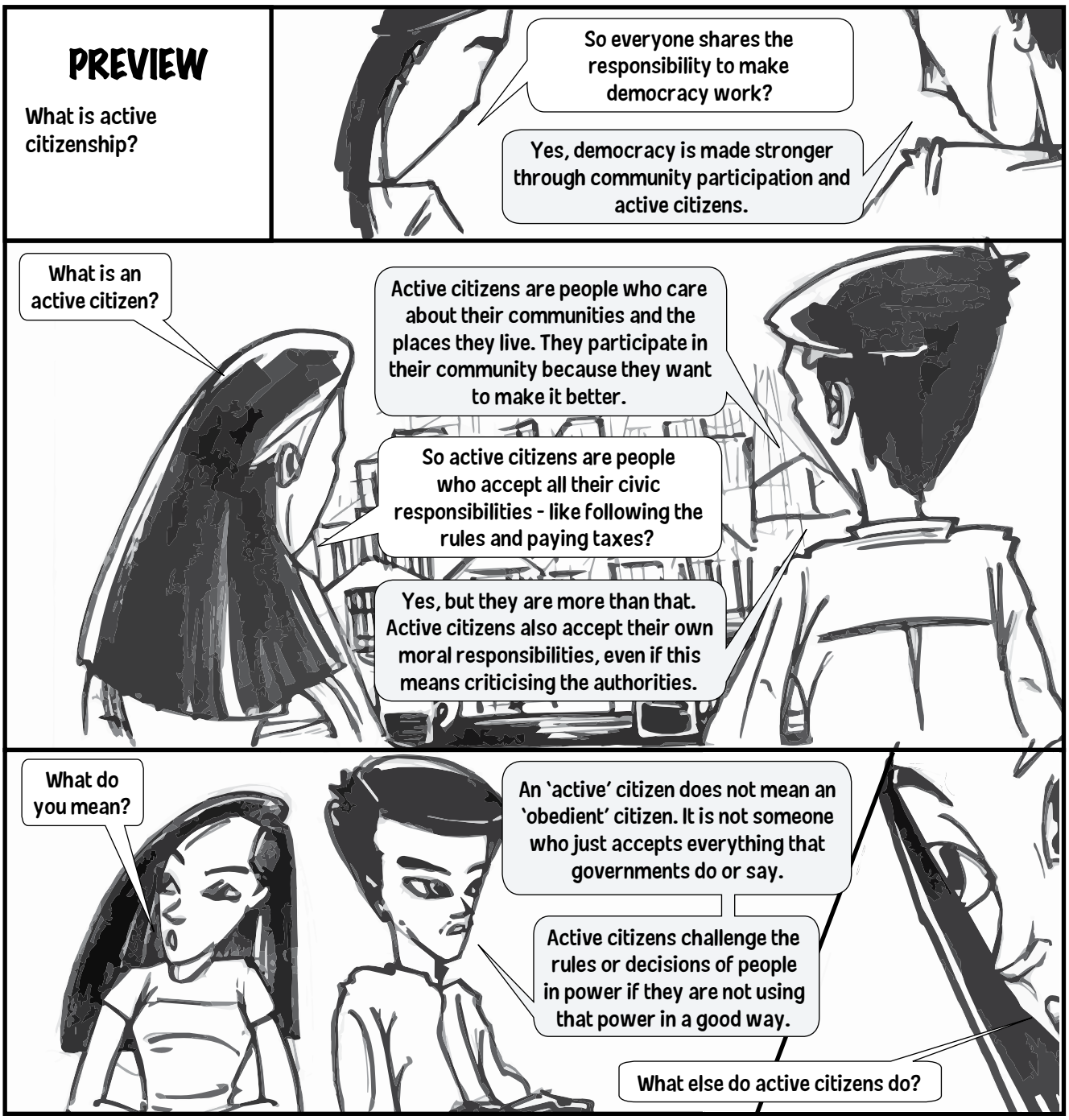
Discussion

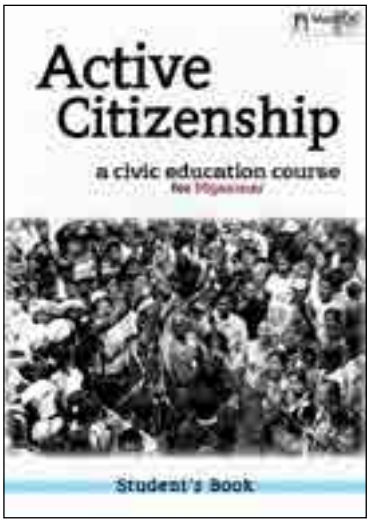
1. What are the most important responsibilities that people have in your community?
2. What stops people from fulfilling their responsibilities in your community?
3. What happens when people do not fulfill these responsibilities?
4. What can be done to encourage people to accept their responsibilities more in your community?

Reflection

1. Have you ever neglected or ignored a responsibility? What happened?
2. Have you ever been negatively affected by someone else neglecting or ignoring a responsibility? How did you feel?

3.2.2 Responsibilities and Active Citizenship





In a democracy, governments exist to serve and protect their citizens. However, if citizens only vote, and then do nothing until the next election, democracy will get weaker. This can lead to many problems including corruption, mismanagement and abuses of power.

Democracy needs active citizens to work with the government to make sure it knows about the people's needs. Democracy also needs citizens to criticise the government if it is not meeting those needs. This requires citizens to be aware of the social and political situation and accept their civic responsibilities.

We can identify some key characteristics of active citizenship:

1. Citizens volunteer their time and effort to develop their community;
2. Citizens actively take part in the decisions that affect them;
3. Citizens are aware of social and political issues that affect their community;
4. Citizens challenge unjust decisions, actions or situations.

Exercise

Match the activities below with the four characteristics of active citizens, above. Answers can be more than one characteristic.

What can I do to be an ACTIVE CITIZEN?

Here are seven things you can do...

a. Attend a community meeting to decide where a new road will be built.
b. Work together with local government to find a solution to a problem in your community.
c. Express your concerns about a new factory to your representative.
d. Be informed about new laws that affect your community.
e. Join together with other people to **raise awareness** about the effects of pollution.
f. Organise a protest against a decision you disagree with.
g. Vote in a local election.

Focus on Myanmar

An Interview with Khin Hnin Kyi Thar

Khin Hnin Kyi Thar is the 28-year-old founder of the Individual Philanthropic Network, based in Yangon. The network focuses on helping poor people in Myaing, an area between Sagaing and Magwe regions.

Q: How did you start your **network**?

A: In September 2012, I made a trip to the mountain range to write an article about people suffering from illnesses there. I found many social problems in that community. After I wrote the article, some donors sent money to me so I could buy the things that people needed. So I started this organisation.

Q: How do you raise funds?

A: I have used Facebook to collect money since starting the network – both my personal account and the network's page. I talk with donors and new volunteers on Facebook. Sometimes I never even meet them in person. About 98 percent of donors from here and from other countries donate via Facebook

Q: How do you help the people in Myaing?

A: We started with education. The government says primary school is supposed to be free. However, the children in the mountain were studying in tents and they had to pay the teachers themselves. When they could not pay, the teachers stopped teaching. So we built seven schools for them and asked the Myaing local government to recognise these schools as government schools. We asked them to offer free education at the primary level. We also bring doctors to treat the people about eight times per year.

Q: Why did you start your network?

A: When we do development work, we can make a difference by ourselves. We don't need to wait for the government. I wanted to start making a difference. I wanted to change what needs to be changed.

Adapted from The Irrawaddy, http://www.irrawaddy.org/interview/region-forgotten.html

Exercise

1. Why did Khin Hnin Kyi Thar start the Individual Philanthropic Network?
2. What activities does her network carry out?
3. How did she raise funds for those networks?
4. Which characteristics of an active citizen does Khin Hnin Kyi Thar have?

Activity

Responsibility Matrix

Read the text then follow the instructions.

Troubletown's school is located at the edge of the town next to a big field. The students like to play on the field. The school is surrounded by farms. The farmers all have dogs to scare away animals and protect their crops.

The school kitchen throws out all of its rubbish and left-over food into a pile in the field. This attracts the dogs, who come to eat the left over food in the rubbish pile.

Some of the students have been throwing stones at the dogs. Recently, some students have been bitten by the dogs and became very sick. The parents of these children are very angry and are demanding that something is done about this situation.

1. Work in groups. Each group has ten 'responsibility points' to give to the four groups in the responsibility matrix (below). Each point represents an amount of responsibility.
   - For example, if you think one group is total responsible, give it ten points.
   - If you think two groups are equally responsible, give them five points each.
   - Distribute your ten points according to how you see the situation.

Responsibility Matrix	
Farmers	**School Management**
Students	**Parents**

2. Present your results to the class. Explain your reasons for dividing the points.
3. Think of another issue in your community. Design a responsibility matrix, and present the results to the class.

Discussion

1. Identify some active citizens in your community.
2. Which of their achievements do you think are most important? Why?
3. What can be done to encourage active citizenship in your community?

Reflection

1. Think of an active citizen in your community. What values do they have?
2. Which values do you share with them?
3. Which of their values do you admire and want to develop in yourself?

3.2.3 Responsibilities and Civil Society

Common goals of CSOs include:

1. protecting the environment;
2. **empowering** marginalised groups;
3. improving access to health or education;
4. promoting social development.

Civil society is very important for democracy. It allows citizens to participate independently of the government. This independence is important for several reasons. Firstly, it allows CSOs to be critical of the government. Secondly, it allows them to meet needs that the government does not.

On the other hand, many CSOs work very closely with the government to achieve their goals. In this way, they act as a bridge between the people and the government.

Strong civil society organisations and active citizens are important for promoting participation. They make sure that the government is more accountable and respects citizens' rights.

Exercise

Match the CSOs with the four goals from the text on page 91. Some CSOs might have more than one goal.

a. Action for Public

Main Activities:

- vocational training and income generation for women living with HIV
- **microfinance** programme
- development and capacity building training for youth

https://www.facebook.com/actionforpublicAFP

Example Answer:
2 – empowering marginalised groups

b. Shan Women's Action Network

Main Activities:

- promoting women's rights and the rights of children
- opposing violence against women and children
- working together for peace and freedom
- women's empowerment
- environmental awareness

http://www.shanwomen.org/

c. Karuna Myanmar Social Services

Main Activities:

- health care & HIV/AIDS awareness training programme
- water and sanitation programme
- early childhood care
- scholarship programme
- disaster risk reduction awareness programme

http://www.kmss-caritasmyanmar.org/

d. Rakhine Coastal Region Conservation Association

Main Activities:

- forest conservation
- establishment of community forests
- natural disaster prevention work
- protect wild elephants from illegal wildlife poaching and killing

http://www.rakhineconservation.org/

e. Kyaunghtarmikhin Local Development Organization

Main Activities:

- capacity building for local organisations and communities
- microfinance activities to build community-led finances
- reforestation program
- leadership training programmes for citizens

f. Burmese Migrant Teachers Association

Main Activities:

- ensure all children in migrant communities have access to education
- improve capacity of migrant teachers in Thailand
- create a curriculum recognised by Thailand and Myanmar
- advocacy for rights of migrant teachers and students

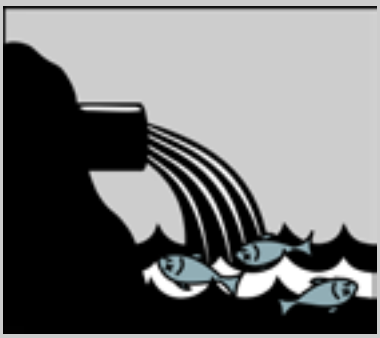
https://bmta05.wordpress.com/

Pollution in the Community

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

In the area around a village, there are lots of factories. These factories produce a lot of pollution and waste. In the last few years, more and more people have got sick. Recently, an environmental NGO came to the village to measure the amount of pollution. They found that the amount of pollution was very dangerous for the health of the local people.



When the local community found out this information, they decided to do something about it. Now they are having a meeting to discuss their plan. The items on the agenda are:

- What possible actions can the community take?
- Which actions would be the most effective?
- Who should be responsible for carrying out these actions?

1. You are at this community meeting. In groups, prepare a presentation about your solutions.
2. Have a similar meeting about an issue that affects your community.
   - What are the problems that your community wants to address?
   - What possible actions can citizens in your area take to address this problem?
   - Which is the most effective type of action that citizens can take?
   - Who should be responsible for carrying out these actions?
3. Prepare a presentation outlining the problem and possible solutions.
4. Design a plan of action – a list of the actions you will take – to change the situation.

Discussion

1. Why is civil society important in a democracy?
2. Which CSOs are active in your community? What do they do?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a strong civil society?

Reflection

1. Have you ever volunteered for a CSO? What was your experience?
2. Have you ever personally benefitted from the work of a CSO? What happened?
3. Have you ever been negatively affected by the work of a CSO? What happened?

4.1 HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1.1 HUMAN RIGHTS: NEEDS AND FREEDOMS

Human rights include the right to life, the right to believe what you want and the right to have a family. Governments do not give citizens these rights, so they cannot take them away either. Everyone has these rights from birth. We have them because we are human.

Human rights are related to our basic needs. 'Basic needs' are things that people need to survive. These needs include having enough food to eat, having clean water to drink and having access to healthcare when we get sick.

These needs also include some basic freedoms. Basic freedoms refer to things that people need to be able to do to live free, happy lives. These include the freedom to express our opinions and to practice our religion. Having access to resources (e.g. food, water and shelter) and enjoying these freedoms are our basic rights as human beings.

The most important document related to human rights is the United Nations' Universal **Declaration** of Human Rights (UDHR).

Rights from birth	Rights from the government
Example answer: *2. Everyone has the rights in this declaration regardless of race, gender, colour, language or political beliefs.*	Example answer: *26. Right to free basic education that promotes understanding and tolerance.*

Exercise

Put the rights from the UDHR into a table. Some rights can go in more than one column.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. All human beings are born equal with freedom, dignity, reason and conscience.
2. Everyone has the rights in this declaration regardless of race, gender, colour, language or political beliefs.
3. Right to life, liberty and security.
4. Right to freedom from slavery.
5. Right to freedom from torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment.
6. Right to recognition as a person before the law.
7. Right to equality and protection before the law.
8. Right to compensation for violation of fundamental rights.
9. Right to be free from **arbitrary** arrest, detention or exile.
10. Right to a fair and public hearing (trial).
11. Right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.
12. Right to privacy and freedom from interference in home and family.
13. Right to freedom of movement and residence and to leave or return to a country.
14. Right to seek **asylum** from persecution.
15. Right to nationality.
16. Right to freedom of consenting marriage and equality within marriage. The right to have a family.
17. Right to own property and not be arbitrarily deprived of it.
18. Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religious beliefs.
19. Right to freedom of opinion, **expression** and to give or receive information.
20. Right to freedom of **assembly** and **association**.
21. Right to take part in government and to vote in regularly held elections. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government.
22. Right to social security, economic, social and cultural development.
23. Right to employment, fair working conditions, equal pay and to join unions.
24. Right to rest, leisure and holidays.
25. Right to an adequate **standard of living**, food, clothing, housing and medical care.
26. Right to free basic education that promotes understanding and tolerance.
27. Right to participation in cultural life, arts and sciences of the community.
28. Right to a social and international order that recognises these rights.
29. Everyone has duties and responsibilities to respect the rights and freedoms of others.
30. Nothing in this declaration permits (allows) acts that destroy any of the rights and freedoms established in it.

Activity

Needs and Freedoms

1. In groups, identify your six most basic needs.
   Example: *food, shelter*
2. Identify your six most basic freedoms.
   Example: *speech, marriage and children*
3. Look at the UDHR on page 95. Identify which rights are related to these needs and freedoms.

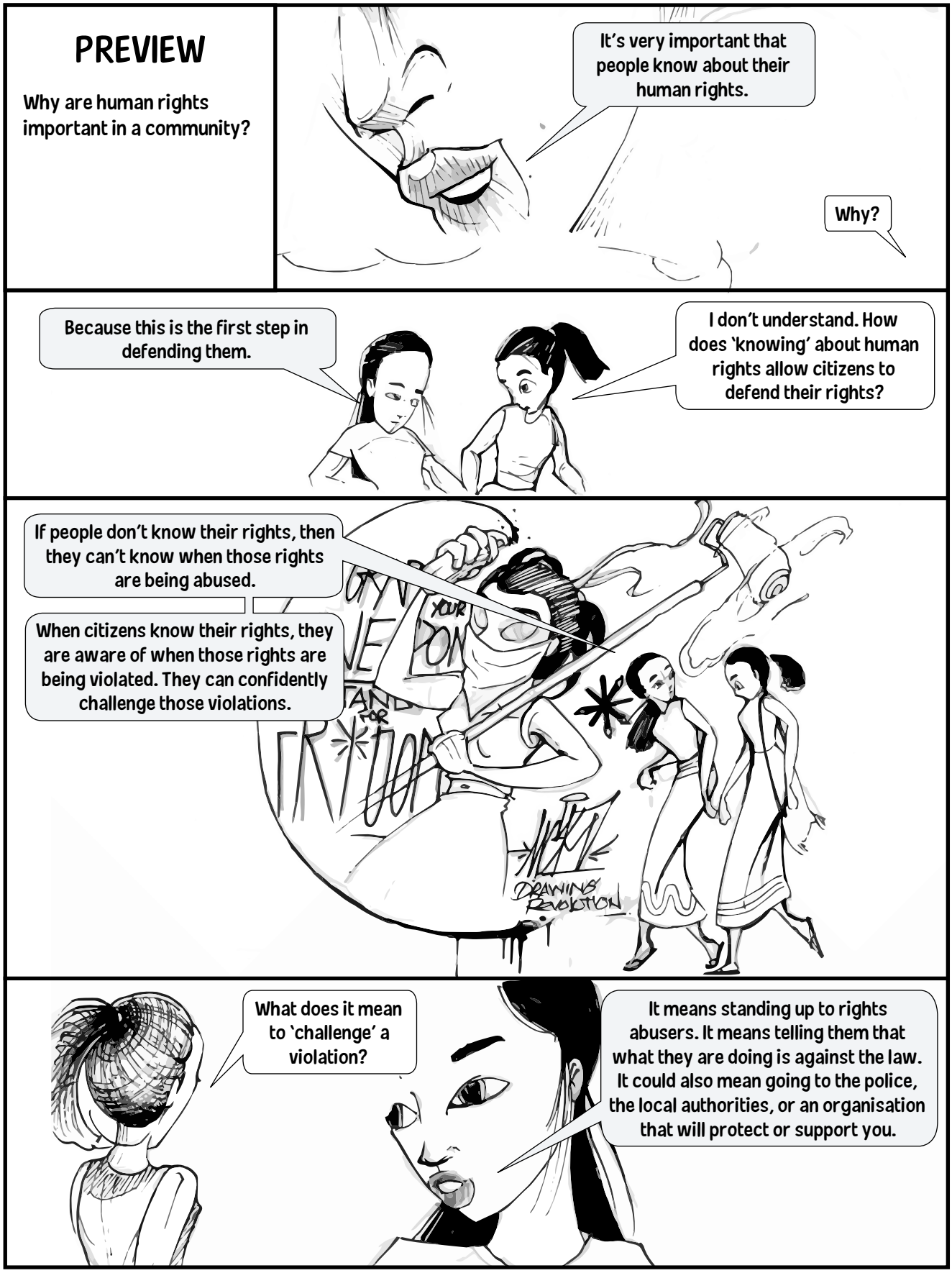
Discussion

1. Is there anything that stops people from meeting their basic needs in your community?
2. What would need to change in your community to make sure that everyone's basic needs are met?
3. Is there anything that stops people from enjoying basic freedoms in your community?
4. What would need to change in your community to make sure that basic freedoms were available to everyone?

Reflection

1. What things are most important for you in life? Which human rights support or protect those things?
2. Have you or someone close to you ever been the victim of a human rights abuse? What happened? How did it make you feel?

4.1.2 Human Rights and Community



Even though every person is born with human rights, these rights are often violated. These rights might be violated by other individuals, businesses or governments. When people do not know what their rights are, it is much easier for others to violate their human rights without any consequences.

Myanmar has signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, if a Myanmar citizen's rights are abused, they can use this document to show that the government is neglecting one of its responsibilities.

Myanmar has also signed other important documents related to human rights. These include:

- The International Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Exercise

Match the list of violations with rights in the UDHR on page 95.

a. Soldiers force people to leave their homes to build a factory on that land.

Example answer: 3, 13, 17, 25

b. A factory pours waste into the river. This pollutes the village water supply. The water becomes unsafe for villagers to drink.

c. A fishing boat forces its workers to work 16 hours per day, seven days a week in dangerous conditions.

d. The people in a village are told to leave the area because the land is being used for a new farm.

e. A journalist is arrested because she reported on a corrupt politician.

f. Organisers of a peaceful demonstration are told that they will be sent to prison if they don't cancel the event.

g. Someone is held in prison for a month without being accused of any crime.

h. **Activists** are prevented from forming an organisation that raises awareness about social and political issues.

i. Members of a religious minority are not allowed to teach in government schools.

Focus on Myanmar

Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

Extract from the mandate of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission.

1. Duties and Powers of the Commission are as follows:

(a). providing information and education to increase awareness of human rights and reduce discrimination;

(b). making sure that international and national human rights laws are followed;

(c). listening to and investigating citizen's complaints about human rights violations;

(d). visiting the places where these human rights violations may have happened;

(e). investigating the places where human rights violations may have happened (including prisons and jails);

(f). working together with civil society organizations, businesses, labour organizations, ethnic organizations, minorities and academic organisations on human rights issues;

(g). working with other national, regional and international human rights organisations;

(h). working on human rights issues sent to the Commission by the Government;

(i). working on human rights issues sent to the Commission by the President;

(j). writing reports about the activities of the Commission;

(k). carrying out any other tasks related to the activities of the Commission;

(l). writing a yearly report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar;

(m). writing special reports on human rights issues to the President;

3. The Commission will have the right to:

(a). act independently on matters that it is responsible for;

(b). act independently on financial management and administrative matters according to the law;

Myanmar National Human Right Commission (2015), "Duties and Powers of the Commission", available from http://mnhrc.org.mm/en/about/mandate/

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What does the MNHRC do to raise awareness about human rights?
2. What kinds of things does the MNHRC do if someone complains about a rights abuse to them?
3. Which other organisations does the MNHRC work with?
4. Why is it important that the MNHRC can act independently?

Activity

Mapping Human Rights

1. In groups, draw a map of your town or neighbourhood. Include:
   - homes, major public buildings (e.g., parks, post office, city hall, schools, places of worship);
   - public services (e.g. hospitals, fire department, police station, cemetery);
   - any other places that are important to the community (e.g. grocery stores, cinemas, petrol stations).
2. What human rights do you associate with different places on your maps? e.g.
   - a place of worship (e.g. pagodas, mosques, temples or churches) – freedom of thought and religion;
   - a school – the right to education;
   - a post office – the right to information, to privacy, and to expression.
3. As you identify these rights, look up the relevant article(s) in the UDHR. Write the article number(s) next to that place on the map.
4. Discuss these questions:
   - Are there any places in this community where people's rights are protected?
   - Are there any places in this community where people's rights are violated?
   - What happens in this community when someone's human rights are violated?
5. Present your map to the class.

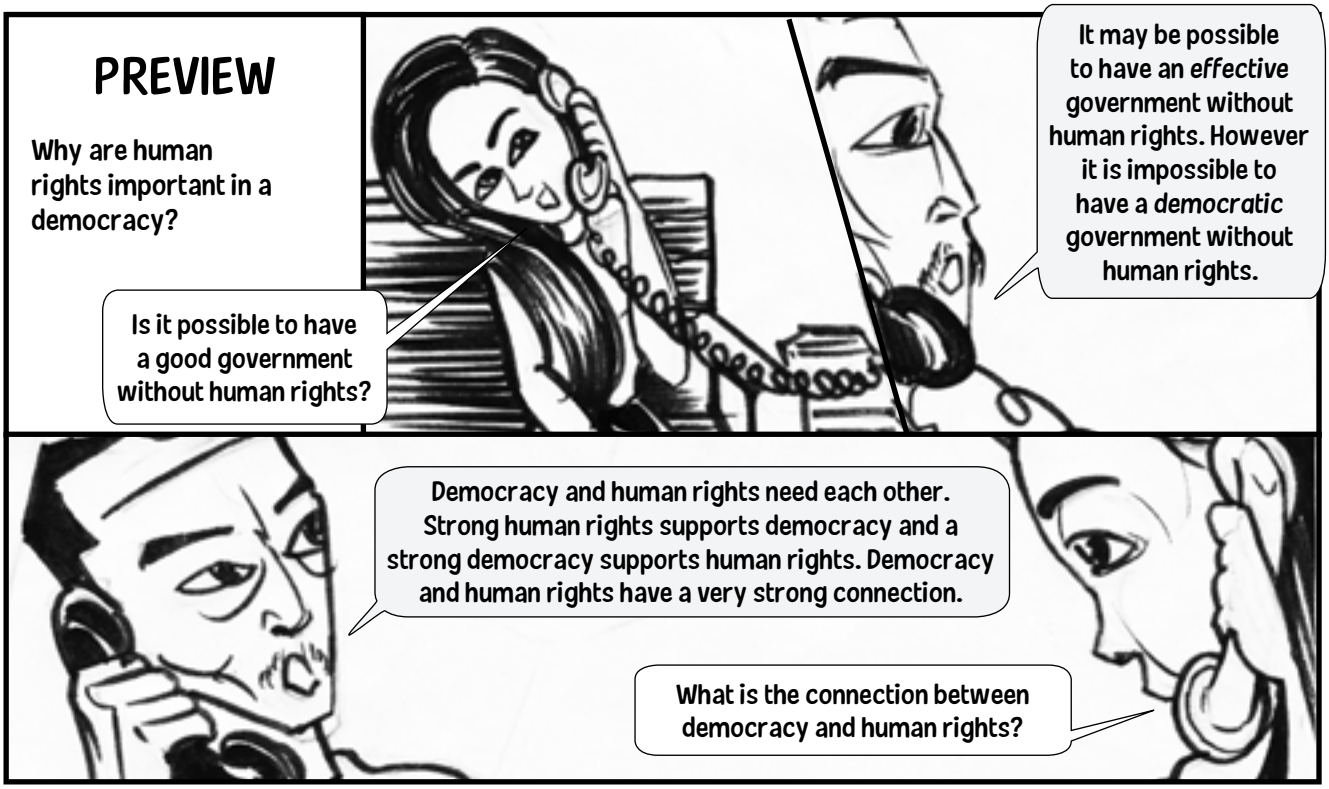
Discussion

1. What are the most important human rights that people have in your community?
2. Which human rights are weak in your community?
3. What can be done to protect or strengthen those rights in your community?

Reflection

1. Do you do anything to strengthen human rights in your community? Give examples.
2. Do you do anything to weaken human rights in your community? Give examples.

4.1.3 Human Rights and Democracy



Human rights are one of the foundations of democracy. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights includes democratic government as a human right. It says that 'the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government' (Article 21).

Democracy cannot work without human rights. Human rights guarantee that all people have the same rights to take part in decisions that affect their communities. These include the right to vote and to stand as a candidate in elections.

A. Freedom Rights (freedom to...)

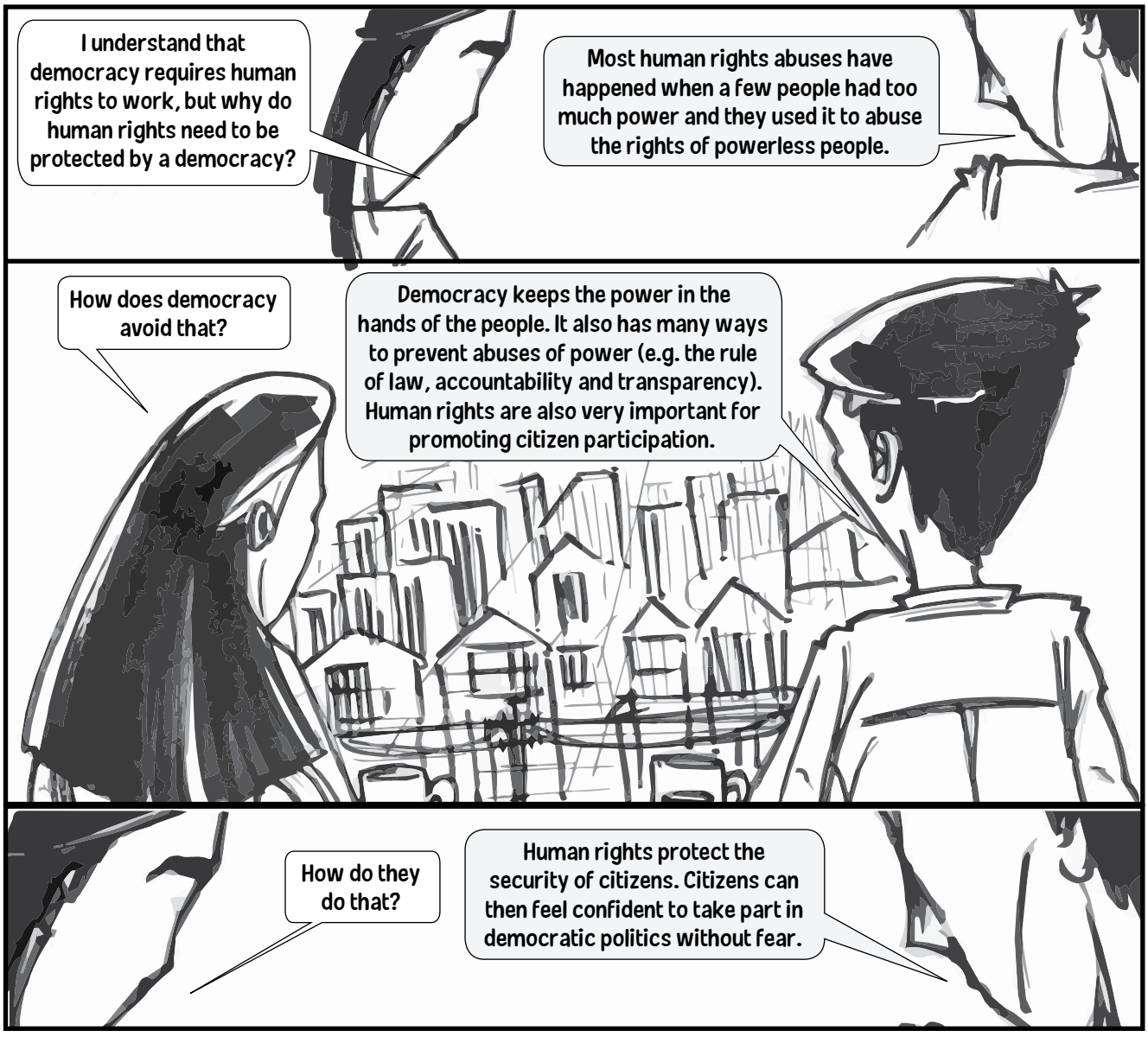
Freedom rights give citizens the *freedom to* do something. They include freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of association and freedom from discrimination. These rights are necessary for citizens to participate in a democracy. For example:

- Without freedom of speech, candidates cannot explain to their community why they should be elected.
- Without freedom of assembly, people cannot gather together to hear candidates speak or debate issues.
- Without freedom of association, people cannot work together to form political parties and civil society organisations.
- Without freedom from discrimination, some people can be excluded from taking part in decision-making.

Exercise

Classify the following as either abuses of, or good uses of freedom rights.

a. A journalist gets messages that tell her to be quiet or her family will be hurt.
   Example answer: *abuse*
b. A group of farmers gather in the town centre to tell people about the effects of pollution on their farmland.
c. The government makes it illegal to be a member of a workers' rights organisation.
d. The government makes a law that requires all courts to have translators for people who cannot speak the majority language well.
e. Government jobs are only given to members of the majority ethnic group.
f. A group of musicians and poets organise a concert called "Songs against Corruption". They sing songs about human rights and democracy.



B. Security Rights (freedom from...)

Security rights protect citizens from abuse. They give citizens *freedom from* unfair treatment. Democracy needs citizens to participate without fear of violence or unfair punishment. This requires confidence and security. Security rights support democracy by protecting citizens from harm and empowering them to participate.

Security rights protect citizens from being illegally threatened, harmed or arrested by the government. They make sure that the government can only arrest or punish people according to clear legal processes that are followed in the correct way. These legal processes might include:

- A person who is arrested and put in prison must be told the reasons for their arrest.
- A person who is arrested appear in a court within 24 hours of their arrest.
- A person who is **detained** has the right to see a lawyer.

These rights (and the laws that protect them) protect citizens from inhumane treatment. This includes freedom from:

- unfair actions of the government, military or police;
- being punished without a good reason;
- torture;
- being searched or arrested without a good reason;
- being denied access to a lawyer/due process;
- corruption;
- violence and intimidation.

Security rights protect people from fear, intimidation and violence. Citizens will not express their views freely if they are living in fear. Security rights give citizens the confidence to take part in democracy, express their ideas freely and criticise government. Without them, democracy cannot survive.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Security rights support democracy by making citizens afraid to criticise the government.
b. Security rights make it harder for the police to arrest someone without a good reason.
c. Security rights do not protect people from violence and intimidation if they are unpopular in the community.
d. Security rights protect citizens from abuses of power.
e. Security rights include the right to see a lawyer if you are arrested.
f. Security rights can be ignored if people don't have enough money to pay a bribe.

Focus on Myanmar

On Human Rights, from *Civics for High School*, 1953

Sometimes people are **brainwashed** by leaders and powerful groups to have one opinion or one belief. This only benefits those leaders and powerful groups. It is bad for society. Therefore, people must have the right to have diverse thoughts and opinions.

Everyone has beliefs that they feel strongly about. If those thoughts do not disturb the peace, the government should allow people to have them. It is especially important to let people freely practice their religion. The Constitution of Myanmar allows citizens to practice traditional spirit worship and other major religions. If citizens want the right to freely practice their own religion, they should also allow others to do so. People should not say that their religion is better than others They should not say that other religions' beliefs are false.

People have different ideas. They want to talk about those ideas freely in public. If the government does not allow citizens to speak freely, they will be angry and **riot**. Therefore, we should allow freedom of speech. However, some kinds of speech can create misunderstanding or conflict among races or nations. Some speech can attack the dignity of the country, or groups or of individuals. This kind of speech should be controlled.

Freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of association are all very important for democratic discussions. Citizens should be free to express their ideas in newspapers and journals.

It is important that the law applies equally to everyone. It should treat rich and poor, and majority and minorities in the same way.

The opportunity to have good education should be for all citizens, not only for the rich and powerful. It is the responsibility of the government to remove any obstacles that stop people from getting an education…. The government should also offer fair work opportunities. It should make sure that poor people do not need to do hard labouring jobs which hurt their bodies.

Ba Pe (1953), 'Civics for High Schools', KEM Burma Pg 23-36 (Myanmar Version)

Exercise

1. Which rights does U Ba Pe say are important in a democracy?
2. Which responsibilities does U Ba Pe say comes with these rights?
3. What does U Ba Pe say that the government should do to help people enjoy these rights?

Activity

Human Rights Poster

1. In groups, choose one of the rights in the UDHR that is related to democracy.

Make a poster with:

- the title/text of the right (on the back of the poster);
- a picture that shows why this right is important for democracy (the front of the poster).

2. Write your right on the back of your poster, and put it on the wall.
3. Walk around the room and decide which right in the UDHR each poster is about.

Discussion

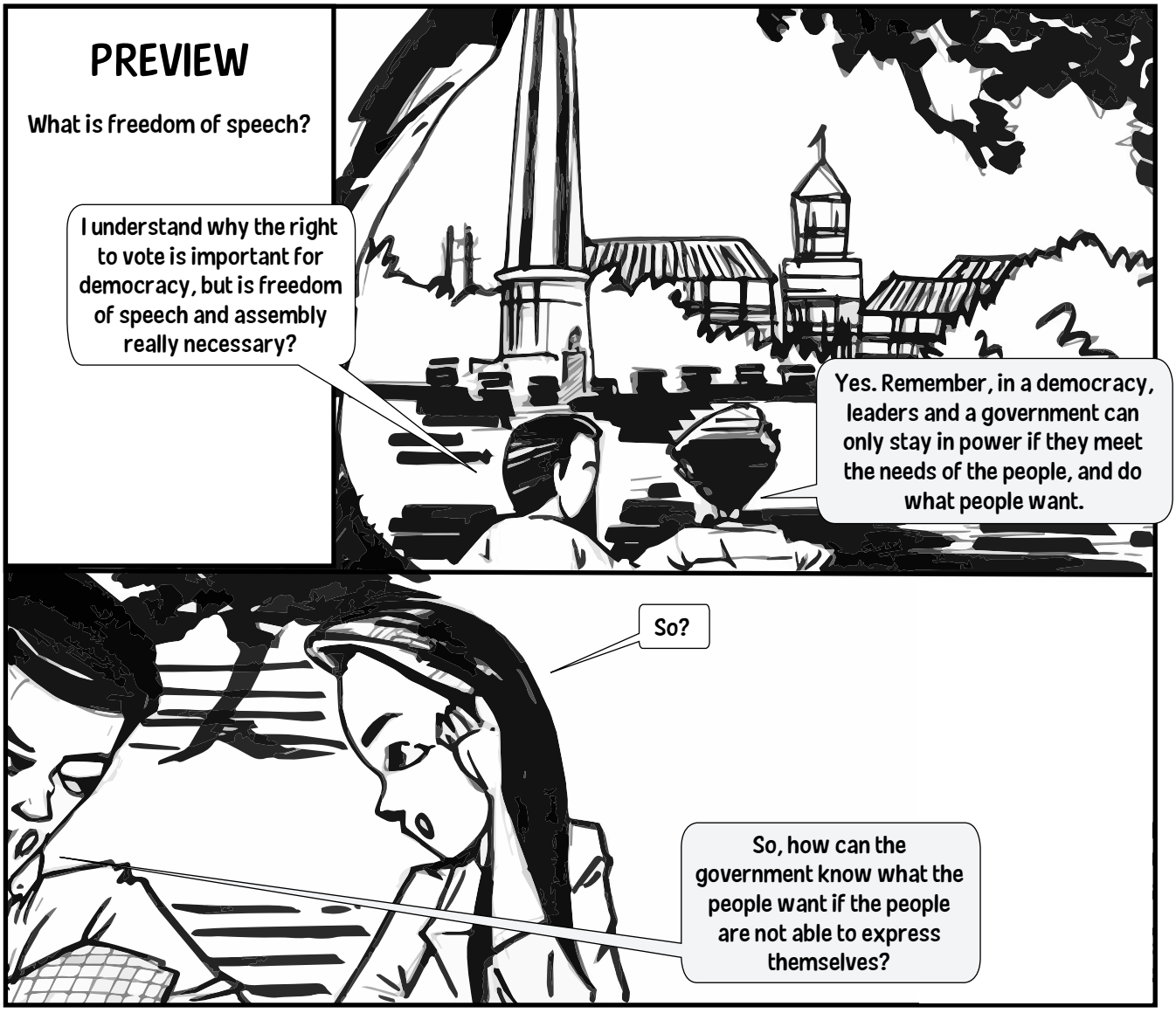
1. Why is democracy good at protecting human rights?
2. Why are freedom rights important in a democracy?
3. Why are security rights important in a democracy?
4. What can people do to defend their human rights in a democracy?

Reflection

1. What makes you feel empowered to take part in decision-making?
2. Which rights can protect or strengthen your empowerment?

4.2 Freedoms of Speech, Assembly, Association, and Equality

4.2.1 Freedom of Speech



Freedom of speech (freedom of expression) is necessary for democracy. It makes sure that every citizen has the right to be heard. It should never be limited without a very good reason (e.g. speech that encourages violence or puts people in danger). Freedom of speech includes the right to communicate information and ideas to others (e.g. giving speeches, commenting on social media and writing articles or a **blog**). It also includes the right to receive information and ideas.

Freedom of speech supports democracy in the following ways:

- It makes sure that everyone's ideas can be heard. This allows the best ideas to win debates. It also helps everyone to understand other people's situations and viewpoints, which can reduce conflict.
- It allows citizens to become informed about what is happening in their country. Informed citizens can make better decisions. This is important because democratic citizens are responsible for choosing their government.
- Freedom of speech is also necessary because it allows communication between the government and the people. Citizens must be able free to write and speak freely about the government. The government can see how popular their actions and decisions are, and change their policies if necessary.

However, freedom of speech does not mean that people can say anything they want. For example, hate speech (when someone makes speeches that encourage people to use violence) is not protected by freedom of speech. These limits on freedom of speech are often written in a country's constitution.

Exercise

1. Which of the following is NOT a benefit of freedom of speech in a democracy?
   a. It leads to more ideas to help solve problems.
   b. It helps citizens to understand each other's needs better.
   c. Only the most educated can express their opinions.
2. Which of the following is NOT a positive result of freedom of speech?
   a. Citizens can make more informed decisions.
   b. The government can understand the people's needs better.
   c. Citizens with unpopular views can't express their opinions.
3. Which of the following does freedom of speech NOT allow?
   a. speech that encourages violence
   b. criticism of democracy
   c. criticism of the government

Focus on Myanmar

Freedom of Speech vs. Hate Speech

Blogger and activist Nay Phone Latt started the Panzagar (flower speech) **campaign** last week, which aims to oppose hate speech. Hate speech involves attacking a person or group on the basis of race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

Q: What made you start this campaign?

A: The conversations on the internet are becoming bad. When we **advocate** for free speech, reducing hate speech is included. … Speech calling for hitting or killing someone is hate speech, it can spread hate among people and is a risk for society.

Hate speech is not only found on social media. It is also included in some public talks and print media. Those groups who are trying to spread hate speech are causing violence and conflicts in our country.

I discussed this issue with other civil society groups, to start an anti-hate speech campaign. First we released the slogan, "Let's not use our speech to spread hate among people", then we named our organisation "Panzagar" (flower speech).

Q: What kind of activities does Panzagar do to achieve its goals?

A: We distribute stickers, posters and pamphlets in Yangon, and also in other states and regions. We are trying to spread the campaign message among the public first, but we are also focusing on powerful local leaders. If the people get the message, they will oppose those who are using dangerous hate speech.

Q: Does stopping hate speech harm freedom of speech?

A: Everyone has right to free speech but not to spread dangerous [hate] speech. We need to use our words responsibly. Limits on freedom of speech is a danger to freedom, but hate speech is also a danger to freedom.

There is a need to explain ourselves clearly. Some think that we are trying stopping the freedom of speech. The Panzagar campaign is not trying to limit freedom of speech, we are just asking people not to make hate speech that can harm society.

Adapted from: Aung, SU (2014), "Hate Speech Pours Poison into the Heart" Interviewed with Nay Phone Latt, The Irrawaddy (April 9, 2014), http://www.irrawaddy.org/interview/hate-speech-pours-poison-heart.html

Exercise

1. What is hate speech?
2. Why did Nay Phone Latt start the Panzagar campaign?
3. Is Nay Phone Latt trying to limit freedom of speech?

Protecting Freedom of Speech

Activity

Examine these cases. Should they be protected by freedom of speech? Why or why not?

a. An activist burns the country's flag to protest against human rights violations.

Example answer: *Yes, because she is expressing herself without harming people.*

or

No, because burning the flag disrespects the country and weakens national unity.

b. A political leader asks her followers to kill the leader of another political party.

c. A journalist writes an article about a township official. It says that he is corrupt and that people should protest to try to get him removed from his position.

d. An activist writes on their Facebook page that people should not pay their taxes to protest against the government.

e. A newspaper writes an article that says that people from one cultural group should not be allowed to wear their traditional clothes or celebrate their festivals in public.

f. A religious leader makes speeches saying that people of other religions should be forced to leave the community.

g. A group of students start a debate club to debate current political issues. They start a Facebook page to promote their discussions and share their views with the community.

h. The local government removes books from the public library. It says that they insult the country and its culture.

i. A violent revolutionary group distributes an article that encourages people to join their fight against the government.

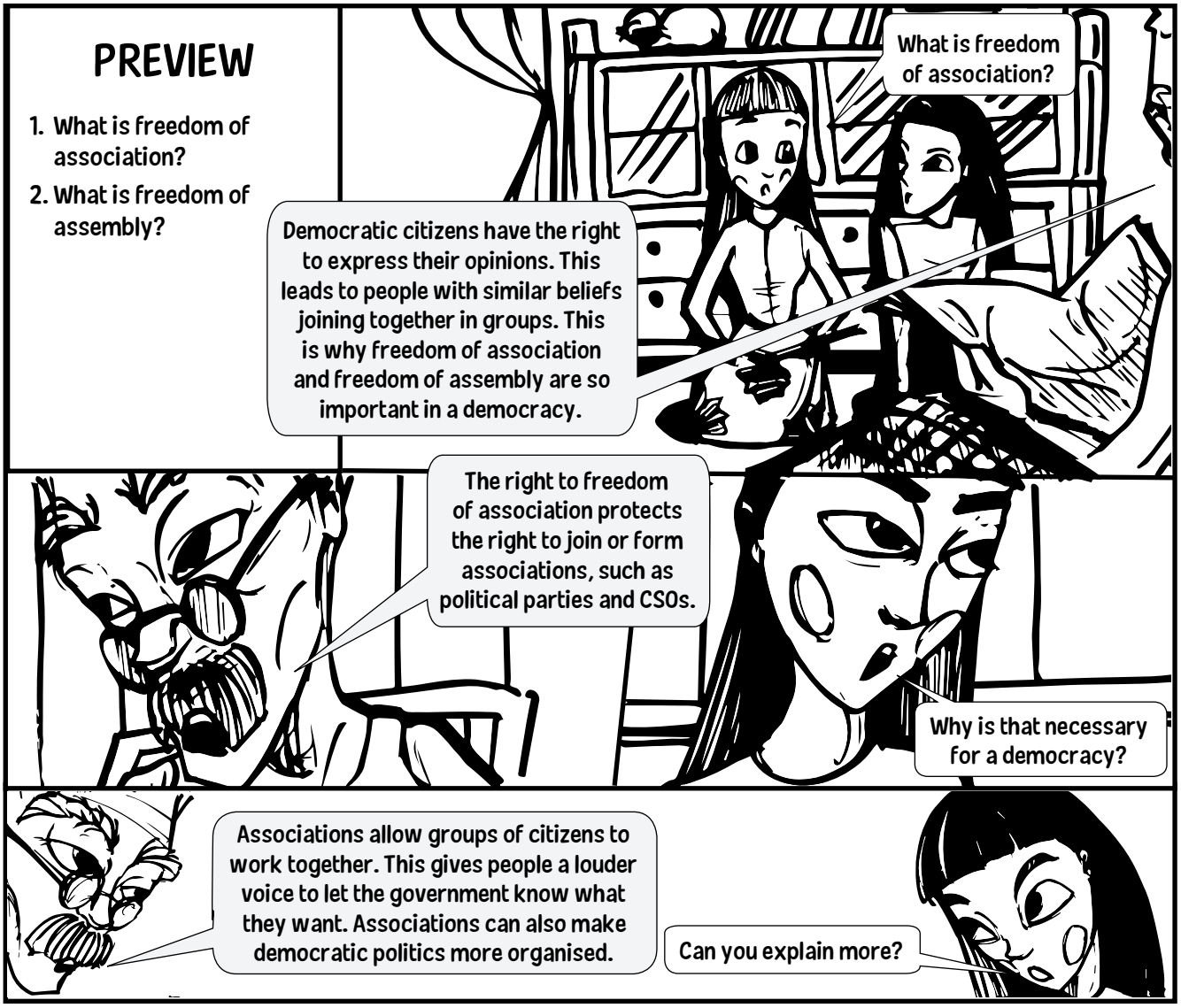
Discussion

1. Why is freedom of speech important in a democracy?
2. Why is freedom of speech important in your community?
3. Is there anything that stops people from expressing themselves in your community?
4. Does anyone use freedom of speech in an irresponsible way in your community? What effect does this have?

Reflection

1. Has anyone ever said something that hurt you or someone you know?
2. Have you ever heard anyone say anything that caused violence or hatred?
3. In either of these cases, do you think that what they said should be banned? Why?

4.2.2 FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY



A. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

Freedom of association means that people have the right to form or join organisations. These include **civil society organisations**, community groups, **faith-based** groups, trade unions and political parties. Freedom of association also means they have the right to not join or support organisations if they don't want to.

Freedom of association protects the rights of individuals to work towards shared goals. It allows active citizens to group together when there is a common problem or need to be met. For example:

- Factory workers form a labour union to promote their rights and interests.
- Villagers form an association to protest against corruption or pollution.

Citizens have more power when they are united in a group. Free associations allow citizens to have a louder voice in public debates. This helps to balance the power of the people and the government. This can strengthen transparency, accountability and participation.

The right to association also includes the right to *not* be a member of a group. For example, this right protects people from being forced to join a political party or trade union if they don't want to. This helps prevent discrimination against people who are not members of a group, or groups forcing people to become members when they don't want to.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Freedom of association does not include the right to join religious organisations.
b. Freedom of association helps citizens to achieve their goals by working together.
c. Freedom of association gives citizens a louder voice when expressing their concerns to the government.
d. Freedom of association includes the right not to join an organisation.

B. Freedom of Assembly

Freedom of assembly means that people have the right to meet peacefully without interference from others. This includes meetings, political speeches, marches and demonstrations.

Freedom of assembly allows groups of people to peacefully express their views. They may want to discuss a problem, exchange ideas, encourage public support for a cause, or gather support for a candidate or party in an election. This promotes participation in a democracy.

Freedom of assembly allows groups of citizens to show their support or disagreement much more powerfully than when they act alone. Large gatherings are often reported by the media. This increases the chance that the government will listen to their needs and concerns.

However, there are rules about freedom of assembly. These include rules about the intention, time, manner and place of an event.

1. **Intention:** They should not lead to public disorder or disturb the peace in society.
2. **Time:** They should not be held during important holidays, or other sensitive dates (e.g. religious celebrations) or times (e.g. in the middle of the night).
3. **Manner:** it should be non-violent (e.g. protesters should not carry weapons with them).
4. **Place:** it should not take place in areas that will cause offense to the people living there.

These rules make sure that protests and demonstrations do not violate the rights of other citizens. This means that any gatherings that could lead to human rights abuses (e.g. by encouraging violence through hate speech) can be prevented to protect other citizens. However, as long as the assembly is peaceful and does not violate the rights of others, there is no reason why it should be banned.

Exercise

Match the violations with the four rules in 4.2.2 B.

a. The organisers of a protest tell participants to bring weapons to show how powerful they are.

   Example answer:
   3. Manner, because protesters should not carry weapons with them at a peaceful protest.

b. A big celebration is planned during the funeral of a popular religious leader.

c. A group of football supporters gather to fight against supporters of the other team.

d. An anti-immigrant group plans a protest march through a neighbourhood where many immigrants live.

Focus on Myanmar

Paung Ku

Background:

Paung Ku aims to strengthen and empower smaller civil society organisations throughout Myanmar. It was established in 2007 by a group of international and local organisations. In 2013, Paung Ku became an independent local NGO.

Paung Ku wants a diverse society in Myanmar that values all ethnicities, cultures and beliefs. It aims for a society based on equality and respect for the rights of all (particularly those who are marginalised). It supports development that empowers poorer people and is environmentally **sustainable**.

Paung Ku wants Myanmar to have a strong civil society. It supports organisations that work for freedom, justice and rights in Myanmar. It provides resources and opportunities to local organisations who are trying to achieve positive change and create peace in their communities.

Main Activities:

Small loans: Providing small amounts of money that allow local organisations to carry out projects and activities. This helps them address needs in their communities and/or express their communities' concerns to the government.

Meetings and trainings: Organising meetings and trainings on important topics such as on **land rights** laws, or on organisational development issues such as financial management. This helps them to be stronger, more professional organisations that can participate more effectively.

Building networks: connecting civil society partners to other civil society organisations within Myanmar. This includes linking groups based in rural areas with urban groups, and linking CSOs to the government. This helps civil society groups to work together to express their needs and concerns to the government.

Adapted from: International Institute of Social Studies in The Hague (no date), "Paung Ku", http://www.iss.nl/research/research_programmes/political_economy_of_resources_environment_and_population_per/networks/mosaic/partners_profiles/paung_ku/

Exercise

1. How did Paung Ku start?
2. What are Paung Ku's goals?
3. What kind of activities do they do to achieve those goals?
4. In what way does Paung Ku support freedom of assembly and freedom of association?

Activity

Know Your Rights 1

1. Examine these cases and decide if they are violations of freedom of assembly or not. Give reasons for your answer.
   a. An anti-war group peacefully protests at soldiers' funerals.
      Example answer: *Violation, because it is disrespectful to the soldiers and their families (place).*
      or
      No violation, because they are protesting peacefully in a public place.
   b. A racist group wants to hold public marches through an ethnic minority neighbourhood.
   c. A religious group organises a demonstration against gender equality.
   d. The government stops an ethnic group from celebrating their national day because they say it weakens national unity.
   e. A group of women chain themselves to a school gate to protest against gender discrimination in the education system.
   f. A nationalist group holds a demonstration where they burn images of other ethnic groups' leaders and symbols.
2. Examine these cases and decide if they are violations of freedom of association or not. Give reasons for your answer.
   a. An international religious organisation wants to open an office that will only provide services to people of their religion.
   b. The government makes an organisation illegal because it is against democracy.
   c. A women's empowerment group does not allow men to join. They say that including men will reduce the effectiveness of their trainings.
   d. A township action committee is formed that does not accept women. They claim that including women will reduce the effectiveness of their decision-making.
   e. An ethnic group wants to open their own schools that do not teach the government curriculum, in order to protect their language and culture.
   f. A trade union in a factory made an agreement with the owners that all workers must be members of the union. The workers do not have a choice to join the union or not.

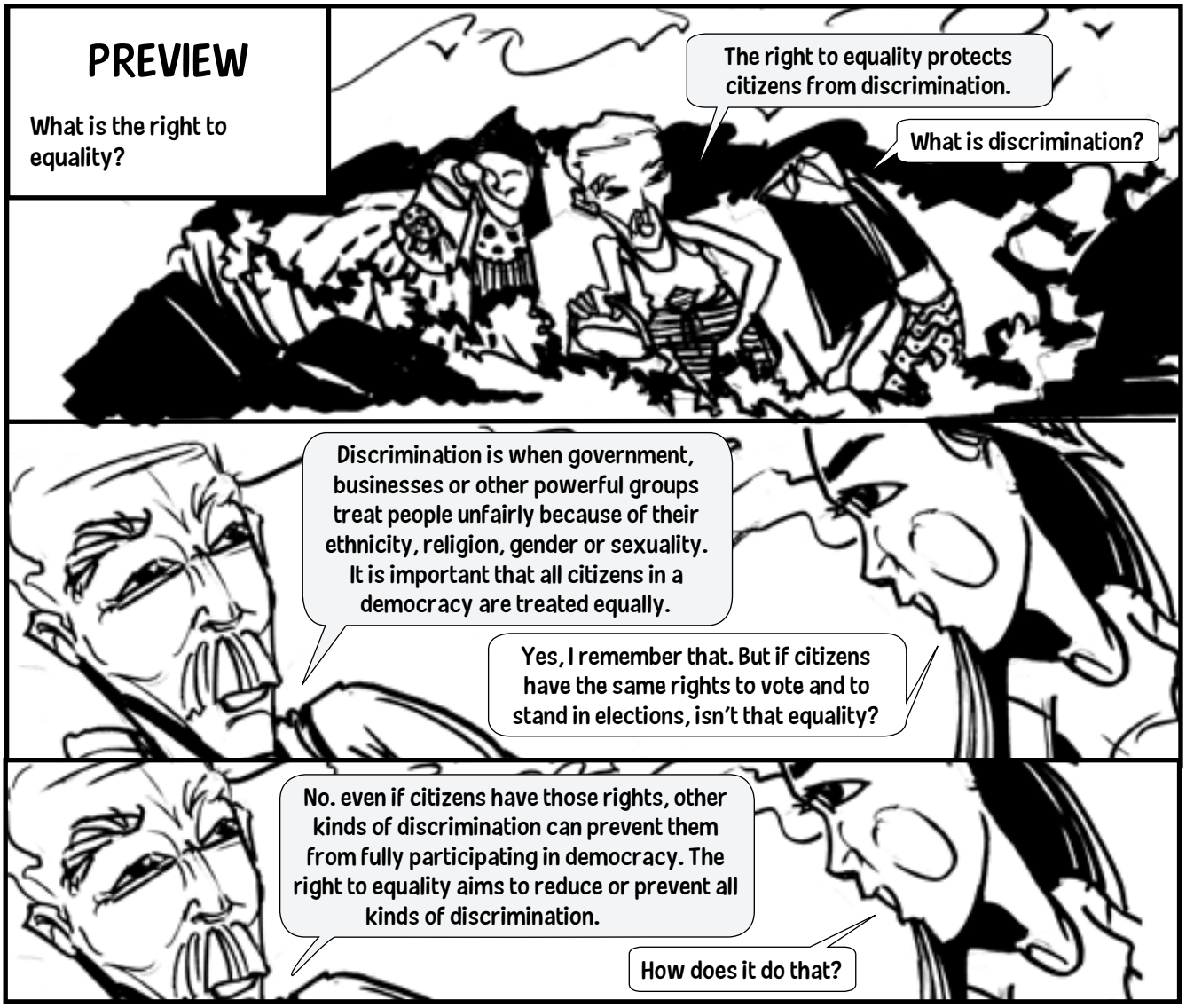
Discussion

1. How is freedom of assembly and association important in your community?
2. What kinds of organisations are working in your community?
3. Are any of their activities irresponsible?
4. In what ways do people make use of freedom of assembly in your community?
5. Are any of these irresponsible? Why?

Reflection

1. How does freedom of assembly (or violations of it) affect you personally? How does this make you feel?
2. How does freedom of association (or violations of it) affect you personally? How does this make you feel?

4.2.3 The Right to Equality



In a democracy, equality (or freedom from discrimination) usually refers to people having the same rights or freedoms.

The right to equality makes sure that individuals and minority groups are not discriminated against. It also protects their rights to freely express their lifestyle, language and culture. The right to equality supports democracy because it builds respect and tolerance in diverse communities.

Marginalised groups are often the victim of rights abuses or discrimination. As a result, there are international treaties to protect the rights of these groups. These include:

- **WOMEN:** Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women;
- **INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:** Declaration on the Rights of **Indigenous** People;
- **REFUGEES:** the 1951 Refugee Convention;
- **MIGRANT WORKERS:** International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;
- **DISABLED PEOPLE:** Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities;
- **RACIAL GROUPS:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- **LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER GROUPS:** A **treaty** on the rights of LGBT groups is currently being discussed at the United Nations.

Poverty (financial inequality) can also be a great danger for democracy. Poverty can stop people from taking part in democracy. When this happens, decisions do not reflect the interests of poor people. This can lead to social problems that weaken the stability of a democracy.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

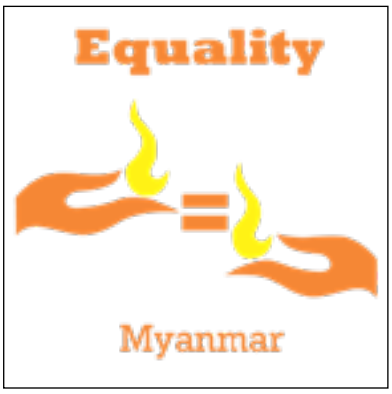
a. The right to equality protects minorities' rights to practice their culture.
b. The right to equality is not important in diverse communities.
c. Poverty can stop people from participating in democracy.

Focus on Myanmar

Equality Myanmar

Background:

Established in 2000, Equality Myanmar has offices in Myanmar and Thailand, and human rights education training centres in Yangon and Mandalay.



Equality Myanmar's mission is to empower the people of Myanmar through human rights education to engage in social change and promote a culture of human rights for all.

Main Activities:

Human rights education, advocacy programs, and research projects which target civil society organisations and **grassroots** communities.

Additionally, the organisation produces human rights educational materials, audio/visual tools, and other multimedia resources. These resources provide an opportunity to learn about human rights issues for people who cannot attend trainings. They include TV episodes, booklets, posters, animations, and magazines.

Since 2000, EQMM has trained over 1,000 women, students, activists, teachers, and religious and community leaders. It is building a network of human rights trainers and advocates across the country and along Myanmar's border regions.

Equality Myanmar (no date), http://equalitymyanmar.org/

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What is the goal of Equality Myanmar?
2. What kind of activities does Equality Myanmar do?
3. Which groups does Equality Myanmar work with?

Activity

Know Your Rights 2

Examine these cases and decide whether the right to equality was violated. If so, should the violation be allowed?

a. A faith-based school only allows children from its religious group to attend.

   Example answer: *Violation. Schools should allow all students, otherwise some children might not be able to attend school.*

   or

   No violation. If they are teaching about their religion, they have the right to only accept students who believe in that religion.

b. The local government only employs people who speak the majority language.

c. A private employer from an ethnic minority group only employs people from that minority.

d. A man does not allow his sister's husband (who belongs to a different religion) to come to their home.

e. Ma Kay Thi was seriously ill but when she went to the hospital the doctors didn't treat her because she was in the country illegally.

f. Ma Nyo Wai and Ko Kyaw Htet are both employed to do the same job. They both have the same qualifications and experience but Ma Nyo Wai gets a lower salary than Ko Kyaw Htet.

g. U Kyaw Win cannot get a job as a doctor in the local hospital because of his religion.

Discussion

1. Why is the right to equality important in a democracy?
2. Does everyone have the right to express their lifestyle, language and culture in your community? Why or why not?
3. Does poverty stop people from participating in democracy in your community? What effect does this have?
4. What kinds of discrimination can you see in your community?
5. What could be done to reduce discrimination in your community?

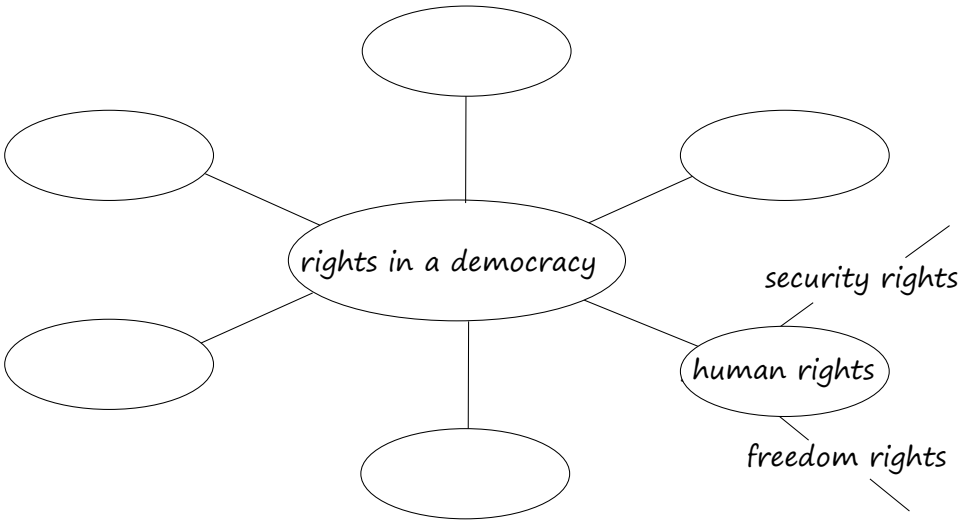
Reflection

1. Have you ever felt that you were discriminated against? Why were you discriminated against? How does this make you feel?
2. Have you ever discriminated against someone? Why did you discriminate against them? How did that make you feel? How do you think it made them feel?

Unit 2 Review

Unit 2 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 2.



Comprehension

1. What are rights and responsibilities?
2. What is a constitution?
3. Why are constitutions important in a democracy?
4. What is majority rule?
5. What are minority rights?
6. What is the relationship between rights and responsibilities in a democracy?
7. Why are responsibilities important in a democracy?
8. What is an active citizen?
9. What are some characteristics of an active citizen?
10. What is a civil society organisation?
11. What are some of the things that CSOs do?
12. What are human rights?
13. Why is it important that citizens are aware of their human rights?
14. What are some of the human rights treaties that Myanmar has signed?
15. Why are freedom rights important in a democracy?
16. Why are security rights important in a democracy?
17. Why is freedom of speech important in a democracy?
18. Are there any limits on freedom of speech in a democracy?
19. Why is freedom of association and assembly important in a democracy?
20. Are there any limits on freedom of association and assembly in a democracy?
21. Why is the right to equality important in a democracy?
22. How does poverty affect democracy?

Unit 2 Glossary

activist (n) – တက်ကြွလှုပ်ရှားသူများ။

advocate (v) – ရပ်တည်ပေးသည်။ အကြံပေးလှုံ့ဆော်သည်။

affirmative action (n) – အနှိမ်ခံဘဝလွတ်မြောက်ရေး ပံ့ပိုးမှု။

arbitrary (adj) – ထင်ရာစိုင်းသော၊ အာဏာရှင်ဆန်သော။

assembly (n) – လူထုစည်းဝေးပွဲ။ တွေ့ဆုံပွဲ။

association (n) – အဖွဲ့အစည်း။ အစုအဖွဲ့။

asylum (n) – နိုင်ငံရေးအရ ခိုလှုံခွင့်ပြုခြင်း။

autonomy (n) – ကိုယ်ပိုင်အုပ်ချုပ်ခွင့်။

ban (v) – တားမြစ်သည်။

bill of rights (n) – နိုင်ငံသားများ၏ မူလအခြေခံအခွင့်အရေးများ။

blog (n, v) – အင်တာနက်ဘလော့စာမျက်နှာ။

brainwash (v) – အယူအဆ တစ်စုံတစ်ရာ ရိုက်သွင်းသည်။

campaign (n, v) – စည်းရုံးခြင်း။ စည်းရုံးသည်။

civil service (n) – ပြည်သူ့ဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ၊ ပြည်သူ့ဝန်ထမ်းကဏ္ဍ။

civil society organisation (CSO) (n) – အရပ်ဘက်အဖွဲ့အစည်း။

compulsory (adj) – မဖြစ်မနေဆောင်ရွက်ရသော။

constitution (n) – ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံအခြေခံ ဥပဒေ။

court (n) – တရားရုံး။

custody (n) – ဓလေ့ထုံးတမ်းအစဉ်အလာ။

declaration (n) – ကြေညာစာတမ်း။

detain (v) – ဖမ်းဆီး ထိန်းသိမ်းသည်။

dictator (n) – အာဏာရှင်။

discriminate (v) – ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံသည်။

empower (v) – စွမ်းရည်မြှင့်တင်ပေးသည်။

entitlement (n) – အခွင့်အာဏာပိုင်မှု။

equal opportunities (n) – တန်းတူညီမျှသော အခွင့်အလမ်းများ။

expression (n) – ဖော်ပြချက်။

faith-based (adj) – ကိုးကွယ်ယုံကြည်မှု အခြေပြုသော။

grassroots (n, adj) – အခြေခံလူထု၊ အခြေခံလူတန်းစား။

hate speech (n) – အမုန်းပွားစေသော စကားများ။

indigenous (adj) – ဌာနေ လူမျိုးစုဖြစ်သော။

insurrection (n) – ပုန်ကန်၊ အာဏာသိမ်းမှု။

just (adj) – မျှတသော။

labour (n) – အလုပ်သမား။

land rights (n) – လယ်ယာမြေ အခွင့်အရေး။

legislative (adj) – ဥပဒေပြုသည်။

microfinance (n) – အသေးစားငွေကြေးရင်းနှီးမြှုပ်နှံမှု။

municipal (adj) – မြို့တော်/ မြို့နယ် စည်ပင်သာယာအစိုးရနှင့် ပတ်သက်သော။

network (n, v) – ကွန်ရက်။ ကွန်ရက်ချိတ်ဆက်သည်။

patent (n) – မူပိုင်ခွင့်။

precautionary (adj) ကြိုတင်သတိပေးကာကွယ်သော။

province (n) – တိုင်း၊ ခရိုင်။

raise awareness (v) – အသိပညာ တိုးမြှင့်ပေးသည်။

riot (v, n) – အဓိကရုဏ်း။

stability (n) – တည်ငြိမ်မှု။

standard of living (n) – လူနေမှုအဆင့်အတန်း။

sustainable (adj) – ရေရှည်တည်မြဲစေသော။

torture (n) – ညှင်းပန်းနှိပ်စက်မှု။

treaty (n) – သဘောတူစာချုပ်။

trial (n) – တရားခွင်။

welfare (n) – လူမှုဖူလုံရေး။

Unit 3:

Democratic Government

Unit Themes

Unit 3 encourages learners to make use of the knowledge and skills they developed in the first two units to explore the role of government.

In Chapter 5, learners analyse the difference between democratic and authoritarian government and assess the advantages and disadvantages of democracy.

In Chapter 6, learners look in more depth at the elements and structures of democratic government. These include the ideas of separation of powers, checks and balances and the concept of good governance. Chapter 6 also looks at the specific roles of the three branches of government as well as their relationships to each other.

Unit 3: Learning Goals

Knowledge
(Exercises)

By the end of this unit you will have increased your understanding of:

- the outcomes of democracy;
- the characteristics of authoritarian government;
- the differences between democratic and authoritarian governments;
- the arguments against democracy;
- the arguments in favour of democracy;
- the parliamentary and BSPP eras in Myanmar's history;
- the basic concept of government;
- the characteristics of good governance;
- separation of powers and checks and balances;
- the role of the legislative branch of government;
- the role of the executive branch of government;
- the role of the judicial branch of government.

Skills
(Activities)

By the end of this unit you will have developed your ability to:

- create a democracy tree;
- create an authoritarianism tree;
- put leaders on a spectrum;
- find solutions to problems;
- debate issues with an opinion line;
- carry out a formal debate;
- create a budget;
- fill out a good governance report card;
- plan and carry out a debate about limiting leaders' power;
- role-play passing a bill in parliament;
- role-play the approval of a bill;
- role-play a judicial review of a bill.

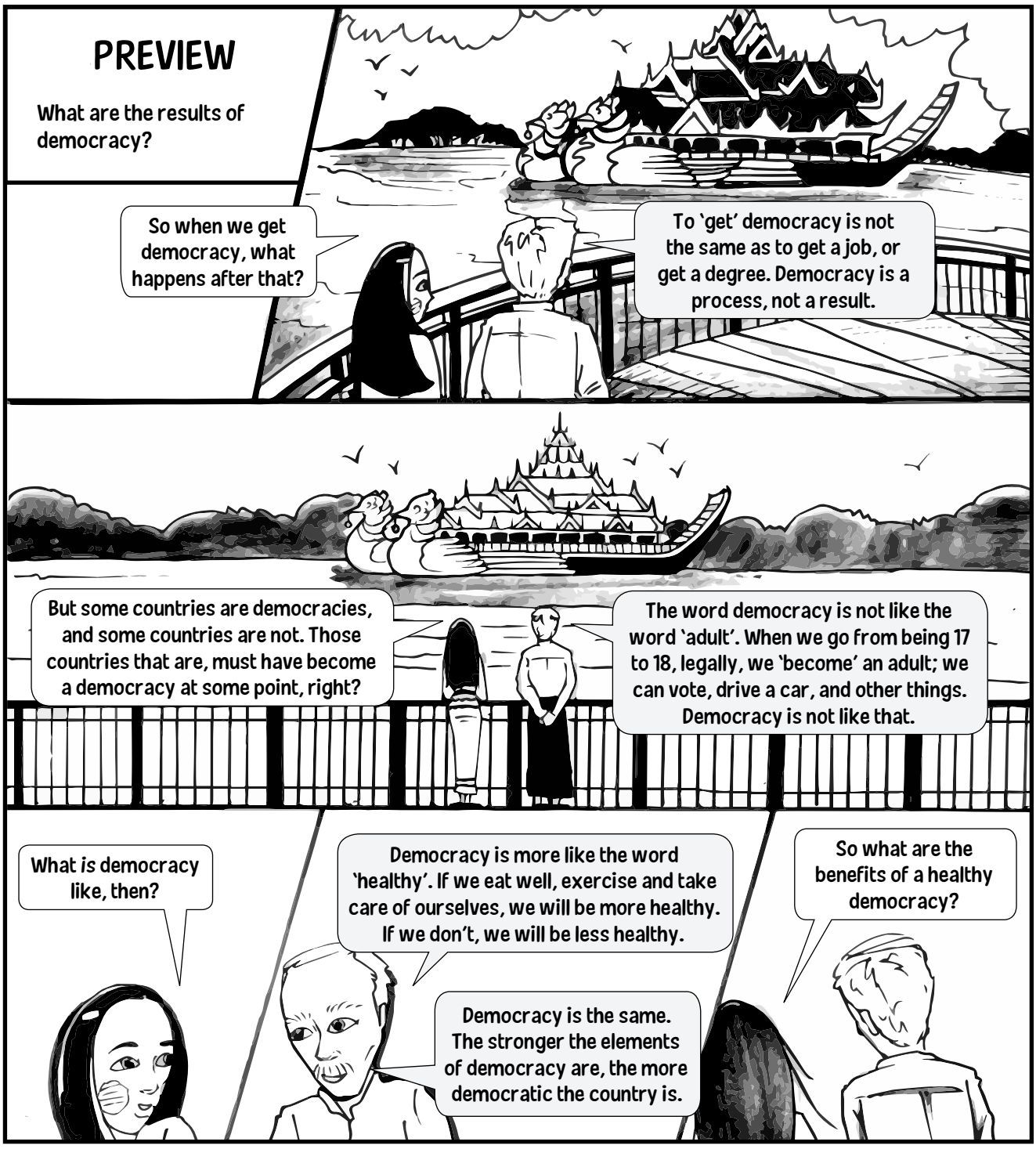
Values
(Reflections)

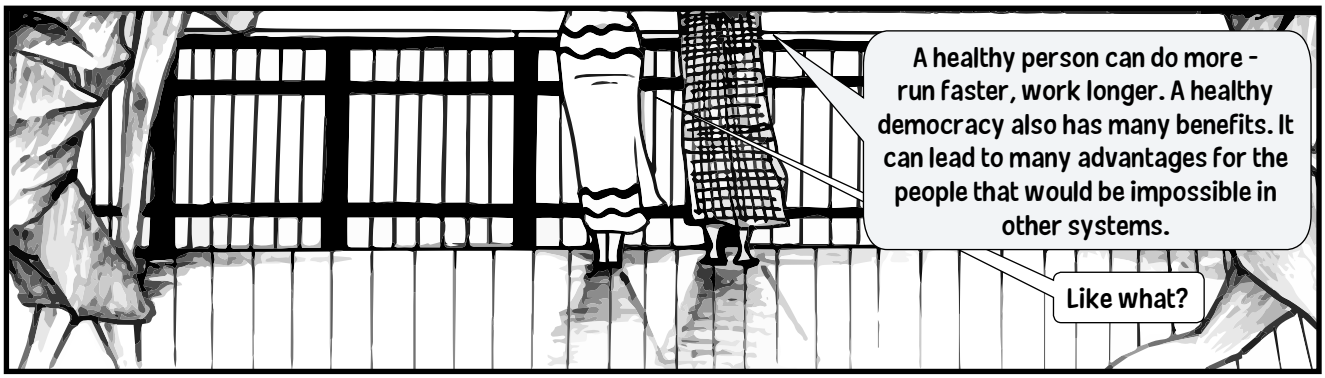
By the end of this unit you will have reflected on:

- which aspects of democracy are most important;
- experiences of authoritarianism;
- your views on leadership;
- whether democracy's advantages outweigh its disadvantages;
- the benefits of living in a democracy;
- whether democracy is the best system or not;
- the relationship between governments and people;
- your understanding of good governance;
- your experience of people having too much power;
- a law that you think is needed;
- the values and characteristics of a good leader;
- your experiences of injustice.

5.1 DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT

5.1.1 THE RESULTS OF DEMOCRACY





A strong democracy requires equality, free and fair elections, accountability, transparency, participation, tolerance and compromise, and the rule of law. This creates a system where people can take part in decisions that affect them.

Democracy also has effects on politics, the economy and society.

A. Politics

Democracy is based on people's right to choose their rulers. Therefore, the most basic outcome of democracy is *government that carries out the decisions of the people*. A democratic government must listen to the needs and concerns of the people. It must also be accountable to them if it doesn't. As a result, the political results of democracy are leaders, decisions and actions that meet the needs of the people.

B. The Economy

Some people claim that democracy improves the economy. Other people argue that rich countries are more democratic because they are richer. Democracy gives people the right to own property and to start a business, as well as other economic freedoms. When lots of people are involved in business, this can improve the economy. However, this does not always help people get out of poverty.

C. Society

Democracies are based on political equality. All individuals have the same right to elect representatives. Furthermore, tolerance and compromise, participation and the rule of law can lead to more social equality, but not always. Democracy can only 'fix' poverty, racism and gender inequality if the citizens want to. If citizens demand social change, democratic governments have the power to share wealth and empower marginalised groups.

Exercise

Choose the best answer.

1. Which of these is a political outcome of democracy?
   a. a government that is accountable to the people
   b. a government that is always popular
   c. a government that makes laws that everyone agrees with
2. Which of these is an economic outcome of democracy?
   a. poverty always increases
   b. freedom to own a business
   c. everyone always gets richer
3. Which of these is a social outcome of democracy?
   a. total gender equality
   b. all citizens have the same rights to elect representatives
   c. an end to discrimination

Focus on Myanmar

Quotes about the Results of Democracy

The most basic democratic rights, such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of justice, right to vote for representatives freely do not come easily. They are the result of a long struggle.

U NU (1956), Progressive Battle , published in "Democracy is ", Htey Maung, Pg 37 (Myanmar version 2013)

Democracy requires more than just a democratic constitution. It takes more to gain the real elements of democracy such as freedom of speech, participation, free and fair elections and accountability. These will come from nowhere except the minds of the people.

U NU (1951), published in "The famous leaders speeches" (Myanmar version 2012)

Democracy does not turn poor people into rich people in one day. It cannot solve the problem of poverty **automatically**. However, it is an idea that shows the people the best way to make themselves free from poverty.

Thakin Ba Thoung (1954), "Defining Democracy", Published by Knowledge Exchange Movement (Burma), (Myanmar Version 2012) pg 17-18

Exercise

1. What does Soe Thi Ma say about democratic rights?
2. What does U Nu say about the elements of democracy?
3. What does Thakin Ba Thoung say about democracy and poverty?

The Fruits of Democracy

Activity

1. In groups, draw a tree with nine roots and nine fruits.
2. Put the requirements (roots) and results (fruits) of democracy on the tree.
   - For the roots: think about the seven elements of democracy. What does democracy need to function effectively? For example, democracy needs accountability so that representatives cannot ignore the needs of the people.
   - For the fruits: think about what happens as a result of these 'roots'. For example, if there is accountability, then representatives make decisions that meet the needs of the people.

3. Discuss the relationship between the roots and the fruits.
   - Did you think of any ideas that were both roots and fruits? Which ones?
   - Are some of the roots more important than the others? Why?
   - Are some of the fruits more important than the others? Why?
   - What is the relationship between the roots and the fruits?
   - Can you think of any other roots or fruits to add to the tree?
4. Which of the seven elements of democracy did you include in your democracy tree?

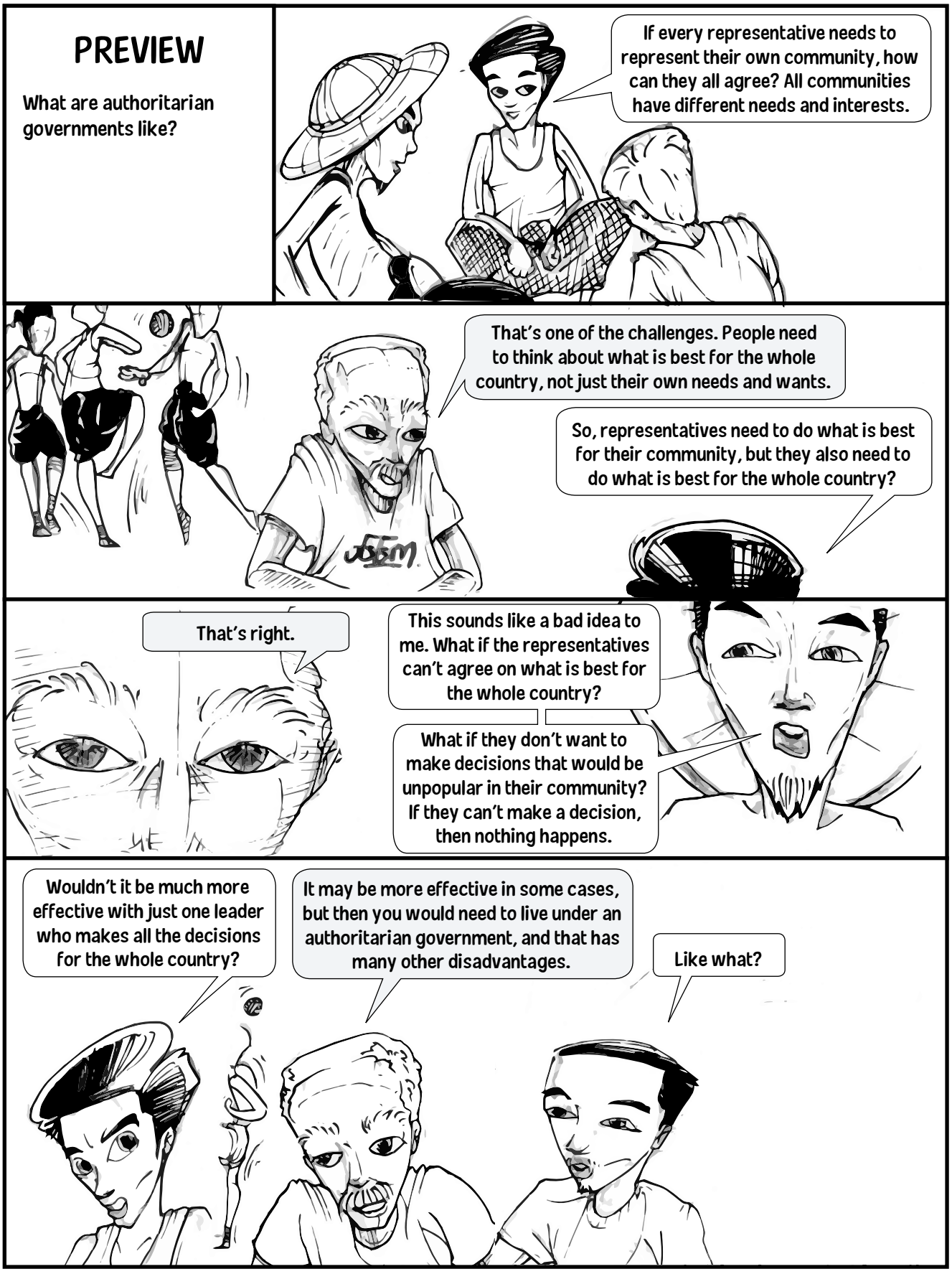
Discussion

1. Which of the roots of the democracy tree can you see in your community?
2. Which of the fruits of the democracy tree can you see in your community?
3. Which of the roots of the democracy tree are weak in your community?
4. Which of the fruits of the democracy tree are weak in your community?

Reflection

1. Which of the roots of the democracy tree are most important to you? Why?
2. Which of the fruits of the democracy tree are most important to you? Why?
3. Do you value democracy? Why?

5.1.2 AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT



A. Authoritarian Governments

In an authoritarian government, the government holds all power. The government is controlled by an individual leader or a small group of people. They make all the important decisions. Many authoritarian governments allow people to vote for representatives. However, those representatives often have little or no power to make important decisions.

Even if there are elections, the people don't have much chance to change the government. This could be because:

- there is only one option in the election;
- the government controls the election process so that they always win.

In either case, the government is not based on the consent of the people. Without political equality and free and fair elections, there is very little accountability and transparency in authoritarian governments. This often results in a lot of corruption and abuses of power.

Under an authoritarian government, citizens do not have the right to take part in decision-making. Authoritarian governments do not allow citizens to challenge or question the government's decisions. Citizens' organisations are often banned. This stops citizens from participating and making sure that the government is accountable. Authoritarian leaders think it is important to make decisions quickly and effectively. They often see discussion and compromise as wasting time.

The rule of law is often weak in authoritarian governments. The people who have the power (government, police, and wealthy businessmen) often ignore the law. It is difficult for ordinary citizens to protect themselves from rights abuses.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. There are never elections in an authoritarian government.

b. Accountability and transparency are weak in authoritarian governments.

c. Authoritarian government is based on tolerance and compromise.

B. The Outcomes of Authoritarianism

Political

In authoritarian systems, the government is not accountable to the people. This makes it easier for leaders to ignore the needs of the people, or commit abuses of power. Citizens cannot participate in decision-making, so decisions do not address their needs and concerns. Political decisions mostly benefit the people in power and their supporters.

Economic

Transparency, accountability and the rule of law are much weaker under authoritarian governments. As a result, it is harder to control corruption. Also, citizens cannot be sure that their property or business will be safe. People are less confident to do business in authoritarian systems. This can have a negative effect on the economy. Poverty is also a big problem in many authoritarian countries, because the needs of the poor are ignored.

Social

Equality is weaker in authoritarian systems. There is often a big gap between rich and poor. Tolerance and compromise is much weaker under authoritarian governments. Minorities and marginalised groups have no way to express their needs and concerns. Sometimes, authoritarian governments blame their problems on minority groups. This can lead to discrimination and violent conflict. There are often rights abuses against minorities and marginalised groups. Citizens cannot rely on the rule of law to protect them from these violations.

Poor children in North Korea

Exercise

Choose the best answer.

1. Which of these is a political outcome of authoritarianism?
   a. Political decisions benefit the people in power.
   b. Political decisions involve a lot of people.
   c. Political decisions are made by consensus.
2. Which of these is an economic outcome of authoritarianism?
   a. There is no poverty in authoritarian governments.
   b. People are less confident to do business.
   c. Authoritarian government usually improves the economy.
3. Which of these is a social outcome of authoritarianism?
   a. The rights of marginalised groups are protected by the rule of law.
   b. There is more equality in society.
   c. There is often discrimination against minorities.

Focus on Myanmar

Quotes about Authoritarianism

"If the people let the government ignore their needs and concerns, representatives will think that they are kings. This will ruin democracy and lead to authoritarianism. It will cause the people to lose their freedom."

General Aung San, 1947, Published in 'the speeches of Leaders', Min Poue Nya Pg 170 (Myanmar version, 2012)

If the government is influenced by authoritarian ideas, they will start choosing officials and representatives from the top. The people will not be able to choose them. These officials and representatives will bully the people into doing what they want. If this happens, the country will become authoritarian. People will lose their independence and the country will not develop. This is why it is so important to become a strong democracy.

General Aung San, 1947, Published in General Aung San Speeches in Sanpay Baintman People flyer (Myanmar Version 1971)

The government is a servant of the people. It should be an organization that knows what the people want and makes decisions based on their own knowledge. I want to be a real representative. Not the kind of representative that goes around making promises and trying to get as many votes as possible. But a representative that makes decisions based on his own judgment.

Lt General Nay Win, 1963, Papa Conference, published in *Democracy is*, Htey Maung, Pg 52 (Myanmar version 2013).

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What does Aung San say are the causes of authoritarianism?
2. What does Aung San say are the results of authoritarianism?
3. According to Ne Win, how should representatives make decisions?

Activity

The Fruits of Authoritarianism

1. In groups, draw a tree with nine roots and nine fruits.

2. Put the requirements (roots) and results (fruits) of authoritarianism on the tree.
   - For the roots: think about which of the seven elements of democracy are absent in an authoritarian government. What is authoritarianism based on? For example, if there is no accountability, then leaders can do whatever they want.
   - For the fruits: think about what happens as a result of these 'roots'. What are the consequences of lack of accountability? For example, without accountability, there will be more corruption and abuses of power.
3. Discuss the relationship between the roots and the fruits.
   - Did you think of any ideas that were both roots and fruits? Which ones?
   - Are some of the roots more important than the others? Why?
   - Are some of the fruits more important than the others? Why?
   - What is the relationship between the roots and the fruits?
4. Can you think of any other roots or fruits to add to the tree?

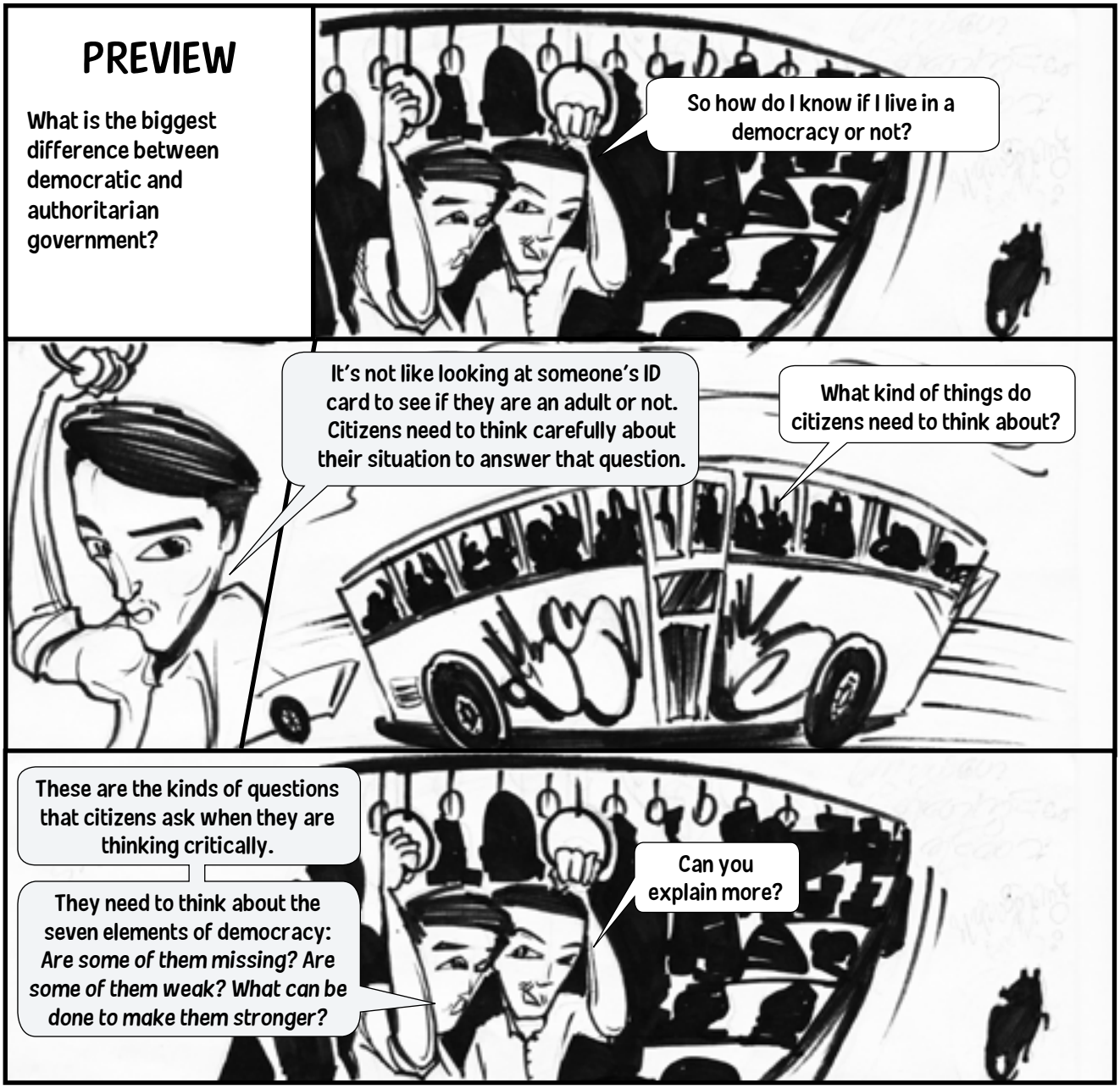
Discussion

1. Which of the roots of the authoritarianism tree can you see in your community?
2. Which of the fruits of the authoritarianism tree can you see in your community?
3. How do these roots and fruits affect daily life in your community?
4. Are these roots and fruits changing? How?

Reflection

1. Do any of the roots and fruits of the authoritarianism tree affect you personally? In what way?
2. How does it make you feel when people make decisions that affect you without your consent?

5.1.3 Democratic and Authoritarian Government



The difference between democratic and authoritarian governments can be seen in the daily life of citizens. The way that citizens speak, work and participate are all affected by the kind of government they live under.

In a democratic system, the seven elements of democracy are in place. This makes sure that citizens can participate in decision-making. However, in an authoritarian system, these elements are limited. This stops citizens from being involved in decision-making and keeps power in the hands of the government.

Exercise

Put the characteristics of democratic and authoritarian governments in the table.

1. Citizens have no way to replace bad leaders.
2. Citizens have the right to form political parties and organisations.
3. Government is not chosen by the people.
4. Government and the police are free to use power how they want.
5. Citizens have the right to access official information.
6. Anyone has the right to run for office.
7. Citizens have the right to replace representatives if they do a bad job.
8. The government and police's use of power is limited by the law.
9. Forming organisations is limited or banned.
10. Everyone has the right to express their ideas and opinions.
11. Views that do not agree with those in power are not listened to.
12. Running for office is either banned or limited to only some people.
13. The people choose the government in regular elections.
14. Access to information is limited.

Element	Democratic	Authoritarian
a. Equality	Example answer: *6. Anyone has the right to run for office.*	Example answer: *12. Running for office is either banned or limited to only some people.*
b. Free and fair elections		
c. Accountability		
d. Transparency		
e. Participation		
f. Tolerance and Compromise		
g. The Rule of Law		

Focus on Myanmar

U Thant on Democracy and Authoritarianism

Burma (Myanmar) is a strong supporter of democratic ideas and a democratic system of government. We in Burma think that a free, democratic government is the best system for the development of the people. We value the democratic way of life and basic freedoms such as freedom of speech and expression, freedom of work, freedom of association and freedom of religion.

However, we are aware that other people have different opinions about democracy.

We believe that the government should serve the people. The government is there to provide freedom and the things that individuals need to live a good life. Others believe that individuals are there to serve the government. We must also remember that democracy is not working well in many countries. Often, democracy is just a mask that powerful groups use to control the people.

The truth is that democracy is a very difficult system. It is difficult because it requires people with diverse ideas and concerns to find a solution to their problems. On the other hand, authoritarianism is an easy system. It only needs to use force or violence to solve its problems. It uses this force to make all people obey the decisions of the government. Tolerance and compromise is not necessary.

Democracy does have some disadvantages. However, it has two very important advantages. Firstly, democratic societies use peaceful and reasonable dialogue to solve their problems. They do not use force or violence. Secondly, democracies change their leaders through free and fair elections. No violent revolutions are necessary in a democracy.

U Thant, (1964), the Third Secretary-General of the United Nations, (1961-1971), "A Burmese View of World Tensions"

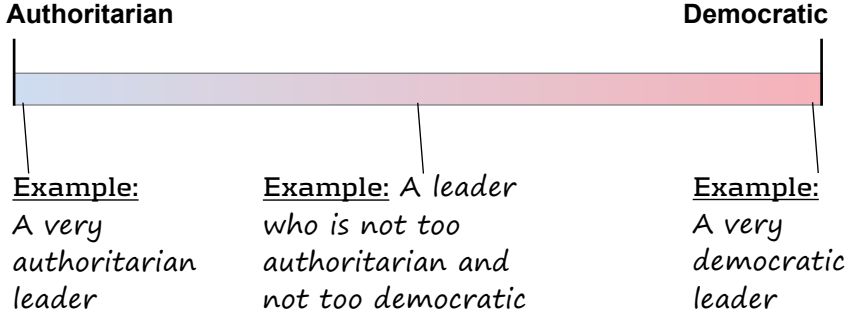
Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. What are the challenges of democracy that U Thant mentions?
2. What difference between democracy and authoritarianism is mentioned in the text?
3. What are the advantages of democracy that U Thant mentions?

Activity

1. Think of a leader in your community. Are they more democratic or authoritarian?
2. Think of some more leaders. Put them on the spectrum. Give reasons for why you put them there.



Discussion

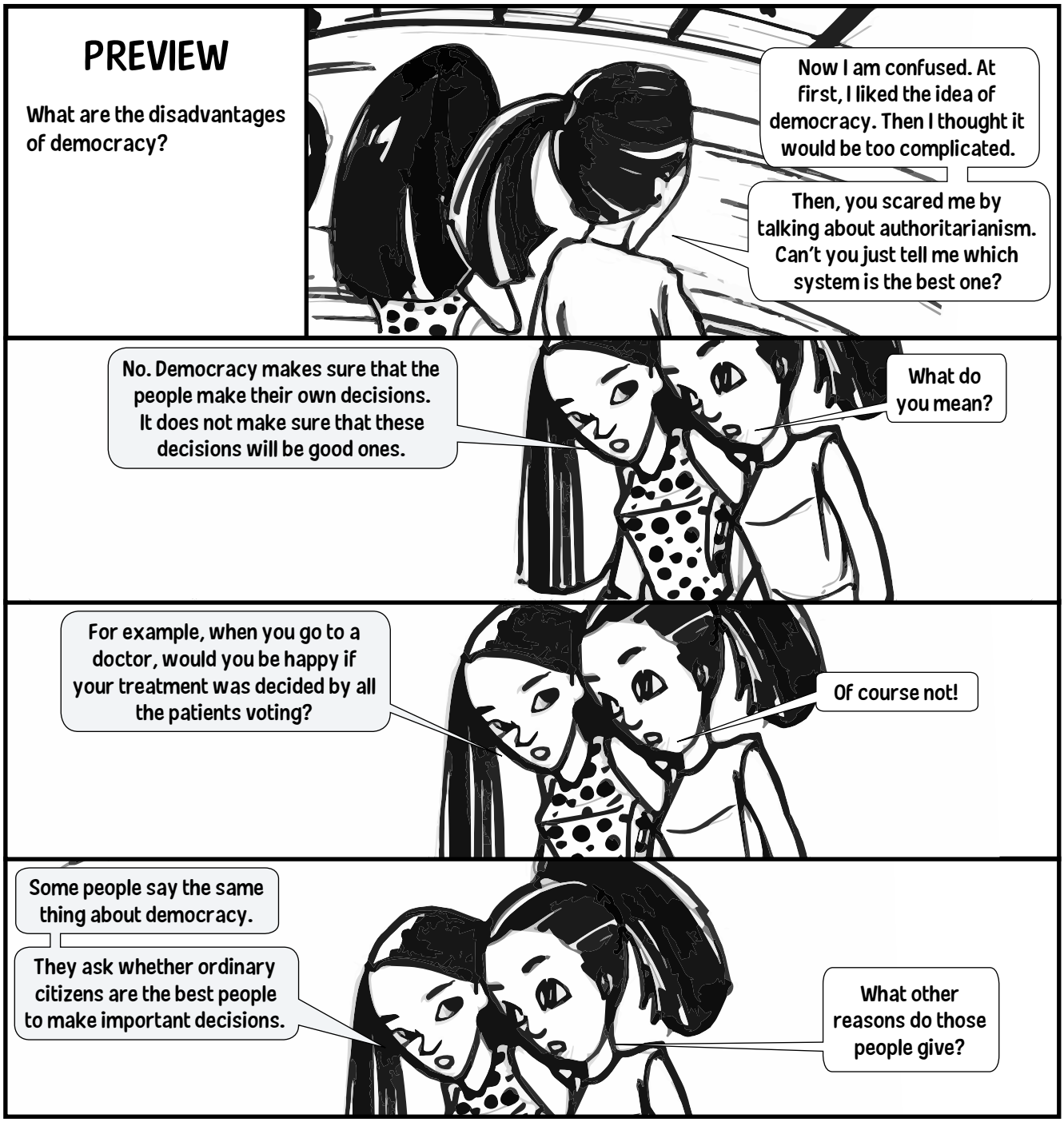
1. What examples of democratic leadership can you see in your community?
2. What examples of authoritarian leadership can you see in your community?
3. What would you like to change about the leadership in your community?

Reflection

Do you respect democratic or authoritarian leaders more? Why?

5.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of Democracy

5.2.1 Arguments Against Democracy



"The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter."

- Winston Churchill

Common arguments that people make against democracy include:

1. LEADERS CHANGE TOO FREQUENTLY IN A DEMOCRACY.

Some policies take a long time to start working. This might be unpopular if people want to see the benefits straight away. A ruling party might not be able to complete their **reforms** if they lose the next election. The new government would need to start again with a new set of policies. Some say that this is wasteful and slows down development.

2. DEMOCRACY IS ALL ABOUT POLITICAL COMPETITION. THIS CAN CAUSE CONFLICT IN SOCIETY.

The competition that is necessary for representative democracy to work can sometimes cause conflict in a community. The criticisms, disagreements and arguments between candidates can become very angry. This can disturb the peace of the community.

Also, there might be conflicts between the supporters of different parties or representatives. Sometimes supporters are not tolerant of each other's views. In extreme situations, this can lead to violence.

3. A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE TO BE CONSULTED IN A DEMOCRACY, SO IT CAN TAKE A LONG TIME TO MAKE DECISIONS.

Democracy is based on equality, participation and compromise. This means decisions can take a very long time. Supporters of democracy say that this avoids bad decisions. Critics of democracy say that it is too difficult to make important decisions quickly. This can lead to delays or **deadlock**.

"Parliamentary democracy is not suitable for Burma at present."

- General Ne Win

4. Ordinary people don't know what is good for the whole country; they should not be responsible for making important decisions.

In large and diverse societies, some issues are very complicated. Making good decisions about these issues can be hard. Citizens might not understand the issues very well. Very few citizens are experts, and some have not even had basic education.

Citizens with jobs and families do not have the time to research and consider all of the options in a debate. Critics of democracy say that allowing citizens to make these kinds of decisions leads to bad decisions.

5. minorities can be excluded from decision-making if they lose an election.

Making important decisions by majority vote can leave the losers feeling resentful and powerless. This can be a big problem when this group is a large minority, e.g. more than 30%. It can also be a problem if the majority ignores the needs and concerns of ethnic, racial or other minorities.

6. leaders only care about being popular, not doing what is best for the community.

In a democracy, some politicians do everything they can to win an election. This includes offering quick, attractive solutions to get people's votes. However, these solutions are not always what the community or country really needs.

Sometimes, slow, difficult or expensive changes are necessary to solve a community's problems. However, if a candidate proposes these changes, they might become unpopular. Then they might lose the election. Democracy can lead to doing what people want, not than what people need.

Exercise

Read the examples (a – f, bottom) and match them with the list of disadvantages of democracy (below) from the previous page.

1. Leaders change too frequently in a democracy.

   Example answer: *C*

2. Democracy is all about political competition. This can cause conflict in society.
3. A lot of people have to be consulted in a democracy, so it can take a long time to make decisions.
4. Ordinary people don't know what is good for the whole country; they should not be responsible for making important decisions.
5. Minorities can be excluded from decision-making if they lose an election.
6. Leaders only care about being popular, not doing what is best for the community.

Examples of the Disadvantages of Democracy

A. IN THE CENTRAL SPORTS CLUB, 75% of members are football players and 25% are chinlone players. Football and chinlone teams participate in competitions, and new members join the teams each year. Each member pays 20,000 kyat per year to the club. Once a year, the club has a budget meeting. All members decide by majority vote how to spend the club's money. Every year, the chinlone group loses the vote, so all the money goes to the football players. Now the chinlone players are getting angry. because their money is being spent on football and they get nothing.

B. THERE IS A REFERENDUM on whether a country should change its voting system. The government suggests a very complicated new voting system. Most people do not understand it. However, many well-educated politicians tell them that it is better. At the next election, many people are confused and do not know how to vote.

C. MA SANDAR WAI has just returned from studying political science at a university in Singapore. She goes back to her township, and runs for election. She is competing against Daw Thet Phyu, who has been living in the community for a long time. Ma Sandar Wai promises a lot of big changes. Daw Thet Phyu says that the community should not make big changes. She believes it is better to continue with slow, steady changes. Ma Sandar Wai wins the election. However, she loses the next election because all of her ideas cost too much money to be completed.

D. THE LOCAL COUNCIL IS DISCUSSING where to build a new road in the town. The rules of the council say that anyone in the community who has an idea or a concern can express this to the council. The rules also say that if more than two council members disagree with a decision, then it cannot be made. Because the new road is a very **controversial** issue, after two months of discussions they still are not able to make a decision.

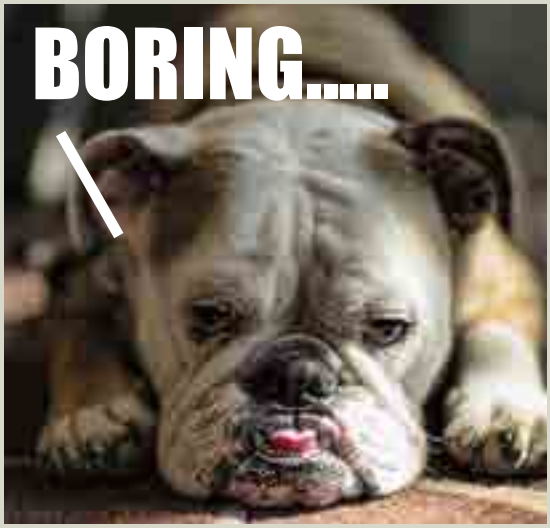
E. THERE ARE A LOT OF YOUNG PEOPLE in the community. Ko Htet Hsan knows that they all love mobile phones and the internet. Before the election, he promises to make mobile phones cheaper and improve internet access in the town. His opponent, U Win Oo, says that if he is elected, he will make sure that all the holes in the street are fixed and street lighting improved. Because of all of the young people's votes, Ko Htet Hsan wins the election. Soon after this, several young people are badly injured because they are looking at their phones while walking on the streets.

F. DURING AN ELECTION, the **XX** Party is competing against the YY Party. The competition between the two parties' supporters is very aggressive. Both parties are nervous because one or two votes would decide who wins the election. Someone from the **XX** Party takes pictures of a YY Party member very drunk in a beer station. He says that after, he drove home and crashed his car into a house. Later, someone from the YY Party told a journal the **XX** Party members were illegally gambling in casinos on the border with China. After the YY Party hears about this, they go to the **XX** Party office to express their anger. Both parties start shouting at each other. After this there is a fight between the two parties' supporters.

Excitement in Boretown

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.



Boretown is a small town and there is nothing to do. A group of citizens decided to hold elections to choose someone to be in charge of Boretown and make it better. This person would be given the power and responsibility to make changes.

There were only two candidates. One was the local teacher, Daw Khin Khin Nwe, who had talked about making changes in the town for years.

Daw Khin Khin Nwe said that she would ask people what they thought would be needed. She thought it would take time to make a plan for all the changes and even longer to implement them well.

A lot of people were disappointed. They had thought that Daw Khin Khin Nwe would come up with ideas for a big shopping centre with a cinema and a concert hall.

Ko Kyaw Kyaw Win, the other candidate, talked about the new swimming pool and cinema that everyone wanted, and the concert hall so all the famous singers would come to Boretown. The people were very happy about these ideas..

Ko Kyaw Kyaw Win won the election.

Ko Kyaw Kyaw Win soon built a swimming pool – in his garden. He then built himself a cinema and concert hall. The people in Boretown became upset. But what could they do? After all, they had voted for him.

The people asked Daw Khin Khin Nwe for help. She said that it was their responsibility because they voted for him. "But this is unfair", the people said. "I know", said Daw Khin Khin Nwe, "so now we have to do something..."

In groups, discuss how the story could continue, focusing on three questions:

1. What could the people of Boretown have done beforehand?
2. What can they do now?
3. How can something like this be prevented in the future?

Focus on Myanmar

Quotes about the Dangers of Democracy

The words 'people' and 'democracy' and so on are used freely, but not honestly. They are used by clever politicians to trick the people into giving them power. They say that they will use the power to serve the people, but they use that power to serve themselves. They use that power to make the situation of the people worse.

Aung San (1947), Address at AFPFL Convention (23/5/1947)

Of all the political systems to rule a country, democracy is the most difficult system. For democracy to be successful, citizens must have enough knowledge and intelligence. If they do not, democracy will lead to **chaos**.

U Thant, (1964), the Third Secretary-General of the United Nations, (1961-1971), "A Burmese View of World Tensions"

If citizens ignore their duties, the government will become corrupt... If someone ignores their personal responsibilities, this will harm themselves and the people around them. However, if citizens ignore their civic responsibilities, this will harm the whole country.

Ba Pe (1953), 'Civics for High Schools', KEM Burma Pg 18-20 (Myanmar Version)

Exercise

1. Why does Aung San say democracy is dangerous?
2. Why does U Thant say democracy is dangerous?
3. According to U Ba Pe, why is it important that citizens fulfil their responsibilities?

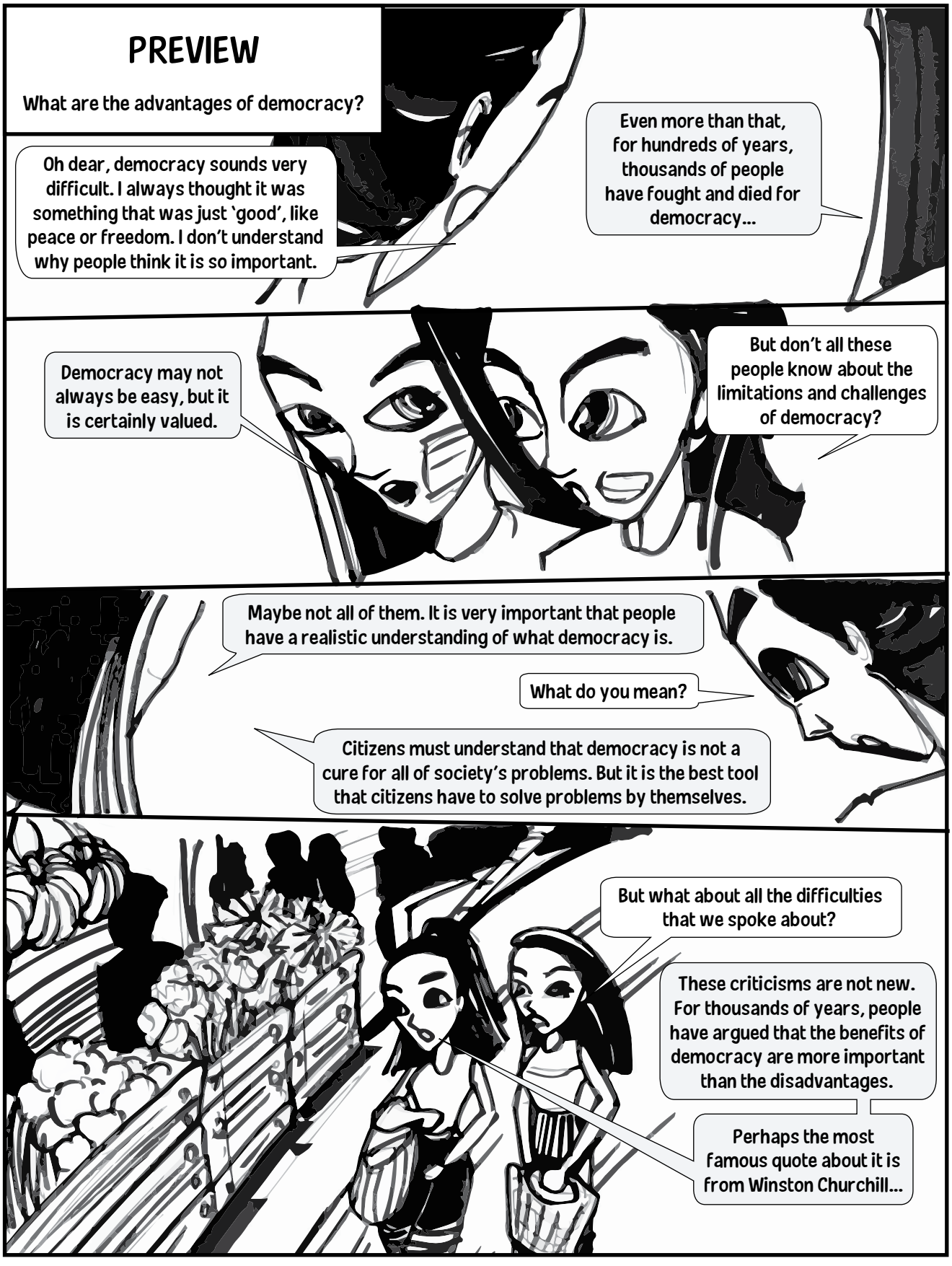
Discussion

1. Can you see any of these disadvantages of democracy in your community? GIve examples.
2. Can you think of any other arguments against democracy?

Reflection

Do any of these problems of democracy affect you personally? In what way?

5.2.2 Arguments For Democracy



"Democracy is the worst form of government, except all the others that have been tried."

- Winston Churchill

Common arguments that people make for democracy include:

1. A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IS A MORE ACCOUNTABLE FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Democratic accountability prevents leaders from abusing their power or ignoring the needs of the people. In a democracy, leaders who don't meet the needs of the people will be replaced by leaders who can. Leaders who break the law will be punished the same as everyone else.

This makes sure that leaders and representatives must fulfil their responsibilities (both to the people and the law) and will get punished if they don't.

2. DEMOCRACY IMPROVES THE QUALITY OF DECISION-MAKING

Democracy is based on discussion and compromise. A democratic decision involves different people, discussions and meetings. When more people are involved, there are more people to identify possible mistakes or dangers in a decision. This takes time, but it can stop governments making bad decisions that negatively affect citizens.

3. DEMOCRACY IS THE BEST SYSTEM FOR PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS.

Democracy is based on participation, equality, and the rule of law. Without these basic requirements, democracy can not work.

- Participation is linked to the right to freedom of speech, association and freedom of assembly.
- Equality is linked to the right to be free from discrimination.
- The rule of law is necessary for protecting all human rights.

In many countries, if people have more human rights, they demand more democracy. If they get more democracy, they demand more human rights.

"In a democracy the poor will have more power than the rich, because there are more of them, and the will of the majority is supreme.

- Aristotle

4. Democracies are usually more peaceful

Democracies are based on tolerance, compromise and equality. This means that it is less likely that minorities will be excluded from decision-making. Democracy can create unity if minorities are included in decision-making. This makes it less likely that minorities will try to separate themselves or use violence to achieve their goals.

Democracy makes sure that citizens resolve their differences through elections, peaceful dialogue and legal processes.

5. It provides equal opportunities to take part in government

Democracy is based on the idea that any eligible citizen has the right to be a representative. This means that the best leadership can rise to the top, whatever their social or economic background is. This often leads to greater representation of women and minorities in government.

6. Democracy meets the needs of the people better than other systems.

Democratic governments need to have the support of the people to stay in power. This means they must pay attention to the needs and concerns of the people.

Democracy is based on communication between the government and the people. The people have a responsibility to express their needs. The government has the responsibility to listen.

Exercise

Read the examples (a – f, bottom) and match them with the list of advantages of democracy (below) from the previous page.

1. A democratic government is a more accountable form of government.

   Example answer: *D*

2. Democracy improves the quality of decision-making.
3. Democracy is the best system for protecting human rights.
4. Democracies are usually more peaceful.
5. Democracy provides **equal opportunities** to take part in government.
6. Democracy meets the needs of the people better than other systems.

Examples of the Advantages of Democracy

A. A TOWNSHIP had a lot of health problems. The local government used to make decisions about the health budget in a very autocratic way. It bought a lot of expensive machines and medicines that the people didn't need. A new leader was elected because he said that he would change the health system. He wanted new community health councils to make important decisions. On these health councils 25% of the members would be government workers, 25% would be doctors and nurses and 50% would be citizens. The new community health councils discussed the issues then made good decisions about the best way to provide health care to their community.

B. MA NYEIN OO was born into a poor family. Since she was a child, she worked at a teashop to support her family. During this time, she faced a lot of discrimination because of her ethnicity and her religion. Later, she started an organisation that supported teashop workers and provided them with education. She gained lots of skills and experience through this and she was elected to the local government. As a representative, she made policies that improved the lives of people in her community.

C. IN A COMMUNITY there are two different ethnic groups. The Exes are the majority and the Zees are the minority. Each year, the local government has to decide on how to spend its budget for festivals and celebrations. Some members of the Zees asked if they could explain their concerns. They wanted to explain why their festivals are so important to them. Both groups sat together and agreed on a budget that allowed them to celebrate both groups' festivals.

D. U WIN SOE was elected as representative for his township. He promised that he would build new wells so that everyone had enough clean water. However, after he was elected, he spent most of his time making business deals. He lost the next election and was replaced by Daw Kyi Kyi Hlaing who built the wells immediately after she was elected.

E. A TOWNSHIP had a big ethnic minority population. These people could not speak the national language well. They didn't go to local clinics because they could not speak with the doctors. As a result, they had many health problems. A representative from this community raised this issue in the local government. He said that the government was denying their citizens the right to health care. The local government agreed, and made a law that said that there should be 'community helpers' in each clinic and hospital. These community helpers would translate into the minority language. As a result, members of the minority community started going to local clinics and their health improved.

F. A large rural township had very few secondary schools. In this township, families did not allow their daughters to travel alone. They also could not afford transportation to the schools. As a result, many girls were not able to go to school. There was an election coming up and one candidate travelled around speaking to the people. She discussed their needs and concerns and she heard the reasons why the girls didn't go to school. She promised to solve this problem if she got elected. She won the election. She made sure that there were free buses for students who lived far away. After this, all of the girls who lived in the area could go to school.

Focus on Myanmar

Quotes about the Advantages of Democracy

Democracy in Myanmar is like the song of Win Oo: 'an unfinished picture'. Democracy is not a picture that is completed by just one person. It is a picture that becomes more beautiful when more people take part in the drawing.

U Maung Myint, (2012), "Democracy", Hnin Si Ni Journal Volume II, 7/5 July

Freedoms of expression, assembly and association help people to understand the issues that they are facing by talking about them and learning from each other. These rights also help the government to understand the needs and concerns of the people better.

U NU (1956), Progressive Battle , published in "Democracy is ", Htey Maung, Pg 38 (Myanmar version 2013

In a democracy, citizens can fully enjoy their human rights. All citizens, regardless of race, **origins** and religions are equal before the law. Citizens all have equal opportunity, whether in government, business or employment. This means that men and women get equal payment for equal work.

U NU (1958), June 29 National Conference of Anti-Fascist People Freedom League (AFPFL), published in "Democracy is ", Htey Maung, Pg 40-41 (Myanmar version 2013).

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. Why does U Maung Myint say that democracy is like an *unfinished picture* in the first quote?
2. What is the advantage of democracy that U Nu mentions in the second quote?
3. What is the advantage of democracy that U Nu mentions in the third quote?

Activity

Opinion Line

1. Read the statements. Think about whether you agree or disagree with them.

> "The people are affected by important decisions, so the people should be responsible for making them."
>
> "Most people are not capable of making good decisions about important issues."

2. One end of the class is 'strongly agree'. The other end is 'strongly disagree'. The middle is where you don't have an opinion. When you hear a statement, go and stand according to your opinion.

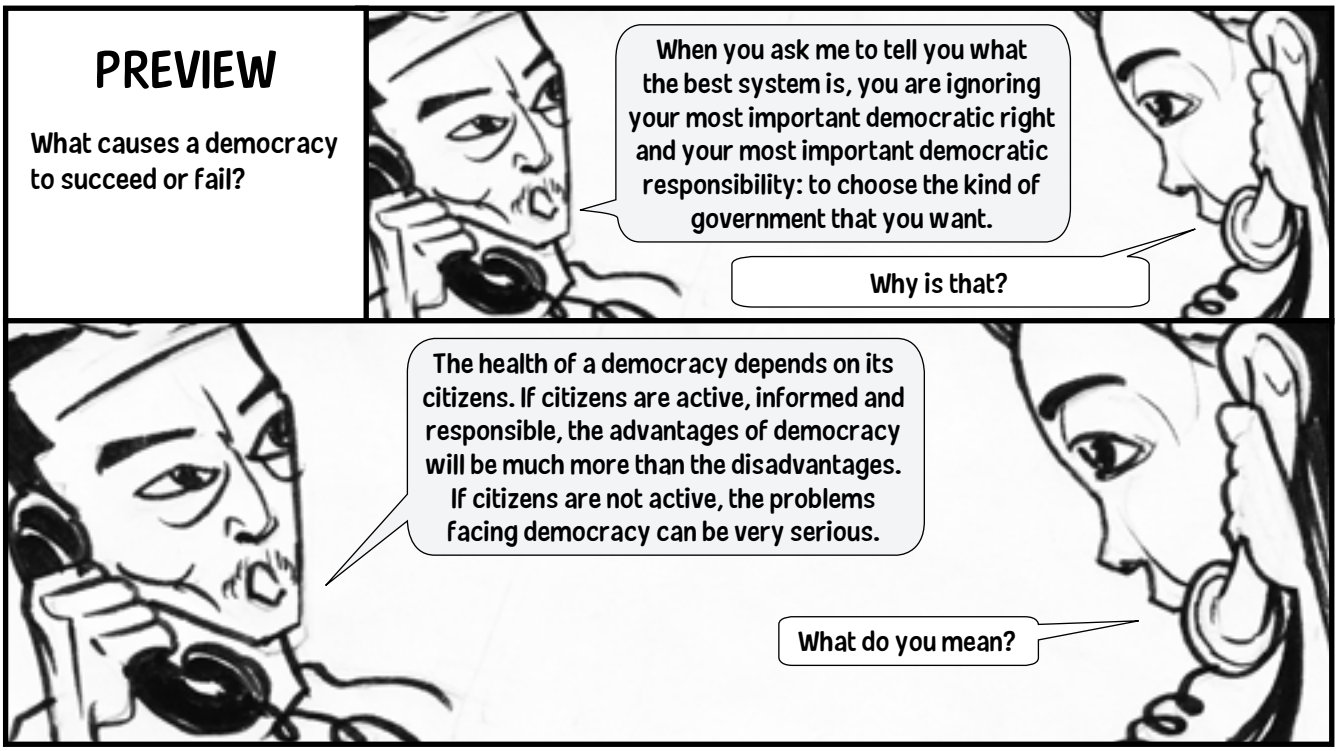
Discussion

1. Why is democracy good at meeting the needs of the people?
2. Can you think of any other arguments for democracy (not discussed in this chapter)?

Reflection

Do you think the advantages of democracy are more important than the disadvantages of democracy? Why?

5.2.3 DEMOCRACY VS AUTHORITARIANISM



Critics and supporters of democracy both use the same argument – that in a democracy, the people are responsible for making important decisions. Critics say this is a weakness of democracy, while supporters say it is a strength.

The success of a democracy does not depend only on its leaders. It depends mainly on its citizens. This is both the strength and the weakness of democracy.

This is perhaps the biggest difference between democracy and other kinds of government. Authoritarian governments do not require citizens to participate. In a democracy, citizens have both a right and a responsibility to take part in decision-making and other democratic activities.

Sharing in decision-making means sharing in the responsibility. The people cannot ignore their responsibilities, or just follow orders without thinking. If they do, critics of democracy are proved to be right.

If citizens are active, informed and responsible, democracy will work. If they are not, democracies can lead to bad leadership, the exclusion of minorities and deadlock. In the end, the citizens themselves decide if a democracy is successful or not.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. The amount of citizen participation is one of the biggest differences between democracy and authoritarianism.
b. Democratic citizens have the same amount of responsibilities as citizens do in authoritarian countries.
c. It is the citizens who are responsible for the failure or the success of a democracy.

Focus on Myanmar

The Parliamentary Era (1948 – 1962)

Myanmar's government was based on the British parliamentary system. The voters elected members of parliament. The parliament was divided into two houses: The Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Nationalities.

The Chamber of Nationalities had representatives from ethnic minority and workers' groups. The Chamber of Deputies was more powerful because it chose the prime minister.

The two houses met together to elect the president. They also appointed judges, approved changes to the constitution, passed laws, and made important decisions about war, peace, and foreign relations.

During this period, people discussed politics freely, and there were independent newspapers. People organised unions of peasants, workers, women, and youth. These groups started to participate in politics and share their opinions.

However, this was a very unstable period in the country. Communists and some of the ethnic groups started to fight against the government. There was also a lot of conflict in the parliament. The different parties did not work together well and it was often difficult to make decisions.

Exercise

Answer the questions.

1. How was the prime minister chosen in the parliamentary era?
2. In what ways was democracy strong during this period?
3. In what ways was democracy unstable during this period?

Focus on Myanmar

The BSPP Era (1962 – 1988)

By 1957, fighting between the government, ethnic groups and communist groups was getting worse. In May 1958, the ruling party (the AFPFL) split into two groups. U Nu led the 'clean' faction. Ba Swe and Kyaw Nyein led The 'stable' faction.

In March 1962, a military **coup** removed U Nu from power. General Ne Win said that the parliamentary system was not good for the country. He said that political leaders did not care about what is best for the country. He said they were only trying to get rich.

General Ne Win's military government made strict rules for university and school students. They changed the curricula and taught only Myanmar in place of ethnic minority languages. In 1962, students protested against the coup. As a response, the student union building of Yangon University was destroyed. After this, political parties and civil society organisations were also controlled much more strictly.

Burma Council Bars Parliamentary Rule

RANGOON, Burma, May 8 (A) Gen. Ne Win, chairman of the ruling Revolutionary Council, says parliamentary democracy is not suitable for Burma at present because the ups and downs of political life has obliged party leaders to "amass fortunes."

Mr. Win said this eagerness of the politicians to line their nests while they could worked against the building of a socialist state.

Newspapers and journals were controlled by the military. This made it difficult to criticise the new government.

In 1974 a new constitution was written. According to the new constitution, Myanmar would be a 'single party government'. That means that there was only one legal political party: the Burma Socialist Program Party. All other parties were illegal. The only people who were allowed to be in government were BSPP party members. The government was controlled by the president and the prime minister.

Exercise

1. What reasons did Ne Win give for taking over the government?
2. In what ways was democracy weakened during this period?
3. Would you say that the 1974 constitution created a democratic or an authoritarian government? Why?

Debate on Democracy

Activity

"Democracy is the best form of government."

1. Decide whether you want to argue for or against the statement. Form groups for and against the statement.
2. Choose three debaters to present your groups' arguments, and as a group, prepare these arguments.
3. Hold the debate.
   - Group 1, speaker 1 presents their arguments for two minutes.
   - Group 2, speaker 1 presents their arguments for two minutes.
   - Group 1, speaker 2 replies to group 2's arguments and presents their arguments for two minutes.
   - Group 2, speaker 2 replies to group 1's arguments and presents their arguments for two minutes.
   - Group 1, speaker 3 replies to group 2's arguments and presents their arguments for two minutes.
   - Group 2, speaker 3 replies to group 1's arguments and presents their arguments for two minutes.
4. As a class, vote on which side presented the best arguments.

Discussion

1. What do you think are the most important advantages of democracy?
2. What do you think are the most important disadvantages of democracy?

Reflection

Has this chapter changed your mind about democracy? How?

6.1 GOVERNMENT

PREVIEW

What words do you think of when you think about 'government'?
Make a class mind map.

6.1.1 GOVERNMENT: THE BASICS

A. WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

A government is the leadership of a country. Governments have the authority to make and **implement** decisions about the country's public policy.

Public policy is a plan of action that governments take to achieve their goals. These goals are often related to meeting the needs of the people and solving the country's problems.

Governments are also responsible for managing conflicts related to national decision-making. This could include conflict between different representatives or parties in the parliament, or between different social or ethnic groups. Governments are also responsible for maintaining peace and security through the police, military and courts.

B. What Is Public Policy?

Public policy decisions are usually about how to distribute public resources and opportunities. Public resources include all the money that governments get from taxes, natural resources and other public goods (this is called **revenue**). Public opportunities include access to education, healthcare and other **social services**.

Debates about public policy are at the centre of democratic politics. In a democracy, political parties get elected because voters think that their policies will be the best for their country.

Different political parties share these resources and opportunities in different ways. These differences are based on their values and the needs and concerns of their supporters. For example, a party with strong support from workers and poor people will distribute more resources and opportunities to them. This might fit with their values of equality and social justice.

Exercise

Choose the best answer.

1. Which of the following is NOT a responsibility of a democratic government?
   a. managing conflicts between different groups
   b. making decisions about public policy
   c. making sure that there is only one political party in the parliament
2. Which of the following is NOT true about public policy?
   a. Public policy decisions are usually about how to distribute resources and opportunities.
   b. Political parties do not disagree about what public policy should be.
   c. Debates about public policy are very important in democratic politics.

C. LAWS

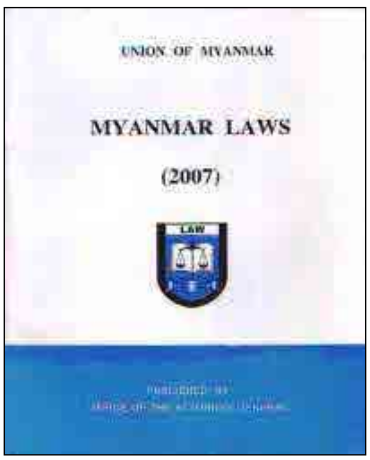
Laws are a very important tool for democratic governments. Government use laws to make changes in society. These changes can affect people's behaviour, their quality of life and their access to resources and opportunities. Democratic governments use laws to solve society's problems and meet the needs of the people.

Laws are usually suggested by a member of parliament (or sometimes by the president). A suggestion for a law is called a **bill**. Bills are debated by members of the parliament and changed until the majority of the representatives agree with the law. If the president also agrees with the bill, then it becomes a law.

The example below shows the steps in this process:

From Idea to Bill to Law

1. A Representative gets a lot of complaints from his community that restaurants stay open very late. People get very drunk and play loud music. This disturbs other people.
2. The representative joins together with other representatives who have the same concerns. They write the draft of a law saying that all restaurants must close by 9 pm.
3. This bill is debated in the parliament until everyone agrees with it. In the process, the closing time is changed from 9 pm to 11 pm.
4. They send the bill to the president who approves it.



The government is responsible for making, implementing and enforcing that law. These three steps can be seen in the following example:

Laws: The Government's Responsibilities

1. **Making:** The government makes a law that all restaurants and bars must close by 11 pm.
2. **Implementing:** The new law is put into effect. Citizens, restaurants and bar owners are all informed about the law and the punishments for breaking it.
3. **Enforcing:** If a restaurant or bar is open after 11 pm, the owner can be punished – they have to pay a fine or go to jail.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. A bill is the name for a law that has not been approved yet.
b. Laws are always suggested by the president.
c. The government is responsible for making, implementing and enforcing laws.

Exercise

Match these activities with the six public policy goals. Note there can be more than one goal for each activity.

1. social welfare
2. national security
3. social justice
4. law and order
5. human rights
6. development

a. improving the country's infrastructure (e.g. building more roads and street lights)
Example answer: *development*

b. improving access to education (e.g. building more schools)
c. promoting economic development (e.g. building new factories)
d. strengthening democracy (e.g. Improving freedom of speech, assembly and association)
e. improving access to healthcare (e.g. building more hospitals)
f. resolving ethnic or religious conflict (e.g. holding peace talks)
g. reducing corruption (creating anti-corruption organisations)
h. reducing unemployment (e.g. creating more jobs)
i. reducing poverty (e.g. providing vocational training and small loans)
j. improving access to affordable electricity (e.g. reducing the price of electricity)
k. improving security (e.g. recruiting more police)
l. strengthening law and order (e.g. longer prison sentences for criminals)

Activity

National Budget

1. In groups, look at the list below. You have a budget of 100 million dollars. How would you spend it?

social welfare
national security
social justice
law and order
human rights
development

2. Present your budget to the class and explain how you made these decisions.
3. As a class, decide on a budget that you all agree with.

D. Local vs National Government

All countries have national and local governments. National governments are responsible for the whole country. Local governments are responsible for parts of a country, e.g. a city, township or region.

Local governments are necessary for several reasons:

- The national government cannot carry out all the work of running the country from the capital city.
- Local governments understand the problems and needs of their communities. This is especially true if there is a lot of ethnic or cultural diversity in the country.
- It is often more efficient and less expensive for the local government to be responsible for some local tasks.

Local governments are responsible for:

- listening to the needs and concerns of local people;
- identifying and solving local problems;
- managing and protecting local resources;
- planning and carrying out local development projects.

Local governments are more accessible and easier to contact than a national government. Therefore they help local people to participate in democracy.

Yangon City Hall: Head of local government in Yangon

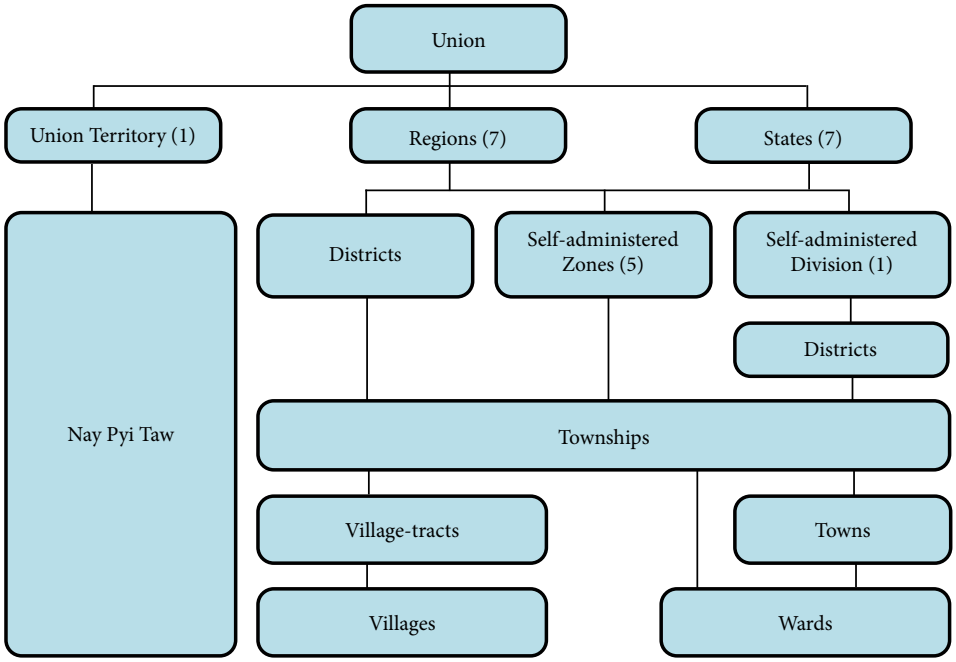
Focus on Myanmar

Local and Regional Governments

In rural areas, the smallest administrative unit is the village, with several grouped together into village tracts. In urban areas, the smallest administrative unit is the ward which is an area of a town or city. Each village-tract/ward has an administrator. Administrators are responsible for carrying out community affairs, repairing bad roads, resolving conflicts between citizens, and maintaining village or ward level health centres.

Urban wards, towns and village tracts are grouped into townships. Township government offices are the lowest level of government in Myanmar. Township government is responsible for repairing bad roads, resolving conflicts between citizens, implementing educational projects, maintaining health centres and helping the poor. Groups of townships are organised as districts, a group of districts make up a region or state.

The country is divided into seven regions (formerly called divisions), seven states, and the Union Territory of Naypyidaw. Each region and state has its own government, led by a chief minister. The chief ministers are appointed by the president. All seven regions and states are given equal powers under the Constitution. These governments are able to make some laws related to the economic, transport, communication and social sectors of their state or region. They can also collect land taxes, transport taxes and taxes on all forest products except teak.



Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

1. Townships are the lowest level of government in Myanmar.
2. Village tract/ward administrators are responsible for making laws.
3. Chief ministers are elected by the people.
4. Some states and regions have more power than others.
5. State/region governments are not allowed to collect any taxes.

Discussion

1. What kind of policy decisions do you think your government should be making?
2. What kind of laws or policies are necessary to address issues and problems in your community?
3. How well does local government promote participation in your community?

Reflection

Do any of these problems of democracy affect you personally? In what way?

PREVIEW

What is good governance?

6.1.2 GOOD GOVERNANCE

'Good **governance**' is a set of principles for governments to rule in the best way possible. These principles make it more difficult for corruption, abuse of power and human rights abuse to happen. They also aim to improve the way that governments make and implement decisions so that their actions better meet the needs of the people.

The United Nations lists eight characteristics for good governance, as follows:

1. Participation
2. Transparency
3. Effectiveness and **Efficiency**
4. **Responsiveness**
5. Accountability
6. Compromise and Tolerance
7. Equity and Isnclusiveness (equality)
8. The Rule of Law

Six of these principles are also in the elements of democracy discussed in Unit 1.

Good governance also requires that governments effectively meet the needs of the people. This requires governments to:

a. make decisions that accurately reflect the needs and concerns of the people, and;

b. carry out those decisions in a way that meets those needs.

This is why the principles of responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency are important.

A. Responsiveness

Responsiveness means that the government's public policy decisions address the needs and concerns of the people.

Good governance requires governments to meet the needs of the people. It is important that governments listen to the people to understand their needs and concerns.

Furthermore, responsiveness requires governments to take this information and transform it into practical policies.

Responsiveness can be seen in the following ways:

- Governments change their policies according to the needs and concerns of the people.
- Governments do this all the time, not just around election times.
- The needs of minority groups are also considered in public policy decisions.
- Governments admit their mistakes and correct policies that negatively affected citizens.

B. Effectiveness and Efficiency

Effectiveness

Effective governments carry out activities that result in the achievement of goals of their policy goals. Public policy goals relate to meeting the needs of the people and solving society's problems. We can measure a government's effectiveness by how well they do this. Effectiveness means that:

- the government chooses the right kind of activities to achieve policy goals;
- the government delivers the right kind of public services and resources for those activities;
- they deliver these services and resources to the right people.

Efficiency

Efficiency is about doing something in the best way possible. This could include doing it the fastest or the least expensive way.

For governments, this means that they carry out activities in a way that makes the best use of resources they have. These resources include people, resources, opportunities and revenue. Efficiency means that:

- there is little waste of public funds or resources;
- there is little mismanagement of public funds or resources;
- services and resources are delivered on time (there are no long delays in essential services).

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. Responsiveness requires governments to listen to the people.
b. A government is effective if its actions are carried out in the least expensive way possible.
c. Efficiency means that waste and mismanagement is minimised.

Activity

Good Governance Report Card

Complete the report card. Rate your school/organisation or local government on how well they meet the eight elements of good governance.

REPORT CARD

ORGANISATION NAME: _____

ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	BAD	OK	GOOD	VERY GOOD
1. Participation	Anyone affected by or interested in a decision has the opportunity to participate in decision-making.				
2. Transparency	People are able to clearly see how and why a decision is made. They can find out what information, advice and consultation was used.				
3. Effectiveness and Efficiency	The government makes the best use of the available people, resources and time to ensure the best possible results for their community.				
4. Responsiveness	Community needs are met on time, and in an appropriate and responsive way.				
5. Accountability	Decision makers are accountable for the consequences of their decisions.				
6. Compromise and Tolerance	Minorities and other groups work together to find common solutions that they all agree to.				
7. Equity and Inclusiveness	All groups, including the most marginalised, have opportunities to participate in decision-making.				
8. The Rule of Law	Decisions and use of power are within the limits set by the law.				

Discussion

1. Why is good governance important in a democracy?
2. What problems does good governance help to reduce?
3. What challenges to good governance are there in your community?
4. What can be done to improve governance in your community?

Reflection

Which of the eight elements of good governance do you think is most important? Why?

6.1.3 Separation of Powers

PREVIEW

What is separation of powers?

A. Three Branches of Government

There are three main functions of government: making laws, implementing laws, and enforcing laws. These functions are carried out by three 'branches' of government:

- the **legislature** (making laws);
- the **executive** (implementing laws);
- the **judiciary** (enforcing laws).

In a democracy, it is important that these three branches of government are independent of each other. Each branch has its own rights, responsibilities and powers. The constitution makes sure that none of these branches can interfere with the rights, responsibilities and powers of the other branches.

This is called ***separation of powers***. Democratic government is based on this idea.

B. Separation of Powers

The main purpose of the separation of powers is to prevent authoritarianism. It does this by making sure that one branch cannot control the others.

In many authoritarian governments, power is held by one branch of government (usually the executive). The other branches are controlled by the executive. This weakens the rule of law, and often leads to corruption and abuses of power. Separation of powers shares the power between the different branches, so that one branch cannot gain too much power.

Separation of powers also makes sure that one branch cannot act without cooperating with the others. If all the branches have to agree on important decisions, this promotes participation, transparency, and tolerance and compromise.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. The executive is responsible for making laws.
b. Democratic governments limit the power of the executive by sharing power with the other two branches.
c. Separation of powers makes sure that the three branches need to work together.

C. CHECKS AND BALANCES

In a system of government with a separation of powers:

- 'Checks' are the rights (and responsibilities) of each **institution** to **supervise** the activities of the others.
- 'Balances' are the limits of each institutions' power. These limits make sure that the three branches' powers are more balanced (more equal).

A system of **checks and balances** prevents abuses of power. It makes that one branch cannot become too powerful. Checks and balances prevent abuses of power in three ways:

1. They make sure that other people or institutions are included in important decision-making. For example, making big changes to Myanmar's constitution requires two things. Firstly, that the majority of MPs accept the decision and secondly that the majority of citizens vote for that change in a referendum.
2. They make sure that other people or institutions can **veto** (cancel) a decision if they do not agree with it. For example, in the United Nations Security Council there are five countries (the USA, the UK, France, Russia and China) who can veto any decision of the council if they do not agree with it.
3. They make sure that there are laws that prevent some decisions from being made. For example, no decision of the government can be made if they go against the bill of rights in a country's constitution.

With a system of checks and balances, the different branches depend on each other, so have to work together. For example, in Myanmar, only the parliament has the power to create laws. Only the president has the powers to approve laws. The president cannot write a bill that he wants to approve. The parliament cannot approve a bill that the president does not approve of. Therefore, it is necessary that the president and the parliament find a compromise before a bill can become a law. Unless they do, no law can be made.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. A system of checks and balances makes government more transparent.
b. Checks and balances make the executive strong enough to make laws quickly.
c. A veto is when one person or institution can cancel the decision of another group or institution.

Debate – Checks and Balances

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

"Anyone who has too much power will become corrupt and abuse that power. For this reason, there should be two rules that apply to all leaders.

1. There should be some decisions that leaders are not allowed to make.
2. All leaders must `give up their power after five years, even if the person who replaces them is less popular."

1. Work in groups of three. In each group:
   - one person represents the supporters of this idea;
   - one person represents the opponents of this idea;
   - one person is a journalist. They ask questions to the two representatives at the end of the debate.
2. Have the debate and question session.
3. As a class, discuss the main points for and against the suggestion.
4. Have a class vote on whether to support this suggestion or not.

Discussion

1. What are the dangers of one person or institution having too much power?
2. Why are checks and balances important in a democracy?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a system of separation of powers?

Reflection

1. Have you ever experienced someone who had too much power and started to abuse their power? What happened? How did it make you feel?
2. What could people have done to prevent that situation from happening?

6.2 THE THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT

PREVIEW

What is a legislature?

6.2.1 LEGISLATURES

The legislature, (often called a parliament), consists of all of the representatives (members of parliament or MPs) from the different communities (e.g. townships) in a country. Legislatures are the part of government that is responsible for making laws. In Myanmar, there are legislatures at the national level (the national parliament) and at the local level (state or regional parliaments).

In a legislature, each MP represents the needs and concerns of the people who elected them (their constituents). MPs can raise awareness about the effects of a bill on their community. They can persuade other MPs to vote for or against a bill. They can suggest changes or additions to bills. Legislatures try to balance the needs and concerns of all the communities in a country to make laws that are fair to everyone.

The representatives in the legislature research, discuss and change bills until they find a compromise that the majority votes for. Compromise can be difficult because different communities and political parties have different needs and concerns. As a result, the law-making process takes a long time, and requires a lot of cooperation and compromise.

Once the majority of the MPs vote for a bill, it gets 'passed' (accepted by the legislature). If the other branches of government also accept the bill, then it becomes a law.

Exercise

1. Put the following steps in order.

How Laws Are Passed

a. MPs discuss, debate and make changes to the bill.

b. The bill is passed by the legislature.

c. The majority of MPs in the legislature votes in favour of the bill.

d. A bill is suggested by a group of MPs.

2. Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

   a. There is a legislature in every state and region in Myanmar.

   b. A bill is only passed when all of the MPs vote in favour of it.

Focus on Myanmar

The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Myanmar's Legislature

The Legislative Branch

- The 2008 constitution describes a **bicameral** legislature called the Union Assembly (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw).
- The two houses of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw are called the Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Assembly) and the Amyotha Hluttaw (Nationalities Assembly).
- The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw is responsible for making national laws, checking and approving national, state and regional budgets and representing the interests of their constituents in government.
- Laws must be approved by both assemblies before they are sent to the president for approval.
- Members of the legislature are elected for five year terms.

Pyithu Hluttaw (lower house)

- There are a maximum of 440 members of the Pyithu Hluttaw.
- 25% of the seats in the Pyithu Hluttaw are reserved for military representatives appointed by the commander-in-chief. The rest are elected as representative of townships (i.e. one representative per township).

Amyotha Hluttaw (upper house)

- The Amyotha Hluttaw is made up of a maximum of 224 members. Each region or state can send up to 12 elected representatives to the Amyotha Hluttaw.
- The commander-in-chief appoints four members of the military from each region or state to the Amyotha Hluttaw (making a total of 56 appointed members).

Regional and State Hluttaws

- In addition to the Pyithu Hluttaw and the Amyotha Hluttaw, there are 14 regional/State assemblies. Each contains two elected representatives from each township within the region or state. In regions or states where there is an ethnic group with at least 0.1 per cent of the population, that ethnic group is guaranteed an ethnic representative in the Assembly. The commander-in-chief appoints military personnel to the Assembly. The exact number of military officials changes depending on the state or region but equals one third of the elected representatives.
- The regional Hluttaw can make laws about issues which affect their state or region (e.g. roads and public spaces, electricity and cultural events). They are also responsible for approving state or regional budgets.

Exercise

1. What is the role of the Pyidaungsu, state and region hluttaws?
2. What percentage of seats in the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw are reserved for military personnel?
3. Are there military personnel in the state and region hluttaws?

Activity

Legislature Role Play

Read the text then follow the instructions.

You are the lawmakers of the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw. You are considering seven bills.

1. In groups, discuss the possible effects of one of the proposed laws. Consider both the positive and negative effects of this proposed law. Put them into a table.
2. Make a presentation to the class.
3. After all presentations, vote on which laws you decide to pass.

Law	Positive Effects	Negative Effects
Example answer: *Free and fair elections: Voting will be compulsory. Anyone who does not vote on election day will have to pay a fine.*	Example answer: *1. It will encourage more people to take part in elections* *2. It will make sure that the results of the elections represent the whole country.*	Example answer: *1. It will take a lot of effort to find and fine all the people who didn't vote* *2. It will discriminate against people who choose not to vote.*

Proposed Laws

1. Free healthcare and education for the poorest people in the country.
2. Voting will be compulsory. Anyone who does not vote on election day will have to pay a fine.
3. Any government worker or representative who lies to the people will be punished.
4. Citizens have the right to request any information from the government. The government is not allowed to keep any information from the people.
5. At least 50% of all members of parliament in the national parliament must be female.
6. Anyone who causes violence or hatred through their speech or writing will be punished.
7. Anyone accused of a crime will be provided with a lawyer to represent them. This will be free.

Discussion

1. Why are legislatures important in a democracy?
2. Who is the Pyithu Hluttaw representative for your township?
3. who is your township's representative for the state or region Hluttaw?

Reflection

What law would you like to propose to the Hluttaw? Why would you propose that law?

6.2.2 Executives

PREVIEW

What is an executive?

The executive is responsible for implementing laws. The executive makes national decisions and puts the laws passed by the legislature in to action.

The executive is responsible for making these laws (written documents) into actions. These actions include providing services (e.g. health care or security) and distributing resources and opportunities (e.g. building clinics, paying the salaries of police). Executives are also responsible for foreign relations.

The leader of the executive is called the *head of government*. In Myanmar, the head of government is the president. The head of government is responsible for making important decisions and managing the government.

In most countries, the head of government needs to approve any bills that the legislature passes. If the executive approves the bill, it becomes a law. If they do not approve, it can be sent back to the legislature or vetoed.

The head of government chooses the ministers in the executive (the **cabinet**). Each of these ministers is responsible for a specific policy area (e.g. health, justice, foreign affairs etc.).

Ministers are responsible for managing all of the government workers who work in their ministry. These government workers carry out all of the government's tasks. These tasks are necessary to distribute resources, services and opportunities according to the laws and policies of the government.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. The executive is responsible for making decisions about public policy.
b. The head of government is responsible for choosing the cabinet.
c. In most countries, the head of government has to approve the laws made by the legislature.

Focus on Myanmar

Myanmar's Executive

Who is in the executive branch of government?

- The president, the vice presidents, the cabinet and the Attorney General make up the executive. The attorney general advises the executive branch on legal issues.

How does the President get elected?

- The president is not elected directly by the people.
- Members of the Union Assembly suggest three presidential candidates. One is chosen by the People's Assembly, one by the Nationalities Assembly, and one by the military members of parliament.
- These candidates may be Hluttaw representatives or not Hluttaw representatives.
- The candidate with the majority of votes from the Union Assembly becomes the president. The two unsuccessful candidates become vice-presidents.

How does the cabinet get elected?

- The president appoints most of the ministers in the Cabinet. The commander-in-chief of the armed services appoints the ministers for defence, home affairs and border affairs.

What powers does the President have?

- They sign laws. A law becomes official after the president signs it.
- They can declare war (or peace).
- They can make (or break) treaties
- They can declare a **state of emergency**. In a state of emergency, the commander-in-chief has greater powers. The situations and laws for declaring a state of emergency are set out in special situations in the constitution,

The executive branch of each region or state has a similar structure to the national executive branch. The leader is called the chief minister and his or her cabinet members are ministers. They get legal advice from the advocate general of the region or state. The president chooses the chief minister of each region or state from the people elected to the regional or state Assembly. The chief minister chooses the cabinet members from either the elected representatives of the Assembly, or from the general population, except for the position of minister of security and border affairs. The commander-in-chief appoints the person to that position.

Exercise

1. Who is included in the executive in Myanmar?
2. How is the president chosen in Myanmar?
3. How are chief ministers chosen in Myanmar?

Executive Role Play

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

You are the executive of the government. The legislature has recently passed a set of laws for you to consider. (See the proposed laws on page 166.)

1. In groups, consider the bills that have been passed by the legislature in Legislature Role Play on page 166. Each group should consider one of the bills. Put them into a table.
2. Make a presentation on the proposed law. Your presentation should outline the difficulties and costs of the law as well as the benefits.
3. After all presentations, vote (or use consensus) to decide whether they will accept the law as it is, or send it back to the legislature.

Law	Obstacles	Costs
Example answer: *Free and fair elections: Voting will be compulsory. Anyone who does not vote on election day will have to pay a fine.*	Example answer: *1. There could be objections from people who choose not to vote.* *2. The part of the government responsible for charging fines might not want the extra work.*	Example answer: *1. The government will need to hire people to identify who didn't vote.* *2. The government will need to hire people to manage the fines.*

Discussion

1. Who do you think should have more power: the executive or the legislature?
2. Who is the chief minister for your state or region?

Reflection

What values and characteristics do you think that leaders should have? Give reasons.

PREVIEW

What is a judiciary?

6.2.3 JUDICIARIES

A. THE JUDICIARY

The judiciary is responsible for enforcing the law. The judiciary is made up of all the courts of the country. The judiciary is also responsible for making sure that new laws do not go against the constitution.

Judiciaries are responsible for providing justice to citizens. This includes punishing individuals who are found guilty of a crime. It also includes finding solutions to repay citizens who have suffered damage or loss as a result of a crime. Judiciaries resolve these conflicts by looking at the situation, looking at the law and making a decision based on what they think is fair.

In a democracy, there are several levels of courts. These include local courts, regional courts and the highest court in the whole country (the supreme court). An important role of the judiciary is to give citizens the right to **appeal** against a decision of a court. This means that citizens can take their case to a higher court if they think that the decision of a lower court is unfair. This is important because lower courts are often more affected by corruption and abuses of power. The right of appeal helps citizens to seek justice if they feel that they have been wrongly treated in a lower court. This is an important part of the rule of law.

It is very important that courts are independent from the other branches of government, political parties, or other powerful groups. There can be no rule of law without an independent judiciary.

Exercise

Are the statements true or false? If false, explain why.

a. The judiciary is only responsible for punishing criminals.
b. The right to appeal allows citizens to ask for a second decision if they were treated unfairly.
c. It is important that the judiciary is independent in a democracy.

B. CONSTITUTIONAL COURTS

Sometime the responsibilities of the different branches conflict. For example, the executive and the legislature both think that they have the right to make a decision. In these cases, it is the duty of the constitutional court to resolve this conflict.

The constitutional court also checks that laws passed by the government are legal according to the constitution. If a decision of the government goes against the constitution, constitutional courts can decide it is illegal and cancel it.

Constitutional courts are also responsible for dealing with cases of violations of citizens' constitutional rights. For example, if someone is removed from their land in a way that violates their constitutional rights, the constitutional court can force the government to give that person's land back.

Exercise

Which of the following is NOT a function of a constitutional court.

a. making sure that new laws do not go against the constitution
b. resolving conflicts between the other branches of government
c. choosing the president

Focus on Myanmar

Myanmar's Judiciary

What courts are there in Myanmar?

- Township courts: for most people who are accused of breaking laws.
- High courts: courts of the state, region or self-administered divisions. If these courts can't make a decision on these cases, they are sent to the supreme court.
- The supreme court: Judges decide about matters regarding:
  - treaties between Myanmar and other countries
  - legal issues between the national and the regional/state governments
  - legal issues between the regional/state governments.

How is the Supreme Court elected?

- The president **nominates** a chief justice.
- The chief justice and the president nominate candidates to be supreme court judges. Nominations must be approved by the Pyidaungsu Hluttaw.
- The Pyidaungsu Hluttaw cannot reject nominations for judges or for the chief justice unless the nominee does not meet the requirements in the Constitution.

Is there a constitutional court?

- Yes. The Constitutional Tribunal of the Union rules on issues related to the constitution.

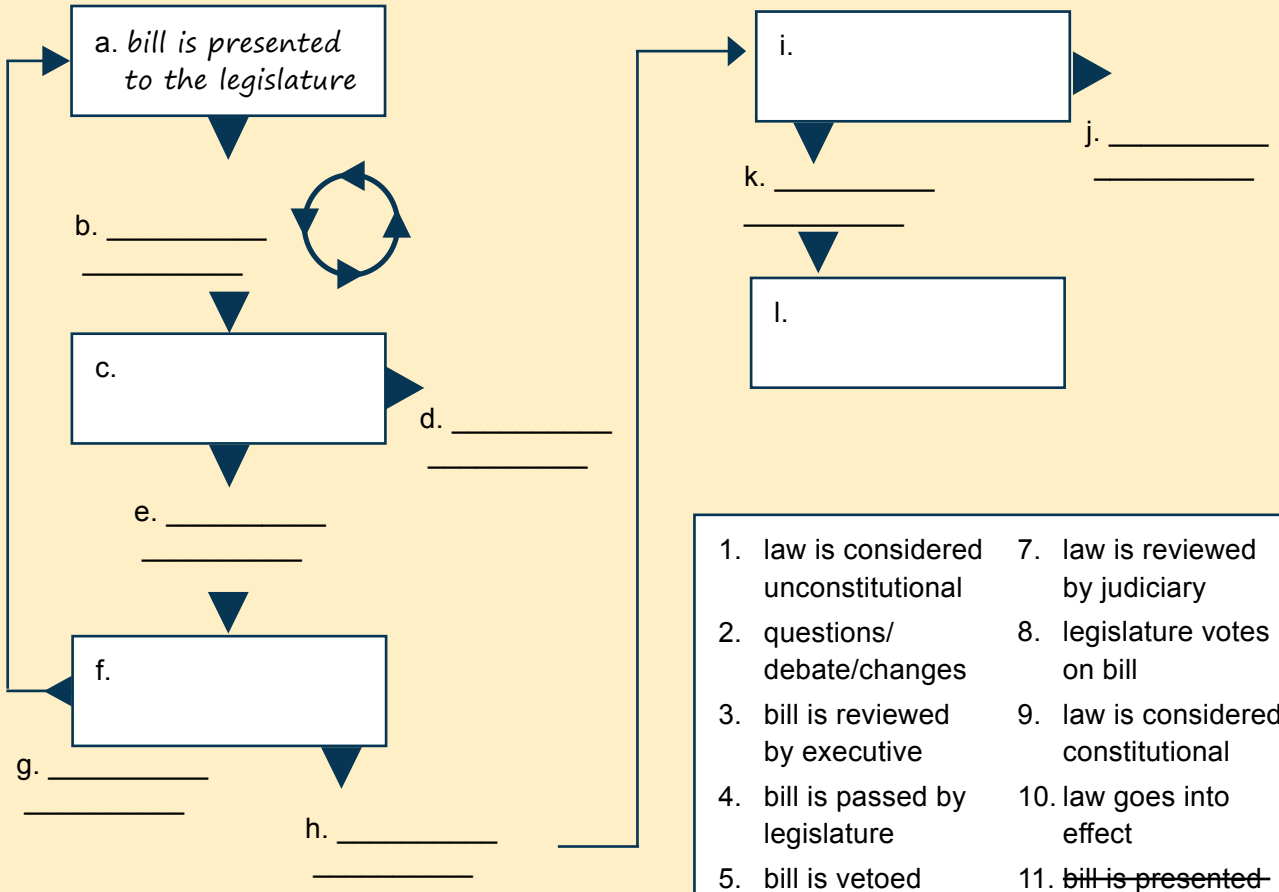
Exercise

1. What are the different levels of court in Myanmar?
2. What is the highest court in Myanmar?
3. How is the chief justice of the Supreme Court chosen?

Exercise

From what you have learned in this chapter, complete the diagram using the steps in the box.

How Laws Are Made



1. law is considered unconstitutional
2. questions/ debate/changes
3. bill is reviewed by executive
4. bill is passed by legislature
5. bill is vetoed
6. bill is accepted and becomes law
7. law is reviewed by judiciary
8. legislature votes on bill
9. law is considered constitutional
10. law goes into effect
11. ~~bill is presented to the legislature~~
12. bill is rejected

Exercise

Match the responsibilities with the correct branch of government.

a. passing bills into laws
Example answer: *legislature*

b. representing the country around the world
c. resolving conflicts between different branches of government
d. carrying out laws and policies
e. dealing with crime and punishment
f. representing the constituents

Judiciary Role Play

Activity

Read the text then follow the instructions.

You are the judicial branch of the government. The legislature has recently passed a set of laws for you to consider. (See the proposed laws on page 166.)

1. Read the scenario. Look at the list of constitutional rights on page 77.
   In groups, consider the laws that have been passed by the legislature to see if there is any way that they might conflict with these constitutional rights.
2. Make a presentation on whether any of these laws could violate these rights so much that they would go against the constitution.

Example answer: *Free and fair elections: Voting will be compulsory. Anyone who does not vote on election day will have to pay a fine.*

This could violate article 360 – 4: (Freedom of conscience) because it could force citizens to vote if they believe that voting is wrong.

Discussion

1. Why are judiciaries important in a democracy?
2. Why is it important that the judiciary is independent in a democracy?
3. How do the courts protect and support the rule of law?

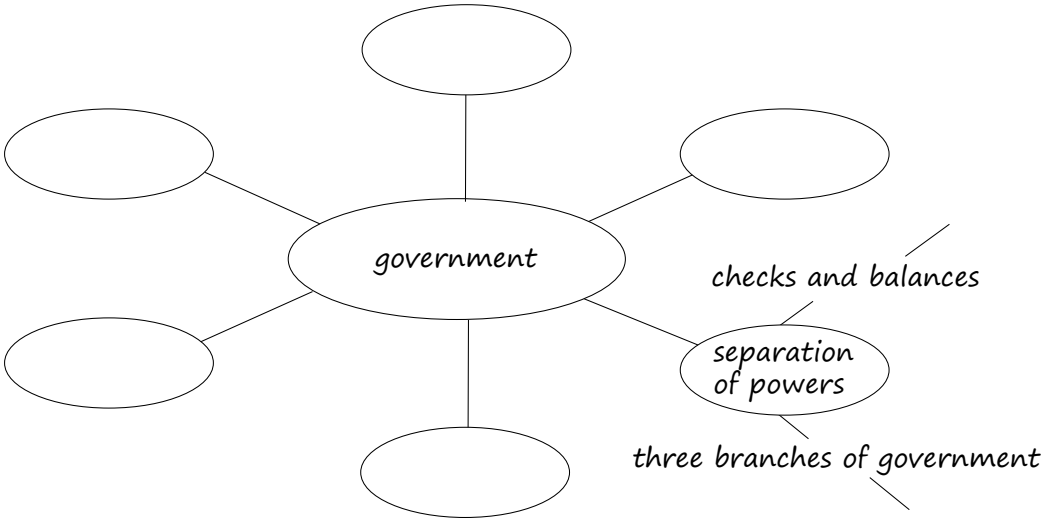
Reflection

1. Has anyone ever made an unfair decision about you? What happened? How did it make you feel?
2. Were you able to appeal that decision? Why or why not?

Unit 3 Review

Unit 3 Mind Map

Complete the mind map with important ideas you have learned in Unit 3.



Comprehension

1. What are some political outcomes of democracy?
2. What are some social and economic outcomes of democracy?
3. What are some political outcomes of authoritarianism?
4. What are some social and economic outcomes of authoritarianism?
5. What are some differences between democratic and authoritarian governments?
6. What are some arguments against democracy?
7. What are some arguments for democracy?
8. Which was more democratic, the Parliamentary era or the BSPP era?
9. What is public policy?
10. What is local government?
11. How are laws made in a democracy?
12. What is responsiveness?
13. What is effectiveness and efficiency?
14. Why is good governance important in a democracy?
15. What is the separation of powers?
16. Why are checks and balances important in a democracy?
17. What are the roles and responsibilities of the legislature?
18. What is the legislature in Myanmar?
19. What are the roles and responsibilities of the executive?
20. What is the executive in Myanmar?
21. What are the roles and responsibilities of the judiciary?
22. What is a constitutional court?

Unit 3 Glossary

appeal (v) – အသနားခံတောင်းဆိုသည်၊ အယူခံဝင်သည်။

automatic (adj) – အလိုအလျောက်ဖြစ်သော။

bicameral (adj) – လွှတ်တော်နှစ်ရပ်ရှိသော။

bill (n) – ဥပဒေကြမ်း

cabinet (n) – အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။

chaos (n) – ကစဉ့်ကလျား။

checks and balances (n) – ထိန်းညှိမှု။

controversial (adj) – အငြင်းပွားဖွယ်ဖြစ်သော။

coup (n) – အာဏာသိမ်းခြင်း။

deadlock (n) – အကြပ်အတည်း၊ ရှေ့တိုးမရဖြစ်ခြင်း။

efficiency (n) – မြန်ဆန်သွက်လက်ပြီး ကုန်ကျမှုနည်းပါး အကျိုးများသော။

executive (n) – အုပ်ချုပ်ရေး။

governance (n) – အုပ်ချုပ်မှု။

implement (v) – အကောင်အထည်ဖော်သည်။ ဆောင်ရွက်သည်။

institution (n) – အဖွဲ့အစည်း၊ တည်ရှိမှု။

judiciary (n) – တရားစီရင်ရေးကဏ္ဍ။

legislature (n) – ဥပဒေပြုရေး။

nominate (v) – အမည်တင်သွင်းသည်။

origin (n) – မူရင်း။

reform (n, v) – ပြုပြင်ပြောင်းလဲခြင်း။ ပြုပြင်ပြောင်းလဲသည်။

responsiveness (n) – လိုအပ်ချက်များကို ဖြည့်ဆည်းတုံ့ပြန်နိုင်မှု။

revenue (n) – အခွန်ဘဏ္ဍာ။

separation of powers (n) – အာဏာခွဲဝေမှု။

social services (n) – လူမှုဝန်ဆောင်မှုများ။

state of emergency (n) – နိုင်ငံတော်အရေးပေါ်အခြေအနေ။

supervise (v) – ကြီးကြပ်သည်။

veto (v, n) – ဗီတို အာဏာသုံးသည်။ ဗီတို အာဏာ။

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48	Unknown	Unknown	Unkonwn	Unkonwn
50	Unknown	Unknown	Unkonwn	Unkonwn
52	emilydickinsonridesabmx	Obey The Law – Vintage Subway Sign	https://www.flickr.com/photos/emilyrides/3871438517/	CC BY 2.0
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54	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
55	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
56	Tim Green aka atouch	'What type of a democracy is this?', political graffiti	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Graffiti_by_the_Five_Rise_Locks_in_Bingley_%286th_November_2010%29.jpg	CC BY 2.0
57	Laurence Grayson	Painted brick wall will old graffiti painted over.	https://www.flickr.com/photos/shortformvideo/4530346114	CC BY 2.0
60	Marc Mongenet	India flag	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:India_flag_300.png	CC BY-SA 3.0
61	Ricardo Liberato	All Giza Pyramids in one shot.	http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:All_Gizah_Pyramids.jpg	CC Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic
64	Laurence Grayson	Painted brick wall will old graffiti painted over.	https://www.flickr.com/photos/shortformvideo/4530346114	CC BY 2.0
71	Nicolas Raymond	Grunge Threaded Flag – South Africa	http://www.stockvault.net/photo/142048/grunge-threaded-flag--south-africa	This photo is free for personal, educational and non-commercial usage.
71	Unknown	Coat of Arms of South Africa	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Coat_of_Arms_of_South_Africa.svg.png	CC BY-SA 3.0
71	bistandsaktuelt	Bill of Rights, Durban South Africa	https://www.flickr.com/photos/baktuelt/6992365078	CC BY 2.0
75	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
78	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
80	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
81	Unknown	Unknown	http://nyeinfoundationmyanmar.org/category/projects	© 2010-2014 Nyein (Shalom) Foundation
84	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
84	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
85	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
96	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
98	Michael Fleshman	December 10 march for voting rights	https://www.flickr.com/photos/fleshmanpix/6732235085	CC BY-SA 2.0
100	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
101	Val Kerry	ARTICLE 1	https://www.flickr.com/photos/artmakesmesmile/2516476754	CC BY 2.0
103	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
107	**Shwe Wutt Hmon**	**Daily Life**	**goldenpollen22@gmail.com**	
111	**EGG Student Council**	**Love Democracy**		
108	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
112	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
122	Htoo Tay Zar	Myanmar-Lower-House-Parliamen	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assembly_of_the_Union#/media/File:Myanmar-Lower-House-Parliament.jpg	CC BY-SA 3.0

130	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
141	Christopher Michel	VC bulldog	https://www.flickr.com/photos/cmichel67/15865399370	CC BY 2.0
152	Koristeellisia longyi-vaatteita	Burmese State Peace and Development Council members greet Abhisit Vejjajiva in October 2010 visit	https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Longyi#/media/File:Burmese_SPDC_members_greet_Abhisit_Vejjajiva.jpg	CC BY 2.0
154	devpolicy.org	Myanmar: on the move	http://devpolicy.org/	Copyright © 2015 Devpolicy Blog from the Development Policy Centre.
155				
156	Francisco Anzola	Government building (Yangon City Hall)	https://www.flickr.com/photos/fran001/8437613802	CC BY 2.0
161	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
163	World Economic Forum	Debate at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting of the New Champions in Tianjin, China 28 September 2008.	https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Flickr_-_World_Economic_Forum_-_BBC_Debate_-_Annual_Meeting_of_the_New_Champions_Tianjin_2008_%281%29.jpg	CC BY-SA 2.0

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