HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION

DISCRIMINATION

(CASTE, RELIGION, RACE, LANGUAGE, GENDER, PLACE OF BIRTH)

MODULE III

UN Decade for Human Rights Education

(1995 - 2004)

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Discrimination

(Caste, Religion, Race, Language, Gender, Place of Birth)

Students Module - Part III

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Discrimination

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Acknowledgement

History is witness to the fact that man has been discriminated against, by his fellow human beings. Although on one side there is the tendency of justifying discrimination, the perspective that discrimination is a sin also prevails. we can take pride in the fact that we are living in times when discrimination is considered not only as a sin but also as a violation of rights and a punishable offence. All the human rights laws that have been evolved in this world say that it is a violation of human rights to discriminate human beings on the basis of Religion, Race, Language, Nationality and Caste. Human Rights armours have been evolved to liberate man from discrimination. All human beings are being discriminated in one way or other. This subject comes with the intention of educating that discrimination is against humanity in the stage of childhood itself.

We do not claim that these modules of the Institute of Human Rights Education are complete in themselves. They have been prepared after taking into account, our social set up, the educational system that functions within this set up and the standard of the students. I assure that the module will be made better with suggestions that are received from the thousands of children who will use this as a text book, the teachers who are going to guide them and the readers who read it as a book.

This is not the effort of an individual but a team work led by Mr. Henri Tiphagne. Since it is the style of the Institute of Human Rights Education to write lessons using true life incidents, we have used incidents of various forms of discriminations that were reported in news papers. My heartfelt gratitude is due to the Social Work students of the American College, Ms. Bharathi, Ms.Sugabrindha and Ms. Sunitha, who compiled the

news reports; Ms. Uma, Mr. Ananda Kumar, Mr. Jayaraman, Mr. Jothi Basu and Ms. Chitra who did the typing; our Zonal of Co-ordinators, who gave valuable advice; Ms. Theresa and Mr. Mohan, who lent a helping hand; our printer Mr. Anthonyraj; the artists Mr. Kalaivanan and Mr.Sathyan; and Dr.G. Joseph Panneer Selvam who did the translation. We owe our gratitude also to Dr.Annadurai who helped us in all stages of the creation of this module.

My thanks are due to the dailies, weeklies and monthlies, which helped us in enriching this book and the Documentation Centre which helped in compilation of the details.

Mr. Bernat worked tirelessly with me at every stage and has contributed to enrich every facet of this book. I thank him too.

Dr. I.Devasahayam

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Foreword

Institute of Human Rights Education has already brought forth two text books, viz., "Human Rights Education" and "Children's Rights". These books have been prescribed for sixth and seventh standard children, with a view to introducing the basic concepts of human rights to them. This book, entitled "Discrimination" is meant for the eighth standard children.

The word `discrimination' deserves attention. It is different from `difference'. Difference is natural, and is found in all creatures. We know how different plants of a particular area are, though they take the same water, breathe the same air and enjoy the same sun light! Same is the case with birds, animals and fish. Even among birds of a particular kind, there are differences. It is this difference that gives variety, and without this diversity, life may not be interesting.

Among natural differences, nothing is considered superior or inferior; but discrimination is man-made and artificial. The origin of this discrimination can be traced to the distant past when people were discriminated on the basis of religion, community, language, gender and place of birth. In the course of time, people started accepting this and thus, the lower caste-upper caste and ruler-ruled divide got fossilized.

Discrimination amounts to denial of rights and hence, unjust. So, the children need to be educated on the problems associated with discrimination, and the need and the ways to put an end to it and to establish an egalitarian society. This book, I believe, will definitely serve this purpose. Written in simple language, profound ideas have been explained using different teaching techniques. The Student's Charter of an Egalitarian Society has also been prepared and this, I would say, is a great attempt.

My best wishes to the Institute of Human Rights Education.

A.K.Venkatasubramanian

About this book

Institute of Human Rights Education takes pleasure in presenting this text book - "Discrimination" - to be prescribed to the students of Human Rights this year. We have already brought forth two text books - "Human Rights Education - An Introduction" and "Children's Rights". Believing that these two books would have created an impact on the students, however little it may be, we present this text book.

The title - Discrimination

Should we have a negative term, viz., discrimination, as the title of the book? Many a person associated with our Organization raised this question. Even some of the members of the Organization who held the view that discrimination should be the subject-matter of the text raised the same question. Yet we decided to keep the title. It is not without reason. Human Rights Education is only an instrument to inculcate the ethos of universal human rights, and we believe, making the children chant "human rights" is the first step towards inculcating this ethos. At the same time, the students must also know about discrimination, the very antithesis of human rights, human liberty and human dignity.

We also aim at inculcating the attitude to fight against injustice in the students. Our intention is to familiarize the word 'discrimination' so much that it buzzes around their head. Hence the choice.

DISCRIMINATION - Meaning

Why 'discrimination'? In a society where discrimination prevails, there can be no equality, democracy, fraternity and justice. These human values are not man-made. They are inherent in the people. Discrimination shatters these inherent qualities and, consequently, humanness. We live in a world when discrimination is institutionalised, legitimised and ingrained. Discriminations based on race, colour, caste, gender and place of birth are presented as if they are justifiable, as if there is nothing wrong in them. The different manifestations of discrimination are acclaimed

in our society. For example, as per law, untouchability, the manifestation of discrimination based on caste has been abolished for about 54 years. At the same time, the ideology that untouchability is a principle to be followed, and if it is not followed the whole structure of the society will fall, is also dominant. We can cite so many examples. We have to break all such falsehood at the childhood itself. Our aim is to drive home the idea that equality is inherent and natural and so the word, 'discrimination', though a negative word has been used, to effect a direct impact upon the students.

Discrimination and Difference

Each and every Human Rights Charter, Act and Covenant, at the national as well as international levels, fall foul of discrimination based on race, gender, language, place of birth, religion etc. They have also set the standards for the abolition of discrimination legally. In our country, starting from the Constitution, many Acts have been passed to abolish discrimination. These Acts aim at eradicating discrimination but not difference. Difference is natural whereas discrimination is artificial. Difference has to be appreciated. Difference is the manifestation of plurality; it is a symbol of plurality. Human rights protect plurality whereas discrimination is a violation of human rights. Both are not the same. Both are associated with human rights but are antithetical to each other. Appreciating this plurality, appreciating democracy and promoting equality are the same. Difference is inherent in plurality. We must understand this.

Lessons

Not a day passes without talking about discrimination. Newspapers carry news about various manifestations of discrimination, and television telecasts news about it. All these news items raise different kinds of feelings in us - pity or anger, and we stop with that. If we want to put an end to discrimination, the value called natural equality must be kindled in our mind. But equality is not just a value; it is a right. This view has to be inculcated in the mind of the students in order to put an end to discrimination. The lessons have been written with a view to realise this aim. Only when we started writing the lessons we realised the difficulties. We could not present everything that we know in this book. Having the middle school students as the

target audience, the lessons have been written.

Explaining the deep concept of discrimination in simple Tamil without diluting the concept was really challenging. There may be weak patches in our maiden attempt. But we believe, we have prepared the lessons in such a way that the students understand what discrimination is.

1.Discrimination - An introduction:

This lesson explains what discrimination is. We have tried to make students understand what discrimination is, using simple stories.

2.Gender discrimination:

An attempt has been made to view violation of women's rights as discrimination. This discrimination against women is a violence. This view has been established by pointing out that women are discriminated against at every stage of their life, from the dream stage to the tomb. We have abridged the text book on Women's Rights that has been published already. The lesson is lengthy; yet it has been done with the aim to educate the future generation.

Gender equality is possible only when women are considered rightful citizens. This is dealt with under the sub-title 'Woman- as a Citizen'. Moreover, a few women fighters who fought for women's rights have also been introduced.

3.Discrimination based on Religion:

Everybody is aware of the need for creating goodwill and tolerance among religions in a multi-religious country like ours. As the majority of our people have faith in God, they will be associated with some religion.

While talking about religious discrimination, no particular religion has been mentioned. Care has been taken not to complicate things in the present situation. In stead of giving importance to religion in politics, religious harmony and unity have been stressed.

4.Racial discrimination:

Racial discrimination is alien to us. Yet this kind of discrimination exists in

foreign countries and the students must know about this and the similarities between racial discrimination and caste discrimination prevelant in our country.

5.Caste discrimination:

Casteism segregates people as higher and lower, based on their birth. Those who are considered lower are discriminated against. The discrimination against the Dalits manifests itself as untouchability. Untouchability makes a mockery of human dignity and so the different manifestations of it have been explained through real life stories. Of course, it is not exhaustive, and not all the manifestations have been presented. But, within limits, we have tried to bring out the seriousness of the problem. Periyar, Mahatma Gandhi, Ambedkar and Narayana Guru have also been introduced as the fighters against untouchability.

6.Discrimination based on place of birth:

India in a sub-continent. Plurality is its asset. In spite of the attempts to have unity in diversity, we find, here and there, enmity being sown, in the name of place of birth and language, and thus, unity is endangered. We have explained, givng a few examples, the discrimination based on place of birth is a human rights violation, and real unity is respecting diversity.

7.Discrimination against Tribes:

The downtrodden are denied all kinds of rights. To make matters worse, there is no awareness among people about this denial. To crown it all, even those who are denied their rights do not know about it. Among the downtrodden, the condition of the tribes is the worst. They are called Adivasis, Tribes and Natives. The objective of this lesson is to show how these people are discriminated against. The modern society sidelines them; or, in the pretext of modernization, tries to alienate these people from themselves. All these are discriminations.

8.Discrimination against Refugees:

Refugees belong to other countries. They have been forced to leave their mother land to settle in other countries. Some say they should be treated sympathetically. Some others hold the view that they are simply unwanted burden and will drain our

resources. Yet others suspect them to be infiltrators. The objective of this lesson is to teach the children that such people have the right to settle in foreign countries and to be treated with equality.

9.Poverty and discrimination:

It is true that neither the International Human Rights Charters nor the Indian Constitution considers poverty a unit of discrimination. They ban discrimination based on race, language, palce of birth, caste, colour and gender. Can we consider poverty a reason for discrimination? As the poor are weak, they can be exploited and discriminated against easily. It is a fact that powerless, poor people will be discriminated against at every stage.

Another reason may also be given. In our society, we find, poverty and caste are interlinked and we find people belonging to lower castes are poor, and as a result, exploited. That is why poverty has been considered a unit of discrimination.

10.Students charter:

Protection of human rights ensures an egalitarian society. Where there is discrimination, there can be no human rights. In such a society, human dignity has no value, and in such a conditions, people can not live as people. The future generation should be concerned, if the same condition were to prevail. The students as pillars of future generation must do something about this. Being aware of what human rights are and how an egalitarian society where man can live as man can be created, the students have the right to demand a particular kind of social set up. They express their rights in the form of this Charter. Though this Charter has not been prepared by students themselves, we believe, this will serve as a model and prompt them to prepare their own Charter and to submit them to the authorities concerned.

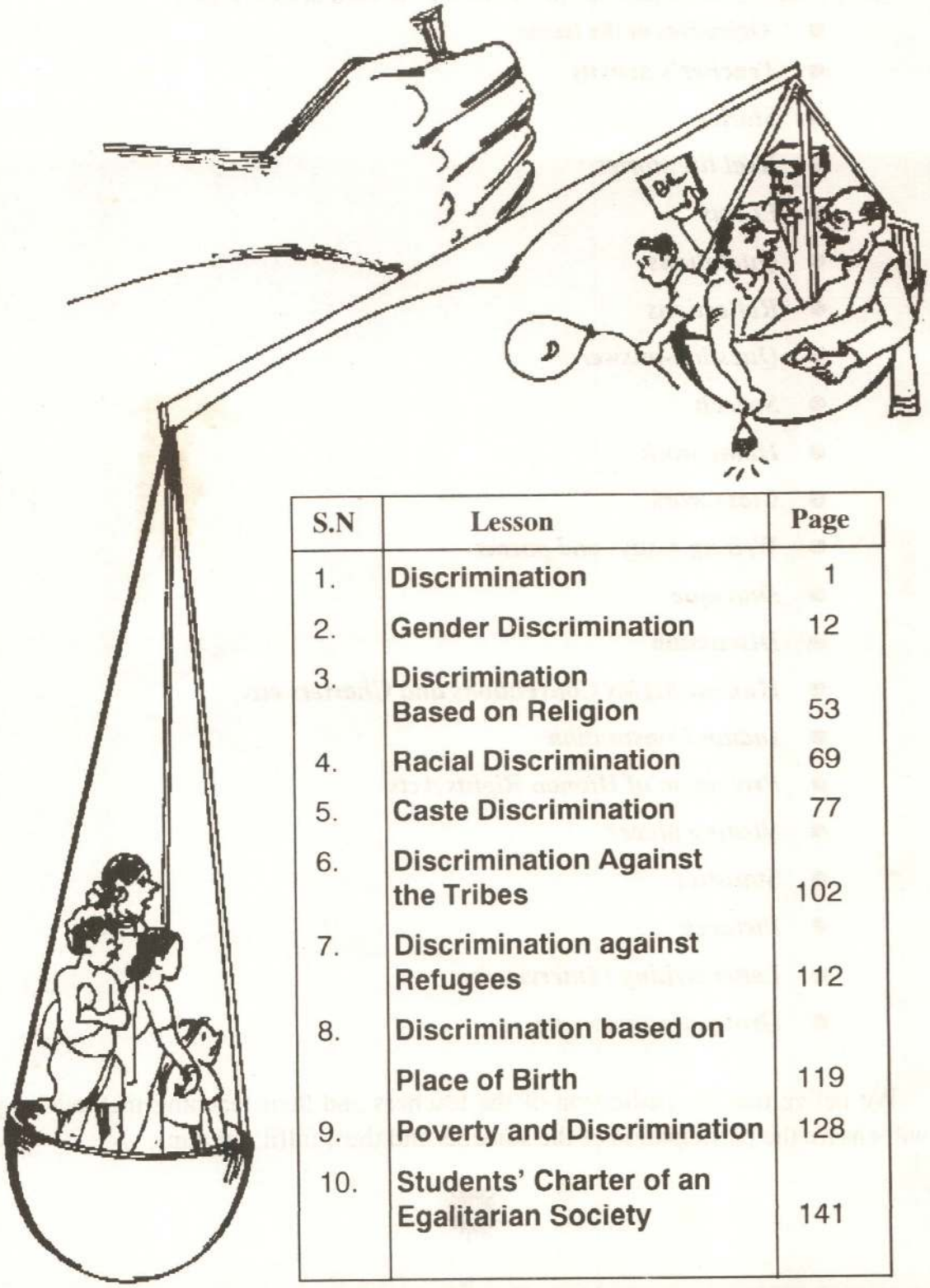
Lesson plan:

We know Human Rights Education cannot be text-book-based, and so, as far as possible, we have structured the lessons in such a way as to encourage student participation. As the text is prescribed for the students who have completed two years of Human Rights Education, the course content is heavy. But we have tried to present it in a very simple language.

Many teaching techniques like the following are used in each lesson.

- ***Objectives of the lesson***
- ***Teacher's activity***
- ***Stories***
- ***Real life stories***
- ***Poems***
- ***Quotations***
- ***Reflections***
- ***Question-answer***
- ***Speech***
- ***Home work***
- ***Class work***
- ***Writing essays and poems***
- ***Dialogue***
- ***Discussion***
- ***Human Rights Conventions and Charters etc.,***
- ***Indian Constitution***
- ***Protection of Human Rights Acts***
- ***Visiting places***
- ***Statistics***
- ***Pictures***
- ***Letter writing / Interviewing***
- ***Group discussion etc***

We belive that the dedication of the teachers and their teaching methodology will ensure the participation of the students and thus, fulfil our aim.



1.Discrimination

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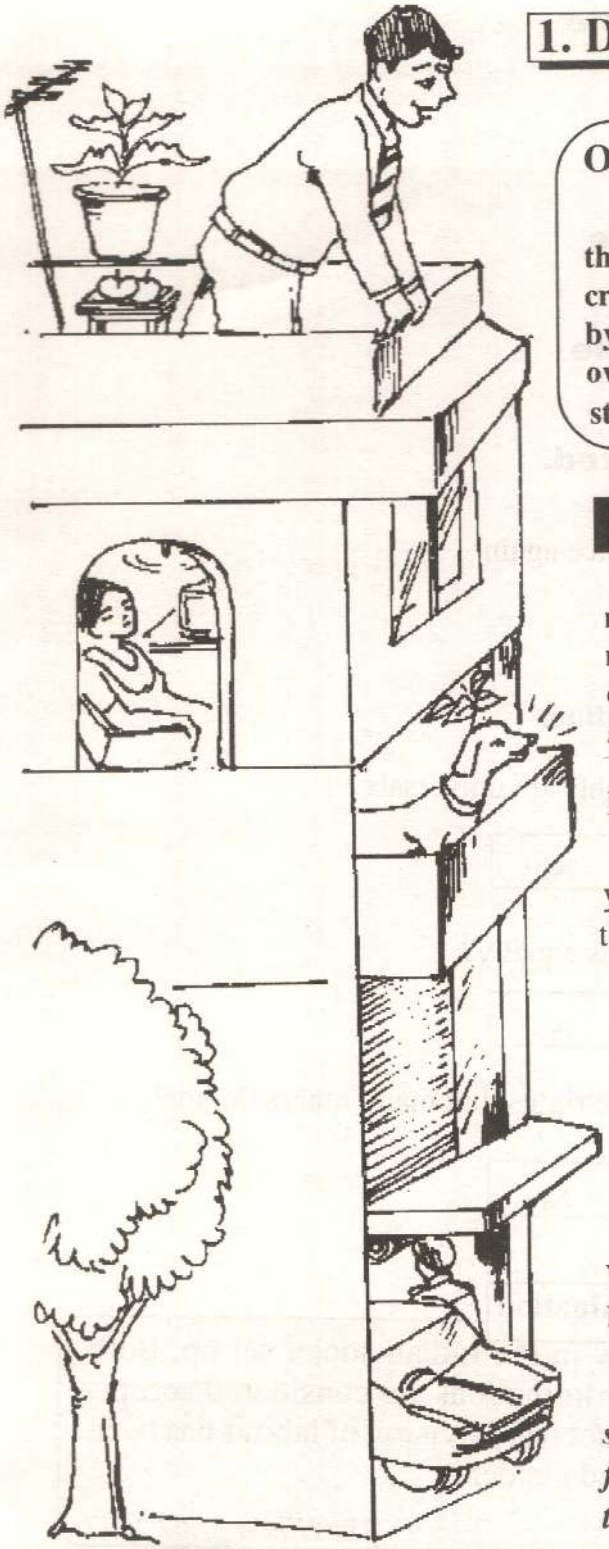


Objectives

The aim of this lesson is to make the students understand what discrimination is. The teacher explains by drawing examples from his/her own experience and that of his/her students.

Teacher's Activity

The teacher takes the students out, makes them sing songs dealing wih human rights and encourages them to share their experiences with others, and thus creates a condusive atmosphere.

Dear Students,

Please recollect what you have studied in the previous years.

What are the features of Human Rights?

The students should repeat the following after the teacher.

a) Human rights belong to **people**.

b) Human rights are **universal**.

c) Human rights are **indivisible**

d) Human rights are **inalienable**.

e) Human rights are **interrelated.**

Ask the students to say this aloud once again

After that, ask them the following questions

a) Do you believe that human rights are universal?

Yes | No

B) Do all people enjoy these rights equally?

Yes | No

c) Do you think some enjoy these rights, but many others do not?

Yes | No

Discrimination

Discrimination is an unwritten law in the Indian social set up. Both caste-based and gender-based discriminations are considered acceptable social orders. In our stratified society, division of labour has been made on the basis of community and gender.

The Hindu 11.07.2002

e) We say,

"Human beings have equal rights;
They have equal human dignity;
They are equally honorable"

Then, why is that certain rights are denied to some people?

For example :

- Why are the poor denied the rights enjoyed by the rich?
- Why are the lower caste people denied the rights enjoyed by the rich?
- Why are they denied the rights enjoyed by the upper caste people?
- Why are women denied the rights enjoyed by men?

f) Why are the people of one religion denied the rights enjoyed by the people of another religion?

Some enjoy all these rights; but many are denied these rights.

Some have these rights, while some others do not have.

This is what we call discrimination.

On what grounds do we discriminate against or in favour of people who are supposed to have the same rights, dignity and self-respect?

Caste

Community

Language

Gender

Place of Birth

Wealth

Do you agree that discriminating between of people who ought to be treated equally is violence?

If it is violence,

is it not a **violation of Human Rights?**

Dear Students

Don't you think that you should know more about discrimination that denies

- **Equality**
- **Liberty** and
- **Dignity**
- **Respect**

Can we allow denial of equality in a democratic country? Can we allow

Discrimination

Segregation

Repression

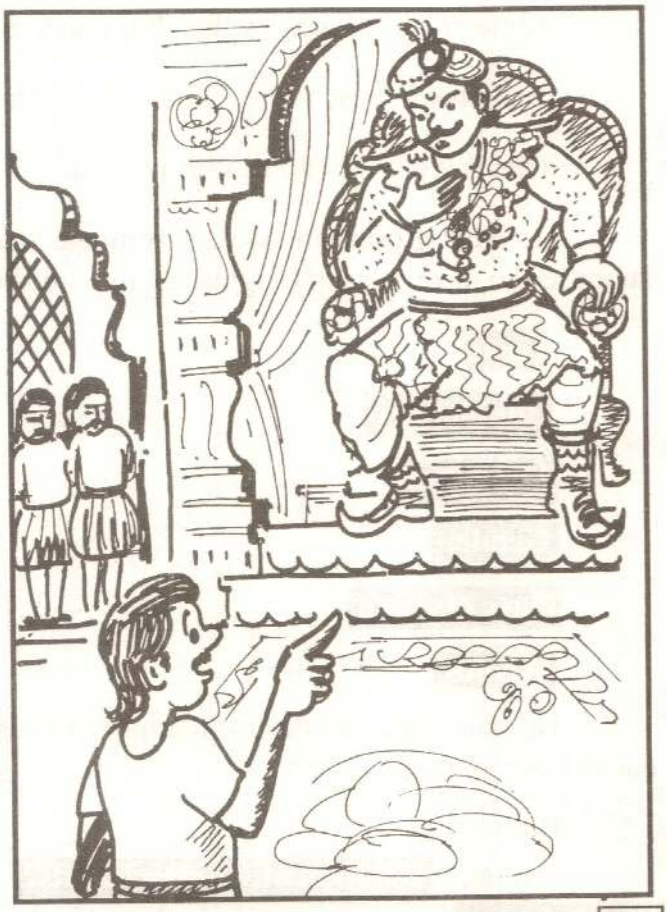
Alienation and

Exploitation?

Students : No sir, we won't.

Teacher : Shall we read a few stories to know about the different forms of discrimination prevalent in our society?

(Divide the students into four groups. Ask each group to read a story. After reading it, ask them the following questions. They can write down the answers and share their views with others.



Story-1

What is the Price?

It was the time when slave trade was rampant. The king of a far off country made a fortune by trading in slaves.

One day slave traders came to his palace to sell slaves. A strange idea flashed through the king's mind.

He said to the courtiers "Listen, all of you. Every slave has a price. So also every human being. What is my price? I'll give one lakh to anybody who guesses it right".

Everybody was tempted and they said something. But the king was not satisfied. It was then a man in rags stood up and said,

"Our Sovereign Lord! I can guess your price. But you must guarantee the safety of my life."

The king smirked. "Come on, say".

"The price of a slave is one thousand rupees. You difinitely deserve more. M mm... you are worth one thousand and one rupee", said the poor man cooly.

"Just that much? Remember I am the king. Am I worth just one rupee more than a slave?" The king was nonplussed.

"My Soverign Lord!. The slave toils day in and day out and one can give any amount for his service. But, you don't do any work at all, and so you are worthless. But your costumes and ornaments have a price, say one thousand. Though worthless, you are a human being, and so your price can be fixed as one rupee.

"God did not create men as masters and slaves. He hasn't given the rich ten eyes and the poor, two.

"Though you are a king, you indulge in slave trade. You are guilty and a guilty man does not worth more than one rupee", declared the poor man.

The king thought for a while. He gave the poor man one lakh rupees as promised and vowed,

"Hereafter, I'll never buy or sell slaves. From this day, slave trade is abolished totally".

Dinamalar-May 28, 2004

Reflection

1. Rich or poor, in power or out of it, basically all human beings are equals. How does the story establish this?

.....

.....

2. Why is that some people consider themselves superior to others?
   (e.g) Wealth?
   Job?
   Beauty?

   What else?

.....

3. How does pride cause discrimination among human beings?

.....

Story-2

A Pet Dog and a Poor Servant Girl

Jimmy was ill and Prema felt very sad. She started nursing the dog, though it was getting late for her husband. To make matters worse, the maid Chellamma did not turn up.

"Ma" The husband of the maid was at the door way. He was scratching his head.

"What the hell happened to your wife? Didn't come for work? Why?" Prema flew into a temper.

"My daughter has sud-

denly taken ill. She is expecting a child. Delivery is due next month. But they have advised me to admit her in the hospital immediately. She must be given blood or else, she cannot be delivered of the child". He was sobbing.

"Why don't you give your blood?" quipped Prema.

They refuse. "They say I am not healthy enough".

"Then why not your wife?" She sounded sarcastic.

"Oh, she is skeletal. She has been starving for so long. How can she give?"

"Then do one thing. Will you do what I tell you?" she asked.

"Tell me Ma, I will." He was beaming.

"You, and for having married you, your wife, and being the child of yours, your daughter all the three hang yourself. You can be free from all these problems."

She was red-cheeked with rage. But he continued heedlessly.

"Ma.Chellamma asked me to get atleast one hundred rupees from you".

Pat came the reply.

"H mm... I am worried about the medical expense of Jimmy. Not a paisa can I spare."

"Anand, go and bring an auto. Hurry up!. We must take Jimmy to hospital." She was preparing to leave.

-Arumbu, July 2001

Reflection

1. We discriminate between human beings as

Rich	-	Poor
Man	-	Woman
Higher Caste	-	Lower Caste

a. Who are discriminated against in this story?

b. By who are they discriminated against?

2. Have such incidents happened in your village/town?

a. Did you feel sorry about such happenings?

b. What can be the reason for Prema's arrogance? Can you guess?

Story-3

Another World

Akila's parents were very rich. They would get her anything she asked for and would never say 'no' to her. It was her birth day. Guests thronged her house and she got so many nice presents.

Akila went to her room and wore the golden chain inlaid with gems, presented by her parents. Then she started admiring her beauty, glancing at herself in the mirror. Suddenly she heard a noise. She turned back and saw a girl in rags standing there.

"Hei, who are you?"

"I am Kannamma..... I have come here by mistake".

"Don't lie. Say you've come to steal"

Screwing up her face, Akila threatened her.

Tears rolled down Kannamma's cheeks.

"No... not at all. My father works in your garden. Mother is ill, so I brought food for him."

Akila was terribly irritated. The girl had spoiled her mood. But another shock awaited her. When she turned back, she saw a swallow flying out of the room, picking the beautiful chain. She ran after the swallow. Dropping the chain on the roof top of a small tiled house, it flew away. Akila entered the house and found a lady lying on an old cot. A small girl was giving fomentation to her. Now and then she went to the wood-burning oven and did something. Meanwhile she was reading a book. Akila looked at her face. Yes... the same girl... Kannamma!.

"You've the test tomorrow :...poor child....hmm...I give you such a lot of trouble....." Mother was coughing. Kannamma went near and stroked her chest.

"Nothing ma..... It's a pleasure to take care of you, Ma. I'll manage to study." She covered her mother with a blanket and continued to read.

Akila was speechless for a moment. She compared her condition with that of Kannamma. Her eyes welled up. "So far I have never thought about these people why? But now...? What's the swallow's message?"

-Dinamani, Siruvar Mani 02.08.2003

Students! Have you read the story? How do you feel? Are they imaginary stories? Don't we find such things happening in our village or town?

Reflection

1. **Are there rich children like Akila in your town/village?**
   - Write down the facilities enjoyed by these children.
     (e.g) Car, bungalow, costly dress etc.
2. **Are there children like Kannamma?**
   - What kind of life do people like Kannamma lead?
   - Are their fathers coolies?
   - Are their mothers house maids?
   - Do they live in huts?
   - Do children like Kannamma go to school?
   - If at all they go, what kind of schools are they?
   - Private Schools?
   - Government Schools?
   - What is the medium of instruction?
   - Tamil?
   - English?
   - What about their dress?
     They have only one set?
     They wear worn-out dress?
     They wear patched colthes?
3. **We know that every body has equal rights. Then what can be the reason for the disparity between Akila and Kannamma?**

✪ Akila's beautiful dress and Kannamma's dirty torn clothes

✪ Nutritious food for Akila ✪ Just gruel for Kannamma

✪ Spacious House ✪ Just a hut

Why is this disparity?

Story-4

Please, be Kind

Muthu was a salt vendor. He used to peddle salt, taking two sacks of salt on a donkey's back. He made a profit. But he became greedy and wanted to sell more. So he loaded three sacks on the donkey's back. The donkey couldn't bear the weight. Its back ached, and it couldn't move an inch.

Muthu got wild and he thrashed the donkey. The donkey strained every nerve and walked along. Muthu was very happy because the profit was more. But the donkey was helpless and it cursed the day it was born.

The next day also Muthu loaded three sacks on the donkey. It could not stir an inch. Muthu thrashed it mercilessly and the donkey brayed in pain. But Muthu didn't care for it.

On the way, they had to cross a river. Unable to walk along, the donkey slumped down while crossing the river. Muthu goaded it and beat it. But the donkey didn't budge. Part of the salt got dissolved, the weight of the load decreased and the donkey was able to get up and walk. Muthu lost a lot. The same thing happened the next day also.

Muthu was mad with rage. He wanted to teach the donkey a lesson. On the next day he loaded the donkey with three sacks of cotton. If the donkey dipped the load in water, the load would get soaked and increase in weight and so, thereafter, the donkey wouldn't do it again, he thought. Some people had advised him to do so, to teach the donkey a lesson.

But the donkey carried the load with much case. It didn't slump down at all.

He understood. Only when more than two sacks were loaded, did the donkey slump down in the water. Other wise it had no problem at all. He decided not to force the donkey to carry more than two sacks thereafter.

-Arumbu, March-1998

Reflection

- ⇨ Do you agree that overloading the donkey is a merciless act?
- ⇨ Do you say, after all a donkey has been created only to serve man, so it is natural that it has to suffer? Or, if you disagree with this statement, say why.
- ⇨ Is it right on the part of a dumb creature like the donkey to show its protest by slumping down in the water? Why? If you say it is wrong, give your reasons.
- ⇨ Have you come across people like Muthu and people who work like the donkey?

- Compare a donkey to a

Agricultural labourer

Bonded labourer and

Child labourer.

You'll understand what discrimination is.

Home Work

a. Write an essay on the topic

"Discrimination is a form of violence and

it is a violation of Human Rights"

.....

b. Write a few slogans against discrimination, on the black board.

.....

.....

2. Gender Discrimination

2. Gender Discrimination

Discriminated Women

Objectives

- To point out that discrimination against women who form half of humanity is a violation of human rights.
- To present graphic pictures of discrimination against women at various stages of life.
- To explain that a society where there is no equality between men and women can never be a mature democratic society.
- As it is impossible to put an end to slavery as long as women are enslaved, attempts must be made to create this awarness among children at this stage itself.
- They must be trained to put an end to the foolish act of humiliating women and to accept them as equals.

Woman: Is she a doll?

What do women do today?

They are just dolls. Think for a while. They are used for the welfare of men and to satisfy them. They are only objects that make men proud of. What else?

A woman cooks food for the man, takes care of his home; begets children for him. Moreover, she is a doll, decked with ornaments, and used for his entertainment. What else is she? Think for a while.

What kind of justice is this? Is it right? Do you find any other creature than man where the female exists only for the male? Just because women do not find this humiliating, should man continue to treat them so cruelly? This is my question.

-Periyar

For the purpose of the present Convention, the term "discrimination against women" shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of ipairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or nay other field.

-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article-1

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

(a) To embody the principle of the equlity of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;

-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article-2

Teacher's Activity

- The teacher recollects what has been taught about discrimination.

- The point highlighted in this lesson is discrimination against women. The lesson may be taught through role play. The women's Rights Day celebration is going on.

Women's Rights Day Celebration

On March 8th, Women's Rights Day was celebrated at Tamukkam Grounds, Madurai. Delegates from various parts of Tamil Nadu and some parts of India attended the meeting. Human Rights teachers and students too participated in it. Mrs. Lakshmi IAS, Collector Madurai presided over the function.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are going to discuss how women who form half of humanity are discriminated against, just beacause they are biologically different. A step by step analysis of various aspects of discrimination against women at different stages of their life is to be made.

I request Mrs. Selvi to talk about the initial stage of discrimination.

1.In the Dream World

Even in the dream world, women are discriminated against. Yes, it happens. From the womb to the tomb, women are discriminated against. Do you know, even before a baby girl is conceived, it is subject to this kind of discrimination?

No person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law

-The constitution of India, Article 21

A happy wedding and the happy married life that follows. It is natural that they want to have a baby after a few months or a year. Nothing wrong.

Thiruvalluvar too says that children are the ornaments of a happy married life.It is true. Married life finds fulfilment only in parent hood. We find couples sharing this view in our village, town also. But do they accept any child, male or female? Or do they like to have only a baby boy? Even before the foetus is formed, even in their dreams, the parents do not wish to have a baby girl.

Couples do dream about baby boys; but do they dream of baby girls?

Discrimination in the dream world too! What is the reason? I ask you, students who have assembled in very large numbers. Ask you parents. Did they dream of any child or only a male child?

A Girl Student : We'll ask our parents.

(Every body laughs)

Reflection

a. Why do people dislike baby girls?

b. Why do people like to have baby boys?

Analyse the views of the society, on male and female children.

Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life.

-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966, Section 6.1.

2. As a Foetus

President: Discrimination against women starts at the dream world itself. Well, it is really something very sad. Now I call upon Dr. Kala to explain how this discrimination is practised at the foetal stage.

Kala : We dream of male children. But what if our dream is not realiszed? Why bother? We have the device to find out the sex of the foetus itself. Find it out and abort. That's all.

Participant : Who is responsible for the formation of a female foetus? Only the woman and not the man?

Stage	Manifestations of discrimination against women
Before Birth	Abortion, sexual abuse, violence against pregnant women
As a Baby	Female infanticide. scolding, discrimination in medical attention and food
As a Child	Child marriage, sexual abuse by family members and others, child prostitution.
As a girl	Betrayed by lover, financial exploitation, violence at work spots, sexual abuse, forced prostitution, abduction.
As a Wife	Cheating by men, family members, violence, dowry, murder, phychological violence, sexual violence at work spots, sexual violence against the handicapped.
At the old age	Discrimination against widows, slander.

-Human Scape July 16, 2003

Kala : There is a wrong notion widely prevalent in the society that women are responsible for the formation of the female foetus. The husband and his family members think so, and they look down upon her. But actually, it is the choromosome in the male that decides the sex of the child. So, in reality, it is the man who decides the sex of the child and not the woman. Unaware of this scientific fact, we hold women responsible for the birth of baby girls.

But, a foetus has life and has the right to live. At the foetal stage, discrimination starts with identifying the foetus as male or female and ends in aborting the foetus, if it is female. The female foetus is refused the right to live and thus it is discriminated against. What is assailed is not the foetus alone. The dignity of the parents, the creators of the foetus, and their rights too!.

As such, two kinds of violation take place here.

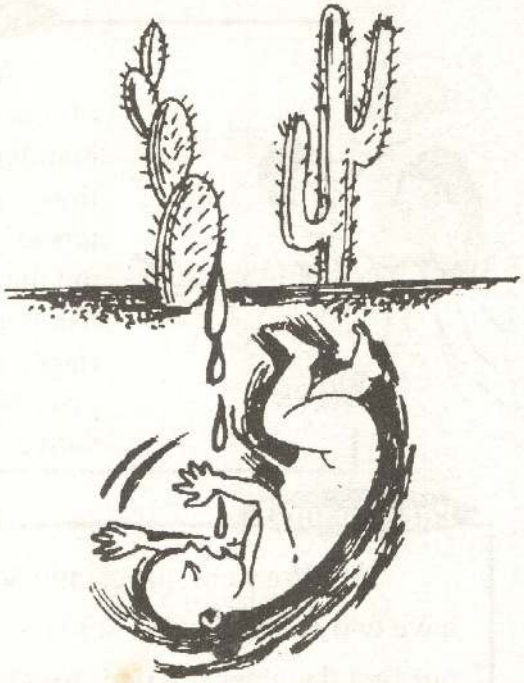
a) Abortion. b) Discrimination against the female foetus after identifying the sex and the abortion that follows, as an act of discrimination.

But nobody has the right to punish a life at the foetal stage itself, without enquiry and, above all, without its permission.

3. As Babies

``Ma . .. .!
Wayward wild animals
That stray into villages
Are handed over, safe and sound,
To the forest officials,
Thanks to legal protection.
Are we,
The female foetus
Worse than these carnivores?
You pack us to our grave
Feeding us with the milky jusice of
The poisonous plant.

- Shanthi Natarajan, Pothenur



Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-3

President : Is the word 'baby' masculine or feminine?

It covers both. But, do we give as much respect to baby girls as baby boys? No..Not at all... Why do we discriminate against bady girls?

Let's listen to some of the participants.

Participant-1

It's a herculean task to get a girl married off nowadays. Already we have a hand to mouth existence and struggle to manage things. How can we get our daughters married off, offering a huge dowry? So we kill them at birth itself.

Participant-2

We can tighten our belt and manage to marry off our daughters. But, the fellows will go on demanding things and force out daughters to get things from us, or else, they will beat our daughters and send them back, or illtreat them through out their life. We think, it would be better for our daughters to die than experiencing hell after marriage. Do you think we kill our daughters happily? No... not at all ..... simply we have no alternative.

Participant-3

Yes. We were sufficiently well off once. We have two daughters. We sold our farmland to get our first daughter married. And to settle our second daughter, we sold our house too. Now we live in a hut. In this difficult condition how can we afford to have daughters?

Reflection

a. Try to understand the anguish of a mother while killing her daughter.

b. Who is guilty of forcing the mother to kill her own daughter?

4. As a Child

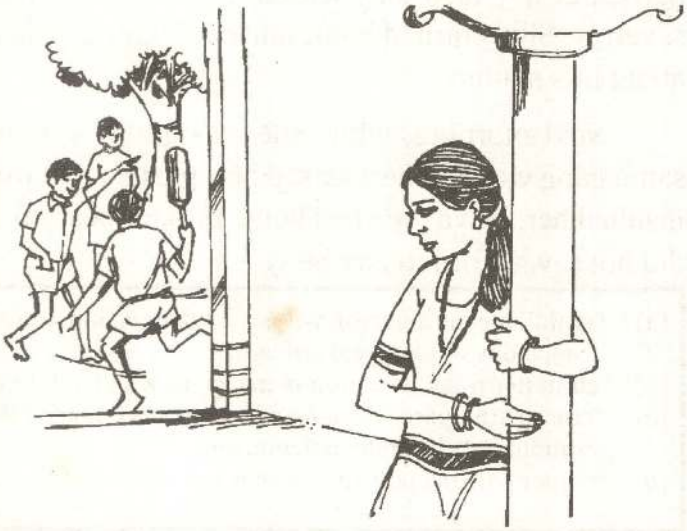
President : We saw how baby girls are discriminated against. As they grow up into children, they must be able to understand things. Do they escape discrimination at least at this stage? The participants may share your experiences.

Experience-I

I am Sarasu. I am 15. My parents withdrew me from school after VIII std. But my elder brother is doing BA in a college. My younger brother has completed HSC and is also going to be admitted in a college. I also want to study. But my parents do not allow me. They say, "After all you are a girl. Why should you study at all?"

Experience-II

My name is Vanitha. I am fifteen and am studying in a government school. In the evenings, after I return from school, I want to play with my friends. But my parents don't all me. When my younger brother is allowed to play, why don't they allow me?



Reflection

Are girls discriminated against only in education and in playing games? What are the other areas? List them.

5.In her Youth

President :

Journalist have come over here. Young girls who have been affected may share your experiences.

Sumathi : My parents say, since I have reached the age of puberty, I must change may natural behaviour.

"You are a pubescent girl. Don't go out and play as you did earlier. Don't talk to every body. Don't go alone Dont talk aloud...Dont laugh...Walk slowly", they say.

"They impose too many restrictions and have crippled my freedom. Why?"

Malathy : This is what happened in our village.

There was a girl called Lakshmi Priya. She was a college student. Every Sunday, when she went to temple, a gang of youngsters would follow her and tease her. On a particular day also they teased her and she warned them severely. She returned home and complained to her parents about this matter.

Next morning, while she was going to college, the same gang waylaid her, teased her, pushed her around and insulted her. Priya returned home broken-hearted. But, she did not say a word to any body.

(a) "child" means a person who, if a male, is under eighteen years of age, and if a female, is under sixteen years of age;
(b) "child marriage" means a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child;
(c) "contracting party" to a marriage means either of the parties whose marriage is or is about to be thereby solemnized;
(d) "minor" means person of either sex who is under eighteen years of age,

-Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929

Questions

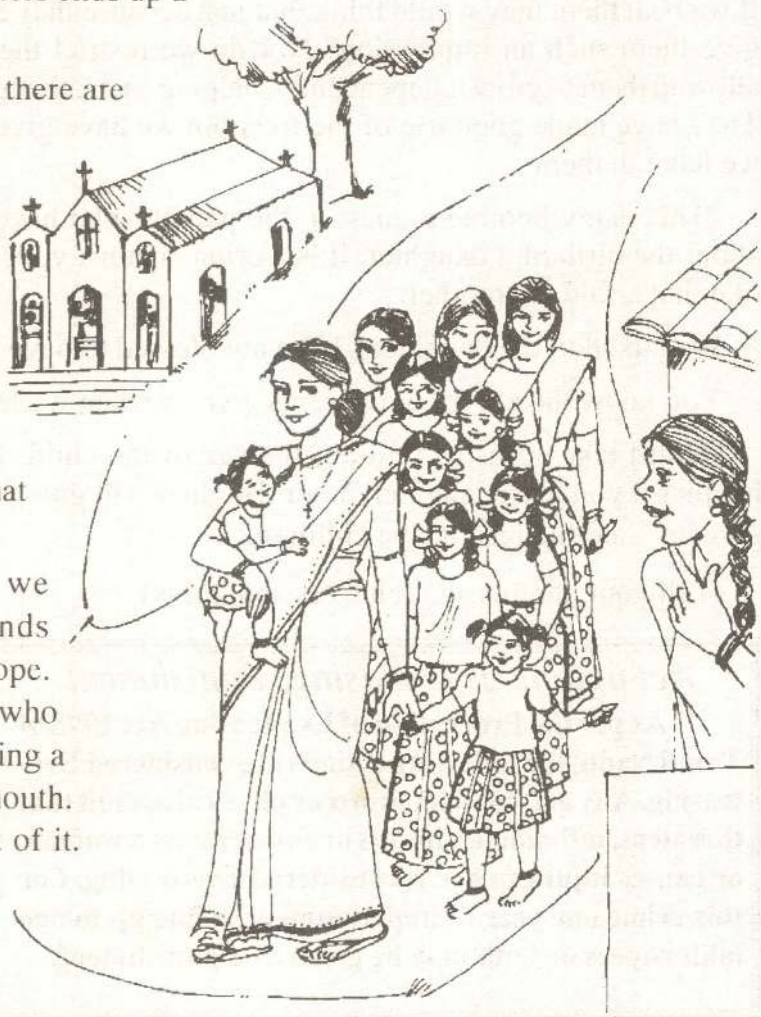
1. Why is the girl teased?
2. Why do they tease her? Is it because she is beautiful, or, do they want to insult her?
3. Who do we tease and who, we don't?
4. Can teasing be considered discrimination?

The woman Blessed with Ten Daughers !

There is a proverb in Tamil.

"A king with five daughters ends up a penniless beggar".

Imagine the condition if there are ten.



A couple from Madurai have ten daughters. They stand out well against parents who get disappointed at the birth of the first daughter and, are broken hearted with the second.

"I have never felt sorry that I don't have a boy"

"We are not rich and we struggle to make both ends meet. But we never lose hope. Of course there are people who kill their baby girls by forcing a grain of paddy into their mouth. But we have never thought of it. Why ! When I had twins in my fifth delivery, people offered to adopt one of the babies. But we refused.

All our daughters have been educated at least upto HSC, and six of them have been married off.

Others are doing their college studies or working some where. Our second daughter alone has refused to marry.

We didn't give any dowry to any of our daughters. Nor has one of them returned home weeping, demanding something.

We treat all our daughters equally. To make them feel that we are impartial, we buy uniform ribbons, bags and clothes for them. For Christmas we buy 40 mts of the same cloth, cut it and stitch clothes for all the children. It would be nice seeing all the daughters in uniform. The whole street would watch us taking our daughters to church on Sundays.

You may not believe. Neither my husband nor I have ever touched our children. If we beat them they would think that just because they are girls we beat them. Why give them such an impression? Nor do we restrict them unnecessarily. We have allowed them to grow independently, helping each other grow. They are bold enough. They have made good use of the freedom we have given them and the confidence we have in them.

"This is my humble request to the parents who have daughters. If you feel sad about the birth of a daughter, it is a crime against your children. Don't even think like that", said the mother.

We talked to the daughters. "We are blessed to have such parents.

You know the advice our parents give us when we leave home after marriage?

"Don't take scans to find out the sex of the child. Be happy if you get a son; happier if you get a daughter. Your daughter will give you as much pleasure as you give us" said the responsive children.

(Tell your parents and relatives about this)

- Aval Vikatan - 2004

Act against Eve-teasing, Punishment

As per the Prevention of Eve-teasing Act 1998 of Tamil Nadu, the following actions are considered Eve-teasing. Any act, conduct, word or physical assault that threatens, intimidates, insults or embarrasses a woman, or causes injury to her is considered Eve-teasing. For this crime one year of imprisonment, a fine up to one lakh rupees or both may be given as a punishment.

- India Today - 31-3-1999

6. As a Bride

President: Let us read the following poems and see how a young girl waiting to be married is discriminated against.

1. Come they home,
To **procure** a bride;
They fix a **price,**
A little high ;
Your loving parents,
On seeing the groom,
Go ahead;
Not a word to you,
A lifeless **stone** are you.

-Bharati Dasan

2. *Our Markets*

In the cattle market,
Teeth and whores on the forehead
Decide the price
In our marriage market,
Our gait and plait
Decide the price,
We have to offer.
The one who buys,
Pays the price.
But in our market,
Commodities pay

Dowry Deaths

- *Those who committed suicide because of dowry arrears-4,769*
- *Those who immolated themselves - 6,414*
- *Those who died in stove accidents - 2,143*
- *Those who were ill-treated by husbands and in-laws - 2,514*
- *Those who died (Total) - 15,840*

-Dinamalar, 26.11.1987

Not only in cash,
Brand new cars,
Gold and bungalows
Are bartered here
Along with us.

None has the might
This custom to fight,
Time honoured,
Age-old custom.

Affluent donkeys,
Offering a dowry,
Can get husbands
Tall and handsome.

- R. Veluchamy

Answer the Question

⇨ What are the words that express the slavery of women in the above poems.

⇨ What are the differences between trading in the cattle market and the mar riage-market?

⇨ Do you understand, after reading the poems, how women are discriminated against in the marriage-market? Explain.

Shall we ask this Question?

A woman separated from her husband is called 'Valavetti' in Tamil. How is the man separated from his wife called?

A woman who has lost her husband is called 'Vidavai' in Tamil. How is a man who has lost his wife called?

'Prostitue' is the word used for a woman. How is a man who commits the same offence called?

7. As a Wife

President: Women are discriminated against through out their life, starting from the dream of the parents to their marrigeable age. The girl becomes a wife. But does she become really a better half? Or discriminated against? Is she a partner of her husband? Or slave? Is she treated equally? Here are a few excerpts from news papers.

1) The story of Anjana

I am Anjana. I am 30. I belong to Orissa. I am one-of the four children of a rich and disciplined family. I got the state rank in English Literature.

When I was a student, I propagated vehemently against dowry. But I was married off to Suresh, a forest officer, offering a huge dowry.

Torture began right from day one. My husband burnt me with cigarette butts, demanding more dowry. On the first night itself I realised that he was an addict. He tortured me all the more for having come to know about this.

The whole family would beat me. They would ask whether I was not ashamed of myself. At times they tortured me psychologically. They would offer poison or a rope and tempt me to commit sucide.

But I was determined. I vowed to show them that I can live. They were scheming to do away with me by divorcing me. Calling me mad, they gave me injections meant for serious mental cases. In the mean time, I had two sons.

The climax was on April 4th 1995. They took me to a mental hopital in a semi-conscious condition and admitted me there. Days, weeks, and months passed by but nobody came to see me.

2) Madavi's Mechnical Life

Every day I get up, prepare breakfast and lunch, get my children ready to school, pack food for my husband, pack them off, take bath, have an apologie of a breakfast, pack my lunch, run after the city bus, elbow my way in, drudge at the office, return in a packed city bus, reach home.....my God ! Do I get a minute of respite? Not at all....not a second....work, work, work working through out the day.

3) Gandhimathi-the Poor Wife of an Addict

Within four months after my marrige, I realised that my husband was an addict. I understood that he had been an addict for years together. He had contacts with other addicts too.

But he used to beat me mercilessly. Knowing that I would not be safe there, I left him and returned to my parents.

4) Dowry Kalyani

I was given 10 sovereigns of gold and Rs.10,000/- in cash as dowry, at the time of my marriage. But my family life was short-lived. My husband was with me for 25 days only. Fully drunk, he used to beat me for no reason. I came to my parents' house, a few days after marriage, according to our custom. But he left me there. I wrote to him many times, but to no avail. My father died three years back. I lead a lonely life, without anybody to support me.

5) Alagammal-the Lady Put to Shame at the Village Panchayat

Alagammal worked in a nutritious meals centre. Her husband married another woman. To continue to live with Alagammal, he demanded her to transfer an acre of fertile land belonging to her father in his name. The village Panchayat leader advised her to comply with her husband's demand. She refused to do so and approached the court and got a divorce.

For taking the matter to the court, disobeying the village leader, she was ostracized by the village community.

One day, Alagammal was ploughing her land hiring a tractor. The village Panchayat leader prevented her form ploughing.

A meeting of the village elders was convened to discuss the matter and Alagammal was fined Rs. 51,000/-.

The village elders told her that the fine would be reduced if she fell at their feet and beg pardon. Alagammal did so 47 times and got the fine reduced to Rs. 4000/-

-Theekkathir-05.08.2003

They are
Champagne cups,
Objects of sex,
Never, understood,
Never honoured.

The thali around their neck,
A sign of slavery.
It hurt, burdened and
Welled up their eyes.

Should their partners die,
They are widowed.
Sans the jewels, they are
Sobbing bushes,
Weeping buds.

When shall this
Ordeal by fire
Be put out?

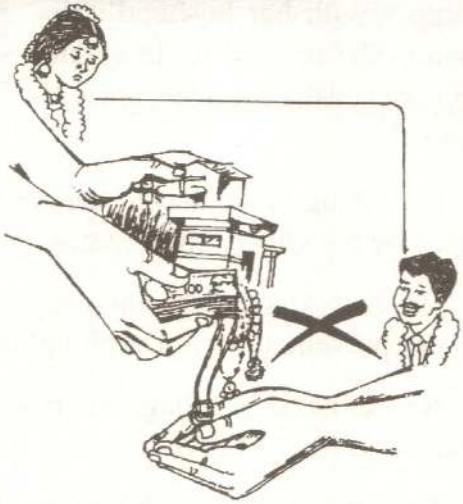
-M. Metha

Reflection

- In Tamil Nadu, we call wife 'ruler of a home', 'life partner' and 'leader'. But are they treated like this?
- Why is that a wife is not given her rights?
- You may know a family where the wife is treated equally. Share what you know about the family with your friends.

The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

Definition of dowry



In this Act, "dowry"means any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly-

a) by one party to a marriage to the other party to the marriage; or

b) by the parents of either party to a marriage or by any other person, to either party to the marriage or to any other person;

Penalty for giving or taking dowry

If any person, after the commencement of this Act, gives or takes or a bets the giving or taking of dowry, he shall be punishable (with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than five years, and with fine which shall not be less that fifteen thousand rupees or the amount of the value of such dowry, whichever is more):

Penalty for demanding dowry

If any person demands directly or indirectly, from the parents or other relatives or guardian of a bride or bridegroom, as the case may be, any dowry, he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than six months but which may extend to two years and with fine shall may extend to ten thousand rupees.

8. As a Daughter in Law

President : A married woman is called a 'wife' and 'leader' of the home. At the same time, she is also called daughter-in-law. She is the wife of a man, and by law, a daughter of the parents of her husband. Does her status improve once she becomes a daughter in law? Or, is she discriminated against? So far she was the daughter of her parents and sister of her brothers. After marriage, she is the wife and life-partner of a man. From being the daughter of her parents, she becomes the daughter of her husband's parents. Listen to the experience of a daughter in law.

Gomathy:

What do we do when we transplant a seedling? We do it without any damage to the seedling. After transplanting, we water the plant, fence around it and protect it. We wait till it roots. We watch patiently. We take so much care. But, do we give the same attention to a woman when she is 'transplanted' into a new home? Rooted to her parental home for more than twenty years she enters a new home. But do we give her the opportunity to adopt herself to the new reality?

New place,
New faces,
New atmoshphere and
New customs.

Even cuisine may be different. Should we not wait till she understands all these things? They simply say, "She doesn't know anything. She can't cook. Nor is she sharp enough".

The husband advises her not to care for anything and to adjust with everything.

She has no role to play in deciding the future of her children.

She should not talk aloud. Should not express her feelings. Must obey the dictates of her

husband. Must bring a huge dowry. Must do the chores without complaining. Must not talk highly of her parental home. The husband earns. She can also earn for her husband, but has no right to spend.

If she is a working woman, things are worse still. Twice the hardship... twice exploited...The husband works only at the office, but the wife, both at home and outside. She carries twice the burden.

Workers toil for eight hours. But there is no time limit for the drudgery of a wife-cum-daughter-in-law.

They are simply dolls. If there are more than a daughter-in-law in a family, the one with the higher/highest dowry enjoys some favour. They have to live life in anxiety.

President

Who is a daughter-in-law? The wife becomes the daughter-in-law. Wife or daughter-in-law, do we treat her as a person? What is her role in the running of the family? What role does she play in begetting children and bringing them up?

What is her role in deciding the future of her grown up children? Does she have the right to keep her identity as a woman? We must raise such questions.

9. As a Mother:

President: A young woman marries, becomes a wife and daughter-in-law, and then a mother. Motherhood is a gift of God. We consider mother a temple and parents, gods.

Male? or Female?

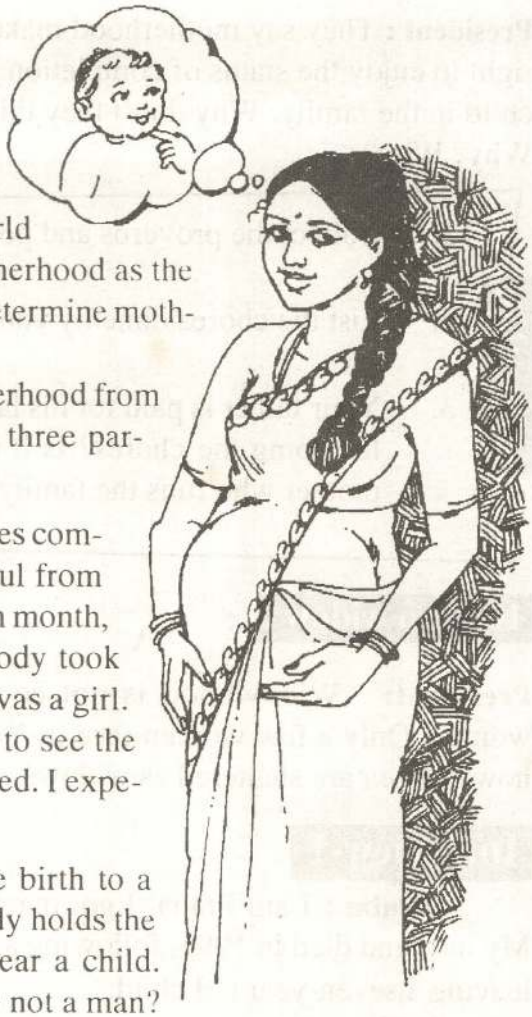
Doctors use a code language to say whether the newborn is a boy or a girl. If a boy, they say "Blue sky. Your child will play foot ball". The child is healthy and chubby and it looks like a doll"means it is a baby girl.

Source : India Today, 10th November 2003

Not only that. We call nature, Mother Nature. Motherhood is also a natural phenomenon. It is a part of life and the society feels happy about it.

A woman becomes complete only as a mother. Whatever it be, how does the world estimate motherhood? Does it consider motherhood as the right of a woman? What are the factors that determine motherhood?

It is a pity that we have to view even motherhood from the human rights' angle. In this discussion, three participants exchange their views.



Sumathi : Is it not a fact that marriage becomes complete only with child birth? I was very careful from the moment I became pregnant. In the seventh month, they took me to my parental home. Everybody took care of me and I gave birth to a baby. But it was a girl. Not a soul from my husband's family came to see the child for three months. I was very much pained. I experienced greater pain than the labour pain.

Vanitha : Why? If a woman does not give birth to a child, she is called a 'barren woman'. Nobody holds the husband responsible if his wife does not bear a child. When a woman is condemned 'barren', why not a man?

Rajee: The desire to have a child is natural. It can be understood. If I die childless, nobcdy will remember me; there will be nobody to lit my pyre; and there will be no heir to my property. Giving these as the reasons, a man marries another woman, while his wife lives with him. Is it right?

Marrying again during life-time of husband or wife-Whoever, having a husband or wife living, marries in any case in which such marriage is void by reason of its taking place during the life of such husband or wife, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years, and shall also be liable to fine.

Indian Penal Code 1860, Section -494

President : They say motherhood makes a woman complete, and women have the right to enjoy the status of completion. Women alone are condemned if there is no child in the family. Why don't they think that the husband may have some defect? Why? Why?

Reflection

1. Collect the proverbs and poems connected with motherhood.
2. List the chores done by your mother from morning to night.
3. Your father is paid for his labour. Why is that your mother is not paid for doing the chores? Is it not work? Then why do we say that the mother who runs the family is 'unemployed'?

10. As a widow

President: Widowhood is not common to all women. Only a few women face it. Yes, let us see how women are shattered as widows.

Interview-1

Praba : I am Praba. I got married in 1990. My husband died in 1996, following a heart attack, leaving a seven-year old child.

I returned to my parental home. My mother was alone as my father had already died. One day I was preparing to go out to fetch water. My mother asked me to wait for some more time. "It is morning and many villagers will come to the pond. They may not like to see us, the widows as it is a bad omen. Listen to me", she said.

Interview-2

Kamala: The society has given a separate identity mark for the widows. They should wear white; should not wear flowers or vermillion mark on the forehead; should not move about freely or take part in auspicious social functions. Remarriage is also forbidden. Are these not manifestations of discrimination against women?

President: If a widow remarries, she is not given the respect due to a woman. They may marry her off again to some body who is prepared to marry her on compassionate grounds. But, she is not given due respect at his house. She is either ridiculed or pitied, and this, in a way is denial of her dignity and rights. At times, the society may approve of widow remarriage; but it never tolerates her children by the first marriage.

Read the following poem and understand the condition of a widow and how she is ill-treated

Reflection

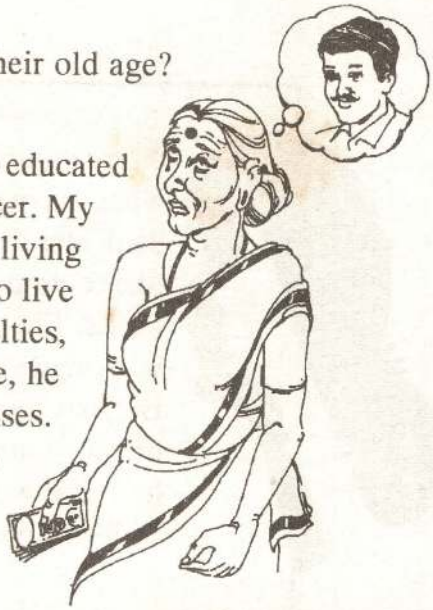
Wearing a white saree
You shrivel at home.
Should you not hover in the sky
Dressed in multi-colour?
He came like an alien
And alas, he left.
Should you wipe out the vermillion mark
Right on your forehead?

Why do you give up flowers?
Why do you sacrifice your rights?
You blank your forehead
For some one who came just days ago.
Remember.Don't lose your self-respect
Resist to save your personality
Don't lose yourself
At any cost.

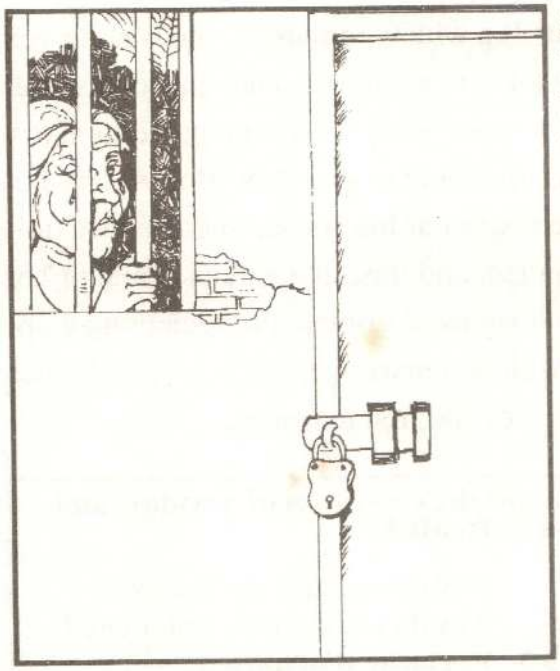
-M.Venkateshvari

11. In their old age

President: Are women treated equally at least in their old age? Let's ask a few of them.



1) Pattammal : I am 70. I have a son. We got him educated and at present, he works in the Railways as an officer. My daughter-in-law is a teacher. My husband and I are living alone in the village and we suffer a lot. We want to live with our son. Though he knows all about our difficulties, he has never invited us to live with him. Of course, he gives us enough money to take care of all our expenses. I have no other problem. But, is it enough if we have money? Is it not necessary to live as a family? Relatives, living and eating together-are all these not important?



2) Can people be so cruel ? Grahathai is 70 years old. To appropriate her property, her relatives kept her imprisoned in a small room for six years and ill-treated her. When she was freed, she looked horrible, wearing a dirty saree. Her hair was unkempt and filthy. Those who enjoyed her property worth crores of rupees, did not even give her a cake of soap. For years she was kept inside a room. She was not given oil to apply on the head. So she collected her urine in a bottle and applied it on her head. As a result, she was stinking of urine.

-Dinamalar, 7.8.2004

Old people are also people like us. They too have desires and feelings. They have the right to live in a family. They have the right to live happily and be loved by children and others. They have the right to express their views. To discard them as unwanted is a violation of their rights. Without them, we would be no where. Can we live such a comfortable life without their wisdom, advice and control? Is it not our duty to safeguard their rights?

Woman Can do

55 year old Kamaladevi is from UP. Her parents married her off when she was ten. She never went to school. After her husband died, she had to take care of her two sons and four daughters. She continued to run the hotel run by her husband. But the attempt failed. She moved to Delhi and tried to manage the family, working as a beautician. She got three of her daughters married. But they too had a hand to mouth existence. She decided to marry off her fourth child only after educating and finding a job for her. She worked day and night. Now her fourth child is at to Delhi University doing MA.

Source: Women's Link, July-September, 2002

Reflection

1. Do your grand parents live with you? Do you think your parents give them respect? Give your reasons.

2. You might have seen old people deserted on the streets and public places. Do you feel sorry that they have been denied their right to live?

Parents with a difference-A Real Story

We have seen children who desert their old parents or admit them in old-age homes.

Do you know about an old couple who look after their two mentally deranged sons, aged 38 and 41?

The derangement was the result of wrong medication. But the parents, Anaiappan and Kothai have made it their mission to take care of these children as long as they are alive.

One of the boys lost mental growth following the wrong injection given when he had fits. The next was also a victim of wrong treatment for chicken pox, primary complex and whooping cough. The third son died of wrong treatment.

The parents have spent every paisa of their earning and pension on their children. They keep both the children at home.

When asked, "why don't you admit atleast one in an asylum to reduce your workload?", the mother replied, "As long as we are alive, we'll take care of them"

Nowdays people are easily put out if someone at home falls ill and stays in bed for a few days. But these parents have been taking care of their children for so many years!. At 41 and 38, these are considered children and nursed by the parents!. These uncomplaining and patient parents have a message to convey.

-Kumudam, 26.04.2004

12. Woman-As a Citizen

Class Room: The students who participated in Women's Rights Day celebration are waiting eagely to ask a few questions to the Human Rights teacher.

The teacher enters and the students stand up. They tell the teacher that they have a few doubts and request him to clarify.

Teacher : Not all at a time. One of you, please ask.

First Student: We attended the con-

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

(a)To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;

(b)To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article-5

ference conducted on the Women's Rights Day and have understood how women are discriminated against. We have sisters. Moreover, our mothers are also women. How can we put an end to this discrimination? Can you tell us?

Teacher : I am glad you are so enthusiastic. Please recollect a lesson you studied last year. Remember the lesson "Democracy and Kingship"?

Parents of boys plan to marry off their sons, exploit the bride's family and amass wealth. This is an inhuman act.

The Tamil youth should not be like bullocks in the oil press; they must be like race horses.

-Periyar

Student : Yes, sir.

Teacher : Come on. One of you tell me what you studied in the lesson.

Student 1 : In democracy, all are equals. There is no discrimination.

Student 2 : In democracy, all are citizens.

Teacher : Excellent. Please give him a hand.

Teacher continues :

Do you know what is meant by " citizen"? Among citizens, there is

- No discrimination between man and woman
- No discrimination based on caste and community
- Everybody is equally entitled to all the rights
- All are equal before law
- Citizens should not be discriminated against, based on gender, community, religion and region

Student : But we want to know what we can do to do away with discrimination against women. You talk about something else sir.

Teacher : Please wait. I am coming to the point.

A woman may be the daughter of her parents, wife of her husband, mother of her child and even the grandma of her grand children.

Thus, in a family, a woman may play different roles and is called daughter, wife, mother or grandma according to the role she plays. But, in a democratic country, there is only one role for her to play, that of a citizen. She is called a citizen.

Let me explain it further. Did your mother vote in the last election?

Student : Yes.

Old Age

45% of the old people suffer from chronic diseases. 70% of them are dependent on others for their livelihood. Among these, 80% of old women are dependent on others.

-Economic and Political Weekly,

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:
(a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;

-Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Article-7

Teacher : Your father?

Student : Yes.

Teacher : They had one vote each, didn't they?

Student : Yes. One for Mother and one for Father.

Teacher : Do you find any equality there? Yes. But why? Just because boths of them are citizens.

Student : Enough if we have equality in voting, sir?

Teacher : Not at all. There must also be equality in the family, in the society, in education, in everything - not enough if we have equality in voting. Women must consider themselves as citizens and fight for equality.

Women Education in India - 2001

As per the census taken in 2001, the literacy rate of women is only 56.28%. In some states, it is lower than that.

Bihar	33.57 %	Jharkant	39.38 %
Jammu-Kashmir	41.82 %	Uttarpradesh	42.98 %
Arunachala Pradesh	44.24 %	Rajasthan	44.34 %
Matya Pradesh	50.28 %	Orissa	50.97 %
Andhra	51.17 %	Chatisgar	52.42 %
Assam	56.03 %		

Source : Women's Link, January - March.

Student : Both men and women vote. But only men rule.

Teacher : That's true. We call this discrimination. See the statistics displayed there. Yu will understand. Both men and women vote in the Parliamentary and Assembly elections. But only men rule over us. Similarly, we discriminate against women in eduation and employment. If we say citizens are equals, can women be discriminated against like this?.

Women must remember that they are citizens of this country. Political, social and economic equality are fundamental rights. So women should ogranise themselves and fight to do away with this discrimination. Women are rightful citizens and they are not pitiable creatures living at the mercy of others. They must have this awakening.

Students : Thank's a lot sir.

Women in State Assemblies

State	1952	1993-1997	State	1952	1993-1997
Andhra	2.9	2.7	Madya Pradesh	2.1	3.8
Assam	0.5	4.8	Maharashtra	1.9	3.8
Bihar	3.6	3.4	Orissa	9.6	5.4
Goa	--	1.1	Punjap	2.2	6.0
Gujarath	--	4.4	Rajasthan	--	4.5
Hariyana	--	4.4	Sikkim	--	3.1
Himachal Pradesh	--	4.4	Tamil Nadu	0.3	3.8
Jammu Kashmir	--	2.3	Uttarpradesh	1.2	4.0
Karnataka	2.0	3.1	West Bengal	0.8	6.8
Kerala	--	9.3	Delhi	4.2	4.3

Women in Parliament

Year	Number	Percentage	Year	Number	Percentage	Year	Number	Percentage
1952	22	4.4	1977	19	3.5	1996	36	7.4
1957	27	5.4	1980	28	5.1	1998	43	7.9
1962	34	6.8	1984	44	8.1	1999	49	--
1967	31	5.9	1989	27	5.2	2004	45	8
1971	22	4.2	1991	39	7.2			

Puthiyakattru,July 2004

Women Who Defeated Discrimination

1) One who opposed discrimination in Prison - Kiren Bedi

Kiran Bedi, a police officer caused ripples in Delhi. Her respect for law was great. But greater was her love of her Khaki uniform of the police. She would be physically present to quell any disturbance. She is clean handed and is not afraid of any politician. She took over as the Director of Thikar prison amidst much controversy. 8250 prisoners were crammed into the prison. She declared, minutes after taking up the mantle, "Prisoners are not animals;they too are human beings". She changed the prison into a spirtual abode. She arranged for teaching yoga and giving adult education. Prisoners were encouraged to take up higer studies and participate in games in the evening. Weekly essay, oratorical, poetry writing and drawing competitions were conducted and the winners, given prizes. The prisoners were given food three times a day and encouraged to take up self employment. Arrangements were made to save the money thus earned in banks. The world witnessed a miracle the miracle of criminals getting transformed into human beings. To the prisoners, she was not an officer enforcing discipline, but an incarnation of some goddess. No doubt, among the police, she is a revolutionary.

2) The First Tamil Woman Imprisoned in the Independence Struggle:

Ms. Rukmani Lakshimipathy (1892- 1953)

Ms. Rukmani Lakshmipathy graduated from Chennai Presidency College and she entered politics in 1923. She donated all her jewels to Mahatma Gandhi as Harijan Fund. She took active part in the salt sathyagraha, Swadeshi Movement and in the black flag demonstration against Simon Commission. It must be stated that she was the first Tamil woman imprisoned in the Independence Struggle. The Ladie's wing of the Vellore prison was started just to accomodate her.

She represented India in the Tenth Conference of Women Franchise conducted

In India, 83% of women suffer from anaemia.

22,000 people die at child birth every year.

As per the data collected by the Central Government, 1.3 crore pregnant women are anaemia.

-Rashtra Magila, September 2000

in Paris in 1926. Hers was an inter-caste marriage, a very bold attempt at her times. She was well versed in many languages. Her role in passing laws against Devadasi System, untouchability, raising the marriageable age of women and prohibition was commendable.

3) One who Supported Widow Re-marriage - Mrs. Dharmambal(1890 - 1962)

Dharmambal was a multi-faceted genius. Her service to the Tamil language, her medical service as a Siddha doctor and her rational thinking - all these made her outstanding. Apart from this, she advocated widow remarriage and inter-caste marriage, and even arranged such marriages. She chose to remian unmarried. She spear-headed the anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu, and rightly Soma Sundara Bharathi called her "The Brave Tamil Annai". She dedicated her whole life for the upliftment of women.

4) One Who Opposed Toddy Shops-Ms. Lakshmi Kantham (1921)

Mrs. Lakshmi Kantham is the first woman M.L.A. of Madurai. She entered public life at the age of eight, with the support of her maternal uncle. At the age of twelve, she courted arrest and was imprisoned for participating in the picketing programme against opening toddy shops.

When she became an M.L.A., she got the permission for all the woman MLAs to sit together, adjacent to the ministers on a par with them. She continues to work for women education and remains a true Gandhiam.

5) Manalur Maniammai- the Volcano

Manalur Maniammai was a nationalist-cum-revolutionary, who fought for the bonded labourers in farms.

Born in an upper caste family in Tanjore, she was married off at the age of

Old Women

According to a survey made in 1993-94, among the old women, 42% are widows. Only 6 to 8 percent of the old women are issueless.

- Economic and Political Weekly, June 2, 2001

nine to a lawyer, as his second wife. The cruel custom of child marriage was in vogue in those days. Her husband died on the tenth year. After that, unable to tolerate the torture of her relations, she returned to her parental home.

Once she happened to listen to a religious concert. The speaker said that widows, as inauspicious beings, did not have the right to perform poojas. Maniammai was stung. She could not understand the logic behind such a denial. After all, it is God who has created all the women. From that day she stopped performing poojas.

She wore kadar and propagated against untouchability and thus endeared herself to the untouchables. No wonder, they called her 'Mother'

In those days, the landed rich of Tanjore area appointed mediators to look after farming in the fields. These mediatiors exploited the poor farmers. To avoid it, this lady took up farming directly and earned the displeasure of the upper caste people. Once, on her way back from a slum, she was insulted and assaulted. To protect herself from enemies, she learnt 'silambam' a martial art. Once, when the son of the village elder was thrashing a handicapped slum child, tying it to a pole, she went there with a sickle and attempted to cut off his hands.

She was released from the jail soon and immediately she organised the farm labourers and scavengers. She remained steadfast in her faith though false allegations were made against her. She lived as a freedom fighter, friend of the labourers and mother of the slum dwellers and fell victim to the destructive forces the land owners.

6) The Lady Who Put an End to Child Marriage - Dr. Muthu Lakshmi Reddy

Born in a backward community, Dr. Muthu Lakshmi courageously dedicated herself to the causes of Liberation of women and Abolition of Devadasi System. "Devadasi system should be abolished from Tamil Nadu", and the term 'devadasi' itself should not find a place in history in future", she thundered.

Old Men and Women in India (1991)

Old men	-	26.34 %
Old Women	-	28.18 %

-Economic and Political Weekly, June 2, 2001

The State shall, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing the right to work, to education and to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement, and in other cases of undeserved want. *-The Constitution of India, Article 41*

Sathia Moorthy, a freedom fighter retorted, "Devadasis are dedicated to god. They are the slaves of gods and are holi people. Why do you advocate abolition of such a holy System?" Pat came the reply: "If you say the Devadasi System is holy and devadasis are dedicated to God, why don't you ordain people of your community as devadasis? why is that women belonging to our community- backward community- alone be made devadasis? why is this discrimination?" roared Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy.

She is the first woman M.L.A. in India. She was born in a poor family and became a doctor with the help of many. She decided to enter politics to put an to end to Devadasi System and the savery of women while she was serving as a doctor in the Chennai Government hopital.

Live Together !

You were born together. Going to be together for ever. Till the white wings of death sever you, you'll be together.

In the silence of God, you'll be together.

Yet, let there be a gap;

Gentle breeze to dance around, let there be space between.

Love each other; but let love be not a bond.

Like an ocean, let your love dance around, bound by the shores - your souls

Fill each other's cups. But, don't drink from the same cup.

Share your bread; don't eat the same bread.

Like the strings of the Veena, that sing in unison, you be together. Like the strings that are detached, you too be.

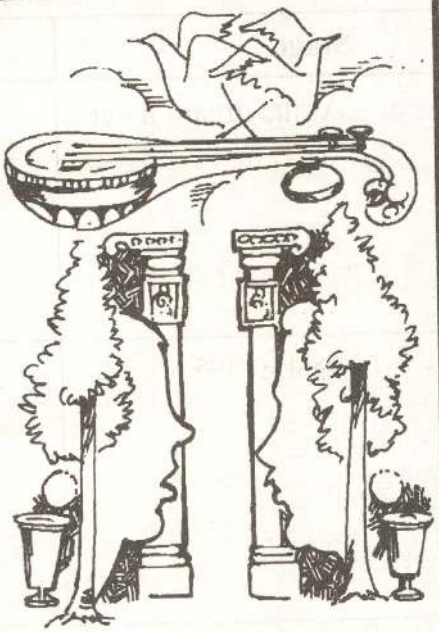
Sing, be happy. But remain yourself.

Give your soul, but not to be kept in somebody's safe.

The hands of life alone can hold your hearts.

Be together. But keep a little distance.

The temple pillars stand alone.



- Kahlil Gibran

She was one of the representatives of India in the Women's Conference in London, in which 42 countries participated. The participants realised that women are refused freedom, considered slaves and objects of sex through out the world, and this realisation kindled their revoultionary spirit. The Women Federation of India introduced her to politics. Brave and wise, she became the first woman MLA of India.

Once she became an MLA, she was able to fight out the evils of Devadasi System, slavery of women and child marriage. She spent much of her time for the welfare of the poor and for women liberation. Rightly, she was given the Padma Bhushan award in 1956.

Class Work

1. You have seen how women are discriminated against at every stage. What are the rights they are deprived of at every stage?

Stage	Rights denied
a. At the dream level	a. b. c.
b. As a foetus	
c. As a baby	

d. As a child	
e. As a young girl	
f. At the marriageble Age	
g. As a wife	
h. As a daughter in law	
i. As a mother	
j. As a widow	
k. In the old age	
l. As a citizen	

2. We saw the different stages in the life of women. What are the different stages in the life of men that are identical with that of women? what are the stages that are different?

1.

2.

3.

3. Do your parents discriminate between male and female? How?

Stage	Discrimination	
In education	Yes No	How?
In playing games		
In food		
In medication		
In dress		

Right to Equality

The state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

-The Constitution of India, Article-15 (1)

4. There are proverbs that praise men and present a gloomy picture of women. State the rights violated in each of the proverbs given below.

Proverb	Violation of Rights
1. Tobacco unfurled is waste; smiling women are lost	
2. Not to counter, adds to her beauty.	
3. Eating just a little, adds to her beauty.	
4. Man is great, and woman is waste.	
5. Women make; And also break	

2.All appropriated measures shall be taken to ensure the principle of equality of status of the husband and wife, and in particular:
(a) Women shall have the same right as men to free choice of a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;
(b) Women shall have equal rights with men during marriage and at its dissolution. In all cases the interest of the children shall be paramount.
(c) Parents shall have equal rights and duties in matters relating to their children. In all cases the interest of the children shall be paramount.
3.Child marriage and the betrothal of young girls before puberty shall be prohibited, and effective action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory. *Article- 6*

All provisions of penal codes which constitute discrimination against women shall be repealed. *Article-7*

All appropriate measures, including legislation, shall be taken to combat all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women. *Article-8*

-Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women-1967

6. A king with five daughters Ends up a penniless beggar.	
7. Women are hind-sighted.	
8. Whip the girl child; and Trim the moringa tree.	
9. Believe a hissing snake; But not a smiling dame.	
10. Can a hen crow and summon the sun?	
11. Though a dwarf, Male is great.	

5. How can we encourage equality of sex in the class room?

a. Displaying pictures of women as doctors, professors, administrators, politician, social workers and freedom fighters, instead of presenting them just as mothers.

b. Collecting pictures from news papers and films to prove that women can function as efficiently as men in any field.

(e.g)

- As a farm labourer along with men.
- As doctors in hospitals
- As wood cutters
- As drivers

c. Inviting women writers, women artistes, women singers and women talented in other fields for meetings conducted in the school so that they can interact with the students.

d. Making the students analyse the views on women presented in the books.

e. Not segregating boys and girls at the elementary school level.

The following measures may be taken in the class room.

1. Boys and girls may be allowed to sit together.

2. They may be allowed to mingle in group activities.

3. Shy girls must be given special attention and may be encouraged to read aloud and answer boldly.

4. Avoid calling a timid boy 'effiminate' and a bold girl 'masculine'

6. Who were the chief guests at various functions in your school, like School Day and Sports Day?

	Function	Name of the Chief Guest
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
Who are the majority of the chief guests? Male or Female?		

7. Exercise

		I accept	I don't accept
1.	There must be equality between male and female in education.		
2.	Both must be given the same food.		
3.	They must be provided with equal medical facilities.		
4.	Both have the same duties and responsibilities.		
5.	Both have the right to play.		
6.	Both have the right to same employment opportunities.		
7.	Both are equally intelligent and equally talented.		
8.	They must be given equal pay.		
9.	They must be given the right to take decisions.		
10.	They must have equal share in the property.		

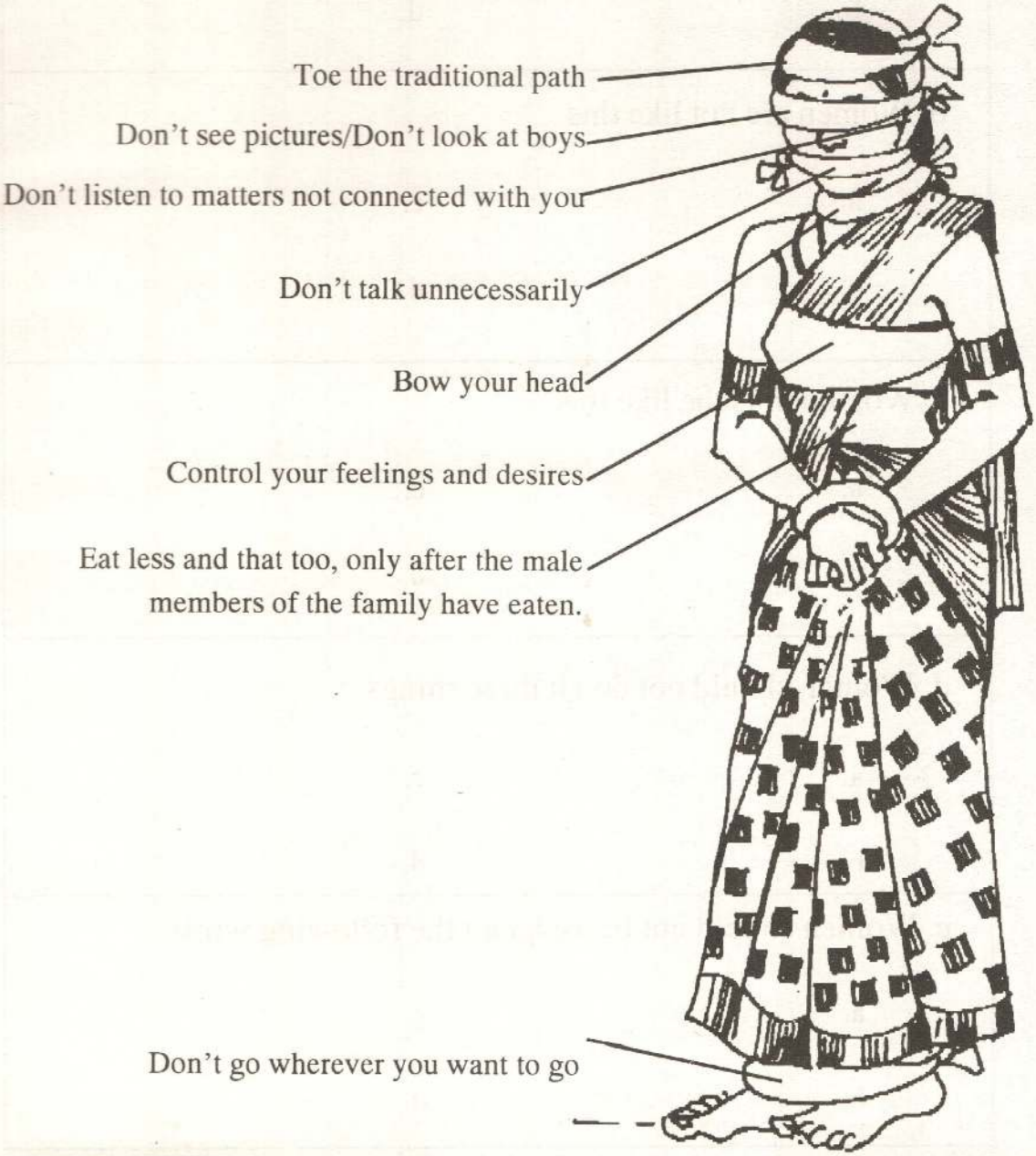
Home Work

1. Is your mother treated equally in the following matters?

	Yes	No
■ In buying clothes?		
■ In deciding expenditures?		
■ In marriage matters?		
■ In decions on education?		

2. Read the statements in the given picture

- If you are a girl, have you experienced all these?
- If you are a boy, has your sister experienced these?



3. How does the society view women? What does it believe?

a. Women are like this	
a.	c.
b.	d.
b. Women are not like this	
a.	c.
b.	d.
c. Women must be like this	
a.	c.
b.	d.
d. Women should not do all these things	
a.	c.
b.	d.
e. Women should not be assigned the following work	
a.	c.
b.	d.

All appropriate measures shall be taken to ensure to girls and women, married or unmarried, equal rights with men in education at all levels, and in particular;
(a) Equal conditions of access to and study in, educational institutions of all types, including universities and vocational, technical and professional schools;
(b) The same choice of curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard, and school premises and equipment of the same quality, whether the institutions are co-educational or not;

-Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women-1967, Article- 9

4. If it is a fact that we discriminate against women, it is also true that your mother is also treated so. You may not like your mother discriminated against. You must take the first attempt to put an end to this discrimination at home itself. How would you tell your father that such discrimination is a violation of human rights? What steps would you take to enforce equality? write about your attempts and how far you succeeded or failed in your attempts.

5. Do you agree that aborting a female foetus and killing a baby-girl are acts against their right to live? If you do, write ten slogans against female infanticide and write them on the black board.

6. Take any daily- English or Tamil and count the advertisements there. Find out how many of them project ladies. What are your comments on these advertisements? Exchange your views in the class.

7. Watch the advertisements in TV. Note how women are picturised in these advertisements. Is there any connection between the objects advertised and the women presented? Share your views with your classmates.

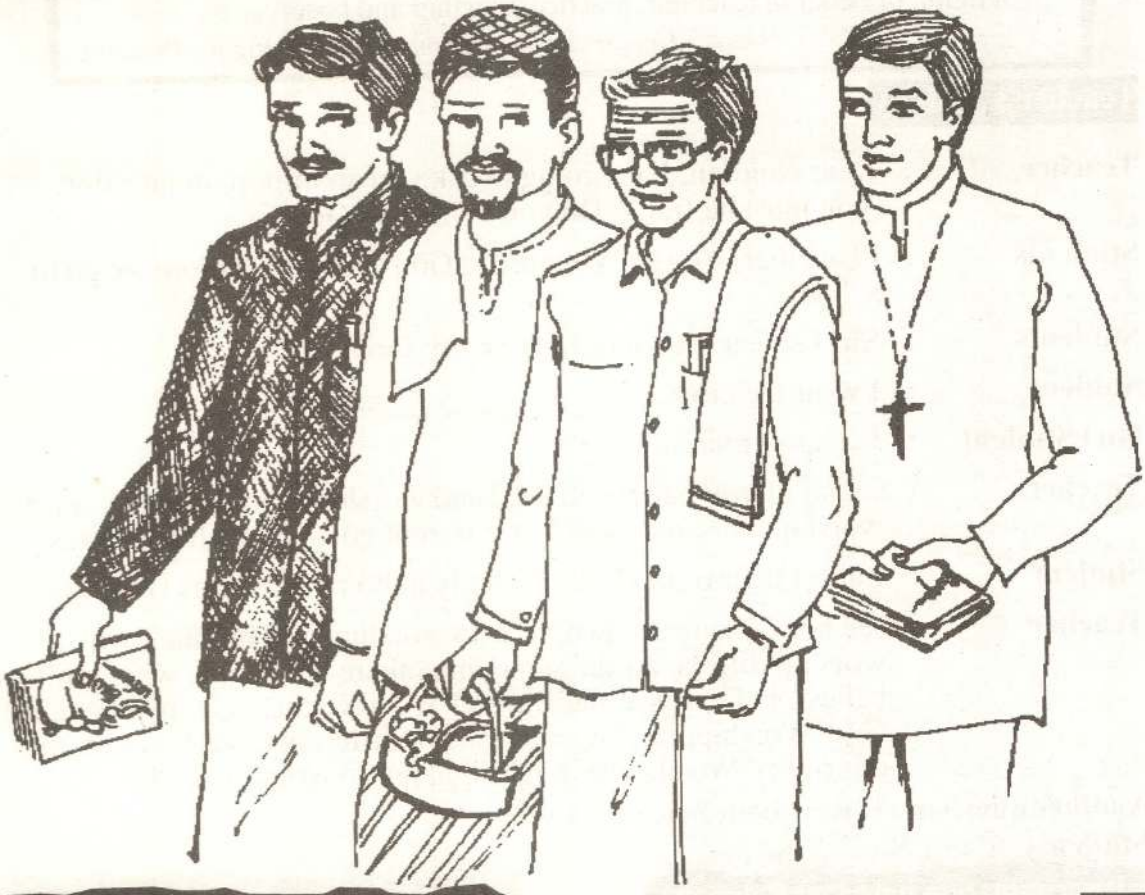
3. Discrimination based on Religion

3. Discrimination based on Religion

Objectives

1. To create social harmony in our multi-religious country.
2. To establish that Freedom of Religion is a fundamental right.
3. To make the pupils understand that :

   Religious minorities must not be discriminated against in the name of a majority religion; religious minorities have equal rights; and, at the same time, separate laws are needed to protect religious minorities.



1. Freedom of conscionce and Free profession practice and propagation of religion:- Subject to public order, moraly, and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equality entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and progpagate religion.

-The Constitution of India, Article 25(1)

2. Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part therof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

-The Constitution of India, Article 29(1)

3. All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

-The Constitution of India, Article 30(1)

4. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom; either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Preamble

Teacher's Activity

Teacher : Dear children, I am going to ask you an important question. You must be frank. Do you believe in God?

Students : (Together) Yes sir. We pray to God every day before we go to school.

Students : Sir, I smear the sacred ash on my forehead.

Student : I wear the cross.

Girl Student : I wear purdah.

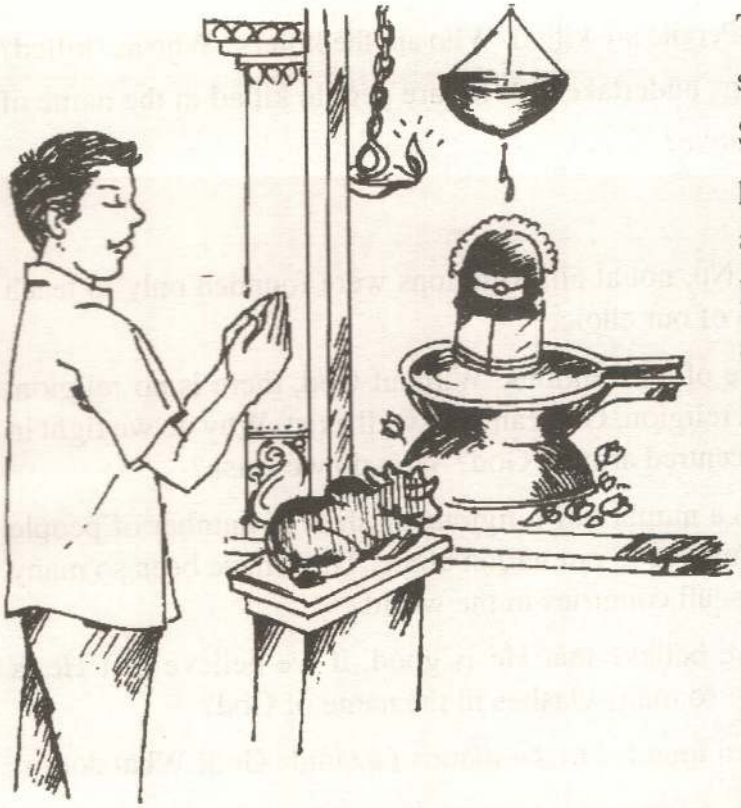
Teacher : So, all of you believe in God and worship Him. But, you don't worship the same God, but different gods.. in different ways.

Student : I don't believe in God... Nobody at home worships God.

Teacher : See now! There are people who worship God but their way of worship differs. At the same time, there are people who don't believe in God. See the variety! We have the right to believe in God. Worshipping the same God or different Gods is also within our rights. We also have the right not to worship God.

Another question : Has anybody here seen God?

Students : No ..... Sir



Teacher : We have never seen God. Yet we love him. Show devotion to him. We pray; we dance; we sacrifice animals, and at times even human beings. Your parents advise you to be devoted to God. What do Your parents say if you do wrong? Don't they say that belivers should not commit sins?

Your parents say God does not like the evil-doers. God hates evil and so He will, one day or other, punish the evil doers.

We say 'Love is Siva' and 'Love is God'.

How happy you are when you celebrate the festival of the village deity!.

We do all these things in the name of an invisible God.

We say God created the world.

It means, we believe that God created man also.

Then, why do we consider the fellow human beings enemies?

Why do we kill them? Discriminate against them?

Do we love the creation of God viz, man, as much as we love the Creator?

Religions have been founded in the names of Gods. Religious clashes are

organised by these religions. People are killed. Who are the killers? Who are killed? In whose name are the killings undertaken? Why are people killed in the name of religion? What can be the motive?

Dear Students !

Did God found religions? No, not at all. Religions were founded only to teach the principles about the Gods of our choice.

God is of course the centre of all religions. Without God, there is no religion. But, at the same time, without religion, God can very well exist. Why do we fight in the name of religion that are centred around God? Why do we clash?

In our country, we witness a number of religious clashes. A number of people die. But, such clashes are not unique to our nation alone. There have been so many instances of violence in almost all countries in the world.

If we believe in God, if we believe that He is good, if we believe that He is universal, why should there be so many clashes in the name of God?

So many religions have been founded in the name of a single God! What does it mean?

Article 1

1. States shall protect the existence and the national or ethnic, cultrual, religous and linguistic identity of monorities within their respective territory, and shall encourge conditions for the promotiion of that identity.

2. States shall adopt appropriate legislative and other measures to achieve these ends.

Atricle 2

1. Person belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorites (hereinafter referred to as persons belonging to minorities) have the right to enjoy their own culture. to profess and practise their own religion, and to use their own language, in private and in public, freely and without interference or any form of discrimation.

Article 4

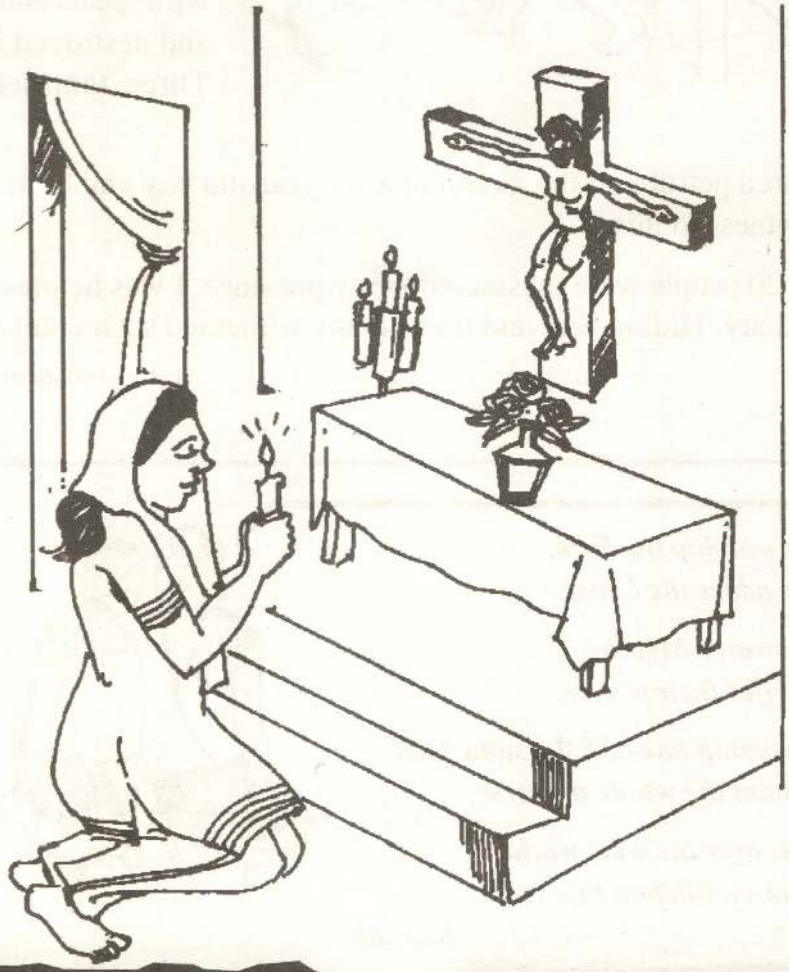
1. States shall take measures where required to ensure that persons belonging to minorites may exercise fully and effectively all their human rights and fundamental freedoms without any discrimination and in full equality before the law.

- Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities

- It means all these religions have their own tenets.
- It means all religions have their own history.
- It means all the religions have their own identification marks.
- Are there differences between religions? Yes, a lot of differences.
- We must accept this fact first.
- We must respect the diffrences.
- We must not refuse the right to be different.
- Is it possible to unite in spite of all these differences?

Should we be united or not?

Respecting the differences is called tolerance.



Do we tolerate other religions? Or, discriminate against?

Read the following episodes.

Episode -1

I am a teacher. Hindu as well as as Muslem students study in our school and there is cordial relationship between them.

On the day of Gujarat bandh at about ten o'clock, around 10000 people attacked a place of worship with spears and petrol bombs and destroyed it completely. Three families were burnt alive.

They poured petrol into the mouth of a six-year-old boy and lit it. He exploded, and I was witness to this.

Around 120 people were massacred in my presence. I was helpless and hid myself in a lavotary. Hiding here and there, many witnessed such cruel acts.

-Gujarat Massacre 2002

Brahmins worship the Fire;
Christians adore the Cross.

Turning towards Mecca,
Muslems offer their prayer.

They all worship one and the same God
Who pervades the whole universe.

God is one, over the wide world
No need for conflict on this score.

-Bharathi

Episode-2

Discrimination in Providing Relief and Rehabilitation

Gujarat massacre left 1,74,000 homeless and they took refuge in camps. But not all those rendered homeless went to these refugee camps. Many of them took shelter in the houses of their relations or friends in various parts of the state. A private survey estimates the number of refugees as 2,50,000. The very next year, Gujarat was rocked by a devastating earth quake. Relief work-Gujarath earth quake relief work- was undertaken. According to a study, the government was hesitant to extend the help to the victims of religious massacre. Was it because these victims belonged to the minortiy religion? If it is, is it not against Indian constititution.

– Crime Against Humanity, P.50

Episode-3

Today, my father one of my sisters and I alone are alive. My mother and my other sister were burnt alive and I witnessed all these atrocities. My sister and father are shell shocked. My father is not able to speak and my sister is yet to stop crying.

Let's foster religious tolerance

India does not belong to Hindus alone. Christianity that does not accept other religions is not true Christianity. True religions do not oppose other religions. The world should not toe the line of intolerant religions. Religious intolerance should not ruin India and Pakistan. We must take the pledge to give even our life to save India from being destroyed by religious intolerance.

-Gandhi

I was witnessiong the whole thing, standing on a wall. They stabbed my sister and mother, doused them with kerosene and set them on fire.

I fell down, shell- shocked. When I tried to escape, one of the fellows held me back and hit me on my chest and stomach. The crowd yelled to chop my head off. But a kind old man in the crowd prevented them and said "Son, run away" and I ran away. I remember his face to this day.

-Gujarat Massacre 2002

Episode-4

Refugees in their own land

You might have heard about the violence in Kashmir. On one side, we find the violent armed insurgence, the trans-border terrorism. On the other are the religious fantatics. These two forces join hand and render the natives of Kashmir, the Pundits, homeless. The driving force is religious intolerance. Pundits are attacked and killed overnight. Houses are destroyed. In 1990, around 1,60,000 Pundits have left their places. More than 2,17,000 Pundits are in the refugee camps where they do not even get the basic amenities. Due to lack of proper medical facilities, many have died. In Delhi alone, 1,43,565 Kashmiri Pundits live as refugees, unable to return to their native state. The Pundits are killed owing to their religious faith. What is going to be their fate in the future? In a multi-religious country like ours, can they be treated like this just because they profess a particular religion?

- Outlook, Feb 10, 2003

Religious clashes and the casualties

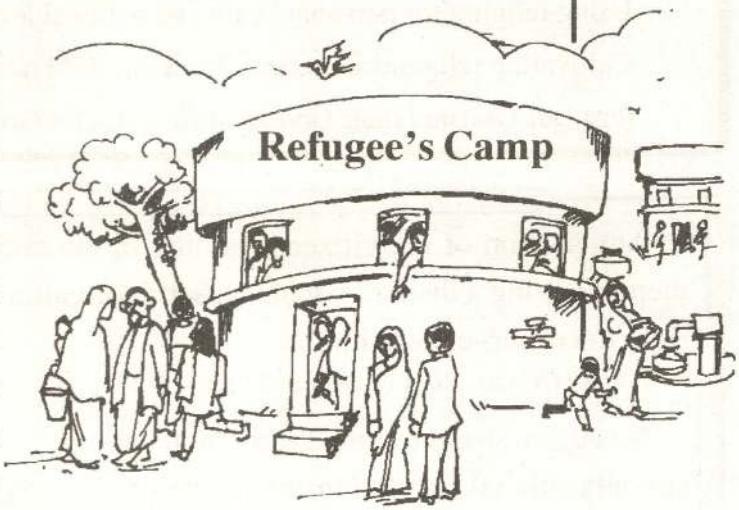
Year	Number	People killed	Year	Number	People Killed
1950	56	50	1980	421	372
1959	42	41	1981	319	196
1964	1070	1919	1983	500	1143
1967	198	301	1984	476	2000
1968	346	133	1992	37	1324
1969	519	673	1993	33	700
1970	528	298	1998	600	207
1979	304	261	2002	16	7081

20,332 people have been killed in religious clashes between 1950and 2002

Source: ***Indian Journal of Secularism, April - June 2002***

Episode-5

The minority muslems affected in the Gujarat violence live as refugees in their own nation. After the violence had abated, they returned to their native places and went on with their original buisness. But people donot buy anything from them. This kind of social boycott is also a kind of untouchability, says



Discrimination based on Religion

- *Enmity between religions disturbs peace.*
- *Denies Freedom of Religion.*
- *Denies Freedom of Speech and Expression.*
- *Denies Freedom to Profess one's one Religion.*
- *Denies Freedom to Propagate ones own Religion.*
- *Divides the people and the nation.*
- *If a Government promoting the majority religion comes to power, all the rights of the minorities will be crushed. The minorities would be forced to depend upon the majority in everything.*

one of the affected persons.

"We may be called the new untouchables. There is nobody to help us", says Sheik of Bavakat.

-India Today, Sep. 1, 2002

Why do we refuse to accept other religions?

- Prejudiced against other religions

  (eg. saying repeatedly that people professing a particular religion are extremists and fanatics and making others believe it)
- Believing that our religion in the best.
- Since my religion is the majority religion in the country, I start thinking that other religions should not be allowed.
- Using religion for personnel gain and political leverage.
- Cultivating religious animocity from the child hood.

  (eg) Our God and their God are different. Our God is good and theirs, bad.

Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

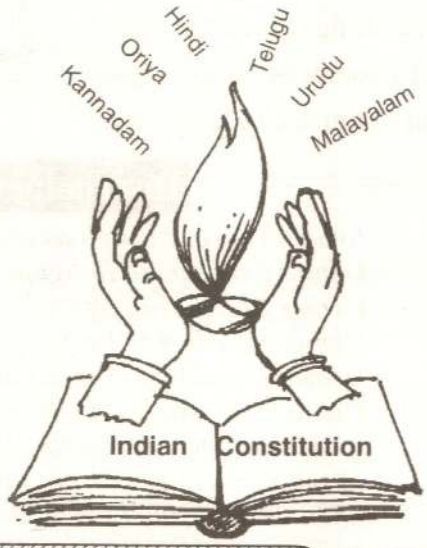
-The Constitution of India, Article-29 (1)

No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

-The Constitution of India, Article-29 (2)

All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

-The Constitution of India, Article 30



Class Work

1) What are the religions found in our nation?

a.

b.

c.

d. etc.

2) Do you think that there can be many religions in a nation? Yes / No

If your answer is 'yes', state your reasons.

a.

b.

c.

If your answer in 'no' state your reasons.

a.

b.

c.

- List any three good principles found in your religion.

a.

b.

c.

- List any two good principles found in two other religions.

a.

b.

c.

3. Does freedom to profess the religion of our choice come under human rights? If your answer is 'yes', state why.

4. Do you mingle with your classmates professing other religions, on equal terms?

Yes | No

5. If you don't, why?

6. What are the rights lost by the people professing the religion that is discriminated against?

a. d.

c. e.

7. a. We must treat the people professing the majority religion and the minority religions equally.

Correct | Wrong

b. Special previleges must be given to the religious minorities to protect their religious, cultural and economic development.

Correct Wrong

c. Though we demand that the majority religion and the minority religions should be treated equally, giving special privilges to minority religions is not an act against equality.

Correct Wrong

d. The minority religions are not justified in demanding special rights.

Correct Wrong

e. The minority religions must be at the mercy of the majority religion.

Correct Wrong

What can we do to put an end to discrimination based on religion?

8. Celebrate Religious Harmony Day in your School. Invite the elders of all religions, and make them speak about the tenets of their religion. Cultural programmes highlighting religious harmony may be conducted.

Minority Rights and Equality

Unless we take all the necessary steps to make the people of minority religions live on equal terms with those of the majority religion, the word 'equlaity' has no meaning at all. It is wrong to demand that the culture of the minority religions should be similar to that of the majority religion. The miniority people have every right to nurture their own culture. We can never approve of the suppression of minority rights, in any context. *-Nehru, 1930*

There can be no development in a society that does not protect the welfare, personality and power of the minority. Nor can there be peace. *-G.P.Pandh*

9. Sing songs and stage dramas and cultural programmes to highlight the awareness among people that religious clashes are an insult to the society.

Home Work

1. Let us assume the majority people of a town profess a particular religion and only a handful practise some other religion. Do you think the people of the minority religion do not need a place of worship for themselves? Would you say that it is better these people go to the place of worship of the majority people? Or, do you think the minority people have the right to have their own place of worship and their own ways of worship? Discuss the matter with your parents and friends and share their views with your classmates.

2. Talk to your friends professing other religions and know the tenets and faiths of other religions also. Share your views with your classmates.

3. Write an essay highlighting the view that only when there is religious harmony can there be peace in a society.

Bless us Appa

Dear Appa,

I love you. We all love you. We all miss you. We thank you for your devotion, your faith, your courage, your values, your sacrifice.

My dear Appa,

It is hard for me even to believe that you have been burnt alive. For five years I have swung widly between the extremes of faith and hopelessness, brotherhood and utter disbelief in humanity. But, thanks to the power of your teaching and the support of our family, I have regained my balance.

Dear Appa,

Amma is never tired of recounting the incident when the curtain in the bed room

caught fire. You first woke Amma up and asked her to get to safety. She sees that 40 year- old incident, yet again!

Dear Appa

You loved every thing!. The sparrows in your office are no more there. You would keep one window open all the time so that the sparrows could get in and out freely. Several times a day you would happily clean the mess the sparrows made in your office. When the sparrows had little chicks, your would put a tape on the fan switch, not allowing it to be turned on even by mistake. You would prefer to swelter to risk injuring the chicks. We also miss the sparrows!.

You could have earned a lot, but you chose to lead a simple life.

Why did they kill you? Who killed you? A few misguided members of a religion. It was not the religion, but a few fanatics.

Dear Appa,

I remember you telling me there is animosity in the world, but there is also peace, harmony and love. There is also fighting and brutality in the world, but there is also brotherhood, peace and tranquillity.

Dear Appa,

Bless us and guide us so that we can clearly see and treat the path you showed us.

Thank you. We love you. We will always love you. We also miss you.

(Nishrin Hussain's letter to her father, Ehsan Jaffri, former M.P. killed in the Gujarat violence.)

-Courtesy : Communalism Combat, Sep 2002

Dear Students

- Do you notice the stand taken by a lady who has lost her father in religious violence?
- She doesn't hate the religion professed by the the murderers.
- She simply says that they were misguided by religious fanatics. She does not hate anybody.
- Note her interest in the nation, her love of peace, in spite of losing her father.

Let's protect freedom of religion; reject religious fanaticism

4. Racial Discrimination

4. Racial Discrimination

Objectives

- There are so many races in the world. Every race has its own identity, history and culture. These must be respected. All are equals. They have the same rights. No race has any right to discriminate against another race.
- Similar to the discrimination based on caste in our country, people are discriminated against on the basis of their colour in the western countries. The similarities between these two kinds of discrimination are to be brought out to the students.

Definition of Discrimination

In this convention, the term"racial discrimination"shall mean any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. *-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Article(1)*

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibitied in all their forms. - *Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-4*

Teacher's Activity

The teacher divides the students into three groups and asks them to read the following passages about three important personalities. Then each group is asked to read aloud one of the passages to the whole class.

1. The one who Defeated Racialism-Nelson Mandela

75 percent of the South Africans are black people. But these black people were treated as slaves by the white minority.

The black could not move from place to place, even in search of job and shelter. Here and there one could see placards with the writing "Whites only"

Their houses were demolished. They were paid very low pay. Their properties were confiscated and the black prisoners disappeared from prisons mysteriously. All these were every day happenings.

They were denied the right to property and were forced to work in dangerous mines. Nelson Mandela fought for these people and against this racial discrimination. As a result, he had to spend 28 years in jail. The fight of the Black against racial discrimination lasted for 80 years!. It was this struggle that gave impetus to the struggles against various forms of discrimination through out the world.

The black gathered together under his leadership and fought against oppression in a non-violent way. The white government suppressed the movement. It laid conditions for the release of Mandala, but he did not agree to any compromise. Liberation of the black alone was his aim, he said. In the end, his mission succeeded. He was released unconditionally in 1990 and in 1993, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace.

In 1994, following the landslide victory in the general election he became the

(i) The rights to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work, to protection against unemployment, to equal pay for equal work, to just and favourable remuneration;

(ii) The right to form and join trade unions;

(iii) The right to housing;

(iv) The right to public health, medical care, social security and social services;

(v) The right to education and training;

(vi) The right to equal participation in cultural activities;

-International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

President of South Africa. But he did not suppress the white. Instead, he made them ministers. The black should not discriminate against the white because they have got a majority in the Parliament, he said.

But, what is to be regretted is that, though several years have passed since Mandela became the President, 72 per cent of the land is in the hands of 13 per cent white population.

2. The victim of Racialism-Martin Luther King

Martin Luther King Said :

"I have a dream

that the nation will hold the truth that all men are created equal,

that one day sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

that one day .....Mississippi (America) will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.

that little black boys and blck girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers..."

Martin Luther King was a pastor and his faith in God made him shudder at the discrimination based on colour. He decided to fight against this. In the race-conscisous American Society, he propagated against this racial prejudice in a non-violent way.

King's initiation into the struggle against racialism dates back to 1955. Rosa Park, black woman was travelling by bus in Mont Gomari. According to

the law of the state, a black occupying a seat should offer it if there was no seat for any white passenger. Rose Park refused to get up and so was arrested. Martin Luther King formed a struggle committee and started boycott of buses. King lead the boycott. Struggle programmes against racial discrimination followed.

He was arrested more than thirty times for taking part in struggles.

"We are the rightful citizens of America. We need not get our rights through violence. The only weapon that we have is struggle, and the greatness of democracy is in the right to struggle", he thundered.

He opposed racial discrimination and demanded equal opportunities in education and employment. He was awarded Nobel Prize for Peace in 1964. In 1968, he was assassinated by a hard- core white racist. On that day the American flag flew at half mast and the day was declared a black day by the President of America. He was so great !.

Mandela

We don't have your frizzy hair;
Nor your drooping lips. But
A community here, very much like yours;
Of the same colour.
Same is the case here too.
Same stinking slums,
And the fight, very much like yours;
Slaves, what if they are
In Africa,
Or in Asia.
You fight against discrimination,
We fight the evil
That strangles us
Over two thousand years!
You may be a Christian,
May worship Jesus,
But an untouchable!
I may be a Hindu,
May venerate Ganapathy,
Yet an untouchable!
Across continents, in every society, remember,
There are brothers, your own brothers.

-Agni Puthran, Arumbu, August 90

3. The man who abolished slavery-Abraham Lincon

We know animals are sold and bought at markets. But do we seek their permission before doing so? No, not at all. There was a time when human beings were sold like animals, and this was an approved practice. These humans were forced to serve those who had bought them. Mainly the balck were sold like this. The owners treated them like animals, worse than animals. But this kind of slavery, like untouchability in India, was not at all considered wrong.

It was Abraham Lincoln, the sixteenth President of America who abolished this practice. Born in a poor family, he was simple and kind. When he became the President, people did not know much about him. But later, he became part of American history itself. He brought to an end the Civil War. In a real democracy, there can be no slavery, there is no place for slavery, he stated categorically. The Proclamation of Abolition of Slavery was made soon. But the fate of those who fight for the liberation of the suppressed overtook him also. He was assassinated for abolishing slavery!

Class Work

1. Mandela had to spend 28 years in prision for fighting against racial discrimination. What are your feelings on hearing this? what are the rights denied to Mandela because he was a black?

Feelings	Rights denied
a.	d.
b.	e.
c.	f.

2. You might have understood the evils of racialism from the brutal assassination of Martin Luther King. What are your feelings on hearing about this murder? What are the rights lost by black Americans?

Feelings	Rights denied
a.	d.
b.	e.
c.	f.

3. Racialism - racial discrimination

Casteism - caste discrimination

Religious fanaticism - religious discrimination

Linguistic fanaticism - linguistic discrimination

Fanaticism creates discrimination and discrimination violates human rights. What can be done to create a society founded on equality? Form groups among yourself and discuss this. Then share your feelings

Untouchability - Casteist in India and Racial in the Western Countries

When I was in Pretoria, one day, I went to an English man to get my hair cut. He refused, turning away in disgust. I felt insulted. I went out and bought a pair of scissors and, standing before a mirror, I cut my own hair. I was successful in cutting hair in the front part of my head. But I spoiled the back side and, my friends in the court were very much amused.

"what happended to your hair, Gandhi? Did rats chew on your head?, they asked. "Nothing like that. The white barber refused to touch my black hair. I decided to do it by myself", replied Gandhi.

My friends were not surprised at my reply. It was not the fault of the white barber to have refused to cut the hair of a black. Had he done that, the white would have boycotted him. We find the same story in our place also. The 'upper'caste people donot permit the barber to cut the hair of the 'untouchables'! I reaped the consequences of this many a time in South Africa. I did not get angry as I believed that all those humiliations were nothing but retribution.

-My Experiment with Truth, M.K.Gandhi

Home Work

1) You have come to know about discriminations based on caste and race. If we accept that both are discriminations,

   a) What are the similarities and differences between them?

   b) What are the rights lost by people because of discrimination?

	Similarities	Differences	Rights denied
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

Consolidate the views and read it in the class.

2) Lincoln, King and Gandhi who opposed untouchability and religious fanaticism were killed.
   Write a poem or drama highlighting their sacrifice.

5. Caste Discrimination

5. Caste Discrimination

Objectives

To teach the students that

- By distinguishing people as upper and lower castes, casteism rejects equality.
- Untouchability, the offspring of casteism scoffs at human rights.
- Basically caste involves refusal of humanity and hence it is a violation of human rights

1. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled without against any discrimination in violation of this declaration and against any incitement ot such discrimination.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-7

2. Every one has the right to nationality. No one shall be arbitarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 15(1) (2)

3. The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. No Citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them, be subject to any disability, liability, restriction or condition with regard to-

   a) access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and place of public entertainment;or

   b) the use of wells, tanks, bathing ghats, roads and places of public resort maintained wholly or partly out of State funds or dedicated to the use of the general public. *-The constitution of India, Section 15(3)*

4. "Untouchability" is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of "Untouchability" shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. *-The constitution of India,Section-17*

Teacher's Activity

1. Read aloud and explain to the students the UN charter against discrimination.
2. The constitution of India adopted in 1950 states that untouchability has been abolished. Ask the students if they agree with this statement.
3. If the students do not understand what untouchability is, the teacher may explain, citing incidents from his own experience.
4. After making the students understand what untouchability is, divide them into 9 groups. Ask them to answer the following questions.

   Are all the people allowed in the following places, without any caste discrimination?

   i) In the houses of upper caste people.
   ii) in their town/village
   iii) in places of worship
   iv) in schools
   v) in public places
   vi) in ponds and wells
   vii) in hotels etc.

b. What are the different manifestations of untouchability practised in these places?

- Double-tumbler method.
- Forbidden from wearing sandals.
- Forbidden from voting.
- Forbidden from using public ponds.
- No equal access to place of worship.

Ask the students to exchange their findings. After they do it, ask one of the students to read the following incidents aloud.

(or)

Ask them to divide themselves into groups. Each group may read one of these incidents and share their views with others.

Manifestation-1

Implanted Untouchability

In Orissa, while taking lunch, dalit children and others sit in separate rows. When a journalist asked a girl about it, the girl, Prithvi said, "We sit on this side because we are dalits. If we go there, they will ask us to go away, and if we touch their tumblers, they will knock down our plates. That is why we sit in a separate row"

- Saynath, The Hindu 21.01.2001

Manifestation-2

Discriminating Tumbler

In a village near Karur, some 80 dalit families are living. They do not have even the basic amenities. To crown it all, in tea shops, they keep separate tumblers for the dalits and for the 'upper caste' people. Dalits are not allowed to enter the tea stall and they have to stand out. They are not allowed to sit on the benches in the tea stalls and in the bus stand!. *- Makkal Kalam, June 2003*

Manifestation-3

Forbidden from riding bicycle

In a village in the western part of Kanchipuram district, dalits are forbidden from walking along the streets where 'upper' caste people live. They should not ride a bicycle nor can they wear trousers and shirts.

-Makkal Kalam, Aug 2002

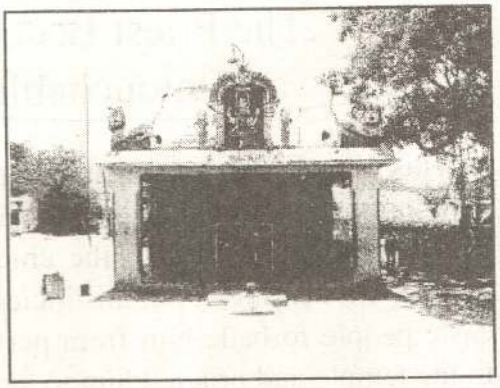
Cases of Violence Registered by the Police

Year	Complaints made in	Complaints registered in	Pending cases	Cases being enquired	Punished	Acquitted
1998	897	391	265	7	21	213
1999	1,011	379	384	9	20	219
2000	996	279	516	33	3	165
2001	500	164	187	149	---	---

-By courtesy: Theekathir, 08.11.2002

Manifestation-4

a. Untouchable God



In our village, after the dalits worship the deity, the 'upper' caste people wash the deity with water and only after that do they worship it. The dalits put up with all this insult and have accepted an upper caste man as the Trustee of the temple. To disturb this communal amity, the upper caste people locked the temple and took away an ancient statue of Amman.

-Makkal Kalam, May 2002

b. Defiled Temple

In a village in Pullambadi Union, near Trichi, a young man took shelter in a Mariamman temple. The 'upper' caste people lost their temper because the temple had been defiled by his entry. They tied him to a tree, and calling him by his caste, they insulted him, beat him with sandals and sticks, pushed him down and kicked him.

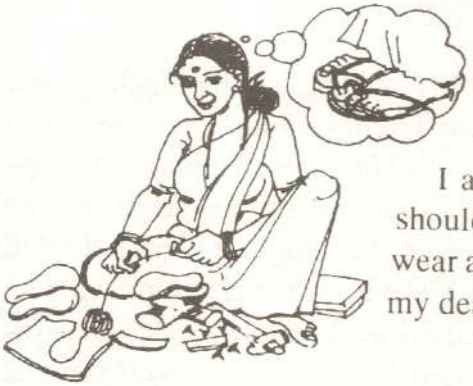
-Theekkathir, 17.01.2001

As far as the untouchables are concerned, humiliation and poverty were their fate in the past. In the Hindu civilization it appears, there in no hope for them to escape from this even in future. In a society where untouchability exists, only poverty and humiliation will hold sway. But this has not been understood even by Indians. *-Dr. Ambedkar*

C.The Priest Becomes an Untouchable

This happened in Petne Taluk in the state of Goa. A brahmin priest solemnized the marriage of a dalit in a temple. He was also the chief priest of the temple. On hearing about this incident, the 'upper' caste people forbade him from performing poojas in the temple and ordered him to get out of the village. By solemnizing a dalit marriage, the priest himself has become a dalit.

-Kalaikathir, Salem, 30.08.2002



Manifestation-5

The Cobbler without Sandals

I am 49. I have never worn a sandal. They say, I should not wear one. I am a cobbler. Why shouldn't I wear a sandal? I must wear sandals at least once before my death. I am determined".

- Rasamma's Desire, Dalit Murasu, May 2004

Is there not a limit to humiliation?

Due to casteism, man is considered filthier than even human excreta. This is true. Not an empty rhetoric. You know how? After defecting, one washes the particular part of the body involved in the act. If one steps on excreta, they wash their legs and, we believe they have become clean. But, if a man touches another man, the pollution caused by the touch cannot be washed off even if the person takes bath. How humiltaling it is, to be treated worse than excreta! What harm can the touch of a man cause? Any defilement? No..... nothing. But they call it defilement. This is deceit. There is no other secret.

-Thanthai Periyar

Manifestation-6

Can Such a Thing Happen?

Thulina is a village in Haryana. Here, five dalits were stoned to death for skinning a dead cow. These dalits have been officially permitted by the Rural Development Officer to skin dead animals in about 40 villages around Tulina and sell the skins. On that particular day, they were arrested under **Prohibition of Cruelty to Cows Act,** on the charge that they skinned a cow alive. The rumour that they skinned a living cow spread and the 'upper' caste religious fanatics barged into the police station, drew the dalits out and beat them to death. All this happend in the presence of eighty strong armed police force who witnessed this in silence.

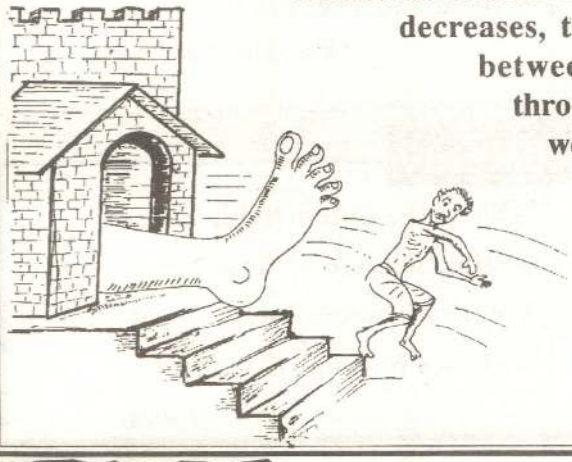
-Dalit Murasu-Nov 2002

Poverty has Caste

God forbid, this should happen in any society. Discrimination gets manifested in different, nauseating forms.

Most of the dalits are not land holders and are very poor. They are denied the opportunity to study.

At the primary level of education, the dalits out-number others. But in middle schools and higher secondary schools, their number decreases, thanks to poverty. The relationship between the dalits and the government, through out India, is also detrimental to the welfare of the dalits.



Prejudiced government officials, their slackness, violence - the dalits have to tolerate all these things and approach the government to seek the rights and concessions due to them.

-Sainath:Dalit Murasu, March 2000

Manifestation-7

Women Bury the Dead

"Sir, a new born child died. A few ladies went to the cremation ground and buried it. Being afraid, the father of the child did not even come to the village".

There are two paths leading to the area where dalits live and both the paths cross the area where 'upper'caste people live. They face a lot of problem which crossing their area. So, the dalits fought for a separate path. But police arrested all men and women who were around. About 35 persons have been arrested and imprisoned under serious charges. As a result, women were forced to bury their dead.

-Dalit Murasu , November 2002

Manifestation-8

Moustache-Not Allowed

This happened in a village 20 kms away from Chidambaram, on the northern bank of the Kollidam. Vadamalai, a dalit youth, was tied to a pole and beaten up by the 'upper' caste people. The crime committed by him was- he had grown a moustache!. The miscreants set fire to his moustache!

-Dalit Murasu June 2000

Untouchability

The crow and sparrow our kin;
One with us mountain and sea;
Wherever we glance ourselves a-dance
In a whirl of ecstasy!

What if the untouchable Pariah?
Do they not live with us?
Are they Chinese? or,
Will they harm us like aliens?

-Bharathi

Manifestation-9

Water and Untouchability

Arunthathiar are low caste people. They are agricultural labourers. They would draw water from the wells of the land lords. On certain days, they would be allowed to draw water only after they do what the land lords ask them to do. At times, the land lords would dissolve cow dung in the water. Once they dissolved pesticides to prevent the labourers from using the water.

The governement officials conducted an enquiry and permitted the arunthathiars to use a public pond. But the land lords prevented them from taking water from the pond. They made a complaint to the Panchayat Chairman and he found a solution. You know how? He employed a person from the upper class and paid him 150/- a month. What he had to do was to take water from the pond and fill the pots of the arunthathiars. If the arunthathiars enter the pond, it will pollute the water!.

-Mahalir Kural-1987

Manifestation-10

Untouchability and Nutritious Meals

Anaipalayam is a village in Erode district. There is an elementary school where a dalit cooked the nutritious meals. Since the cook happend to be a dalit, the children of the majority upper class community refused to take that. The upper caste boycotted the meals.

-Theekkathir 11.01.2002

Indian social structure centres on a clearly startified communal set up. Higher the layer, greater is the respect and lower the layer, humiliation and discrimination. To perpetrate untouchability, it has been given social and religious recognition. For centuries, dalits have been experiencing disrespect, inhuman treatment and insult and they have been out casted.

-Justice K. Ramasamy, Dalit Murasu, January 2002
From the essay, "Casteism as the Cause of Social Problems".

Manifestation-11

Dalit Panchayat President Beaten with Sandal

In a village in Thiruppuvanam Union, Sivaganga district, the Panchayat President was a dalit. After hoisting the national flag on the Independence Day, he went to the panchayat office. At that time the upper caste people came there and, insulted him by beating him with sandals.

-Makkal Kalam November 2003

Manifestation-12

Discrimination in the Prison

In Babura prison in Bihar, Sundar, a dalit was made to stand in the latrine through out night for scolding a jail official. Other prisoners urinated on him. Sundar was terrified, and he asked his mother to pay 2000/- as bribe to the jail official, and his mother raised the amount by selling the cow she had and paid the amount.

-The week, November 23, 2003

- **Forces or intimidates a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe not to vote or to vote to a particular candidate or to vote in a manner other that that provided by law;** (Section 3 (1) (vii))
- **Institutes false, malicious or vexatious suit or criminal or other legal proceedings against a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe.** (Section3 (1) (xiii)

S.C. & S.T. (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1995

Manifestation-13

Not Allowed to Occupy the Chair

In a Panchayat in Nagapattinam, a dalit woman was elected the Panchayat President. But, so far, she has not sat on the chair meant for the President. Rather, she has not been allowed!. For a dalit Panchayat President, to sit on the chair itself has become a challenge in this social set up.

Similarly, in another Panchayat, the upper caste people do not allow the use of chairs in the panchayat office.

- Dalit Murasu, April 1999

Manifestation-14

The lot of a Corpse

In Mahakang, a part of Karnataka, caste discrimination extends further than death. The upper caste people bury the dead body, while the dalits cremate it. But, the body of Pandiappa was half cremated and half buried!.

Due to povery, his wife Susheela Bai was not able to buy the fire wood needed to cremate the body. So, she decided to bury it. But the upper caste people objected to this. As there was no alternative, the body was cremated. But as there was not enough fire wood, only part of the body could be cremated. The unburnt remains were buried.

-Sainath, The Hindu, 03.09.2000

Callous Cruelty

Casteist arrogance
Stretches further;
From cowdung to
Human excreta!

Pigs and dogs
That eat human excreta.
Touch not their own.

Casteist arrogance,
At full Stretch,
Forced it to happen

- Pattali, **Thamizhar Kannottam**, June 2004

Manifestation-15

The Lamentable Condition of the Civilized Society

The conscience of a discriminated, suppressed man talks to you.

"I am Karuppiah and I belong to Thinniyam village near Lalgudi. I burn corpses in the cremation ground and do whatever they command me to do.

A few months back it was decided to build a row of houses for the lower caste people and we were asked to pay Rs. 2000/- to the President for allotting a house. I paid 2000/- for a house for my sister. But they did not allot me a house. Nor did they refund the money, inspite of repeated requests. In April 2002, I approached Thiru. Subramanian, the husband of the President and asked him to refund the money. But he refused. I approached many upper class people, but in vain.

At that time, some of my collegues advised me to inform the public about this beating tom-tom and I acted accordingly. On 20.05.2002, I announced in public that the President and her husband have refused to repay the amount paid by me and requested the public to help me in getting back the money. I also threatened not to perform the duty of burning the body, if they did not settle the matter.

But they reacted differently. They convened the village panchayat to condemn my action. Nobody turned up except Mr. Subramanian, the teacher. He beat me mercilessly and kicked me, and calling me by my caste, insulted me. I prostrated before him and sought apology. But he did not leave me. He continued to kick me and ordered me to go around the village seeking the apology of the people.

He beat those who came with me also, and branded all over their body. Above all, he made us eat human excreta! No where in the world can you hear of such atrocities.

Listen to my pathetic story, you good souls. Think for a while.

- Report of People's Watch-Tamil Nadu

One law for sudras; different one
For Brahmins who live to eat;
Should any Sastra so proclaim,
It isn't Sastra, base casteist ruse *-Bharathi*

Manifestation-16

Untouchable Love!

Murugan and Kalaiarasi were graduates, living in a village near Kadalur. But, they were of different communities. Kalaiarasi belonged to an upper caste and Murugan, a lower caste.

Murugan was doing a graduate course in Engineering in a nearby University, and Kalairani was doing a graduate programme through distance education. They loved each other. Rajadurai, the father of Kalairani came to know about this. Fearing that the father may separate them, they registered their marriage and took refuge in the house of the maternal uncle of Murugan.

Rajadurai was stung that their daughter had married a lower caste boy. He traced them out and barged in with a handful of mercenaries. He tied the couple to a tree, poured poison into their mouth and burnt them alive.

-Front Line-September 12,2003

Manifestation-17

They Cut Their Own Hair

Barbers refuse to cut their hair. Finding no other alternative, the dalit youth help each other in cutting their hair. They also cut the hair of school boys.

They can neither make a complaint to anybody nor oppose it openly. Theirs is a hand to mouth existence and eating three times a day itself is a luxury to them. How can they fight against untouchability?

-Makkal Kalam, Sep 2002

Manifestation-18

Love Vs Caste

This happened in Orissa. A bhramin girl, Sabeetha Das and a dalit boy loved each other, and legally got married. Though law permitted their marriage, casteism, didn't. The Bhramin Association there isolated the family of Sabeetha from the community. But, Sabeetha's father told them that he was prepared to accept any punishment for the crime committed by the daughter and requested them to admit the family back into their fold. As dictated by them, he declared that his daughter had died and performed the obsequies. He had his head tonsured and sprinkled water around him and took the ceremonial bath to bury the daughter alive. He preferred his caste to his daughter. At the same time, his daughter is happy with her dalit husband.

-Sainath, The Hindu 06.02.2000

Manifestation-19

Untouchability at the Hotel

At Botan in Naboda district in Orissa, for the first time, a dalit started a hotel, Hotel Raj Kumar. Situated in the heart of the town where there is heavy movement of people, the hotel attracts a lot of people. Moreover, the dishes are very tasty and the hotel, very clean. At an average about 100 to 150 people visit the hotel every day. But, ironically,only a few from the locality go there.....for, the owner happens to be a dalit!

-Sainath, The Hindu 9.04.2004

Birth is alike to all - but not their worth
Because of their diverse deeds

- Kural. (972)

Class Work

1. What are the different forms of untouchability found in the different manifestations stated above?

_____

_____

_____

2. We have already discussed the different forms of untouchability. Do you find any new form in these manifestations?

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____ d. _____

3. Do you know any other form of untouchability? If you know, state two of them.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Deliverance!deliverance!deliverance!
To the Pariahs,the Tiyas, the Pulayas
Deliverance!
To the Paravas, the Kuravas,the Maravas
Deliverance !
Let us become learned and wise!
Let us do useful and skilful work
Deliverance!deliverance!deliverance!

-Bharathi

Untouchables they are ; but
Are they a not children
Born of our mother, dear
Born of the same Mother?

Children a few are exalted,
Others, branded untouchables;
Who would believe this, dear,
Who would believe this?

-Bharathi

4. Do you accept that all these forms of untouchability are a kind of violence? If your answer is 'yes', state why?

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____ d. _____

5. What are the rights lost by the 'lower' caste people as they are discriminated aganist and considered untouchable?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. Suggest two ways in which they can get back their rights

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

7. Do you know about the special rights-the seat reservations-given to the lower caste people by the government, to enable them to live on equal terms with the other people?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

8. Do you think that seat reservation given to the lower caste people who have been suppressed for generations is right?

Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

---

9. Giving special rights - special reservations - to a section of the people is

Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

---

10. In our society we find different categories of people like.

rich / poor
upper caste / lower caste

Do you find any relationship between the poor and the lower caste? Explain

_____

_____

_____

Do you find any relationship between the rich and the upper caste? Explain it.

_____

_____

_____

Dalit People

1. Population	16.48 %	
2. Literacy		37.82 %
3. Literacy (Male)	49.91 %	
4. Litreacy (Female)		13.76%
5. Drop outs (High School)	79.88 %	
6. In Central Government Jobs		
Class 1	10.14 %	
Class 2	12.67%	
Class 3	16.15 %	
Class 4	21.26 %	
7. In public sector Organizations	8.41 %	
8. Agriculture	25.44 %	
9. Agricultural Labourers	49.04 %	

(1991 census)

11. Is untouchability a sin?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

If your answer is 'yes', state your reasons.

_____

_____

What can we do to abolish untouchability in schools?

a. _____

b. _____

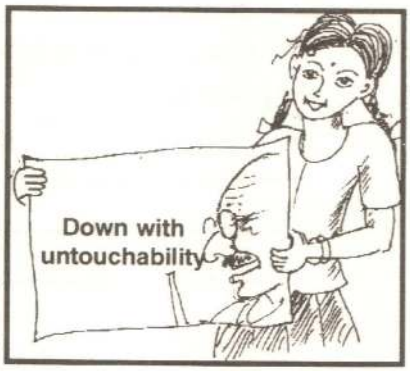
c. _____

12. Slogans like the following may be written on the black board to be read by every body

"The rights of the lower caste people are also human rights".

"Untouchability is not merely an act of violence; it is also a violation of human rights".

"It is pathetic that the civilized society discriminates people through untouchability"



Dalit in Central Government Jobs

Posts	1971	1987	1991	1994
Class- I	2.58	8.23	9.09	10.25
Class- II	4.06	10.40	11.82	12.06
Class- III	9.59	14.40	15.67	15.73
Class- IV	10.37	20.00	21.24	20.46

13.	Collect the views of Periyar, Ambedkar and Gandhiji on untouchability, and display them on the walls.

14.	Dec 10 is Human Rights Day. The day may be observed as Abolition of Untouchablity Day.

15.	Human Rights Students, along with other students may take an oath to estabilish a society where there is no untouchability. Arrangements may be made for this.

16.	Students may by encouraged to recite poems condemning untouchability.

Home Work

1. Interview an untouchable and ask him about his feelings when he is treated as an untouchable. Share your findings with your class mates.

2. Are there proverbs about lower caste people? collect them and read them in the class

Basic Amenities (%)		
Class	Electricity	Sanitation
Lower Caste People (SC)	30.91	9.84
Others	61.31	26.76

Source: "Factors Affecting the Population and Occupation of SC/ST People" Page-6

3. What do they call the place where the lower caste people live? What do they call the place where the upper caste people live? Collect the details.

(E.g) **Village**
Slum
Colony

4. Read the following stories and discuss with your class mates the answers to the questions given below.

Episode-1

What would you do, if you were treated like this?

Murugan is a ninth standard student. He is the class topper. One day, his father Mr. Chandran goes to the school. He is shocked to find Murugan sitting in the last row.

He went straight to the Headmaster and shouted, "My son stands first in the class. By making him sit on the last row, you have done him injustice. You have insulted him".

The Headmaster cooly replied, "I understand your anxiely. I'll enquire the class teacher".

The class teacher was summoned. Finding Chandran in an angry mood, he said,

"I understand your feelings, and why you get angry, Yes, People call the last row, the row of the easy-going. I do accept. It has been so since I was a student. But, should we go on thinking that the last benchers are good for nothing fellows? Should we develop such an attitude?"

Chandran sounded apologetic. "Not

that, sir. He must not feel hurt that you have seated him in the last bench. A good student must not develop inferiority complex... That's why I ....." he said.

Your are wrong, sir. We discriminate pupils as good students and poor students; make the poor students sit on the last row and break their confidence. Do you know how many we have spoiled like this? I don't want to create such a feeling in my students also. That's why I adopt such a measure". He stopped for a while. Then he asked, "Has your son ever scored less?"

"No sir," said Chandran

"I have been teaching him from his sixth standard, and he has been sitting in the last row and yet he has been scoring well consistently. The teacher's aim is, generally speaking, to make each one of the students score well".

"A motivated student can score well wherever he sits. He'll be interested only in his studies, as your son does.

"But, as a teacher, am I not morally bound to take care of other students also? That's why I make the weak students sit in the front row so that I can show them special attention. I don't know about other classes, but I implement this. The fellows will try better, at least because they have been seated in the first row. That's why.

"Now tell me, ... should the last row be branded the row of the easy-going? The row of the dullard?...."

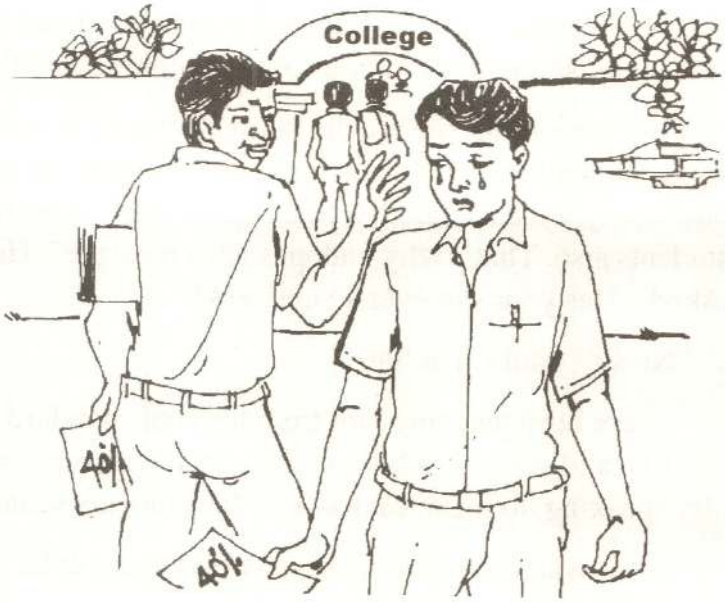
Chandran was speechless. He stood up and said, "Please forgive me. I simply thought about my son and that he has been seated in the last row. I couldn't understand the logic behind it".

Then he told the Headmaster: "Sir you should adopt such novel measures to improve the lot of the weak students. You must make it a rule to be followed in all classes". He then took leave of them.

A society prejudiced and unfair,
And discriminates by birth;
Will it flourish, dear,
Can it flourish?

-Bharati

Episode-2



Muthusamy belonged to the lower caste. His father was an agricultural labourer. Muthusamy was able to continue his studies only because of the nutritious meal offered in the school. His parents were uneducated and he did not have any facility to study at home. Moreover, there was none at home to clarify his doubts. In spite of all these, he was able to scrape through the HSC with 40% marks.

Another boy of his own village, Mohan too appeared for the same examination. He belonged to the upper caste and was rich. He studied in a good school. As his parents were educated he could get all his doubts clarified at home itself. They provided him with all the facilities, including nutritious food. He too scored 40%.

Both applied to a college for higher studies and opted for the same subject. Muthusamy was admitted whereas Mohan was not. In the case of Muthusamy, the Principal said, 40% was enough; but not for Mohan.

Mohan returned home broken-hearted. "This is injustice", he went on complaining.

Reflection

1. Is it right to make a good student sit in the last row?

If your answer is 'yes', state your reasons.

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

If your answer is 'no', state your reasons

a. _____

_____

b. _____

_____

2. In the second incident, we find one of the students is given a seat in the college and the other is not. Is it injustice?

Yes ☐ **No** ☐

3. a. Mohan

Rich
- upper caste
- has all facilities

b. Muthusamy

Poor
- lower caste

If we treat both of them equally, there is no chance for Muthusamy to improve

Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

- If we treat those who are not equals as equals, inequality alone will result.

Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

- As long as equality is established, those who are not equals should not be treated as equals.

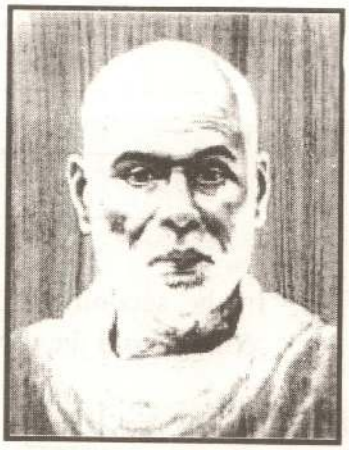
Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

- The Indian Government gives reservation of seats to the lower caste only to uplift them to the level of the upper caste.

Right ☐ **Wrong** ☐

Those who Fought Against Untouchability

1. Narayana Guru



"Don't ask anybody their caste.

Don't say your caste.

Don't think about caste"

Do you know whose golden words are these?

Do you know who declared 'one community, one religion and one God"?

Do you know who proclaimed,

"This is our way.

Where all

Live as brothers,

Shattered is caste

Along with religion"?

It was Shri. Narayana Guru, a social reformer. Born in Kerala, he opposed casteism. Very much like Periyar of Tamil Nadu, he fought for the freedom of the lower caste people. He was not an atheist and he said that temples must be accessible to everybody. He founded educational institutions to uplift the backward people. When casteism was rampant in Kerala, he organised the Eazhava people and led a mass movement against this. He declared, casteism is a human right violation and condemned refusal of food, cloth, shelter and education to people in the name of caste.

He urged them to fight against this injustice. After a long drawn fight, he won the battle for rights.

2.In the life of Ambedkar

According to the Indian Constitution, we are the rightful citizens of free India. Ambedkar was one of the architects of our Constitution. He had his education both in India and abroad, and was well-settled in life. Yet he remembered his past - his community, and the instances of untouchability inside the class room.

Ambedkar was born in Maharashtra. He belonged to the 'Mahar' community, considered to be a lower caste. The mahars were forced to hang an earthern pot from their neck and to spit only into it. In addition, they had to wipe their foot prints on the floor. They were 'Untouchables', and so their touch and even their sight would defile others!.

One day the teacher asked Ambedkar to do a sum on the black board. Next moment all the children rushed towards the black board shouting "defiled", to remove their lunch boxes kept behind the black board. Ambedkar's heart missed a beat.

The lower caste students should sit only on the floor, spreading a sack.

Once Ambedkar and his brother travalled by a cart. But, when the cart-driver came to know that they were Mahars, untouchables, he turned the cart upside down.

Once, when Ambedkar went to have his hair cut, the barber refused to cut the hair of an 'untouchable'. When he wanted to study Sanskrit, they refused to teach the sacred language to an untouchable!.

After completing his education abroad, he went to work under the king of Baroda who helped him to study abroad. But nobody was prepared to rent a house for him; nor was he allowed to stay in any lodge. At the office, no body spoke to him, or touched the articles touched by him. Above all, he was not even allowed to drink water kept there.

He had education and character and yet the society hated him and refused to accept him, branding him an untouchable. He was anguished.

These bitter experiences forced him to fight for the abolition of untouchability and the formation of a classless society. He organised the suppressed people and fought for their liberation. His watch words were : "Teach, Unite, Fight". He convened the meeting of lower caste people and started hotels for them.

He joined the freedom struggle also, to ensure the pariticpation of the dalit in it . At the Round Table Confrence in London, he talked about the condition of the dalit in India. He argued that, to ensure equality of the dalit with others, the dalit must be given reservation in elections and jobs. He fought for it and suceeded in it.

He dedicated his life to create a classless society. Let us strive to safeguard the dignity, respect and rights of the suppressed people.

6. Discrimination against the Tribes

6. Discrimination against the Tribes

Objectives

Tribes are the native people of our land. They are also called natives and adivasis. Through out history, at various stages, they had to face aggression. They lost their land and homes. Their culture, language, customs, trade, production methods - all these were trampled upon. They continue to lose their right to live, day by day. Branded uncivilized and barbaric, their dignity and individuality are questioned and their rights, denied. Of late, there is an awakening through out the world that their individuality it - their culture, language, custom, socio-economic sturucture - should be preserved. Discrimination against the tribes is also a violation of human rights. The objective of this lesson is to make this idea clear to the students.

1.Indigenous and tribal peoples shall enhoy the full measure of human rights and fundamental freedoms without hindrance or discrimination. The provisions of the Convention shall be applied without discrimination to male and female members of these peoples.
2. No form of force or coercion shall be used in violation of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples concerned, including the rights contained in this Convention.

- ILO Convention Concerning Indigenious and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, Article-3

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, economic, soical and cultural characteristics, as well as their legal systems, while retaining their legal systems, while retaining their rights to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state.

-UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article-3

The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particualr, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

-The Constitution of India, Article 46

Teacher's Acitivity

1) If there are tribal students in the class, they may be asked to describe the problems they face every day.
2) Or, you may narrate an incident and then question the students.

There are big dams in India, where the water flowing from mountains are stored. When such dams are built, the tribal people who live there for years together are dislocated. They are evicted.

a. Building such dams have not caused hardships to the people who have been living there for years.

I agree I disagree

---

b. Who are going to be benefited from by such dams?

---

c. Who are going to be affected?

The social, cultural, religious and spiritual values and practices of these peoples shall be recognised and protected, and due account shall be taken of the nature of the problems which face them both as groups and as individuals;

- ILO Convention Concerning Indigenious and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, Article-5 (a)

The peoples concerned shall have the right to decide their own priorities for the process of development as it affects their lives, beliefs, institutions and spiritual well-being and the lands they occupy or otherwise use, and to exercise control, to the extent possible, over their own economic, social and cultural development.

- ILO Convention Concerning Indigenious and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, Article-7

Adequate penalties shall be established by law for unauthorised instrusion upon, or use of, the lands of the peoples concerned, and governments shall take measures to prevent such offences.

- ILO Convention concerning Indigenious and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, Article-18

d. What are the rights lost by the people who live in the areas where the dams are built?

1. ----------

2. ----------

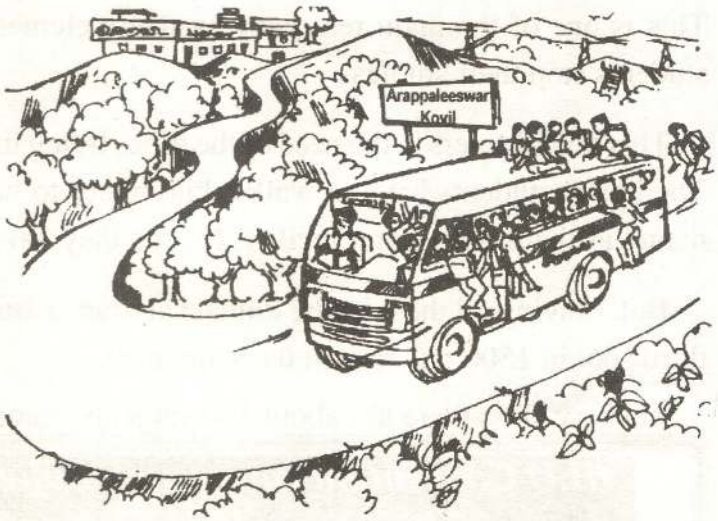
3. ----------

3. Divide the students into groups and ask them to read the following episodes. After that, let them share their views.

Episode-1

Tribal Students Who Walk 30 kms to School

There is a higher secondary school in a mountainous region near Salem where 1457 students study. But only 55 girls and 220 boys can be accomodated in the hostel.



Though many students would like to stay in the hostel, they cannot baccomodated in the school. So the students living miles away are constrained to continue their studies as day scholars.

Special measure shall be adopted as appropriate for safegaurding the persons, institutions, property, labour, cultures and environment of the people's concerned.

Article-4(1)

Governments shall take steps as necessary to identity the lands which the people's concerned tradationally occupy and to garantee offective protection of their rights of ownership and possession.

Article - 14 (2)

- ILO Convention concerning indigenious and Tribal peoples in Independent Countries

The hardships they face are many. They have to trudge up miles of rough mountain tracks to reach the school. In the rainy seasons, their suffering knows no bounds. They have to start at 5 am to reach the school, and can return home only at seven or eight. Yet their desire to study impels them to undergo such ordeals.

Arappaleeswar Kovil is 11km away from the school. In the mini bus that plies from here in the morning, only 40 passengers can be accommodated. But, around 100 would wait for the bus. Just the survival of the fittest! Unable to get into the bus, people travel atop the bus, or hang on to the ladder.

As they have to spend most of their time in shuttling between home and school, the students are not able to concentrate on their studies. As a result, they drop out. This is one of the main reasons why many elementary as well as middle school students stop their studies.

This school caters to the need of the tribes living in more than 200 villages around. The hostel students have to walk a kilo meter to take bath and answer the call of nature as there is no water facility. Nor do they have play grounds.

But, braving all these odds, Ramachandran, a student of this school claimed the third spot in 1500 mts race at the state level.

In every class there are about 100 students. Enough number of teachers are not

ILO Convention concerning Indigenious and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries

This Convention applies to Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic condtitions distiguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs or traditions or by special laws or regulations;

-Article-1(1)(a)

The rights of the peoples concerned to the natural resources pertaining to their lands shall be specially safeguarded. These rights include the right of these peoples to participate in the use, management and conservation of these resources.

-Article-15(1)

there and the vacancies have not been filled up. In spite of this, this Tamil medium school has a pass record of 68% in SSLC and 89%, in the HSC in the last acadmic year.

-Dinamalar, 28.02.2004

Episode-2

Kidney Village

There is a village in the Iduki district of Kerala where mainly tribes live. It is called kidney village because many people here have lost their kidney, thanks to the mafia operating in this area. Also, many are waiting for their turn.

Matthew was promised one lakh, but was given only Rs. 59,000. Now he has lost his kidney, money and the capacity to work. Mohanan's kidney was fixed at 40,000/- but he was given only 33,000/-

-Meantime, June 14-17,2002

The Feat of an Adivasi

Cynthia Bai is an adivasi woman. Thanks to reservation, she became the President of the Panchayat. In the beginning she knew nothing and did things according to the dictates of her husband. The women of her village, Baika, were generally illiterates and Cynthia too was. Her children taught her to sign. And then she concentrated on her studies.

Soon she took over the administration of the Panchayat. She got the permission to construct a building for the Panchayat. She deepened the ponds.

She corrected herself and then reformed the Panchayath. If we strive, nothing is impossible. All that matters is only hardwork and perseverance.

Source : Panchayati Raj Update, June 2001

Episode-3

Came with a Snake

"Sir, I belong to the Irular Community. I came here to get a community certificate", said a young man making obeisance to an officer.

The officer looked at him. "Hei, you say you are an Irular. Are they not snake charmers? you are well dressed and Irulars won't dress decently. Do you actually belong to the community? Look! unless you come with a snake, I won't give you the certificate. Till then.... go...go.." The officer simply dismissed him.

The young man was hurt. The next day he went to the office with a snake in his hand. The clerks there were horrified and they refused to allow him in. The youth was neither able to see the officer nor get the certificate from him.

-Junior Vikatan, 02.04.2002

UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

- *Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.* *- Article 3*
- *Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, economic, social and cultural characteristics, as well as their legal systems, while retaining their rights to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the state.* *- Artilce 4*
- *Indigenous peoples have the right to particpate fully, if they so choose, at all levels of decision- making in matters which may affect their rights, lives and destinies through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.* *-Article 19*
- *Indigenous peoples have the right to own, develop, control and use the lands and territories, includings the total environment of the lands, air, waters, coastal seas, sea-ice, flora and fauna and other resources which they have traditionally owned or otherwise occupied or used. This includes the right to the full recognition of their laws, traditions and customs, land-tenure systems and institutions for the development and management of resources, and the right to effective measures by States to prevent any interference with, alienation of or encroachment upon these rights.* *-Article 26*

Ebisode-4

Without a Community Certificate

All these people have been given voter identify cards, but not their community certificates. As a result, they are not able to admit their children in schools because, to claim that they belong to the schedule tribe, they need to produce the certificate.

Their main occupation is collecting rare herbs and honey from the forest. They would sell them in the market and earn their livelihood. But, as collecting such things from forests in illegal, the forest officials prevent them from collecting herbs and honey. Deprived of their livelihood, they are forced to eat tuber found in the forest.

-Dinakaran, Dec 23, 2002

Violence Against the Tribes

Year	Number of Crimes Committed	Murder	Sexual Abuse	Robbery	Violation of Civil Rights	Total (Column3to6)
1995	5,489	75	369	40	71	555
1996	4,973	94	314	51	72	531
1997	4,644	95	315	29	88	527
1998	4,276	66	331	38	50	485
1999	3,841	71	336	43	35	485

Dalit Murasu, Jan, 2002

Episode-5

As Bonded Labourers

Around 52 adivasi families work as daily labourers in the coffee estates in Pommai Kadu near Kodaikanal. For a pittance, they toil, and if they ask for a raise in their wages, they will be dismissed. To make matters worse, having received petty amounts as loans from the estate owners, they are forced to work there as bonded labourers.

They engage themselves in dangerous jobs. They have to remove the fungus on the trees. They also collect honey from beehives on tree tops.

But they do not get their due, as the traders cheat them using faulty balances. To add to their misery, the forest officials too confiscate honey, saying that it is the Government's property. If they resist, they are beaten and handed over to the police.

They have no permanent structures to live, and they take shelter only in huts made of the basks of plantain trees. They do not even enjoy the basic amenities like electricity and roads; nor are there medical facilities.

-Dinamani 17.12.2002

Ebisode-6

At the Mercy of District Administration

In Tamil Nadu, about 4879 Malai Vedan tribes live. To enjoy the reservation given to them in education and employment, they should get a community certificate from the Thasildars.

Till 1989, there was no problem in getting the certificates, as the Thasildars issued them as per the rules. After that, they refused to, and the tribes appealed to the Human Rights Commission. The commission promptly passed an order on Feb 15, 2000 to issue the tribes the certificates so as to enable them to get their fundamental rights. In spite of that, the district administration remains inactive.

Class Work

1. Divide the students into groups and ask them to read each of the episodes. Then they may be asked to enlist the rights lost by tribes in each of the episodes.

Rights denied	
1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	6.

2. Do you have any acquaintance with the tribes? If you have, enlist the differences between their customs and yours.

   (e.g) Food habits

   a. ----------

   b. ----------

   c. ----------

   d. ----------

3. Do you think that the customs, religion and language of the tribal people must be kept intact? Or, do you want them to follow your custom, religion and language? State your reasons.

Home Work

a. Do you believe that we have the social responsibility to abolish discrimination against the tribes? Talk to the elders of your village and write down the reasons to do so.

b. Some people think that the tribes are, after all, uncivilized people; they live in forests and so there is nothing wrong in discriminating against the tribes. Is it right? If you consider this view wrong, state your reasons.

c. "Deforestation destroys the people who live in the forests also, and so this is not good for future". Write an essay highlighting this view.

7. Discrimination against Refugees

7. Discrimination against Refugees

Objectives

Refugees have been forced to leave their own countries. They have given up their relations, language, culture and others, and have been forced to live in some other country.

They have not come to another country to have a luxurious life.

To save their life and their children they had to move to a foreign country. They are also human beings; they too have human rights. Just because they have taken refuge in a foreign country, they should not be treated as people who live at the mercy others. Each refugee is a person. So he too has human dignity, respect and rights.

To remove the false notions about refugees is the aim of the lesson.

Who are Refugees?

a. Refugees are those who have been forced to leave their mother land, and to seek refuge in some other nation. Tortured in their mother land, they had no safely there. They were discriminated against, and were subjected to repressive measures on the basis of their community, language, religion, sex, nationality, political affiliation and principles. As a result, they had to leave their country.

b. They are those who take refuge in other countries, unable to live in their mother land, as a result of foreign aggression or civil wars or on going wars, and the resultant violation of human rights.

Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution. *- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article- 14*

Non- discrimination : The Contracting States shall apply the provisions of this Convention to refugees without discrimination as to race, religion or country of origin. *-Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article-3*

The country of his nationality shall mean each of the countries of which he is a national, and a person shall not be deemed to be lacking the protection of the country of his nationality if, without any valid reason based on well-founded fear, he has not aviled himself of the protection of one of the countries of which he is national.

-Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article-1 (2)

Teacher's Activity

a. The teacher should verify whether students know who a refugee is. If any of the students do not know, the teacher can read the definition given in the beginning of the lesson and explain the meaning.

b. To make the students reject the mistaken notion about the refugees, the following slogans may be recited together.

"Refugees are also human beings"

"They have equal rights"

"They are not people at the mercy of others; but rightful citizens"

After this, ask the students to read the following episodes.

1) Nandhini's Desire

The whole refugees' camp was busy from that morning. Even those who have to cross miles to reach their work spots were walking up and down the camp.

They were talking about the visit of the ministers and government officials. They were waiting with petitions for fulfilling their needs and solving their problems.

Nandhini was seventeen. She came to India five years ago.

She was doing seventh standard when they left their country. She stood first is the class. On a particular night, there was heavy bombardment, followed by gun fight. The next morning they found the school reduced to a heap of rubble. Some of Nandhini's friends were killed in the bombardment. Families were fleeing to India. Nandhini's mother and Nandhini also fled to India, leaving all their property.

> The Contracting States shall accord to refugees the same treatment as is accorded to nationals with respect to elementary education.
>
> *-Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, Article-22*

Nandhini lost two years of studies as she was shifted from one camp to another. She would stare at students going to schools and weep. After much difficulty, on the third year, she was admitted in a school. But the classmates were much junior to her in age, and she spoke Tamil with a foreign accent. The class mates were amused and they mocked at her. Nandhini felt ashamed. She was not able to mix with them. So, she dropped out of school.

One day a minister visited the camp. He listened to their complaints and received petitions.

Hundreds of petitions demanding help for education, roads, drinking water, electricity etc. were given. Nandhini went near the minister and hesitated for a while.

The minister asked her, "what do you want?"

Nandhini's eyes welled up. "I must study. I must see my friends. I can't study here. I must go to my mother land", sobbed Nandhini.

-By courtesy C.Panneerselvam

Number of Refugees in the World

- There are 10.4 millions refugees in the world
- In Asia, 4.2 million
- In Africa. 3.5 million
- In Europe 2.5 million

Source : www.irr.org

Refugees in India in 2002

- 332,000 in total
- 143,000 from Sri Lanka
- 110,000 from Tibet
- 52,000 from Burma
- 15,000 from Bhutan
- 11,400 from Afganistan

Source :www.refugee.org

Those who are refugees in their own land

- 600,000 in total
- 350,000 to 450,000 in Kashmir
- 150,000 to 200,000 Tribes in North Eastern states
- 100,000 Minorities in Gujarat

Source : www.refugee.org

Dear Students,

a. Why is Nandhini unhappy?

Reasons a. ----------

b. ----------

b. What are the rights lost by Nandhini as a refugee?

a. ----------

b. ----------

c. ----------

2) Who am I?

I came to India from Tibet as a refugee and I live here alone, having been separated from my parents. I like to see them. Like a bird that has lost its wing, I suffer in silence. Physically I am in India. But my mind and soul are in Tibet, around my parents, my relations, the people of my country. I cannot render in words the agony I experience alone, all all alone. Though I have got the opportunity to continue my higher studies here, many a question comes to my mind.

Who am I?

Where did I come from?

Why am I here?

What am I going to do?

These questions jolt me.

- A refugee from Tibet who studies in India, 1999

Reflection

Why does this student feel unhappy? If you were the student, what would be your feelings?

Class work

1. You should have left your parents, friends and village/town at some time or other to stay with your relations or friends at some other town/village. What were your feelings then? Share your experiences with your friends.

2. Have you stayed in a hostel? What were your feelings then? Recollect them.

3. The refugees come empty handed any remain penniless. So they starve. They cannot afford to pay for medical expenses; nor can they educate their children. As they have to live in very small houses, they cannot even have privacy. Naturally they lose the fundamental rights. What are the rights lost by the refugees?

	Rights denied
Women	a.
	b.
	c.
Children	a.
	b.
	c.
Old People	a.
	b.
	c.
Youngsters	a.
	b.
	c.

4. Refugees are foreigners. We may show them mercy; but, they should not be given their rights. There is no need to treat them as equals.

I accept this statement

Reasons

a.. ----------

b. ----------

c.----------

I do not accept this statement

Reasons

a. ----------

b. ----------

c. ----------

A Refugee Family

Son is at Jaffna,
Wife, at Colombo;
Father lives at Vanni,
Ailing mother at Chennai;
Relatives in Germany
Like a camel
Shuttling the desert
I drift, back and forth
From land to land
Like a monkey-grabbed cotton pillow,
Is my family, torn to bits
Piece by piece and
In piecemeal.

- Jeyabalan, Between Fear and Hope **Page -** 54

Home Work

a. Is there a refugee camp near your town/village? Visit the camp and ask the refugees the following questions and share your views.

- **Why did they come to India?**
- **How did they come?**
- **Are their basic needs fulfilled?**

☐ Food	☐ Medicine	☐ Education
☐ Clothes	☐ Hygiene	☐ Security
☐ Water		

b. Imagine yourself as a refugee child. What are the right you would lose? Write an essay on the topic and read it in the class.

8. Discrimination based on Place of Birth

8. Discrimination based on Place of Birth

Objectives

- **To establish that people are discriminated against on the basis of not only caste, community, language and religion but also place of birth.**
- **India is a sub-continent. It consists of different states where people speak different languages and it is a multi-cultural nation. The people of this country have the right to go to any place within the country and settle there. Discriminating against such settlers on the basis of their place of birth is a violation of human rights. The students must be taught this.**

No citizen shall, on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, descent, place of birth, residence or any of them, be ineligible for, or discriminated against in respect of, any employment or office under.

-The Constitution of India, Article 16 (2)

All Citizens shall have the right-

a. to freedom of speech and expressions
b. to assemble peaceably and without arms;
c. to form associations or unions;
d. to move freely throughout the territory of India.

-The Constitution of India, Article-19 (1)

Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-13

Teacher's Activity

- Make the students read aloud the relevant clauses in the Charter that forbids discrimination against people on the basis of place of birth.
- Clarify the doubts of the student. After that this, the teacher introduces the subject. The simple explanation given below may be used for that.

Teacher : India is a sub-continent. People speaking different languages are here. They have different cultures and customs. That is why our nation has been divided into different states, on the basis of the language spoken there. How many states are there in India?

Students : 30 states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra.

Teacher : In the country called India, there are many states. As citizens of India, we can go to any state, settle there and take up any job. Nobody has the right to segregate or suppress or discriminate against any one, just because the person has been born in some other state.

Students : If one settles in some other state, should they speak only that language?

Teacher : No. They should not be forced to. Let them, if they wish to. The state must make arrangements to enable the settlers to get their children educated in their mother tongue.

No body has the right to discriminate against anybody, based on their place of birth.

Students : We consider India as one nation. Tamilians are in many other states and people from many states live in Tamil Nadu. This is really wonderful. It gives us a lot of pleasure.

Another Student : But it does not make every one happy. Recently, in Mumbai people demonstrated demanding the South Indians who are living there to leave Mumbai. Also, whenever the Kavari dispute becomes live, the Tamilans in Bangalore live in fear.

Teacher : This kind of activities based on birth place is called discrimination. Listen to another news.

Wrongfully dispossesses a member of a Scheduled Caste or a Scheduled Tribe from his land or premises or interferes with the enjoyment of his rights any land, premises or water;

- 3(1) (v) S.C.& S.T. (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

1) In Those Days!

Kanyakumari district was once ruled over by Malayalam kings. In those days Malayala Namboodris, a dominant community treated the Tamilians as untouchables, suppressed them and committed atrocities in the name of caste. None of the Tamilians- both male and female - were allowed to wear any dress above their waist.

To make matters worse, the Tamilians were forced to pay 108 taxes while the Namboodaries had none. Taxes on Head and Moustache, and marriage and death; for climibing palmyra trees and selling toddy; for spreading net and selling fish - all these were taxed. The Tamilians were thus crushed.

The punished cannot make an appeal. They cannot register deeds. They must not talk ill of the higher class people. Should they happen to see the Namboodaris on the streets, they should keep aside and allow them go. Tamilians should wear their clothes only above their knees. They are not permitted to enter temples. The punishments given to them were also cruel. According to the severity of the mistakes committed, they were punished and the punishments included carrying stones on the back, eating tamarind, and pulling out the hair in their moustache one by one.

These atrocities continued even after independence. The accused/culprits were forced to dip their hand in boiling oil as a sort of punishment. It was called 'dipping the hand'. The Tamilians were forced to speak only in Malayalam in the areas on the northern side of the Neyyaru.

-Kumudam

Acts with intent to cause injury, insult or annoyance to any member of a Scheduled Caste, or a Scheduled Tribe by dumping excreta, waste matter, carcasses or any other abnoxious substance in his premises or neighbourhood;

- 3(1) (**ii**) S.C.& S.T. (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

2) This Happens Today

On Nov. 9th, 2003 at Gawhati, the capital of Assam, this incident took place. They started the work to recruit people for the Indian Railways. Hindi speaking Biharis came to Gawhati to take part in the test. Protesting that only Assamese should be permitted to take the test in Assam, the Assam students started attacking the Biharis. In retaliation, the Biharis attacked the Assamese travelling by trains, across Bihar. Following this, Biharis living in Assam were massacred. In the areas in Assam where Biharis live in large number, many people were killed in violence. In a brick kiln in Dhin Suhiya, seven Bihari coolies were shot dead. In total, around 34 Biharis were killed. Their houses and shops were plundered and money and jewels, taken away. Similarly, in Maharashtra also, there were protests against appointing railway employees form other states.

-Frontline, Dec 19, 2000

Class Work

1. Do you know people form other states live in Tamil Nadu? Can you name two of them?

   a. _____

   b. _____

At the commencement of this Constitution, every person who has his domicile in the territory of India; and-
(a) who was born in the territory of India; or
(b) either of whose parents was born in the territory of India; or
(c) who has been ordinarily resident in the territory of India for not less than five years immediately preceding such commencement, shall be a citizen of India.

-The Constitution of India, Article 5

2. Do you think that people from other states should be teated equally? State your reasons.

a. _____

b. _____

3. Give your comments on the attack of the Biharis in Assam. What are the rights lost by those attacked in Bihar?

a.	c.
b.	d.

4. You go to a shop to buy something. You friend tells you that you should not buy there because the shop belongs to one who is from another state. How would you drive home the idea that we should not discriminate against people by their place of birth?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Everyone lawfully within the territory of a State shall, within that territory, have the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence.

-International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights , Section 12(1)

5. All human beings should be treated equally, irrespective of their religion, language and place of birth. State the reasons.

a.	c.
b.	d.

6. In order treat a person who speaks a different language, professes a different religion, and belongs to a different place equally, would you compel them to speak your language and profess your own religion? Or would you allow them to speak their own language and profess their own religion?

State your view and the reasons for that.

My View

Reasons

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

States parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development .

-Convention on the Rights of the Child-1989, Article-27

7. Suppose there is a man who has settled in your village. He is extraordinarily good and he does a lot of good to every body. Some people want him to contest the election to the Panchayat President. Some argue that an outsider should not be elected to the post. What is your view ?

❖ If you think he can be made the Panchayat President, state your reasons.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

❖ If you think he should not be made the Panchayat President, state your reasons.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Home Work

1. Suppose all those who live in your village are relatives. A family from some other town settles in your village. Will you treat this family equally in the following situations though they do not belong to your place? Or, will you discriminate against them?

	Will be treated Equally	Will be discriminated against
Village Panchayat		
Panchayat Election		
Cooperative Society		
Marriage		
Love Marriage		
Function at Home		

2. Ask an outsider who has settled in your town or some where whether he/she is treated equally;

   or,

   discriminated against, since he/she does not belong to the place.

3. If they are discriminated against, ask them about the areas of discrimination.

- Education ☐
- Job ☐
- Employment opportunity ☐
- Marriage ☐
- Worship ☐

etc.

4. What are the rights lost by people when they are discriminated against because they belong to some other place?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. Write an essay on the steps to be taken to put on end to this kind of discrimination.

6. You see films, though most of the actors in the film are not Tamilians. What will you say to one who says he will see films acted only by Tamil actors ?

_____

_____

_____

7. Actors and actresses belonging to other states act in Tamil films. Similarly Tamilians act in many other language films. What will be the impact in the cinefield, if discrimination based on place of birth takes root? What will happen in other fields? Reflect upon this.

9. Poverty and Discrimination

9. Poverty and Discrimination

Objectives

Poverty is not a disease, only a symptom of it. Economic inequality is the disease. That is, the chasm between the rich and the poor - those who have and those who do not is the disease. Poverty makes a mockey of human rights and it subjects man to different manifestations of poverty like begging, expliotation, bonded labour etc.

The poor are easily discriminated against. Poverty being the manifestation of discrimination is a violation of human rights. In the same way the discrimination based on poverty is also a violation of human rights. The objective of this lesson is to explain this to the students.

Economic inequality
|
Poverty
|
Helplessness
|
Exploitation
|
Discrimination

Wheras recongnition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world. *-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Preamble*

All are the equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this declaration and against any incitement ot such discrimination. *-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-7*

JUSTICE, social, economic and political;
LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all
FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and *integrity* of the Nation;

-The constitution of India, Preamble

The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India. *- The Constitution of India, Article-14*

Teacher's Activity

Ask the students to read the excerpts from the charters given above and list the important words there.

Eg: Justice

Equality

Equal Rights

Social Security

Peace

Dignity

Ask the students to explain these terms. Then discuss with them and by giving simple examples, explain these terms.

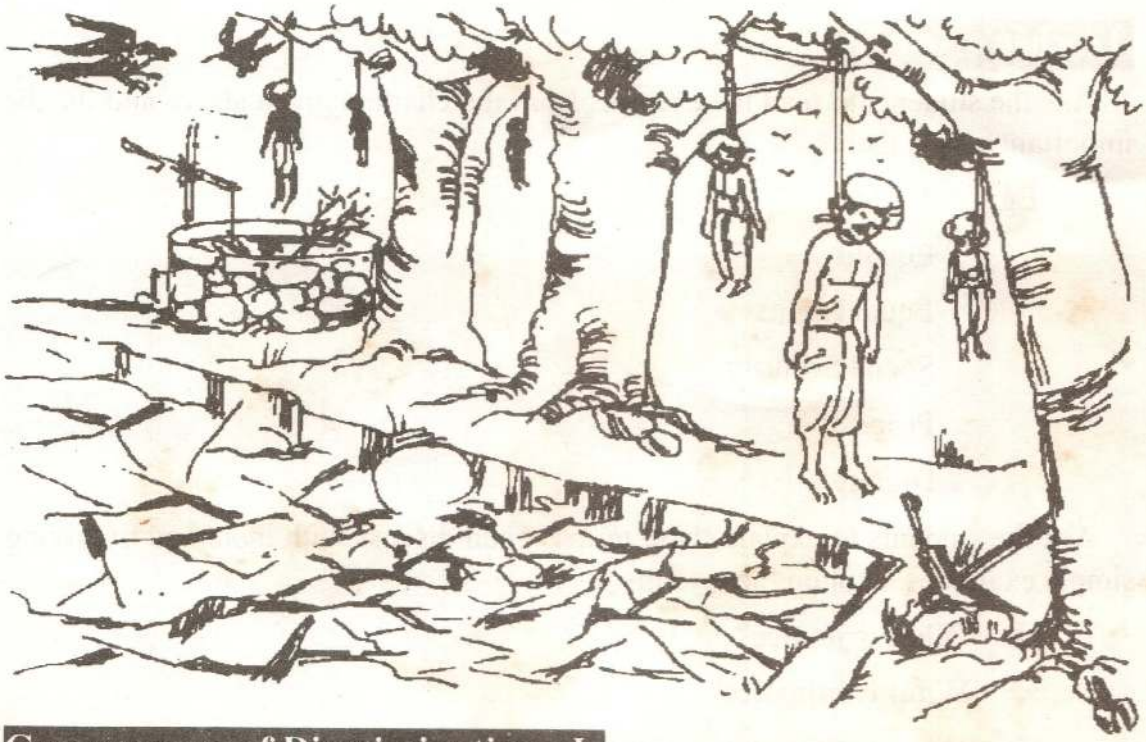
- **What is justice?**
- **What is injustice?**
- **What is the relationship between justice and equality?**
- **Are justice and equality different?**
- **Do you accept that every body has inherent dignity?**

- What is true **peace**?

Is keeping mum real peace?
Can peace generated by justice be considered equality?
Can accepting everything calmly be considered peace?

After the discussions are over, ask the students to read the following incidents in groups and try to understand the meanings of the above words.

> The state shall, in particular, strive to minimise the inequalities in income, and endeavour to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities, not only amongst individuals but also amongst groups of people residing in different areas or engaged in different vocations.
>
> *-The Constitution of India, Article 38 (2)*



Consequence of Discrimination - I

The suicide Capital

Anandapur is the capital of one of the districts in Andhra. This is called the suicide capital. From 2000 to March 2004, 450 farmers have committed suicide here. From May 18th to 29th, around 80 have committed suicide.

This raises a few questions...

- **Why do poor farmers commit suicide?**
- **Farmers suffer due to severe famine**

↓

Hunger

↓

Inability to pay off debts

↓

Suicide

(Famine → Hunger → debt → Suicide)

- Is this justice or injustice?
- When a few flourish, why should poor farmers commit suicide? what are the reasons?

What are the rights lost by those who are forced to commit suicide following poverty, hunger and debts?

~~- Right to Equality~~
~~- Right to Freedom~~
- Right to Live ✓

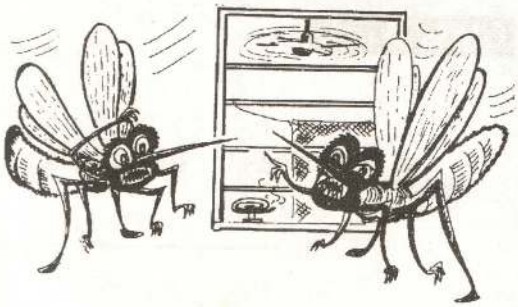
Consequence of Discrimination-2

Who can be discriminated against?

A mosquito was buzzing around. It looked angry and irritated.

Another mosquito came there. On seeing the other mosquito, it asked,"Why do you sing angrily?

"What can I say? This house is well protected. See the fans, mosquito coils, mosquito nets, blankets....and what not!. I am not able to suck a drop of blood and I am simply buzzing around".



People Below the Poverty Line in India (Statewise)

Below the poverty line Percentage	States
10 %	Goa, Hariyana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu Kashmir, Punjab, Diu Daman, Delhi
20 %	Andhra Pradesh, Gujarath, Karnataka, Kerala, Mijoram, Rajasthan
30 %	Maharashtra, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Pondicherry
40 %	Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Madhyapradesh, Megalaya, Nagaland, Sikkim, Thiripura, Uttarpradesh
50 %	Bihar, Orissa

Source: Central Planning Commission (1999-2000)

"Why are you so dejected?

Take leaf juice. You won't harm anybody".

"Shoo...Human blood....How tasty it is!. A totally different taste".

The mosquito came out of the house. It saw a poor man lying in front of a hut. He had a dhoti on and nothing else. He was in deep sleep.

The mosquito - the first one - flew towards him, buzzing happily.

In sat on him and injected its needle-like mouth.

Oh! Mmm, delicious! The mosquito lost itself!

- Siruvar Malar, Dinamalar

Class Work

- Why does the mosquitos get angry?

a. _____

b. _____

The number of people below the poverty line (between 1973 and 2000)

Year	Rural		a Town/aCity		Comparison	
	Tamil Nadu	India	Tamil Nadu	India	Tamil Nadu	India
1973-74	57.43	56.44	49.40	49.01	54.94	54.88
1977-78	57.68	53.7	48.69	45.24	54.79	51.32
1983	53.99	45.65	46.96	40.7	51.66	44.48
1987-88	45.80	39.9	38.64	38.20	43.39	38.86
1993-94	32.48	37.27	39.77	32.36	35.3	35.97
1999-2000	20.55	27.9	22.11	23.63	21.12	26.10

Source : Central Planning commission

■ **Why is that the mosquito is not able to bite the rich man and suck his blood?**

a. _____

b. _____

■ **What made in possible for the mosquito to suck blood from the poor man?**

a. _____

b. _____

■ **List the objects that saved the rich man from the mosquitos.**

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

The number of people below the poverty line in 1999-2000 in South India

State	Rural		Town/City		Comparision	
	Number of People (in lakhs)	Percentage of people	Number of People (in lakhs)	Percentage of people	Number of People (in lakhs)	Percentage of people
Andhrapradesh	58.13	11.5	60.88	29.63	119.1	15.17
Karnataka	59.91	17.38	44.49	25.25	104.40	20.4
Kerala	20.97	9.38	20.7	20.27	41.4	12.72
Tamil Nadu	80.51	20.55	49.97	21.11	130.48	21.12
India	1932.43	27.9	670.7	23.62	2602.50	26.10

Source: Central Planning Commision

■ **List the things that the poor man is deprived of to protect himself from the mosquitos.**

a. _____ c. _____

b. _____ d. _____

■ **How is it possible for the mosquito to suck blood from the poor man?**

Reason

a. _____ c. _____

b. _____ d. _____

■ **Compare a rich man and a poor one you know**

a. What are the facilities enjoyed by the rich man?

_____

_____

b. What are the basic amenities the poor man lacks?

_____

_____

Article 11(2) The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:

- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - 1966

Every one has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article-3

Facilities	Rich Man	Poor Man
House Bungalow Hut	☑	☒
Vehicle Cycle Car		
Clothes Costly Dress Dhoti and Shirt		
Nutritious Meal 3 times Once a day Only rice porridge		
Education Government School Matriculation School		
Medical Facility Government Hospital Private Hospital		
Water House Connection Street Tap		

- Add other disparties that you note.

- Reflect on the reasons why there is so much of difference between men.

Consequence of Discrimination-3

Tortured and locked up in a room without food

Believing that we would be able to earn a lot if we get a job abroad, we raised money by selling our properties and borrowing from lenders, and gave it to the agents. We were five. We were taken to Malasia and there, we were sold off to a Chinese agent. They locked us in a small room.

There were 40 inside. We were taken to a company to do some job. We worked for ten days but they did not even give us enough food. The broker received our pay. When we approached the broker, he beat us mercilessly, starved us and tortured us. He also threatened to kill us. They forced us to work for 12 hours a day.

(Statement made by young men taken to Malasia with a promise of employment.)

- Dinakaran, 13.06.2004

Class Work

- Why did these young men go abroad?

_____

_____

- What is the need to find a job abroad, raising loans?

_____

_____

- Why do the young men bear the insults of the Malasian boss?

Tick the correct answer

a. Infatuation with foreign countries ☐

b. Unemployment ☐

c. Poverty ☐

- Why does the Malasian boss discriminate against them?

a. because they are poor. ☐

b. because they are forigners. ☐

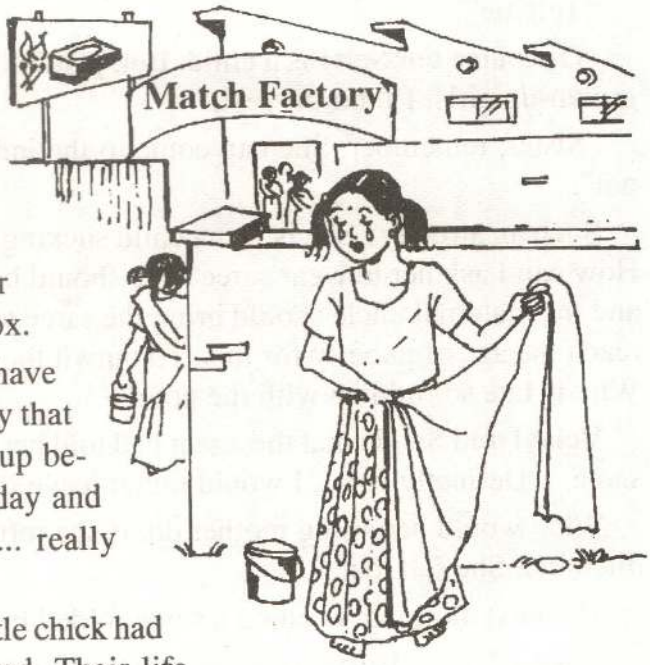
What's as cruel as poverty?

Poverty alone - nothing else.

-Thiruvalluvar

Consquence of Discrmination-4

Bud



Hectic life started at four in the morning for eight year old Selvi.

She got up and brushed her teeth with ash. She plaited her hair and had some rice porridge. Taking the account sheet and money box she started to the match factory. Her mother, Velayi gave her the lunch box.

Selvi..... the child who ought to have been playing around like a dragon fly that flies from plant to plant... she gets up before sun rise, drudges through the day and returns home hours after sun set.... really cruel.

Velayi was anguished that this little chick had to strain like this for their livelihood. Their life went on listlessly like this.

One day, the agent of the match factory came with a news.

"There is a government rule against employing children in match industries. Now and then officials inspect industries and fine them in thousands, so Selvi need not come for work from tomorrow".

Velayi screamed. "Atrocious.....The rules that do not safeguard the parents take pity upon children and cut off our sustenance! Do mothers love to see their children tortured like this? Hunger, what else? Poverty...livelihood.... We have no alternative... Do they bar this also? -----

"Owner has strictly told me. Children like Selvi should be stopped with this week"... continued the agent.

Democray

Fair elections, freedom of expression, Rule of Law are the pillars of Democracy. For the success of Democracy these are not enough. Democracy is meaningless, unless all citizens enjoy equal rights.

– EPW - March 15, 2003

"Brother, the girl brings home ninety rupees a week. Two of us manage to keep us a live with the money. Is there no way out?... Tell me, please..."

"There is only one...but will you do it?"

"Tell me"

"Of course our Selvi is a child. But, just for the sake of it, let her wear saree like grown-up girls. I'll do the rest.

"Sister, remember. She can come to the industry only in saree. Or else, let her not".

Such an atrocity? She is just a child sucking her thumb and not a pubescent girl. How can I ask her to wear saree? We should have the function, all must be invited and the maternal uncle should bring the saree to be worn by the girl. The girl has to reach the age of puberty for this. To outwit the law, how can she wear... my God... Why is fate so ruthless with the poor?

Velayi told Selvi what the agent had told her. But, Selvi refused. "I will not wear saree.... Definetly not ... I would rather leave the job".

What would her ailing mother do, if she refused to wear a saree? Selvi was in a dilemma. She felt lost.

The next morning, keeping a saree folded in her hand, she started to the factory.

- Melanmai Ponnuchamy (Abridged) from the short story collection, Attathu Pattenil

Students :

Read the story repeatedly. After that answer the following questions

a. Selvi is eight, younger to you in age. While all of you are studying in schools, she works in a factory. What is the reason?

Poverty ? ☐

Her Mother? ☐

If some must beg and live, let the creator
Himself beg and die

- Kural, 1062

b. **Eight year old Selvi is forced by circumstances to earn to run the family and this is a violation of rights. Give two reasons for this.**

1.

_____

2.

_____

c. **Other children of Selvi is age get up in the morning, take bath, wear uniform and go to school carrying their books. But selvi wakes up at four, puts on ragged clothes and goes to the factorty by the company bus. She slogs through the day to feed her mother. How would you describe Selvi's condition?**

_____

_____

d. **You might have seen little children wear saree for fun. Otherwise the ceremonal wearing of saree is conducted only after a girl reaches the age of puberty. It is a happy occassion when all relatives and well - wishers are invited.**

- **Why is Selvi compelled to wear saree?**

_____

_____

- **Selvi is forced to wear a saree. Is it not a kind of violence?**

Yes ☐ No ☐

e. **If you were a girl like Selvi and forced to wear saree like her, how would you feel? Write it in the form of a letter.**

_____

_____

_____

C. **What are the things lost by Selvi because of her poverty?**

e.g

a. **Games**

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

Consequence of Discrimination-5

The Tragedy of selling the child

I went to Bangalore with my family to find some means of livelihood. They took us to the quarry in Devananalli. They gave food only once a day. We were not given wages. On the tenth of last May, my wife gave birth to a baby girl. We could not bring up the child. Moreover, we needed money to escape from the quarry. So we sold our twenty-day old baby to a person for 100 rupees, and with the money escaped from the quarry.

-Kalaikathir 25.05.2004

Reflection

- What forced the parents to sell their new - born baby?

a.Poverty ☐

b. Hatred for babies ☐

Students' charter of an Egalitarian society

Students,

Recollect what you have studied. Bring back to your memory all those who are discriminated against:

- Women
- The poor
- Marginalised
- Refugees
- Tribes
- Religious minorities
- Black people

Please recollect how these people are discriminated against.

Are you not moved when people like us are discriminated against thus?

Should we not do something to put an end to this?

What we can do?

Whenever humanity was crushed, many shed tears; a lot of people were shaken; lots of people were enraged, unable to bear it; and yet others, fought against it. The various laws and Acts for the protection of human rights are only the outcome of these emotions and reactions. As a result, defenders of human rights have appeared in our country and in other parts of the world. Human rights organization have been founded; and Human Rights Acts have been passed. It is the duty of the students to do their best to realise the dream of the defenders of human rights by strengthening the human rights organizations and human rights Acts.

We, the students of Human Rights have the rare opportunity to know what dis-

crimination is, and how discriminating people on any ground is an act of violence. We assure that we will join hands to establish an egalitarian society where discrimination finds no place. We submit the following Charter to the Government of Tamil Nadu, the Government of India and the UNO, so that the establishment of such an egalitarian society is feasible in future.

Preamble of the Charter

Discrimination is antithetical to fundamental rights, human dignity and a civilized society. There is no equality in a society where discrimination, segregation, exploitation and slander prevail.

In discrimination,

there is no relationship;
no dialogue;
no mututal faith;
no respect;
no freedom;
and, as a result, no humanitarianism ;
no human values;
above all,
there is
no democracy.

If the basic principle of democracy is equality, and if the constitution of a democracy secures this equality, there is neither democracy nor equality in a society where discrimination exists.

Democracy that does not ensure equality is pseudo- democracy. We affirm that we will strive to safeguard real

democracy, where human dignity and human rights are assured.

Democracy

is synonymous with equal justice, equality and multi-societal participation.

Discrimination

is the denial of
democracy
justice
dignity
human rights and
human values.

Having understood this, we swear that we would throw our might to establish a society where there is no discrimination.

We do not think that equality is a value yet to be conceived. The sense of equality is ingrained in the mind of the people and in the society. It is something inherent.

Discrimination is man-made, and is a pseudo-value, created by man. Thanks to discrimination that crushes humanity, defenders of equality, Human Rights Acts, Charters and Agreements have come into existence.

We have a high regard for these Charters, and to revitalize these Charters, we submit the following demands.

To the Governments

Being a violation of human rights, discrimination is a violence. Discrimination cannot be eradicated overnight simply by passing laws. Unless the concept of equality becomes part of the culture, it is not possible to put an end to discrimination.

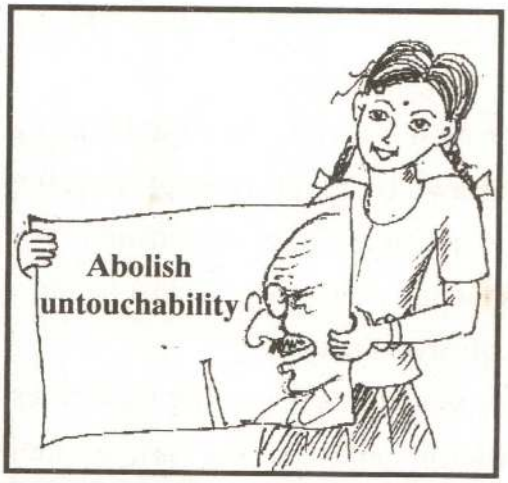
So Human Rights Education that promotes human rights culture must be introduced in all schools in Tamil Nadu, as a compulsory subject.

Casteism justifies inequality and entrenches it; and this inequality creates discrimination. Untouchability is the child of casteism and so, unless caste is eradi-

cated, untouchability cannot be put an end to. Therefore, the Government should give priority to measures against abolition of caste, along with steps to eradicate untouchability. We assure that we will join the fight against casteism that threatens to divide future generations too.

Though, as per the Indian Constitution, untouchability has been abolished, in actually, all manifestations of it have not been put an end to. As untouchability is an act of violence and a violation of human rights, the Governments should take all possible steps to eradicate it. The Acts preventing violence against the Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe people must be implemented in all earnestness. Programmes must be organised where the legal authorities who implement these Acts and the people who are covered by these Acts may be educated in these Acts.

People who belong to the lower strata of our society are those who belong to lower castes- viz; Scheduled Castes. They are also poor. So they are discriminated, exploited and treated as untouchables. The Government must take appropriate steps to empower them socially, culturally and economically.



Reservations are the measures recommended by the constitution to ensure equality in the society. But due to the New Economic Policy and the consequent privitization and liberalization, reservations are being given up gradually and so the Government must take steps to implement reservation in private sector also.

There must be equality in education. When

the rich get quality education and enjoy all facilities, the poor get education of a very low standard. We request the government to put an end to this injustice - this kind of discrimination in education, and to provide compulsory, quality education to all equally.

To the Government of India

We respect the organizations like National Human Rights Commission, Minority Commission, National Women Commission, Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes Commission that have been formed to ensure the rights of the downtrodden. These organizations must be allowed to function as independant bodies and to ensure the proper implementation of human rights Acts and Charters against discrimination.

Since discrimination against women who constitute half of humanity is a serious human rights violation, 50% of seats in the Parliament, State Assemblies and Panchayats may be reserved for women.

People who divide the society and create disharmony among people in the name of religion must be punished severely.

We request the government, in order to create the awareness that linguistic and religious minorities are also the rightful citizens of our nation the Government must give them the needed protection.

The laws enacted to preserve the cultural and linguistic identity of the minorities should be properly implemented.

Laws must be passed to enable women who have been discriminated against at every stage, from dream to tomb, to live a confident and independent life.

After independence, many Acts have been passed by the Government to ensure women liberation and to safeguard them. But most of the women are not aware of these and so awareness programmes must be conducted to educate them in these legal provisions.

Women education must be given importance and women must be given the opportunity to study at every stage of education.

We want to keep the unity of the nation and we hate discrimination based on place of birth. We demand that the Government should ban aggressive activities, in the name of "Sons of the Soil", like abhorrence of people from other states, refusing employment to them and segregating them.

We request the Government to take care of the basic needs of the refugee children, like education, medicine etc.

We respect the identity and culture of the tribes. Steps must be taken to ensure that they are not deprived of their living places and to get their rightful share in the benefits of developmental activities at the national level. They must be provided, without any discrimination, basic amenities like education and medical facility.

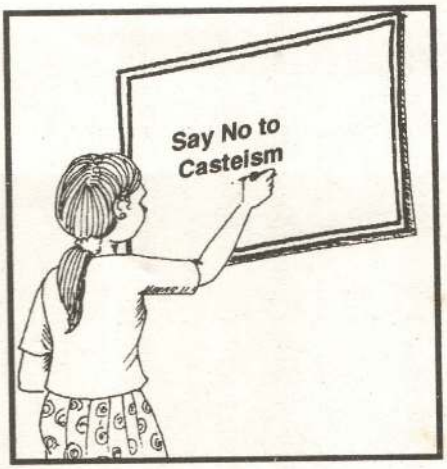
TO UNO

We demand the UNO to supervise the implementation of all the Conventions and Covenants formulated to ensure human rights, especially of the downtrodden with the concurrence of all its member nations.

As Human Rights Acts and Charters by themselves cannot eradicate discrimination, the UNO has declared a decade for Human Rights Education (1995 - 2004).

We request that this period may be extended by ten more years.

We request the member nations that have agreed to implement the ten year plan of Human Rights Education, to introduce Human Rights as a compulsory subject in educational institutions.



To the world community

We detest discrimination that creates inequality. The future world is ours. We want our world to be free from war, aggression, discrimination, hegemony and injustice; and to be imbued with love, equality and peace. We will never allow the forces that try to decimate our dream. We respect plurality; we accept diversity. But, we will never allow discrimination based on diversity. We want the world community to work shoulder to shoulder with us to establish such a world.

Right to peace is a fundamental right. We hate all kinds of wars that shatter peace. Forced war is a sign of hegemony and so the UNO should take steps to put an end to forced wars.

The **Friedrich Naumann Foundation** is a German non-profit institution primarily engaged in the strengthening of democratic and pluralist development both in the industrialized and the developing world. The Naumann Foundation has its activities spread over in more than 60 countries across the world.

The Friedrich Naumann Foundation promotes the principle of freedom in human dignity, both in Germany as well as abroad together with its partners- through political education, political advice and political dialogue. The Foundation has the following objectives:

- To sensitize people on political issues and motivate them to get involved.
- To provide liberal answers to the burning issues of the day, and to incorporate new findings and experiences- including those from other cultures- into liberal solutions.
- To strive for cooperation in development through free international trade and through helping to establish free and responsible civic societies in developing countries.
- To work towards worldwide victory of human and civil rights.

Wherever freedom, democracy and rule of law are just beginning to gain a foothold, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation is particularly called upon to lend its expertise and assume responsibility. As the only liberal organization of its kind worldwide, the Foundation is active in many countries of the world, helping to lay the foundation for a future in freedom that bears responsibility for coming generations.

In South Asia, where the political situation is characterized by the sharpest of contrasts, the Foundation faces some important challenges to accompany and support the distinct endeavours to move from feudalistic structures to democracy. The Foundation offers advice and training for people in positions of leadership. Liberal solutions are worked out for the problems of the region through workshops and studies. In follow-up events organized on a country or region-wide basis depending on the subjects involved, these solutions are then discussed with various groups and put before the general public thereby enhancing structural efficacy.

People's Watch - Tamil Nadu

- People's Watch- Tamil Nadu came into existence on 10th December 1995 with the twin objectives of ensuring State accountability in the protection of human rights by monitoring human rights violations and promoting a human rights culture.
- Imparting skills and knowledge on human rights through training to individuals and groups, who intervene when rights are violated.
- Documenting and conducting studies on rights violations.
- Working in solidarity with National Human Rights Institutions, movements, organizations and institutions that function both in national and international levels to protect human rights.

Institute of Human Rights Education

People's Watch - Tamil Nadu has established the Institute of Human Rights Education with the objective of promoting a culture of human rights through human rights education. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education was proclaimed in December 1994 by the General Assembly, spanning the period 1st January 1995 to 31st December 2004. With the inspiration of Decade for HRE (1995-2004) and the motivation of the National Plan of Action of the Government of India, this Institute has been introducing human rights education in schools of Tamil Nadu from the year 1997, in 6 phases.

Phase	Period	District	No. of Schools	Type of schools	Class/ standard	Students	Teachers
I	1997-1998	1	9	Private Schools	9	1756	90
II	1998-2000	10	122	Private, Govt. Schools	8,9	21,320	315
III	1999-2002	29	238	Aided Schools (TNCRI)	7,8,9	33,785	730
IV	2002-2005	29	258	Govt. Schools (ADW-GTR)	6th, 7th & 8th	25,819	492
V	2002-2005	10	134	Aided Schools (RC Diocese)	6th, 7th & 8th	14,330	251
VI	2002-2005	15	155	Aided Schools (CSI Diocese)	6th, 7th & 8th	12,650	333
Total			916			1,09,660	2211

- HRE has already been introduced in some colleges of Tamil Nadu. It has also been introduced in many member colleges of the All India Association of Christian Higher Education (AIACHE) from the year 2002.
- Training on Human Rights to various strategic groups like people's representatives, advocates, police personnel, medical practitioners, members of trade unions, political parties, media professionals, various movements, dalit, women organizations among others.
- Preparing modules for HRE.
- Conducting study on impact of HRE.

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