EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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I. WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO DO?

Where are we going, and how can we get there?

> *'Democratic education ... sets out to empower children and train them to become critically aware of the context in which they find themselves.'(Bernard Trafford, Headteacher)*

A teacher of any subject needs to be clear about what she is aiming for, and the best means of taking her students there. For the teacher of CE these questions can seem harder than for the teacher of maths, history, or a foreign language. Everyone knows what is meant by a g*ood historian* or a g*ood mathematician*, and teachers through the ages have not done a bad job of making them. But who is sure of what we mean by a *good citizen*? And how on earth would we go about making *them*? (If, that is, we have not been doing so already.)

Few people remember civics lessons at school with any great affection; and few who missed out on such lessons have the feeling that they *really* missed out. Can we say that we would be worse people, or worse citizens without lessons in good citizenship? Can such lessons make a difference? Do we *need* them? *What are we trying to do?*

A first step for a teacher of the subject may be for her to consider what goals she, personally, would set: what she is trying to do, or perhaps what she would *like* to be

able to do. Before working with children in this area, it can be helpful for us to be clear, at least, about our own attitudes to such general questions.

Brainstorming initial responses to questions like the following can be a useful starting point:

- *How would you like your students to turn out?*
- *What would your ideal citizen be like?*
- *What sort of things would signify a 'successful' course of civic education, and what sort failure?*

This could also be done as a class exercise. A group of students can help to put together such a list, and this can be helpful not only in defining the subject matter and task of civic education - for you, and for them - but also in drawing a picture of the perceptions and presuppositions of that group of students. Some responses given by students in different countries are provided in the sample lesson at the end of this chapter.

The 'Bad' Citizen?

One way of illustrating the possible breadth of issues which could be included is to think about the type of events which might *disappoint* a teacher responsible for a course of civic education. Suppose, for example, we were to learn that a former student had been guilty of ...

> *Committing a murder, robbing a bank, or beating up a policeman who tried to prevent him from carrying out any of these acts...*

Or, less radically ...

> *breaking the school windows, selling stolen goods, advertising damaged goods, introducing discriminatory policies, voting for an extremist party, throwing rubbish into a neighbour's garden...*

Or more commonly still...

> *not voting in elections, not demonstrating against HR infringements committed by the government, being rude to customers, carrying out a discriminatory policy (while not believing in it), not doing anything for the community, or simply not taking an interest in politics... ?*

How many of the above do you see as falling within the remit of civic education? Which of them do you think you are trying to address?

Different notions of citizenship

There is little agreement as to what exactly constitutes the concept of 'citizenship', and there is therefore also little agreement as to the exact nature of education for citizenship. Many people see education in this subject as no more than giving students an understanding of the basic legal and political structures of their society; and lessons are, for that reason, frequently directed towards providing *information* on these issues.

However, we should recognise that simply providing information goes no way towards teaching students to *care for* or to *respect* those structures; and unless we address these problems, young people may be able to recite all the laws of the land, but they will not necessarily feel the need to obey any of them, or to change them if they are unsuitable or inadequate, or to introduce new laws to cope with changing circumstances and current inadequacies.

For that reason, we take a broader view of civic education. We see the task of civic education as encompassing the following three aims:

1. Giving students a **perception and understanding** of the way that society can and should operate;

2. E**nabling** them to work within this society for its improvement (for *all* members); and

3. E**ngendering** within them an interest in, concern for and desire to work towards such improvements.

On the next page, we offer a list of specific characteristics which teachers (in a number of different countries) have come up with, when asked to list aspects of the 'good' citizen.

It may be helpful for you to compile your own list of characteristics, before going on to look at the list: What should members of society know, what should they be able to do, and what should they be like, as people?

PERCEPTIONS OF THE GOOD CITIZEN...

As seen by a broad array of teachers

Citizens would have an understanding or awareness of...

The legal system, political structures, social structures, social injustice, the courts, human rights, democratic and non-democratic systems, the electoral process, social progress, different cultures and their values; and moral or political concepts - for example, right and wrong, fairness, justice, responsibility, dignity, honesty, power and authority, democracy, cooperation and conflict etc.

Citizens would be able to...

Reason effectively, argue their point of view, persuade others, communicate ideas to others, listen to different points of view, resolve conflict, make compromises, make objective judgements, assist and protect others, work within the prevailing system, work towards change, stand up for themselves, stand up for others, express an opinion clearly and concisely etc.

Citizens would be...

Tolerant towards other points of view and other people, fair in their dealings with others, honest, kind, sympathetic, helpful, objective and impartial in making judgements, reasonable, open-minded, involved in others and in the life of society, engaged in the democratic process, thoughtful of others, sensitive, caring, etc.

Everyone's list will be different: it may contain more detail, or less. Compare your own list with that given

above, and see whether you might want to add or take away some of your categories.

SAMPLE LESSON 1:

CITIZENSHIP – WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The following exercise could be used as an alternative to one of the training tasks, in order to explore different conceptions of citizenship.

Introduction:

Our ideas about citizenship come from the Greeks. The term democracy comes from the Greek "demos" meaning government by the people. Aristotle wrote ' A citizen is one who has a share in both ruling and being ruled'.

In Ancient Greece - 400 BC - half the population of Athens were slaves. But the free male members of the city - the citizens - elected representatives to govern the city and the surrounding countryside. A man could be a citizen if his father had been a citizen before him. The members of the city entrusted their government to elected representatives, and in return were entitled to certain rights as members of the city.

Citizens had duties to the city, as we do today - the duty to pay dues or taxes, to be called to defend the city, and loyalty to the community.

1. Getting into the topic

1.1 Word associations

In this section, students are invited to explore the nature of the word citizen.

Allow about 25 minutes for this exercise.

Explain the rules of brain-storming to the students: the tutor says a word and everyone in the group has one minute to write down any word that comes into their heads - a sort of free association. It is important for the group to understand that there are no right or wrong answers.

Give the group the word citizen - and ask them in the next minute to jot down all the words they associate with it.

Now ask members of the group to call out the words. No justifications or explanations are allowed; every contribution is equally valid.

List the words on a flipchart or blackboard. The group will come up with a variety of words - such as person, women, born, town, voting, patriot etc..

Now ask students to suggest categories which would enable them to group the words in some way. *Individual and community* might be suggested, or *rights and responsibilities.* Alternatively ask members of the group to read the complete list and to suggest two or three words which capture the flavour of the list. Use the group names or descriptions to move towards a definition of citizen.

In conclusion, ask your students if anyone can translate the words citizen or citizenship into any other language. Citizen in French is *citoyen(ne)*, but citizenship is *droits de citoyens* (lit. rights of citizens). In Hindi, there is no word for citizen.

1.2 Quotations

Students are asked to explore further the term citizen and to highlight the place of rights and responsibilities within it. Allow about 20 minutes for this exercise

Give students - in pairs - copies of the quotations on page xx. Ask them to read each one carefully and to decide which one they find most interesting or feel most comfortable with.

Invite each pair to report back on their discussion. Key points which may arise are.....

- *the right to break the law in pursuit of a greater good*
- *a sense of obligation towards the less fortunate,*
- *the difference between responsibility for oneself and for the wider community,*
- *taking part in the democratic process.*

At this point it will be useful to highlight the distinction between collective and individual rights, responsibilities and freedoms.

As a concluding exercise, invite members to complete the sentence;

"As a citizen I expect....."

> Share some of the responses around the group. Are they similar?

What does the term citizen mean to you?

Ten people were asked what the word *citizen* meant to them. This is what they said.....

1. "Citizen - it implies people working together, helping each other. A good citizen is involved in the local community, doing things not just for herself but for other people."

2. "As a Quaker, I believe that my real responsibility is to my fellow human beings, not merely to the nation-state that gives me my passport. I see all this citizens' charter stuff as reducing that responsibility to a sort of consumers' rights - *I've paid my taxes therefore I'm entitled to a good service.* That's not enough for me."

3. "When politicians talk about citizens, they don't mean ordinary people like me, otherwise there wouldn't be all this homelessness and unemployment."

4. "As a citizen, I've got a responsibility to rock the boat if necessary - and not just by using the so-called legitimate political process."

5. "I don't really feel part of society, but I've got rights and entitlements just like you. Why should it be different for me?"

6. “As a citizen, there is a responsibility to challenge the suffering, pain and distress around me. Non-action is action, silence is louder than words.”

7. “I grew up in England at that time just after the war when we all had the benefits of grammar school education, going to college, the national health service, and all that. We were middle class, and part of that up-bringing was learning that we had to give back to society something for these privileges.”

8. “But now I only think of myself as a citizen when I'm talking to someone from another country -like Canada - where it is a controversial issue.”

9. “It's not a question of duty but responsibility to the communities I'm part of - to my black sisters and brothers, to my local neighbourhood, my family in the widest sense. These are all overlapping communities.”

10. I think it's all about obeying the law and doing what is right.”

II. THREE CENTRAL OBJECTIVES.

If readers have given some thought to the type of characteristics they would like to encourage in students through lessons of civic education, they will find that these can be divided into 3 different categories. At the end of the last section, we provided one possible list, which had been put together by participants at various different training workshops. We divided the characteristics into the separate categories of:

- **Knowledge / understanding**
- **Skills / competencies**
- **Attitudes / values**

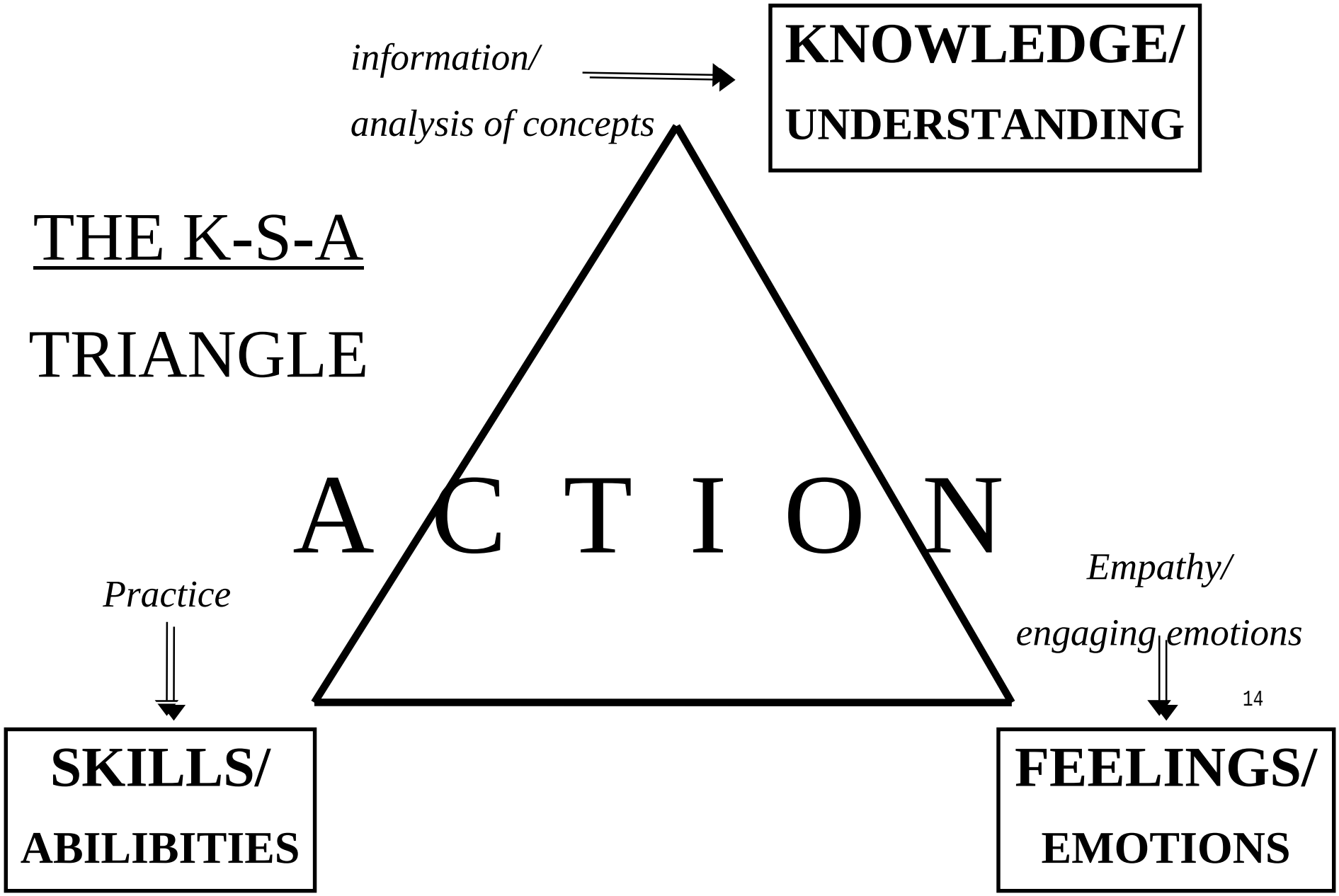
It will be useful for individual teachers to make the same division within their own list, so that they are clear about the different *types* of characteristics which they are trying to encourage.

The division into knowledge, skills and attitudes is helpful, and it is useful to keep it in the front of our minds not only when thinking about citizenship in general, but also when planning individual lessons in the subject:

Firstly - because any one, without the other two, is of very little use.

Secondly - because each one requires a different methodological emphasis.

It is helpful to represent these ideas in the form of a diagram. You can see this on the following page: the **Knowledge-Skills-Attitudes Triangle**.


information/
analysis of concepts
KNOWLEDGE/
UNDERSTANDING
THE K-S-A
TRIANGLE
A C T I O N
Practice
Empathy/
engaging emotions
SKILLS/
ABILIBITIES
FEELINGS/
EMOTIONS

What does the K - S - A triangle show?

- The triangle helps to *remind* us that civic education is not just about giving our students information. Information, without the ability to use it effectively, and without the desire to use it effectively is only of academic use - and it is also boring for the majority of students! What students find boring, they are unlikely to find important, and unlikely to want to use.
- Our goal as teachers of civic education is *action*. We want the information that we give our students to be put to use - because the citizen who sits at home minding his or her own business is hardly likely to be making a contribution to the life of society!

> For example: we want students to know about the political process - in order to know how to *use* it, or how to *affect* it when it is not serving society - and also in order that they should understand its purpose, and would therefore *want* to improve and affect it.
>
> Equally, we want them to know about the international conventions on human rights so that they understand the idea of human rights, so that they mind about infringements of human rights, and are aware of what possible *courses of action* can be taken to put a stop to such infringements.

- The triangle helps to remind us about the strong connection between knowledge, skills and attitudes: Just as knowledge on its own will not be enough to promote action, nor too will skills, and nor will attitudes. An effective, well-balanced lesson will aim to help students in *all* of these three areas.

For example - in order to make a change in government, or a law, or in order to provide more assistance to certain sectors of society…

> It is not enough to *want* to...
>
> ...if you lack the *ability*;
>
> It is not enough to have the *skills* to implement change...
>
> ...if you do not *know* what the current laws say;
>
> It is not enough to *know* about the prevailing system...
>
> ...if you lack the *desire* to alter it.

SUMMARY:

The teacher of civic education should aim to encourage in students

1. **Awareness** and **understanding** of the political, social and legal systems

2. **Competence** in the type of practices which are necessary for a healthy democracy

3. Open-minded, fair and engaged **attitudes** towards others in society, and towards political, social and moral issues.

SAMPLE LESSON 2:

THE GANG.

Aims: To show how a group of people, involved to varying degrees in committing an offence, may be dealt with in law;

To encourage pupils to use all the evidence available in reaching a fair decision.

Time: 45-60 minutes

Preparation: Arrange seating to allow pupils to work in twos and threes.

What happened…

On the night of March 3 at around 10.15 pm, Kevin Watkins left his friend's house to go home. He took a short cut across a piece of open land. Halfway across, he was stopped, attacked and knocked to the ground. The attackers took his wallet containing £50 and left him with bruises on his face and body.

The Victim:

'I saw a group of people walking along the path towards me. As they got close, one of them came forward and asked me the time. I looked at my watch and someone hit me hard in the stomach and I fell to the ground. I tried to stand up but they kept kicking and punching me. Then someone pulled my jacket, there was a shout and they were gome.'

The Accused:

Alison

"It was stupid what happened. Glynn said it would be so easy to stop someone and get some money. He told me to go ahead and ask him the time. I didn't know he was going to hit the man."

Glynn

"We met this man walking along the path. Alison stopped him the time, but he swore at her and pushed passed. We couldn't have that, so we bundled him. His wallet fell out of his pocket, Craig picked it up, and we left him."

Sean

" I said I did not want any trouble, but the others laughed at me. We stopped this man, and Glynn hit him. Then when he was on the ground Glynn and Craig kicked him, and Craig grabbed his wallet. I didn't do anything. I just pretended. I didn't want to look scared. Glynn offered me some money but I wouldn't take it."

Craig:

" we'd been walking around a bit, looking for a laugh. Glynn said it would be easy to stop someone for a bit of money. We say this man walking by himself. Glynn told Alison to stop him and ask him for the time. Then we all piled in. I didn't hit him, just grabbed his jacket and looked for his wallet."

The Law

What the (British) law says:

> **Robbery**. A person who steals by using, or threatening to use force is guilty of robbery
>
> A person who helps or encourages someone to steal something in this way, and realises what she or he is doing, commits the crime of **aiding and abetting** the robbery.

Using the evidence you have before you, decide whether you would find Alison, Glynn, Sean and Craig guilty of robbery. Remember they may not be telling the truth. Use the table below to record your results.

	ALISON	GLYNN	SEAN	GRAIG
Did the person carry out the robbery?				
Did the person help or encourage anyone to commit the robbery?				
Do you think the person is guilty or not guilty of robbery or aiding and abetting the robbery?				

Turning the clock back

Unfortunately attacks of this kind take place quite often. How can they be stopped? Do you think Alison, Glynn, Sean and Craig really wanted to hit and steal from Kevin.

Who is the Leader of the group?

Why do you think Sean found it difficult to stay out of trouble?

What could Sean have done to stay out of trouble?

Write down the conversation that might have taken place a few minutes before Kevin was attacked, in which the gang were discussing what they should do.

III. CREATING A STRUCTURE

In the previous section we looked at three different objectives within civic education: developing knowledge, skills and attitudes. Although we noted that each of these are closely connected, and that *each* should be included within any well-balanced lesson, it is clear that the methodology used in such lessons will need to reflect the differences between the three central objectives.

In this section, we shall look at how, in a general sense, we may try to achieve each of these objectives. In section X, we shall move on to more concrete examples of different teaching methods which may be used within the civic education classroom.

REACHING OUR OBJECTIVES:

1. Understanding / knowledge

In order to deepen students understanding in an area, we need to give them *information* about the legal, political and social processes and structures. We also need to develop their *understanding* of the basic concepts which underlie these structures.

For example:

> We might look at how laws are passed, how MPs are elected, how someone is charged with a crime, how the courts work, how laws are affected in their passage through parliament, how events are reported in the media, what role civil society plays within the democratic process, the role of the non-governmental sector etc

> In the area of *concepts*, we need students to appreciate the complexity of concepts such as democracy, human rights, obligation, equality, difference, fairness, justice, discrimination etc. This will entail allowing them to explore these concepts in controversial or borderline situations (See section X)

2. Skills / abilities

In order to develop democratic skills and abilities, we need to give students *experience* of the type of practices which are essential to, and help to sustain a healthy democracy; and *practice* at using them.

For example:

> Students should be given opportunities to discuss and debate issues, to practise conflict resolution, to improve listening and other communication skills, to frame arguments, to weigh up evidence, to negotiate, to analyse issues, to think critically, to make judgements, to take an opposite point of view, etc.

3. Attitudes / emotions

In order to encourage certain attitudes in students, we need to engage their feelings in the lessons, and help them to empathise with different points of view. They need to begin to feel that the issues *matter*.

For example:

> By giving students the opportunity to experience *directly* the feelings and emotions of other people in different situations. This may be done by role-play, or by getting students to describe cases from the point of view of different characters in a case, or by getting students to describe a different point of view from their own. Fundamentally, we need to select cases with which students are *likely* to empathise: which are real, and which are not too distant from their own experience.

ONE METHODOLOGY

We shall look in more detail at each of these 'three methodologies' in later sections (Knowledge - in Section X, Skills in Section XX, Attitudes in Section XXX). But it is worth making a further point. Despite the fact that we have allocated the

development of understanding, skills and attitudes to different sections, and have noted *different* methodologies, in fact, as we shall see, it is really very difficult to mark a clear distinction between a part of the lesson which develops, for example, skills, another which develops attitudes, and another which attempts to clarify concepts or points of information.

To illustrate this, let us look at what might be required in order to develop a deeper understanding of the *concept* of democracy **(knowledge / understanding**).

1. To begin with, noone could be said fully to *understand* the concept of democracy unless they were able to appreciate both its **positive** and its **negative** qualities - in other words, to ascribe some *value* to the concept.

For example

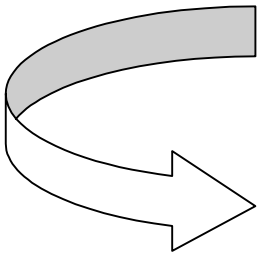
> We need to understand that a democratic system offers everyone an *equal* opportunity to voice concerns and to vote, that politicians are *accountable* to their electorate, and that a free press ensures (relatively) *free access* to information concerning the general public;

And on the other hand

> that in actual fact a democratic system generally reflects only the interests of a majority of the population, that the interests of that majority often conflict with the interests of the unrepresented minority, and that a 'free' press is more often than not directed by its proprietors or by others with direct access to power.

In order to appreciate those positive and negative qualities, the student needs first to be able to *value* such things as accountability, free access to information, and equality of opportunity. In other words, in order simply to *understand* the concept of democracy, students' attitudes need to be engaged, and they need to be taught to

value certain concepts above others. Thus the development of *attitudes* becomes an essential part of merely developing *understanding*.



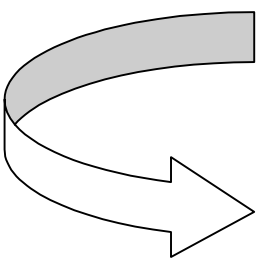
ATTITUDES

UNDERSTANDING

2. In a similar fashion, we can see that in order to develop such attitudes - in order, that is, to give students a sense of the *value* of equality, freedom, or accountability - we need to enable them to make *use* of these valuable concepts: we need, in other words, to give them the *skills* to apply their democratic rights and freedoms.

For example

> People do not value the opportunity which they possess under a democratic state to criticise bad legislation - if their criticisms are always *misdirected*, or *badly expressed*, and hence fail to hit their target; noone will appreciate the value of a free press if he cannot *make sense of* the arguments expressed in that press; and noone will appreciate the fact that his parliamentary representative is ultimately accountable to the electorate - if he and others are incapable of *communicating* to other members of that electorate the failings of different candidates up for election.

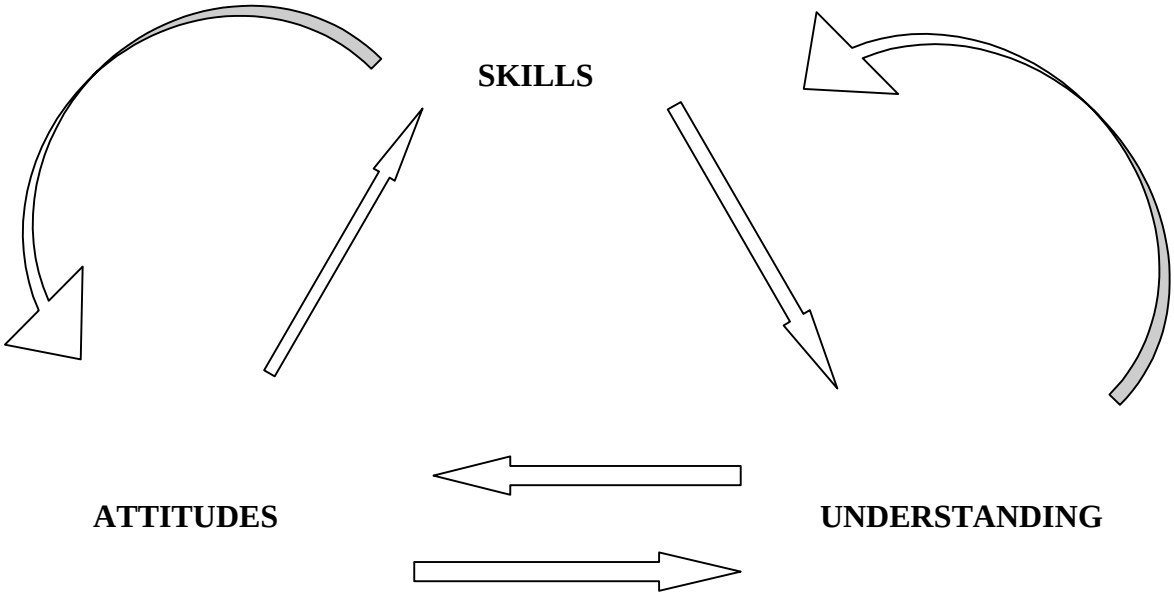


SKILLS

ATTITUDES

We could easily apply the same type of arguments to link *understanding* and *skills*.

It is clear that we are really talking of one methodology which successfully combines the elements needed to develop each of our three fundamental categories.



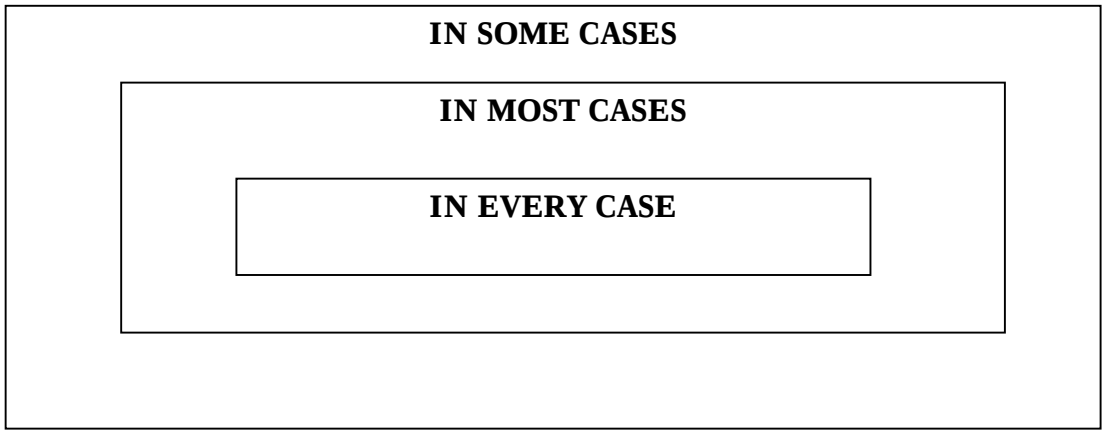
SAMPLE LESSON 3:

Human Rights

This is a lesson designed for 14-16 year olds, but we have seen it used effectively even with children at primary level. The lesson begins with the following activity:

Where do you stand?

A card game for four players. Each group is given a sheet of A3 paper with the figure below taking up the whole sheet.



Playing the game:

1 Each group is given a set of cards. One person in the group should shuffle and deal out all the cards. It doesn't matter if some people get more cards than others.

2 Without talking to anyone else, read through your cards and place each one, face up, where you think it should go on the board. For example, one of the cards says **Torture is wrong**. If you think that it is wrong in *every* case, place the card writing upwards in the centre ring. If you

feel it is wrong in *most* cases, place the card in the middle ring.Put it in the outside ring if you feel torture is wrong only in *some* cases.

3 When everyone in your group has decided where to place their cards on the board – still without talking – look carefully at the cards put down by the other members of your group. If you feel that a card has been placed in the wrong section, turn it face down on the board.

4 When everyone has had a chance to do this, the cards that have not been turned over are those on which all your group agree.

5 Make a note of those cards which have been left face up in the centre section marked 'in every case'.

6 The next stage is for your group to look together at each of the cards which are face down. In each case you will need to find out who put it threre, and who turned it over. Your job is now to reach a group decision over where each of these cards should go. If you cannot agree on this, you might have to think of a way of settling disagreements.

7 Add to your list wording from any more cards that have been placed in the centre section.

The cards in the centre of the figure describe things which you all believe should apply to everyone – no matter who they are, regardless of sex, age, colour, religion or anything else – in all circumstances. These are your ideas of basic human rights.
How does your list compare with those of other groups?

The game can be extended by asking students to alter the wording of the cards that have been placed in the space labelled 'In most cases' in a way that would allow them

to be classed as 'In every case'. This allows students to practise their drafting skills, and to draw up a longer bill of rights.

Decision Cards

Decision Card 1_____ **Killing is wrong**	**Decision Card 8_____** **People should be allowed to criticise the government**
Decision Card 2_____ **Torture is wrong**	**Decision Card 9_____** **People should be allowed to talk to and meet anyone they wish**
Decision Card 3_____ **It is wrong to keep someone as a slave**	**Decision Card 10_____** **It is wrong to force a person to work**
Decision Card 4_____ **After a certain age, people should be able to marry anyone they wish**	**Decision Card 11_____** **A person accused of a crime should be tried by someone who has nothing to do with the case**
Decision Card 5_____ **People should be allowed to say or write what they wish**	**Decision Card 12_____** **People should be allowed to travel and leave their country if they wish**
Decision Card 6_____ **All people should be treated equally. It should not depend on such things as their sex,**	**Decision Card 13_____** **Private letters and telephone calls should not be intercepted**

appearance or the country that they're from	

- The second part of the lesson looks at some of the anti-Jewish legislation passed by the Nazi Government in Germany between 1933 and 1935. Students are asked to read through the information and mark or underline those sections which they feel break one of the human rights which have been listed.
- In the final part of the lesson, students are introduced to the European Convention on Human Rights and are able to compare it with their own lists of human rights.

Points to note:

- Children are introduced to the concept of human rights *first* by carrying out the activity. Only when they have already devoted the greater part of the lesson to *discussing* the moral problems posed in the activity, is some 'information' about human rights introduced into the lesson.

- This enables students to discuss complex questions of human rights without being too influenced by what they may believe to be the '*right'* answer. Human rights are looked at first of all as questions concerned with *values* rather than as *facts* over which there is no room for disagreement or discussion.

- The way in which each of the decision cards is phrased helps to bring out the strong connection between human rights and moral concepts. For example, the issue of the right to life is presented in the form of the moral question - *could it ever be right to take someone's life?* The right to free speech is discussed by means of the concrete question: *are there times when it should be wrong for people even to voice criticism of the government?*

- By means of discussion and disagreement, pupils discover for themselves the complexity of questions connected with human rights. They learn that even the right to life is not a straightforward issue, and that the belief that *everyone has a right to life* is open to a number of interpretations, many of which have strong reasons in support of them.

- By working in small groups, all pupils have the opportunity to make their opinion heard, and to express that opinion in as convincing way as possible. They are also more likely to listen to the points of views of other members of their group, since they are able, in most cases, to respond directly to those with which they agree or disagree. (see Section X for further comments on the value of such discussion work)

- Pupils are then presented with real instances of human rights' infringements which helps them to place these concepts into a context to which they can relate directly. They come to see what concrete actions or laws may infringe the rights which they have been discussing in the abstract.

- Only at the very end of the lesson is there mention of international documents on human rights. These are then introduced in their *historical context*. Pupils thus come to see that these international document were *written down* only in very recent history, and in direct response to severe infringements during the second world war; and also that they were written down by a group of individuals after discussion (and disagreement!) - and are therefore as time-based and as perhaps as fallible as any other laws or documents written by human beings. (It may be worth mentioning to students that despite the fact that the UNDHR exists to this day, a number of different charters and protocols have been added since, in order to clarify and refine the original ideas).

IV. SKILLS

The lesson described in the previous section may appear to some teachers to offer little in the way of educational results. After all, it contained relatively little information for students, and what was offered, came only at the very end of the lesson. The majority of the lesson was actually taken up with discussion of relatively abstract - even philosophical - questions; and what is more, with discussion which did not include contributions from the teacher, and which did not, in all likelihood, lead to agreement among the disputants.

DISCUSSION WITH NO END?

What is the point of such endless discussions? It is clear that they do not (or hardly ever) lead to agreement, and we know that it is rare for people to be persuaded to change their point of view in the course of such discussions. *Why is it not better to bypass the lengthy process of disputation and simply provide students with the answers?*

We take the view that it is the very *process* of such discussions which is invaluable in developing certain important skills in young people - and providing the 'answer' would by-pass that vital process. We shall consider, in a moment, some of the benefits of using discussion of this form in the classroom, but before moving on, it is worth asking ourselves how many of us *could* actually provide students with the 'answers' to these type of questions.

Do you know the 'answer' to the following questions?

IN WHICH CIRCUMSTANCES (IF ANY) MIGHT IT BE PERMISSIBLE TO TAKE THE LIFE OF ANOTHER PERSON?

(…self-defence? defence of one's children? defence of one's country?);

IN WHICH CIRCUMSTANCES (IF ANY) MIGHT IT BE PERMISSABLE TO RESTRICT THE MOVEMENTS OF SOMEONE, AND TO WHAT EXTENT?

(…with convicted murderers? paedophiles? children?)

These are important questions, which demand answers; but it is surely the case that most of us - adults, educationalists, even philosophers - find these questions genuinely puzzling and troubling. If we are among those who do not, we should not try to take comfort from the other sensible and rational people who seem to *share* our point of view - because there will be at least as many sensible and rational people who do not! It is in the *nature* of these questions that they provoke disagreement, and we should be taking a large responsibility on ourselves if we provided *our* answer as the one which should be learnt by our students.

The value of using such questions as the basis of discussion lies precisely in the fact that they are troublesome, and that they give rise to different opinions

Firstly - because it is the process of airing, clarifying, and attempting to find common ground among different opinions which helps in the development of the critical thinking skills which are so important to future citizens of a democratic state;

Secondly, because civic education is supposed to prepare students not only for the easy decisions in life, but also, and above all, for the difficult ones.

We need then to *familiarise* students with the difficult issues, *familiarise* them with the processes of disentangling and resolving them, and *familiarise* them with the inevitable disagreements and differences of opinion which surround them. It is essential to the

spirit of democracy that individuals should be able to make up their own minds on questions such as these - however much we may want them to make them up in accordance with our own personal opinions.

WHICH SKILLS?

1. Thinking skills

For the democratic process to work effectively, a number of different abilities are required of the ordinary citizen. The most obvious role which citizens play in a democracy is to vote in or out successive governments. Even this task requires of the voter that he be able to...

- *understand* the different choices on offer,
- be able to *select out* the most important aspects,
- to *compare* these with other options on offer,
- to *assess* the different advantages for himself, and for society as a whole,
- to make a *judgement* about which would be preferable (for himself, and for society as a whole),
- and perhaps to select a *compromise* position if the optimum state of affairs seems to be unrealistic.

That is only to list some of the thinking skills which are required in just one (out of many) of the tasks of the ordinary citizen. It is clear that such critical thinking skills are essential for the effective functioning of the democratic process, and such an example serves to remind us just how much is presupposed of the eighteen year old citizen, when he first receives the right to vote!

We can enumerate two further 'classes' of skills which are vital to the effective functioning of the democratic process. Teachers of civic education can, and should, help to encourage and develop all of these skills in their lessons.

2. Social skills

Under this class we include the skills of communication with other citizens - for example, the ability to listen effectively, to express one's opinion, to persuade (and be persuaded), to negotiate, argue, compromise, resolve conflict etc.

3. Societal (political) skills

The third class includes those skills which we might think are required only by political activists - but it is important for educators to keep them in mind since our task is also to prepare the future political activists! (and in the weakest sense of the term). We include here such abilities as organising support, organising campaigns or protests, attracting publicity, using the mass media and - again - persuading, listening, negotiating etc.

METHODOLOGY

The best, and probably the only way to assist students with the development of certain skills is to give them practice in using them.

That is why it is essential to devote a significant amount of lesson time to discussion of the type of problematic questions which we have presented. Students will not come to be competent at debating, arguing, expressing their thoughts clearly, following a line of discussion etc. unless they are familiar with these practices, and familiar with the problems which arise in trying to carry them out.

We can encourage discussion both in small groups of students without a teacher (as in the Human Rights exercise) and as a whole class, with the teacher acting as *facilitator* of the discussion.

SAMPLE LESSON 4:

Theme: **WHY IS IT WRONG TO LIE?**

The following whole class discussion is taken from Thomas Lickona's excellent book 'Educating for Character' (pp246 – 248) and provides a good example of effective use of discussion with young children.

FIRST GRADERS TACKLE A MORAL DILEMMA

Mark and the Movies

Mark was on his way to the movies when he met his friend Steven. Steven said he really wanted to see this movie too, but he spent all his allowance and wouldn't be getting any more until after the movie left town. Both Mark and Steven were 12 but could easily pass for younger. If they lied about their age, they could both get in on the money Mark had.

Mark didn't know, though, if he should lie about his age. Steven said 'It's your money, so it's your decision'

What should Mark do?

Here's how the discussion went with these 6-year olds:

Teacher: Okay, what do you think Mark should do?

John: Him and Steven should tell them how old they are.

Emily: they shouldn't lie about their age.

Teacher: why do you think they shouldn't lie?

Tina: Because if they did lie, they'd get a spanking.

John: Mark shouldn't lie about his age because it leads to a mess.

Teacher: What kind of a mess?

John: His mother might find out.

Sarah: The father too.

Erin: They'd get punished.

Teacher: So you all think Mark and Steven shouldn't lie because they might get caught and punished. What if no one catches them – would it be right to lie then?

Most: Yes!

Billy: No it's not. The manager of the show might catch them.

Teacher: But what if no one catches them?

Billy: Then it's all right.

> *The teacher comments on the amount of Stage 1 thinking brought out by the discussion so far: "I was surprised at how punishment oriented my kids were. Fear of getting caught was their* only *reason for not lying. If they thought they wouldn't get caught, then it was okay to lie".*

"Who thinks it would still be wrong to lie?" She asked the class, "Even if Mark and Steven wouldn't get caught?"

Five children raised their hands. The discussion continued:

Troy: They'd still ge tin a mixed-up mess.

Teacher: How?

Troy: Steven might tell somebody that they lied.

Teacher: He might, that's true. But would it still be wrong even if Steven didn't tell anybody?

Troy: Yes.

Teacher: Why, Troy?

Troy: [reaching] I don't know… but it is.

Emily: It's not nice to lie

Troy: [in a rush] Yeah, and it's not fair to other people, either!

Teacher: Who wouldn't it be fair to?

Troy: The others in the show. They had to pay full price.

Teacher: You mean that if other 12 year-old kids had to pay the full price for their tickets, then it's not fair for Mark and Steven to get in cheaper?

Troy: Right.

The teacher comments:

I considered Troy's comment a real breakthrough. I went back to the kids who originally said it would be okay to lie if they could get away with it. Some of them still said it would be alright to lie as long as they didn't get caught. However, two of them now said they thought it wouldn't be fair, though they had trouble explaining why.

At this point several children were getting tired, so I didn't push it. I decided to bring in some everyday dilemmas – like cutting into lunch line, and taking kids' things without their permission – that would make the issue of fairness more concrete to them.

Points to note:

> The teacher plays devil's advocate at the beginning of the discussion in order to tease out of the children their 'true' beliefs.
>
> In this way – the children give the 'right' answer first…
>
> …while really believing in the 'wrong' answer (their reasons for thinking that lying is wrong are egocentric, punishment oriented).
>
> But in the course of the discussion, they go on to find the *right* answer themselves.

TEACHER AS FACILITATOR

Enabling students to conduct the type of debate outlined in the previous section demands a great deal of skill from the teacher herself. The teacher needs to *enable* students to *find their own answers* to these difficult questions, and not to interfere unduly in the process of discussion. Only in this way will students become proficient in the skills required, and only in this way will students really come to *feel* that a given answer is 'right' - and not simply to 'know' it because the teacher says so.

It is always tempting to monopolise discussion among students. The teacher, after all, is more experienced, and probably more articulate, and it often seems that students are flailing around, and failing to grasp the important points. The teacher has to steer a narrow course between, on the one hand, dominating the proceedings, and on the other,

allowing students a free reign - which often results in a rather chaotic discussion, with participants touching on any issue that happens to take their fancy.

Such a task is not easy for the teacher, but it does become easier with practice. Teachers who work effectively in this way have normally reported difficulties at the beginning, before their students become aware of the 'rules of the game' and become proficient at keeping to them; and before the teachers themselves discover the key to effective facililitation. So individuals should not be discouraged!

More concrete guidelines for the practising teacher are outlined in Section X *The Role of the Teacher*. We include here a short check list of important points:

- give students a *problem* to think through and puzzle over;
- play devil's advocate if they cannot see the problem;
- allow them time and freedom to think for themselves;
- make them feel that the issues matter;
- keep the discussion on course - do not let them be led astray!
- value all opinions: answers are *very, very rarely 'wrong'*
- *trust* students to make up their own mind

And remember: the process of thinking through is more important than the answer itself

A WASTE OF TIME?

Any time-consuming method of conducting a lesson, with so many difficulties for the teacher, needs justification. After all, the great advantage of simply 'telling' students the 'right' answer is that it can be done extremely quickly, leaving time for other activities, and enabling more ground to be covered.

But just how effective is such a method? We know that students can give the 'right' answer when asked to do so during a the lesson - but that does not mean that they will

always *behave* in accordance with it. We want students to *internalise* important moral principles so that they *understand* why they exist, come to *feel* that they are important, and thereby come to *respect* them. Obedience to moral principles is far more likely to follow from a genuine respect for them than from a fear of punishment or sanctions.

Consider the benefits of discussion listed on the following page, and make a comparative list for a lesson where moral principles and rules are laid down by the teacher.

Benefits of Discussion:

1 Students enjoy it! It is a way of engaging their attention on important issues;

2 They gain the ability to think through and find their own answers;

3 They come to see that such issues ***matter,*** by seeing and considering the effect on other people;

4 They are therefore more likely to *respect* and *obey certain* important moral principles;

5 Discussion helps them to verbalise their thoughts - to get across what they mean, and to clarify ideas for themselves;

6 It helps communication - listening to, relating to, and understanding others;

7 It helps them to develop ideas (together);

8 Students come to understand and value different points of view - and thus to *tolerate* those points of view;

9 They gain in confidence as they become better at contributing to such discussions, and less afraid of being laughed at or told off

10 Discussion provides an opportunity to talk about issues affecting or concerning members of the class;

11 different views are aired: inconsistencies and intolerances are brought to light;

12 discussion helps to build a class identity - a community of shared values and common understanding;

13 it points up the complexity of cases which appear simple - and thereby helps to combat dogmatism;

14 students learn to disagree with an idea, but not necessarily to disrespect the person holding it;

15 the teacher gains the *trust* of students, and receives a more accurate picture of their, concerns, values and thinking processes.

SAMPLE LESSON 5:

ACTION STATIONS

Aim: To examine some of the issues raised when groups decide to take the law into their own hands.

To consider the role of individuals and the public in enforcing law.

Time: About 30 to 45 minutes

Preparation: Arrange seating to allow pupils to work in small groups.

Activity

Pupils propose measures for dealing with a serious outbreak of theft in a community, and consider the role of neighbourhood patrols in combating crime.

Outline the situation faced by local residents:

Local Residents are Furious…

"It's terrible round here. Nothing is safe. Everyday someone in this area has their home broken into"
"There are lights on here all night. Old people are afraid to go to sleep in case they are burgled. One lady is son scared she keeps a truncheon with her all the time"
"Last night they stole a car.It belongs to a man who takes his wife to hospital every day for kidney treatment"

SOMETHING MUST BE DONE!

Ask pupils, at first individually and then in small groups to make a list of all the things that can be done to make the community safer. Encourage pupils

to think about the problem as widely as possible. Draw up a plan of action by taking one suggestion from each small group.

Give out the texts: 'Taking the law into their own hands", and go through both the newspaper stories with the class. These give contrasting accounts of how an apparent rise in crime was handled by two community groups. Compare these with the pupils own action plans and ask how they would react to the community groups' action plan if they were local residents in Milton Keynes or Grimethorpe. Encourage pupils to explain their concerns and to suggest what other measures could have been taken to protect local citizens.

Taking the law into their own hands

Here are two ways in which people have tried to beat the problem of crime in their community.

Vigilantes Patrol Streets

Vigilante patrols have taken to the streets of Milton Keynes to control crime. Military-style units have vowed to clear the streets in response to recent attacks on local residents, particularly children. Two patrols were on the streets last weekend, carrying walkie-talkies and accompanied by a rottweiler and a Doberman. The anti-crime patrol say they will question anyone they regard as acting suspiciously. A spokesperson said, "we are taking the law into our own hands. If the cops can't protect our kids, then we will"

When asked if the units will resort to violence, he replied, "I cannot say how our people will react if faced with an attacker"

Stamping out crime

Gangs of teenagers have been roaming around Grimethorpe's Park Estate trying the doors on almost every home and car in the street. Now, from dusk till dawn every night, groups of men patrol the estate. Anyone acting suspiciously is watched and reported to the police.

More than 80 people aged 17-80 have joined the scheme. Their powerful torches and blue anoraks have been bought with given by the residents. Two housewives organise

the group's rota and ring the police every third night to provide a list of patrolmen on duty.

A list of local residents who have agreed to their telephones being used to call the police has been drawn up.

Mr Carl Roberts, who started the residents' group says "We don't go looking for trouble, but things are so bad, we have to help ourselves".

Questions:

> How do these stories which are based on fact compare with your action plan?
>
> What are the differences between the two groups? Would you be in favour of either of these patrols in your area?
>
> How do you think police would react to these groups?
>
> What are the dangers of people taking the law into their own hands?

5. MORAL EDUCATION

'You should fight to defend your country!'
'Killing is wrong'
'The legal profession is corrupt'
'People are morally obliged to pay taxes to the government'
'The President is undemocratic!'
'I need not obey an unjust law'
'My neighbour's unlawful practices are none of my business'

We shall each have our opinion on the truth of these moral judgements. We may agree with all of them, or disagree with them; or perhaps we simply feel that they are of little overall importance. Our opinion about each will depend on our *attitudes* towards, for example, the President, the system of taxation, or the concept of equality, as well on what we know that society expects from us.

This is the type of thing we are talking about when we refer to *developing attitudes* within lessons of civic education. We are talking about the type of *feelings* that our students have concerning a string of different issues - moral, political, social, legal etc. and the extent to which we can have any influence on these feelings. This aspect of civic education is probably the most difficult, and certainly the most controversial - which is perhaps why teachers are often uneasy about approaching it directly.

The difficulty lies in the extent to which we, as teachers, are actually *able* to influence the attitudes of our students: can we, for example, make them *feel* injustices, *perceive* that certain practices are 'wrong', and *accept* their obligations and

responsibilities? Or can we only tell them about these things, and *hope* that they will shape their behaviour in accordance with them?

The controversial aspect concerns the extent to which we *ought* we to try to shape our students' attitudes. Should not this aspect of education be the responsibility of the parents, rather than of the school? If the teacher of civic education finds that the values which children are picking up at home conflict with those of the school (or with the individual values of that teacher) does he or she have the *right* to attempt to change them? Who is to say that the teacher's values are correct?

WHAT *OUGHT* WE TO DO?

Moral education, perhaps even more than political education, is the area most likely to bring school into conflict with parents – which is something that no teacher wants to do.

Nevertheless, and despite the problems, there is no doubt that the school, and individual teachers do have a great influence on the way that their students relate to important issues, whether or not they would like this to be the case. Even by *failing* to address these issues we are sending a message to students - perhaps that the issues are unimportant, or that they *ought not* (in some sense) to be discussed.

> *This is a real issue for the teacher of civic education, whose task, if it is to have an effect on behaviour, must include not only the imparting of information about the way society works, but also developing some type of attitude towards this society.*

But which attitudes (or whose?) should these be?

… AND HOW CAN WE DO IT?

We need to find a way of striking a balance between on the one hand, ignoring controversial issues altogether in lessons, and on the other, laying down (our own) strict moral rules for students to learn.

1. AN INCOMPLETE APPROACH…

One method, commonly used, is to take a set of *Moral Principles* with which we can all agree, and simply to give them to our students to learn. For example:

Don't steal,
Don't harm others,
Don't kill,
Do to others only what you would have done to yourself,
Carry out your responsibilities,
Always act in order to produce the greatest amount of happiness...

... and so on.

Although such principles are undoubtedly important, this approach does not go very far in terms of cultivating *attitudes.*

1 Because we can 'know' the principles, and not act on them

2 Because general principles often don't help in specific cases - and it is in specific cases that people start to disagree

1. Knowledge alone is insufficient.

Action is our end goal. As educators we need to educate our students not only for the easy decisions in life, but above all, for the difficult ones. Everyone knows it is wrong to steal, wrong to be unkind, and wrong to avoid paying taxes - yet many of us do it

nevertheless. We need to educate our students so that they not only 'know' that such principles are 'right', but so that they *feel* that they are right and do not *want* to disobey them - even when the temptation is strongest.

2. Principles of little use

Why do the principles not always help in specific cases?

...because they frequently clash with one another.

For example:

DON'T STEAL **HELP OTHERS**

But what should someone do when the only way he can help a sick relative is to steal the medicine he cannot afford?

DON'T KILL **DEFEND YOUR COUNTRY**

What should someone do when his country has been invaded and he has been called up to defend it?

DON'T DISOBEY THE LAW **LOOK AFTER YOUR FAMILY**

What should someone do when the severe tax regime imposed by the government makes it impossible for him to feed his family?

ONE TASK OF MORAL EDUCATION is to enable children to solve such dilemmas for themselves. We should allow time for students to

discuss problematic moral cases, since this helps to develop their moral understanding and moral reasoning skills.

2. Filling the gaps...

We probably can't make *perfect people*. All humans have their own weaknesses, and even the best intentioned moral agent is likely to slip up from time to time. As moral educators, we want to try to prevent the worst 'slip-ups', and perhaps to ensure that our students slip up in minor ways, less often.

Human beings can slip up, morally, in a number of different ways:

1 They may not *know* what is right and what is wrong

2 They may 'know', but not understand *why* things are 'right' or 'wrong'

3 They may *know* and *understand*, but not *want* to do what is right

4 They may *know* that something is wrong, *understand* why it is wrong, and *want* to do what is right – but be *unable* to stop themselves from doing wrong (perhaps psychologically – this is their weakness)

We need to concentrate on each of these four areas:
Knowledge of what is right
Understanding of what is right
Wanting to do things which are right (or not wrong)

Being able to do what is right

Developing moral understanding

A great deal of research has been done on what constitutes 'moral understanding'. Now is not the moment to go into detail, but it is useful to summarise some basic points, since this will help us to know what we can reasonably expect from children in terms of morality, and also to formulate appropriate methods of deepening their understanding.

1. As with most forms of thinking at an early age, children's thinking about morality is fundamentally *egocentric*. They find it difficult to *decentre*, to take another's perspective *(for example – to consider: what if* she *wants it too? What if that is hurtful to* him*? What if* they *will get into trouble?)*

- **We need to help them to decentre – to get them to think about the effect of certain behaviour on others.**

2. Young children tend to focus on the concrete, observable effects of actions *(for example, this is wrong because I might get caught, you will go to gaol, he would be punished)*

- **We need to help them to see the broader consequences: what if you wouldn't get caught, but if everyone were to do this? What would be the effect on the class/school/society?**

- **And we need to draw the discussion away from pure consequences, and look at the principled objections: would that be a nice thing to do? Is it kind? Is it fair?**

3. Students will often give the answer they know that adults/the teacher expects of them – either because they want to please them, or because they have not considered the reasons behind moral laws or conventions.

- **We need to encourage them to say what they feel, and to create an atmosphere where they will feel able to do this.**

- **And we need to encourage them to justify their answers, so that we – and they – will come to see the reasons behind their thinking.**

4. Children tend to see moral rules as arbitrary impositions by adults: these are just another set of rules *(like – put your hand up before you speak).* Things are seen as wrong because adults say so!

For this reason, they will often see the 'rightness' of an answer as depending on its content, rather on than the reasons behind it. We may find that they are giving the 'right answer for the 'wrong' reasons – *for example, that it is wrong to steal because you might get caught.*

- **We need to help them to understand why these rules exist, why they are good rules. Otherwise they are likely to disobey them when they think adults are not looking (and sometimes – precisely because they have been told it would be wrong!)**

- **We need to explore the motivation behind their thinking – to ask them why they take the view they do. We need to accustom them to the idea that there may exist numerous reasons for given moral judgements, and some will be better than others.**

Concluding remarks

In this section, we have looked at the development of moral attitudes through the discussion of problematic moral cases. The idea is that a deeper understanding of moral principles and the ideas that lie behind them will help to shape the way that children look at these principles – in other words, to shape their *attitudes* towards them. Understanding what an issue really involves often changes our *desires* concerning that issue.

> For example: **if I understand that someone I love is likely to suffer as a result of my deceitful behaviour, I shall probably want less to be deceitful (although it may not be enough to stop me altogether).**

SAMPLE LESSON 6:

ABIGAIL'S PROBLEM

Aim: To develop skills of reasoning and discussion through consideration of a moral and legal dilemma.

Time: About one hour

Preparation: Arrange seating to allow pupils to work in small groups.

Activity

Abigail wants to help her father out of his financial difficulties. Pupils discuss haw she should do this and whether she should break the law.

> Divide the class into small groups of three or four. Give each pupil a copy of '**The Tailor'**. Check that they understand the problem and ask each of them to make a note of what they think Abigail should do, and why. Now ask pupils to discuss the problem with the other members of their group and endeavour to reach a unanimous decision. Give the groups time to consider the issues as a whole and to choose the best reason offered within the group. Ask each group to decide on Abigail's best course of action.
>
> Repeat the exercise for the **Constables Duty.** Both exercises explore a similar conflict between duty, legal compliance and the rights of others.

In **The Tailor** , the dilemma is about whether to break the law to right a wrong and prevent the unjust imprisonment of Abigail's father. Since Sir James owes him 20 guineas he himself is breaking an agreement, and some pupils may feel he is bringing the robbery on himself. Ask pupils to consider carefully whether Abigail has the right to take money from Sir James.

The local constable arrests Abigail and she explains to him why she robbed Sir James. In The **Constable's Duty**, pupils decide whether Abigail should be charged with the robbery-for if she is, she will almost certainly be found guilty and executed.

As a homework or follow-up to this work, pupils can devise a similar dilemma for themselves. Some pupils may need help to get started and could be given examples in which they learn of a friend who is stealing from a shop owned by an aunt or uncle; or cases of euthanasia when a wife or husband would be breaking the law by ending the life of their partner who is terminally ill.

Abigail's Problem

This is the story of Abigail, the daughter of a tailor, who did her best to help her father…..

The Tailor

There was a tailor whose skill with a needle was so great that people came from miles around to have their suits made. However, they were not so keen to pay their bills on time. The tailor had to pay his own bills and to feed his family. When he could not pay for all the cloth he ordered he was in danger of being sent to prison. The tailor, a mild man, would never demand payment from people who owed him money.

His eldest daughter, Abigail, decides to do something to save her family. Abigail knows that one man who owes her father 20 guineas is sir James Hooper, who rides into town by the same road every week of the year. Sir James is refusing to pay Abigail's father.

Abigail thinks about disguising herself as a highway robber and taking the money from Sir James.

- **Without talking to anyone else, write down what you think Abigail should do.**
- **Now share your opinion with the others in your group, and try to decide between yourselves what Abigail should do next. When you have done this, choose what you think is the best reason for your decision.**

- **Should people obey the law at all times? Try to explain your answer as clearly as you can.**

The Constable's Duty

Abigail decides to take the money from Sir James. Just outside the town she stops Sir James at gun point and forces him to hand over his purse, containing 100 guineas.

The Town Constable arrives just as Abigail is riding away-he gives chase and eventually catches up with her and arrests her.

Abigail tells the constable why she took Sir James's purse. The constable wonders whether he should arrest Abigail or let her go.

If Abigail is charged and found guilty of robbery she will be hanged.

- **What should the constable do?**
- **As before, write down your own decision first and then come to a group decision between yourselves. When you have done this, chose the best reason for your decision.**

- **Now try this yourself……**

Problems liken this are called dilemmas. They happen in all kinds of situations. Try to think of one yourself. It could be made up or based on something that has happened to you.

6. THE DEMOCRATIC CLASSROOM

> *The man who does not rejoice in noble actions is not even good; since noone would call a man just who did not enjoy acting justly*
>
> Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics

Aristotle set high standards. Why, in fact might people *want* to abide by moral norms? After all, it is not always an easy thing to do, and pursuing the selfish life may well lead to less moral anguish, and to greater overall satisfaction. How could we persuade students to act *well*, rather than badly?

An attempt might take one of three broad approaches:

1. We might try to instill genuine fear of the consequences of behaving badly

> … but as we have seen, this will be an inadequate form of education - partly because people, in fact, do very often get away with behaving badly! (But also, perhaps more importantly, because we do not want people to behave well *only* in order to avoid punishment).

2. We can help them to understand the impact of bad actions on other people (and help them to see others as *people*, like themselves).

We looked at this approach in Section 5. It attempts to cultivate the desire to do good by appealing to, and encouraging, students' desire not to harm others. It explores the consequences and ramifications of different actions

3. Concentrating on the positive values of a moral environment, a culture where people respect, care for and look after one another.

This approach attempts to *create* this type of environment (at least on a small scale) in order that students will come to appreciate it *in itself*, rather than simply because they are instructed to do so by adults.

It is the third 'method' which we shall look at in this section. We can think of it as the attempt to create a type of mini-democracy within the classroom; or perhaps as a *model* of the type of society that we are trying to 'sell' to our students.

> It is worth noting that although we present it as a 'method', as a *means to an end*, in fact, if we are serious about the values we are trying to pass on to students – then we have little choice as to whether to employ this 'method' or not. After all, a *genuine* democrat finds it almost impossible to run a dictatorship (just as a natural dictator is unable to rule in a democratic fashion!). And a *teacher* who is genuinely committed to democratic values rules a 'democratic class' not for pragmatic reasons, but because she will be *unable to do otherwise*.

ENGAGING 'DESIRE'

We have talked throughout this guide about the need to enable students to engage not only intellectually, but also emotionally. It is all very well to know what one *ought* to do in a given situation, but as we know, humans all too frequently do things they ought not to! We need, somehow, to engage *desire*. It will be much easier for students to adhere to rules and laws if they *want* to do so.

We clearly cannot - and we would not want to - recreate *negative* feelings within our classrooms, in order that students could have direct experience of how disagreeable

they are - and thereby want to avoid them. But we *can* attempt to recreate a positive moral atmosphere, where students will feel at ease, and will begin to feel that they are respected and valued by other members of the class. By this means, they may come to value such an atmosphere, and will then desire to reproduce it in other fields of life.

How can we do this?

The best place to start is with ourselves! This section, after all, is about teachers setting an example, and providing a model of good behaviour and democratic practices. We cannot expect students to learn these lessons if the environment in which they spend most of their formative years is *autocratic*. What model would they then have to adopt? How could they practise democratic skills in such an environment? And how could we expect them to become active and effective citizens later on - when their entire experience to date has been as passive participants in a system which has often seemed to them to be unfair, but over which they have had no control or influence?

We can look to students - if we are brave enough - to point up areas in which we could improve our own democratic practices, and the next section will suggest how we may do this. But we can also begin to look at our own practices with a more objective (and democratic!) eye. We can ask ourselves:

To what extent do we really, as teachers…

- **Practise what we preach?**
- **Act to remove injustices in the classroom?**
- **Genuinely respect our students?**
- **Genuinely respect their rights?**
- **Listen to them?**
- **Behave democratically?**

DEFINING THE ISSUES

It is clear that when we talk about *Democracy* in school or in the classroom, we are using it in a fairly loose sense (although some people use it more literally than others). Schools are not, and cannot be, genuine democracies, and the question is more about the right *balance* between an authoritarian and a 'democratic' approach.

Such a balance may be exhibited in any number of ways. As good a way as any of seeing the spread of issues which are involved is to listen to the views of students - to ask *them* where they believe the balance should lie. Such an exercise can serve a dual purpose: it gives teachers an idea of student concerns, and it also helps students to feel that their opinions are of some *interest* to teachers - even if no concrete action actually follows such a discussion.

EXERCISE

Teachers could ask their students to think about –

> **Whether there are things in school which they would like to change;**
>
> **Or - which aspects of school life they dislike;**
>
> **Or - which aspects they regard as unfair**

Emphasise that teachers attempting to put such questions to students will need to

- Give them *time* to think about these issues;
- *listen* to their views;
- and try to *respond thoughtfully*…

> *… The exercise is as much about being seen to give serious consideration to the views of students, as it is about giving them a real voice in matters*

of school policy. Students should not feel that they will get into trouble for voicing unorthodox or merely different opinions[1].

If students are not available (as in a training course) or if teachers do not wish to put such questions to students directly, then it can be an equally useful exercise to get them to put *themselves* in the shoes of students, and try to think about what their concerns might be. Thus, for teachers to ask themselves the question -

What would I mind about if I were a student today?

results…

The list below has been drawn up on the basis of discussions with students in a number of different schools (and a number of different countries), and serves to give a broad picture of student priorities and interests. The suggestions and complaints which have been included were those most commonly cited – there were, of course, many, many others.

We aren't allowed to wear make-up/short skirts/trainers/high shoes etc.
The teachers don't listen to our point of view
The teacher is always late for lessons – but we get told off if we are
Too much homework!
We have nowhere to put our things
They don't respect our breaks – they make us work through them
The lessons are boring
We get marked down for bad behaviour, even if our work is good
The teachers are always complaining about how difficult things are for them

[1] Nevertheless – teachers will probably want to set some rules for such an exercise. At the very least, it should be agreed that complaints should not be directed at individuals, and that no names would be mentioned.

They don't care what we think

Teachers pick on certain students

Good students always get asked to do things

Teachers don't call us by our first names

We don't want to have to change our shoes

We want to be able to leave the school premises at break times

We want clean toilets

On the basis of the list above, or using your own list –

Consider how many of these complaints or suggestions you feel to be justified.
Where you feel them to be justified, can you provide students with a satisfactory explanation for why they should accept them?
If you cannot – would you consider changing the status quo? (if not – why not?)

CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY

If you set students the task which was described in the previous section, then the type of suggestions which they came up with will almost certainly have been dependent on the *culture* and *relations* which already existed within your own classroom. The results of such an exercise can be a great deal more interesting and enlightening - and sometimes, more challenging – in a class where students are accustomed to a certain amount of freedom, and already have a clear conception of the type of expectations which are realistic within a democratic, as opposed to an authoritarian environment.

A discussion of such issues, and its usefulness in terms of *education for democaracy* can therefore often be assisted by drawing up a list, at the beginning, of the essential concepts of democracy. Some of these concepts may appear to be irrelevant to the classroom environment (although even in these cases it is worth asking *why* they

appear not to be relevant); but in general such a list can provide a useful springboard for looking at the assumptions which both students and teachers are accustomed to take for granted within the classroom.

We have provided a sample below of the type of concepts which may be relevant, and of some specific questions arising out of these concepts. These are to be taken as no more than a guideline – there will of course be other concepts which are relevant, and other issues which you may want to look at as well.

Ask teachers (or students) to brainstorm the fundamental concepts of democracy – to list those values or structures which are essential to democratic society.
Taking those concepts which appear to be most relevant to classroom or school practice, ask yourselves whether they apply within your classroom, and to what extent they ought to apply.

SOME EXAMPLES

1. Rule of law.

- Who makes the rules in your classroom? (*Is this fair?*)
- Are *you* subject to the same rules as your pupils?
- Ought you to be? *For example - do you apologise if you arrive late for lessons? Do you always listen while your students are talking to you?*

2. Accountability / Control of the abuse of power

- Are there people (eg parents) to whom teachers *ought* to be accountable, but who in fact have little influence over your behaviour? (What would *they* feel about this?)
- Is there favouritism or corruption within the school(/your class)?
- Do you feel that you ever *abuse* your power over your students? (Do you think your students would agree with you?)
- Do any *mechanisms* exist to which students could resort in cases of such abuse?

3. Rights

- Are you confident that *all* the rights of your students are respected within your classroom? For example -
    - *Freedom of Speech? Do your students feel able to express* any *opinion?*
    - *Human Dignity? Are students ever humiliated in class?*
    - *Tolerance/Lack of discrimination? Are people condemned for their opinions? Are minorities protected?*

4. Justice / Equality

- Do you treat all students in the same way?
- Do you criticise or reprimand students unfairly when you do not know the answers to their questions?
- Are your punishments fair? Are they consistent?
- Do you ever compare them with one another (suggesting that one is 'better')?

5. Transparency

- Are all school rules known to students? To parents?
- Are decisions and policies made public beforehand?

6. 'Rule of the people', Participation, Elections

- Are their opportunities for students or parents to influence school policy?
- Are they encouraged to participate actively in aspects of school life?
- Are there any mechanisms by which those in power are made accountable to students or parents?

No rules?

We began this section with the idea that students may need to be given some *positive* reasons for observing moral principles, and we suggested that one way of doing this was to attempt to create a culture within the classroom (school?) where such norms are always observed, and where students can feel safe, respected and valued. Yet we have offered no prescriptions for how such an environment can be created.

Prescriptions might defeat the point. The point is to set students an example, through our own behaviour, and the questions which we have raised in this section are supposed to help us consider our own behaviour from a more objective point of view. You will find a few more practical 'suggestions' in Section X – The Role of the teacher, and some other issues have been raised in different parts of this handbook. But fundamentally, the ethos within the classroom is something which depends on the perceptions, values and behaviour of the *teacher* – and that is something over which external 'Prescriptions' can have little control.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

However democratic such a process of introspection reveals the individual teacher to be, creating a *democratic classroom* is a 'method' which will probably not be sufficient on its own to guide our students through the moral difficulties they will undoubtedly face in life. After all, the real world is *not* a perfect moral environment, where everyone respects and values everyone else; and we need students to be able to cope not only within the cosy confines of a democratic classroom, but also in the real world, where difficult decisions sometimes have to be made, and where people do things which provoke feelings of rage, or selfishness, or the desire for revenge.

For that reason, we have adopted a two-pronged approach to moral education. On the one hand, we certainly want our students to value the 'positive' – and we have suggested that the most effective way of assisting with this is to *teach by example*. On the other hand, though, we do need to introduce them to ways of responding to and dealing with *negative* feelings and difficult situations, at least on an intellectual plane. Everyone will come into contact with such difficult situations at some point in his or her life. Ignoring their presence, and concentrating only on positive aspects will not prepare us for the difficult decisions we are almost certainly going to come up against.

A two-pronged approach:

Intellect	Feelings
We can make students think about the *consequences* of their actions What *makes* things wrong *Why* some things are wrong, and others right *Which* other courses of action are open to them	Help students to *empathise* with others To *feel* what others would feel To *appreciate* a culture where virtue is respected To *want* to avoid hurting other people

SAMPLE LESSON 7:

CLASSROOM CONTROL

Aim: To explore the nature and purpose of punishment in schools.

Time: Up to one hour

Preparation: Arrange appropriate seating plan; Check the school's policy on discipline

Activity

An extract from a nineteenth century document, offering advice on the punishment to teachers in Lancashire, and two more familiar situations are used to explore the nature and purpose of punishment in schools.

Ask the class to read through the passage 'Punishment - some suggestions'

Ask the class to offer their initial reaction to the list. The overwhelmingly physical and authoritarian methods advocated will probably be noted. Nothing suggested in the advice would be regarded as reasonable or legal today. Ask pupils to pick out four punishments and describe what they were designed to do. For example, several punishments are designed to humiliate or ridicule. Others are intended to inflict pain or discomfort.

Now tell pupils what the law says about punishment in schools and ask them, either individually or working in pairs, to identify four punishments currently used in schools and to discuss what they are designed to do. Ask the class to consider why the physical forms of punishment are now illegal. The value of punishments which can also help the offenders personally or assist them in making amends can be considered. The unfairness or inappropriateness of some forms of punishment might also be discussed.

The final section of the topic, 'Fair treatment', is designed to encourage pupils to identify the needs of the offenders in the two incidents and at the same time to address the problems raised by the offending behaviour. Pupils should be encouraged to reflect thoughtfully on how the problems can be dealt with so that the likelihood of their happening again can be minimised.

Classroom Control

Ever since there were schools, there have been pupils who did not want to attend them and whose behaviour was not as good as it should have been. More than 150 years ago, teachers in Lancashire were given this advice about keeping order.

Punishment-some suggestions

If a pupil doesn't sit still in his desk the teacher can tie a big log around his neck. It isn't too heavy if he sits up straight and still but if leans right or left the logs weight will make the rope bite into his neck. If there are two pupils being a nuisance the teacher can bolt them together with wooden shackles around their legs. Then they can be made to walk around and around the classroom backwards till they are tired out. Sometimes two really bad pupils can have their legs and necks fastened together and they are made to walk round the school backwards all day. Some schools have a sack or a basket and a bad pupil is put into it and hung all day by a rope from the roof of the school. All the other pupils can see him hanging there and they smile and laugh at this bird in a cage. This pupil is one of the best for making pupils behave. If a boy is disobedient to his parents or idle in his work he should have a label such as 'disobedient' or 'lazy' tied on him and be made to walk around the school with two boys in front of him shouting "Here comes the idle boy" or what ever is suitable. In this way the fault is made public and the culprit is usually cured. When a boy comes to school with a dirty face or hands a girl can be appointed to wash his face in front of the whole school. This usually makes the other pupils laugh at him, especially if the girl is told to smack him a few times (not too hard) around the face when she has finished washing him. The same method can be used if girls come to school dirty. This punishment makes the whole school laugh at the culprit and usually cures him.

One of the best punishments is to keep pupils in after school. One of the difficulties of this, however, is that the teacher has to stay in as well. This difficulty can be

avoided by tying the pupils to their desks in such a way that they can not untie themselves. The teacher can return after an hour or so and untie them.

All these different methods of punishment give it a continual novelty. Any single punishment used too often loses its effect and teachers should take care to vary their punishments as much as possible.

- **Pick out four punishments from "Punishment-some suggestions", and after each one write down what you think it was designed to do.**
- **Do you think the punishment was a good one? Why, or why not?**

FAIR TREATMENT

Fighting back

On the field at break, Steven was making fun of Robert again. It made Robert's life a misery. Robert was very thin for his age, and Steven always enjoyed pointing this out. At last Robert had had enough so he went over to Steven and said he was sick of being made fun of. Then he hit Steven in the stomach as hard as he could.

Robert's friend Bryan was watching what was happening. When he saw Steven double over he ran over and joined in He knew what it was like to be teased by Steven. A crowd quickly gathered, cheering on the two boys and before very long Steven was hurt quite badly.

The fight was stopped by Mr Heslop who took Steven to the medical room and sent Robert and Bryan to see the deputy head.

The deputy head must decide how to deal with what has happened

- **What are the problems to be investigated?**

- **What do you think should happen to each of the boys involved?**

Losing Out

Angie is not very good at reading. Last week, her history teacher, Mr Fielding, gave the class a test. Angie found the test difficult and did not do well. When Mr Fielding went through the answers with the class, Angie did not pay attention and talked to her friend. Mr Fielding told Angie to stop talking, but a few minutes later she was chatting again.

Mr Fielding got ver annoyed. He told Angie that she was stopping others from hearing the right answers, and sent her out of the room. As she got up, Angie swore loudly and slammed the door.

Mr Fielding deals with Angie at the end of the Lesson.

- **What are the problems that need to be investigated?**
- **What should happen to Angie?**

COULD IT HAPPEN TODAY?

What the (British) law says

> Under the Education (No 2) Act 1986, it is against the law for a teacher to hit a pupil unless the teacher has to use force to stop someone from being injured or to prevent damage to property.
>
> The law does not apply to pupils in private schools whose parents pay for their education.
>
> The law says that punishment given to a pupil by a teacher must be reasonable-and this depends on such things as the age of the pupil and what she or he has done.

Cases involving the punishment of children at school do not often come to court. When they do, the main question that must be decided is whether the school has acted in the way that a sensible parent would have done.

- **Make a list of four different ways in which pupils are punished in your school.**
- **Underneath each one, write a sentence about what you think the punishment is designed to do.**
- **What do you think are the most effective forms of punishment? Why? Do you think some punishments are more unfair than others.**

7. CONCEPTS

In this section we shall look at some of the issues which you might want to cover during a course of civic education. Issues are presented in the form of questions which children could think about, and which could be used as the basis of discussion. The list does not aim to be comprehensive; it is intended purely as a guideline, as one possible selection of issues that could form the basis of a course.

PRIMARY

THE INDIVIDUAL

You	**What** kind of person are you: which words would you use to describe yourself? **What** makes you happy or sad? **What** do you enjoy doing by your self?
Others	**In** which ways are your friends different from you, and in which respects are they similar? **What** do you like about them? **What** do you enjoy doing with them? **What** would it be like to have no friends?
Difference	**How** are people in your class/family different from you? **Why** is it difficult being different from other people? **Think** of something you like about everyone in your class. **Why** do people like different things? **Can** you think of some things that everyone likes? **Are** there any things that we *ought not* to like?

Feelings	**What** makes people sad or happy? **What** makes your best friend/mummy/daddy unhappy? **Why** do people sometimes hide their feelings? **Do** people always say what they are thinking? **How** can we tell what other people are really feeling?

OUR WORLD (THINGS AND BEINGS)

Animals	**How** are animals different from people? **Do** they have feelings? **Are** people more important than animals? **Which** is more important to *you*? **Do** we have a duty to look after animals? **Do** animals have rights? **Make** a list of which rights you think different animals have. **Do** you think it is wrong to test animals for scientific purposes? **Or** to kill animals to eat? **Why** are some people cruel to animals?
Environment	**Should** we care about keeping our school clean and tidy? **What** is wrong with dropping litter? **Who** should be responsible for looking after common property (at school, in the community etc)? **Is** vandalism a problem in your local community? **Make** a list of all the examples of vandalism that you have come across recently. **Why** do you think that people vandalise their environment? **What** kind of a duty do we have to look after the environment? **What** would you look for in a pleasant environment? **How** can we help to improve the quality of our environment?

Plants	**What** role do plants play in the life of humans? **Do** we have a duty to look after the plant species in the world?

SELF AND OTHERS

Friends	**Why** is it important to have friends? **How** do we choose our friends? **What** does it mean to be a good friend? **How** much does someone's appearance tell you about what he or she is really like? **Why** do some people find it difficult to make friends?
Kindness	**Why** are people sometimes unkind to others? **Think** of as many ways of being kind/unkind as you can. **Do** you think we have a *duty* to be kind to other people? **Why** do people become enemies? **How** can we prevent people from becoming enemies with other people? **How** can we help enemies to forget their quarrels and make friends?
Honesty	**Why** do people say we should always be honest with others? **What** would happen if everyone lied all the time? **Is** it always wrong to lie? **Can** you think of a case where you might lie to help a friend?
Peer pressure	**Do** your friends sometimes make you do things you do not want to do? **Why** do people sometimes behave differently when they are with a group of friends? **Which** difficulties do our friends sometimes create for us?

Relations	**What** responsibilities do we have towards other people in the world? **How** would we like others to behave towards us? **Is** it fair that other people may be more or less fortunate than we are? **Which** reasons can you give for why people should help each other? **How** can we help people who are unhappy or lonely? **Do** you think we have a duty to help others/share our possessions with them? **What** methods can we use if someone refuses to share his possessions with us?

THE COMMUNITY

Types	**Think** of all the different communities that you belong to. **In which** community do you feel happiest? **What** are the rules and principles of this community? **Who** makes these rules?
Relations	**What makes** a nice community? **How** do people behave towards each other in a nice community? **Why** is it difficult to live in some communities? **Think** about all the things which are wrong with one of the communities in which you live (eg local, school, national) **How** can we help to make our community a better place?
Leaders	**Why** do we need leaders at school, in the community, and in the world? **What** makes a good leader? **How** do people often choose leaders? (eg in groups of friends, politicians, the command of a ship) **How** do you think we *should* choose them? **Should** we always do what our leaders say? Does it make a difference how the leaders have been chosen?
	Why do we need rules (eg at school)?

Rules

Think about the rules in your school, and try to think of the reasons behind them.

Would you like to change any of them?

What could you do if you wanted to change the rules?

Who should make the laws in the country?

Could you make rules to suit everyone, and how should you decide which members of the community to suit?

What would happen if everyone made their own laws?

7TH GRADE

LIFE IN SOCIETY

What do you understand by the word 'Society'?

How does society differ from any other group of people?

How does the individual fit into society?

What is the bare minimum which society should be expected to provide for its individual members?

What is the bare minimum which society should be entitled to expect from the individual?

What are *rights*? (moral and legal aspects)

Can they ever be restricted or infringed? (In which cases?)

Can you think of cases where your rights have seemed to be in conflict with someone else's?

What should be done in such cases?

Which possible courses of action are open to the individual when his rights are infringed by other members of society?

Which courses of action are available when the government infringes certain basic rights?

Which rights and responsibilities for married couples are contained within the marriage laws?

Are there additional rights and responsibilities which should be expected of married couples?

What are the arguments for and against living with a partner, as opposed to entering into a marriage contract?

How do you explain the increasing divorce rates throughout the world?

Do parents have *obligations* towards their children? Do children have reciprocal responsibilities?

Can abortion be justified, where a parent feels unable to accept all of these responsibilities?

Do you think the burden of responsibility is carried out fairly within the home (men/women; parents/children)?

Individuals and groups, the community, the State:

What role do NGOs play in a democratic society?

In which ways are NGOs able to influence government policy or legislation?

What makes something a *community,* rather than just a group of people?

Do individuals *owe anything to* their local community?

Why do we need regional government as well as a national one?

Do regional politicians have any real power, or is everything decided at a national level?

Relations between individuals and the State in a democracy:

How do you think that individuals and the State ought to interact in a democracy?

Can a working democracy really be considered to be 'rule of the people'?

What is the role of political parties in the democratic process?

What are the means by which individuals may become involved in, or influence the political process?

How can the government be held accountable for its actions? (which mechanisms exist?)

Democratic citizenship: participation political activism

'Why should I bother to vote - my vote makes no difference'. Do you agree?

Do citizens have responsibilities towards society, other than the obligations which are enshrined in law?

What actions are open to citizens if they feel dissatisfied with measures being taken by the Government? What are the arguments for and against taking such action?

Romanian political system

Where does the balance of power lie in the Romanian political system?

Which controls exist to limit these powers?

How are citizen's rights defended within the Constitution?

What is the purpose of Parliament?

Is Government policy a *result of the democratic process*? How? Are Ministers restricted in the policies they wish to carry out?

How is the independence of the Courts assured? Why is this important?

What are the main political movements / parties in Romania?

How can those who do not sympathise with any of the main parties become involved in the democratic process?

What role should the media play in democratic society? To what extent do you think that it plays this role in Romania?

What are the difficulties in ensuring an independent media?

How do you explain the failure of much of the electorate to vote at elections?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Romanian electoral system?

Are all main decisions made by politicians? Are there possibilities for people to become more involved?

Do you feel yourself to be a citizen of Europe, or only of Romania? Can you explain your feeling?

Why do you think that the European Union does not automatically accept all European nations as members? What would Romania have to do or show in order to be accepted?

8TH GRADE

BASIC VALUES AND CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY

Authority:

Is there a difference between *Power* and *Authority*? Brainstorm people's views

Think of all the ways in which people acquire authority or power (at home, school, in the community etc) Are some of these ways 'better' than others?

Why ought we to obey those in authority?

Think of all the reasons why we should obey our parents/teachers/political leaders

Are there any cases where we are not obliged to obey them? (or obliged not to?)

What responsibilities do those in authority have towards the people they command?

Liberty:

What is Liberty? Brainstorm people's views; which words do people asssociate with the concept?

Should people be free to do whatever they choose? To say whatever they choose? To think whatever they choose?

What would be the problem with allowing everyone to do exactly what they liked?

In which respects is individual freedom restricted in your school? In your country? How does this differ from other schools/countries?

Do you think the restrictions are fair? How can you justify their existence?

When is it permissible to restrict the freedom of someone else? How do we decide? Who should decide?

Responsibility:

What does it mean to say that I have a responsibility to do something? Brainstorm people's views; which words do people associate with the concept of responsibility?

Think about the differences between the concepts of responsibility, duty, obligation.

Is it wrong to fail to carry out one's responsibility? Think of cases where you may have done this.

If someone has a right to something, does that mean that I have a responsibility to make sure he gets that thing?

Does anyone else have that responsibility? (Does this mean that they have to do it?)

What is the connection between rights and responsibilities?

What sort of responsibilities do we have towards other people in our family/school/country/other countries? Do we (you) normally carry out those responsibilities?

Justice:

What is Justice? Brainstorm people's views; which words do people associate with the concept?

Is justice to do with getting what you deserve? (how do we decide what someone deserves?

Do people in Western Europe deserve to live better, on average, than people in Africa? Is this fair? Just?

What does it mean to say that someone deserves to be punished?

Is an 'eye for an eye' a just punishment? Is it fair to kill someone if he has taken a life? Could this be just?

Children complain that it is not fair if someone gets more than them: is justice to do with getting equal shares?

The Courts are supposed to administer justice: are decisions made by the Courts automatically 'just'?

Equality:

What does it mean to say that all people are equal? Brainstorm people's views

In which respects is a heart surgeon equal to a common criminal?

Would it be possible to treat everyone equally? What would this involve?

Give examples of cases where people are treated equally in school/society. Try to explain the cases where there seem to be inequalities.

Some people start with a better chance in life; should others be helped in order to equalise matters?

Why is equality important? Is all inequality unfair?

If you get better exam results than someone else, does that give you the right to better living conditions? Should people be paid the same amount of money if they work the same number of hours?

Property:

Think about the concepts: owning, belonging to, property. Do they overlap exactly?

Why do you think that people are more careful of things which belong to them? Are they right to be?

Who should be responsible for the upkeep of common property?

Who should carry responsibility for looking after the earth's natural resources?

Should I be allowed to do whatever I like with the things which belong to me? Can you think of any restrictions?

Who ought to take ownership of someone's property when they die? Why?

Pluralism (tolerance, respect for differences):

Why should I be tolerant of different points of view if I am certain of the rightness of my own position?

What does this mean? (Does it mean I cannot strongly argue for my own point of view?)

Are there any points of view which we ought not to tolerate?

How should society deal with extremist groups and people holding positions which are harmful to others? (Nazism, for example?)

Do we have to tolerate violent criminals?

What does it mean to respect a point of view that I am unable to agree with?

In which ways ought society to respect the views of minorities? Does it have to do anything about these views (eg if they conflict with that of the majority)?

Patriotism:

Is patriotism something we are obliged to feel, or something we simply cannot help feeling?

Are there any reasons why we should feel greater loyalty/allegiance to our own country than to other countries?

Are there any circumstance where to betray one's country would be a good thing?

Is there a difference between nationalism and patriotism?

Which are the elements of Romanian culture, or events in Romanian history of which you feel most proud?

Are there elements or events of which you are ashamed?

SAMPLE LESSON 8:

OUTLAWS

Aims: To examine the notion of being outside the protection of the law.
To show how some aspects of English Law have changed.
To identify some of the protective functions of the legal system.

Time: 40-60 minutes

Activity

Pupils examine a legal case from the thirteenth century and consider whether the legal procedures meet their own ideas of fairness and justice. The concept of an outlaw is used to prompt consideration of some of the protective functions of the law today.

Provide pupils with the texts ' A wanted Man' and 'Outside the Law'. First go through the case of Alan of Rascawe.

Ask pupils to decide whether Alan is guilty of murder. He was guilty by medieval standards, but what of today's? Ask them to think of mitigating circumstances or ways in which the killing of Richard Whirlpippin may not have been lawful, for example, provocation, accident or self-defence. Draw out suggestions from the whole group and then ask pupils, again in pairs, to decide whether the law in 1256 was fair. Finally ask them to imagine that the crime had taken place today. What would they do to ensure that Alan would get a fair trial? Suggestions are likely to include the need to include:

- Provide Alan of Rascawe with an opportunity to state his case;
- Listen to statements from witnesses, if any;
- Ensure that those who judge the case have no connection with either the victim or the accused;
- Avoid deciding on the guilt of Alan of Rascawe until all the evidence has been heard.

Pupils can present the comments in a written or illustrated form.

Next read through the brief explanation of the state of outlawry on page 32, and the case of John of Clayton. The questions which follow ask pupils to think how outlaws would be treated today, had outlawry rule not been abolished.

A WANTED MAN…

In the year 1256, Alan of Rascawe hit Richard Whirlpippin on the head with a shovel and killed him. Alan ran away, and in doing so, under the law of the time, automatically became guilty of murder.

When Alan failed to appear in court to face the charge of murder, he became an outlaw. As an outlaw, all his possessions (value 7 pence) were given to the King and he became a hunted man. Anyone could kill Alan on sight.

People living in the local area had to join in the search for Alan. If they didn't catch him, everybody would be fined. The records don't show whether Alan of Rascawe was ever found – alive or dead.

- **Do you think the treatment of outlaws was fair? Give reasons for your answer.**
- **Under the law of the time, Alan was guilty of murder. Imagine that the crime had taken place today. What should be done to make sure that Alan has a fair trial?**

OUTSIDE THE LAW

In the Middle Ages, anyone accused of a crime who failed to turn up in court to charges became an outlaw. Outlaws had no legal rights. An outlaw was someone who was OUTside the protection of the LAW.

A fair return?

The year was 1317. Wiallam Farington died in suspicious circumstances. Foul play was suspected and John of Clayton was called before the court and charged with helping to bring about Wiallam's death.

For reasons that we do not know, John left the country and did not come to court and so became an outlaw. But six years later, he returned to England. When news of his return reached William's nephew - also called William, he and his friend Robert stopped John and told him to give himself up.

John had other ideas. He lifted his stick to prevent the men from grabbing him, but Wiallam raised his crossbow and took aim. John dropped his stick and took out a dagger and Wiallam also took out a knife. The two men fought and John was killed. Wiallam and Robert were charged with his murder, but were released by the court because anyone killing an outlaw could not be found guilty of murder.

In 1322, when John died, an outlaw could be killed by anyone on sight. But the King felt that too many people were being killed in this way. So in 1329 the law was changed, and from then on only the local sheriff had the power to take an outlaw's life. The last person in Engand and Wales to be made an outlaw was in 1964, but it was not until 1938 that the law was finally abolished.

- **Outlaws had no legal rights. If the law had not been changed, what would it mean today for a person who became outlawed?**
- **Is there any situation in which you think it would be right to treat a person as an outlaw?**

8. TEACHING METHODS

This section will describe in very broad outlines some of the alternative methods you may want to employ in the classroom. Most of them have been discussed – or illustrated – elsewhere in the manual.

1. GROUP WORK

We have remarked that civic education lessons are often most effectively undertaken by giving pupils the opportunity to work in pairs or small groups (three or four pupils). The main advantage of such group work is that it promotes maximum participation from all students: in a small group, all students can be involved in both 'thinking and doing.'

Small group work also helps with the development of cooperative skills, such as listening and communication skills, problem solving and sharing of tasks.

Forming groups

The least disruptive way of forming groups is to ask pupils to work with a partner or with others sitting nearby. This will often be quite satisfactory, but friendship groups often contain pupils of the same sex, interests and abilities**.** There will be times when a greater diversity is desirable or even essential to the outcome of the exercise. There are many devices by which pupils may be randomly allocated to groups (e.g. by number, letter, or birthday). Think about the likely difficulties before you begin, and, as always, explain to pupils why you are asking them to work in a particular way.

It may sometimes be appropriate to organise pupils within the groups:

A *laissez-faire approach* would involve the teacher giving a general assignment to the group. For example: *organise a research project on 'qualities of good leaders'*. The students are then left to organise themselves.

A *highly structured approach* would involve the teacher assigning a specific role to each group member. Depending upon the task, the roles might include 'materials handler', 'scribe', 'reporter to the large group' and so on.

A *semi-structured approach* might involve the teacher recommending certain roles, but leaving it to the group to assign roles.

For general discussion, role-assigning will rarely be appropriate since this will tend to restrict the participation of some of the members in the discussion.

Reporting back

It is rarely appropriate to listen to the detailed conclusions of all groups in the class. This can be repetitious and boring. It is, however, important to acknowledge the work of all pupils.

Strategies for achieving this include:

- Obtaining the comments of one or two groups and asking the remainder whether they have anything to add;
- limiting feedback from each group to one point only
- allocating each small group a distinct task so that the work of each group becomes vital to the completion of the whole task
- asking pupils to use the work they have done in their group as the basis of a piece of further work, for example a piece of individual writing.

SAMPLE LESSON 9:

EMERGENCY

Aim: To consider circumstances in which it might be appropriate for limits to be placed on the normal rights of citizens.

Time: 45 to 60 minutes

Preparation: Arrange seating to allow pupils to work in groups of three or four.

Activity

A serious accident occurs at a nuclear power station. Pupils take on the role of the authorities and determine whether, in the circumstances, there should be a change in existing civil liberties.

Before embarking on the main part of this unit, pupils may find it helpful to discuss some of the problems which arise form civil emergencies and disasters. They may know of examples in their own area of the accidents at Chernobyl, Sellafield and Flixborough or at Camelford in Cornwall, where the water supply was seriously contaminated.

This discussion can draw upon the examples given in *What next*? and *What did happen next*? in which there was a need for immediate action to protect life and property and where there might have also been a temporary suspension of normal rights and liberties.

> Give pupils copies *Emergency*! and go though the details of the accident at the power station in Cornbridge. Make sure pupils understand the seriousness of exposure to high levels of harmful radiation.
>
> Pupils are asked to take on the role of members of an emergency planning group and to draw up a plan to deal with the emergency. They are given guidance on some of the things they will need to decide.
>
> Divide pupils into some groups of three and four. Ask them to work alone initially, listing their own suggestions for emergency measures.
>
> After a few minutes, ask them to pool their ideas with the other members of their group and then draw up an emergency plan with their five most urgent tasks, arranged in order of priority. They can use the *Emergancy Plan* for this…
>
> Ask two groups to outline their plan to the whole class and then seek comment and comparison from others. Discuss the problems that might be faced by the authorities in carrying out these measures, and ask whether there would be a need to change laws to cope with this.

EMERGENCY!

Cornbridge

Cornbridge is an imaginary seaside town on the western side of the country, over 300km from London.

Cornbridge is the main town in an important fruit and vegetable growing area. Many people also work in the chemical factory, the oil refinery and nuclear power station in Cornbridggee bay.

It is the end of August, the weather is fine and Cornbridge Boat Week begins tomorrow. Vistors come from miles around to watch the races, which begin and end in the town harbour.

A call in the night

It is the middle of the night. A call is made to one of the government offices in London. There has been an explosion at the power station in Cornbridge.

ACTION STATIONS

Emergency planning

Near each nuclear power station, there is a special group of people called an emergency planning group who have the job of deciding what to do if a serious accident ever takes place.

In this group there is someone from the police and from the local authority, a representative from the government and scientists and engineers who know how to deal with nuclear power.

Imagine you are a member of the emergency planning group at Cornbridge Bay power station.

Two workers at the power station have died and twenty have been injured in the explosion. A large amount of radioactivite material has been released into the atmosphere and this will spread to nearby towns and villagers. Children and pregnant women are in particular danger from high levels of radiation.

First make a list, on your own, of some of the things that need to be done to deal with this emergency.
Amongst other things, you will need to decide….

- **What will you do about people in Cornbridge and other towns and villages nearby?**
- **What information will you give to the general public about the accident?**
- **Now share your ideas with other members of your group and draw up an emergency action plan.**
- **Do you think the government would have to pass any new laws to deal with the emergency? If so, what would they be.**

EMERGENCY PLAN

It would be important to

1……

2……

3……

4……

5……

New laws that would be needed….

……

……

……

……

HOW FAR CAN YOU GO?

There are some difficult decisions to be made. What do you think should be done in each case?

Case 1: The most dangerous job of all.

Fire fighters are sent to the power station to deal witth the fire. They are all wearing protective clothing, but levels of radiation are very high. Many will injured and some may die.

Five fire fighters refuse to go near the power station.

Case 2: The News

The news is bad. Tests show that radioactive dust from the explosion is being carried in the atmosphere to other parts of the country.

The government minister does not want television, radio, and newspapers to broadcast this information. She says that people are not in danger and the news will only make them panic.

Case 3 Leaving Home

People are being advised to leave Cornbridge. Radioactivity is at a dangerous level.

A man and woman with two young children refuse to leave their house. No one can persuade them that it is the best thing to do.

Case 4 Onlookers

In spite of the danger, people from other towns are driving into Cornbrige to look at the damaged power stations.

The crowds are making the job of the police, ambulance and fire services more difficult.

Case 5 Harvest Time

The crops are ready to harvest.

Farmers in the area are picking fruit to sell in the market. The fruit has been contaminated by radioactivity.

WHAT NEXT?

Fire!

2 september 1666, fire breaks out in a bakery in the city of London. A strong wind fans the flames and a large part of the city is on fire.

Poisonous Gas

2 December 1984, a large cloud of poisonous gas leaks from a chemical factory in the town of Bhopal in India. 200,000 people live close to the factory.

Water Pollution

1 November 1986, an accident causes chemicals to be washed into the River Rhine in Switzerland. More than half a million fish are killed and the water supply of many people is seriously polluted.

Meltdown

28 March 1979, the cooling system fails at a nuclear power station in Pennsylvannia, USA. The core of the nuclear reactor heats up to a dangerous level. There is a chance that the power station will explode and send dangerous radioactive material into the air above nearby towns.

WHAT DID HAPPEN NEXT

The great fire of London

The people of London were moved out of their homes as quickly as possible. Even the King helped with this.

12,000 homes and 37 churches were destroyed. The fire was stopped from spreading by blowing up houses with gunpowder and making a break that th flames could not cross.

Bhopal

There was a lot of delay in organising the rescue and in getting people away from the factoy. The offical death toll is 2,352, but many believe that the real figure is nearer 10,000. Many more were also permanently disabled by breathing in the poisonous gas.

River Rhine

The river flows from Switzerland through West Germany and Holland. The governments of these countries ordered that the water supply to the cities along the river should be shut off.

Three Mile Island, Pennsylvania.

The governor of Pennsylvania asked the experts for advice. Some said there was no danger, but others warned that there could be a leak of harmful radiation. He decided not to take any chances and recommded that all pregnant women and children within five miles of the power station should leave the area at once.

There was no explosion, but a certain amount of radioactive gas did escape from the power station.

2. DISCUSSION

Distinguishing different types of discussion can be useful in helping to identify the form which will generally be most effective for lessons of civic education.

1. Disputational Discussion is characterised by…

- disagreements, assertions, challenges
- people offering individual perspectives,
- few attempts to offer constructive suggestions or to understand others' position
- competition between disputants

2. Cumulative discussion is characterised by…

- People taking others' positions and building on them
- Drawing out of points of *agreement*

- But – a reluctance to face genuine differences or to resolve inconsistencies

3. Exploratory Discussion is characterised by…

- An atmosphere of trust and mutual respect
- Attempts to understand opponents and to see where they are coming from
- Cooperative attempts to think through and clarify concepts, issues or problems

In general, it will be the third form, exploratory discussion, which will be most appropriate and effective for lessons of civic education.

Rules of Discussion

One way to help create a 'safe' environment, where all students feel able to contribute to discussion is to establish a (concise) list of 'rules' which all students understand, and are able to respect. This is best done at the beginning of the school year, when norms of behaviour are being established - although such rules could be drawn up at any time, and can of course be altered in the course of the year. The list should be written on a piece of paper and hung in the classroom for all to see.

Asking students to develop their own 'Rules for Discussion' can be an effective way of helping them to understand the necessity for these rules, and can also give them a sense of 'ownership' which will make the rules more likely to deserve their respect. You may want to propose some general principles, such as the following, if they are not introduced by the students.

- listen to the person who is speaking
- only one person speaks at a time
- raise your hand to be recognised if you want to say something

- no interruption when someone is speaking
- when you disagree with someone, make sure that you make a difference between criticising their idea, and the person themselves
- no laughing when a person is saying something (unless they are making a joke)
- encourage everyone to participate

SAMPLE LESSON 10

TAKING ACTION

Aim: To consider the problems facing an individual when dealing with moral or legal issues. How do you decide whether or not to take action.

THE LESSON

It's up to you.

The two key ideas central to this part of the topic:

a) Everyday we are faced with moral or legal dilemmas. What principles do we apply to dealing with them?

b) It is not always appropriate to invoke the law even when, in theory, there is a legal remedy. It is very important to seek proper advice.

> You could begin the lesson by asking students how they have resacted when they have either witnessed injustice or been a victim of injustice. What did they do? What kind of things affected the action they took? The exercise they are about to do provides some situations from school where such dilemmas arise
>
> Ask the class to work in pairs or small groups sorting the situation cards into those about which they would do something and those they would ignore.
>
> The next step is to ask them to consider in detail the cards in the 'action' pile. What would they do? Why? And what would they hope to achieve? With the 'do nothing' cards, ask students why they have made these decisions. It will be valuable to explore the reasons behind the decisions. Many students will have decided to ignore those situations which do not affect them directly, even when theft may be involved. Many young children are brought up 'not to tell

tales'. It may be worth exploring the reasons behind this advice. Does it still apply to situations facing teenagers and adults?

TAKING ACTION - SITUATION CARDS

Situation 1 You are taking a science exam and notice that a friend is looking up the answers in a textbook hidden under the desk.	**Situation 6** You feel that a teacher has got it in for you, and always seems to be telling you off for no reason at all.
Situation 2 Someone in your class borrowed a set of felt-tip pens from you last week and will not give them back	**Situation 7** You see a friend in your class steal a pack of file paper from the stock cupboard.
Situation 3 Some people on free school dinners are offering to sell their dinner tickets for half the normal price	**Situation 8** You realise someone is spreading nasty rumours about you. Not one of them is true but you are worried that others will believe them
Situation 4 You are trying to do some work, but you cannot concentrate because the person next to you will not stop chewing	**Situation 9** A fight is planned after school between to lads in your year. Everyone is talking about it.
Situation 5 An older boy at school threatens you with trouble unless you hand over some money.	**Situation 10** A watch given to you on your birthday has been stolen. Someone in your class has taken it and you think you know who it is.

3. QUESTIONING

The development of critical and reflective thinking is an important aim of education generally, but it is particularly vital in matters of citizenship. The best way of encouraging such development is by using exploratory discussion, either in small

groups or as a whole class. In whole class discussion, the teacher will have a crucial role to play in *facilitating* the discussion – that is, in moving it on, and enabling pupils to explore the issue in the most effective way.

% *Closed questions, to which pupils can only answer 'yes' and 'no', are of little value.*

% *Leading questions, which make it obvious what response is expected, are of little value.*

{ *Questions beginning with the words 'why?', 'how?' or 'what?' are usually helpful, as are the questions which encourage pupils to clarify the views expressed. These will include prompts such as:*

Are you saying that...?

What did you mean by the word...?

Useful questions to stimulate more complex thinking ...

What happened...?	helps to clarify people's view of the situation and to ensure that the 'same' event is being considered by everyone
Why did it happen? Did it have to happen?	to encourage understanding of causes and effect, consequences of actions etc
Why did they do this? Did they have to do it? Did they really want to do it?	to move from external assessment of actions to consider internal motivations or causation: this is important for the issue of responsibility and blame or punishment later.
Were there other things he/she could have done?	to encourage a greater awareness of the fact that actions are in fact based on choices or influenced by a failure to consider alternatives
What did someone feel? What would you feel in such an instance?	happy, sad, friendly, hurt, kind, pained, encouraged, humiliated etc: how wide are children's vocabularies? To what extent are they able to empathise with people in different situations?
Was it FAIR? Was it right	These are important stock questions, to be asked as often as

/ wrong? Why?	possible It is crucial to follow them up with '*Why*?' questions, in order to understand children's level of moral reasoning
Was that KIND? Was it a nice thing to do?	these and related questions should be used to encourage empathy and understanding of effects of actions or words on others
What would be the effect on other people/the school etc?Would you like it to happen to you/ your mummy/ daddy/ friend?	these questions help them to consider other less egocentric reasons for why it might be right /wrong by looking at different groups of people who might be affected
WHY do you think that?	As much as we can we must encourage the children to give reasons for their answers. This is something which must be encouraged at all stages because it is the question which reveals most effectively how egocentric (or otherwise) the children are in their moral reasoning.

4. ROLEPLAY

A roleplay is a small drama played by the students. It is normally improvised, and aims to bring to life circumstances and events which are unfamiliar to students. Roleplays can help to improve understanding of a situation and encourage *empathy* towards those who are in it. For example:

> In a roleplay about a robbery, a student playing the part of the victim would think about what it would *feel* like to be the victim of a crime - and should thereby come to appreciate more fully the negative consequences and aspects of theft.
>
> A student playing the part of the robber will need to try to understand the *motivation* of the character he is trying to portray, rather than simply playing a stereotypical 'villain'. He may thereby come to appreciate more fully the reasons behind crime; and develop a deeper understanding of, and tolerance towards, the personalities who become involved in it.

Warning!

It can be easy to misuse roleplay as a teaching method. It can often become an enjoyable, but educationally unproductive use of classroom time. Students should not be encouraged to think of the exercise as a *performance*. A role play does not even need to be performed to be a useful learning experience. It is far more important that the students should think themselves into the part they are playing, and try to experience the feelings of a person in such a position.

The educational use of role play is mostly in this thoughtful preparation; the performance is almost of secondary value. Students will need to be given time and guidance to learn to use it effectively.

SAMPLE LESSON 11:

DUTY CALLS

Aim: To examine the extent to which people accept responsibility for their actions and are prepared to own up or make amends.

To consider the distinctionnn between knowing what is right and actually doing it.

Time: At least 45 minutes

Who is to blame?

With pupils seated in pairs, give each one a copy of the situations labelled 'Who is to blame?'. Ask them to make a personal assessment of each situation and then to share their decision with their partner. Now draw the class together and ask for two or three reactions to each dilemma. Encourage pupils to give reasons for their answers. If time is available ask pupils to choose one of the situations and to discuss what the people involved might be feeling. Then tell them to take a part each and role play the situation from the point at which the problem is first discovered. Ask just three or four pairs to explain the outcome of their work and try to draw the discussion towards the key quesiton: *what stops us from doing what we know to be right?*

On Duty

Give out the situation cards from On Duty and ask pupils to discuss and note what the central character in each case should do. You may prefer to select one or two situations to look at together before asking pupils to work independently. Stress that pupils should take time to consider each situation in as much detail as possible. Younger or less articulate members of the class may need your help in going beyond superficial or intuitive judgements.

Debriefing is essential in a lesson of this kind. It is unlikely that you will want to deal with all seven situations with the whole group. You could ask groups to nominate the ones they found most difficult and concentrate on these.

WHO IS TO BLAME?

Do you have those days when everything seems to go wromg, and you end up with the blame?

- **Read the four situations below.**
- **Discuss each one and then write down what you think you ought to do and what you think you probably would do, if it happened to you.**
- **With a partner choose one of the situations and discuss what the people involved would be feeling. Then take a part each and role play the situation. Do your best to persuade the other person that you have a good case and try to reach what both sides agree is a fair solution.**

1. Your cousin asks you to look after his three prize budgerigars while he is away for a week. He explains how much food they should be given, but does not tell you to top up the birds' drinking water. On the sixth day, one of the birds dies-of thirst.

2. You borrow a friend's new racket for a game of tennis. After the game you notice that two of the strings are broken.

3. Your friend borrows your bike to go to the shops. You don't mention the poor brakes. On the way back she comes down a hill and loses control. Crash! She falls off and badly scrapes her arm and leg, and rips her new jacket.

4. Your mum or dad lets you borrow their best pen for school. The pen was expensive and given as a present some years ago. You lend it to someone in the class who loses it.

ON DUTY

Decisions! We make hundreds of them eveyr day! Some decisions are easy, and some are hard. In this piece of work you are going to be asked to take some hard decisions.

- **You will be given five cards. On each card there is a short story.**
- **Place the pile face down on your desk.**
- **Pick up the top card. Read it. Make sure the others in your group understand the main details.**
- **Decide and make a note of what you think the person should do in each case.**
- **Go on to the next card until you have worked your way through them all.**

1. Mrs Searle, Laura's English teacher, is looking for a book in the school library. On the other side of the bookcase Laura is talking to Stephanie about her brother, who is 18 years old and no longer at the school. Mrs Searle tells Laura tell Stephanie that he is selling drugs and that some of his customers are in year 11 at school. Mrs Searle has taught Laura for three years and knows Laura's mother would be heartbroken to learn what is happening.

What should Mrs Searle do?

2. Garry needs a new shirt. He and his best friend, Ben, look at several on display in a shop. Garry decides which one he likes best and slips it under his coat. Ben tells him to put it back, but Garry leaves him and walks out of the store. Ben follows him out, but is stopped by a security guard and is taken to the manager. The manager of the shop realises that it was Garry, not Ben who took the shirt and asks Ben for Garry's name and address.

3. Paula (who is 13) is waiting to be served in a sweetshop. In front of her are two boys aged about nine. Paula knows who they are and where they live. They ask the assistant for something from the back shelf, and as she turns to get it, one of the boys takes two chocolate bars and puts them straight into his pocket.

What should Paula do?

	4. Hassan and his friend are on their way home at night. As they reach the end of the road, a car turns the corner in front of them. The car is going too fast. It skids and hits the car parked on the other side of the road. The driver doesn't stop, but Hassan gets a clear view of the number plate. **What should Hassan do?**
	It is late at night, Cathy says goodbye to her friends and walks down the road to get the last bus, which is due in five minutes. A woman walking towards her on the other side of the road appears to trip and fall heavily on her side. Cathy is a qualified first aider. **What should Cathy do?**

5. PROJECT WORK

Not available in translation

6. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Using the media/current events: Not available in translation

SAMPLE LESSON 12:

THE OLD CLAY PIT

Aim: To determine resonsibility for an explosion of methane gas leaking from an abondoned ladfill site.

To raise pupils awareness of the legal problems of waste disposal.

Time: Up to one hour

Preparation: Arrange the seating to work in groups of two or three.

Activity

Pupils discuss the responsibility for what took place when an explosion of methane gas destroyed a bungalow near an old landfill site in Loscoe, Derbyshire.

With the pupils sitting in groups of twos and threes, provide each pupil with the information in 'The Old Clay Pit'. Go through the details with the class and ask pupils what they think the unpleasant smell could have been. The answer is given on the following page along with a description of the explosion and details of the after effects.

Now ask pupils to consider who should be held responsible for the accident a list of those who might be blamed is given on page 68. In this exercise, pupils have ten points to allocate between the parties. Some pupils may find it easier to begin by identifying those who had no responsibility for the explosion first, and then awarding points to the remainder according to level of blameworthiness.

Gather a sample of results from the groups. Find out who is thought to be the most culpable and why.

Ask pupils to decide whether those affected by the accident should be compensated and if so, by whom?

Although pupils may feel that one or several groups listed on page 68 bear some responsibility, it was very difficult for the residents of Loscoe to obtain and compensation at all. Details of the outcome are on page 69. These can be used to illustrate some of the difficulties of pursuing a claim of negligence through the courts, particularly when help with legal costs is not available.

THE OLD CLAY PIT

1. Loscoe is a village in Derbyshire. Many years ago there was a brickwoods in the village, which used clay dug from the nearby pit. When the brickworks closed down , the pit was bought by a waste disposal company who asked the council if they could fill it with rubble and household waste.

2. The county council said they could do this but for a long time no records were kept of what was being put into the pit.

3. When the tip was full, it was left to settle and then covered with a thick layer of soil. Two years later the land was bought by a company to be used as a park for hire vans.

4. 50 metres from the tip is an estate of houses. Not long after the tip was covered with soil, the local residents complained of a strange smell and noticed there lawns were turning from green to black.

The residents called the county council, who sent someone to investugate. He said there was nothing to worry about.

- **What was the strange smell? Why was the grass turning black?**

Methane Menace

The smell that the people were complaining about was a gas called methane. Methane is produced by rotting waste. It is very dangerous, and when lit is highly explosive…

At about 6.30 am Mr and Mrs Thompson and their son Colin were fast asleep in their bungalow in Loscoe. Suddenly, with no warning there was a huge explosion.

"The first thing I was aware of was a flying sensation, and then darkness" said Mr Thompson.

Mr Thompson had been blown across the room and buried under a pile of rubble. Colin was found underneath the floor boards, and Mrs Thompson was left looking at the sky through a hole in the roof.

"I hurt so much" said Mrs Thompson afterwards, "I thought I would crumple into little pieces"

Gas from the tip had passed underground and come to the surface underneath the Thompson bungalow. When the central heating boiler came on automatically at 6.30 am, the gas ignited. It was a miracle the family survived.

The After Effects.

<u>The Thompsons</u>

- The Thompson family was seriously injured in the blast. For some time after leaving hospital, Mr Thompson had to wear a special collar because of the damage to his neck and Mrs Thompson had to walk with a stick.
- Their house, brand new car, and all their possessions were destroyed.

<u>The Villagers</u>

- Many were worried about the danger of more explosions.

- Because of a build up of gas under their houses, two families had to leave their homes and move into a caravan.
- No one wanted to buy a house in Loscoe.

WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE?

• Who do you think was responsible for what happened in Loscoe?
• Look at the list on the next page and decide how much blame you would place on those people who had connection with the explosion.
• You have ten marks to share out between those you think were to blame. A high number of marks means a high level of blame, and low marks mean little blame.

	YOUR SCORE
The company which dug the pit.	
The waste disposal company which filled the pit with rubbish	
The County Council which allowed the waste disposal company to fill the pit with rubbish	
The firm which built the bungalows near the tip.	
The safety officer who told the villagers there was no danger	
The Thompson family	
The company which bought the land for its van hire business	
Total	10

Should any of the people affected by the explosion be compensated in any way? If so, how much should this be, and who should pay?

THE FINAL CHAPTER

The Thompsons

The council found somewhere else for Mr and Mrs Thompson and their son to live, and eventually bought their old house from them. Mr and Mrs Thompson moved to a new house in another village.

The Villagers

- Most villagers wanted the tip to be empied and the rubbish to be taken elsewhere. Experts said it would cost £2.5 million to move the 300,000 tonnes of rubbish. Neither the government nor the council would pay for the cost of doing this.
- The amounts of gas inside the tip are now carefully checked, and waste gas is regularly burnt off.
- Many people wanted to move from Loscoe, but could not sell their homes.
- Houses in the village were now worth a lot less than before the explosion. A group of Villagers decided to try to get some compensation for all the money they had lost.
- Taking a case to court can be expensive and villagers could not raise enough money for what could have been a very long case.

What the (British) Law Says.

The Law Changes

In 1990 the law was changed to try to make sure that this kind of accident did not happen again.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 old landfill sites like the one at Loscoe must be regularly inspected to check whether there is a build up of gas, or any other problem which may cause pollution or harm to human health.

7. USING OUTSIDE HELP

It can be very helpful to complement the work in class by using the assistance of someone with specialist knowledge and expertise. You may wish to invite representatives from different groups in society to talk to students, in order to clarify

or enliven specific topics. Or you may wish to take a group of children out of school to visit some of these organisations. Some examples of people you could invite would be:

- The police
- Trade union officers
- Representatives from local business and industry
- Charities and pressure groups (NGOs)
- Local councillors and MPs
- Solicitors
- Magistrates
- Local community representatives
- Health officers

Planning the Visit

- Consider why the visit would be helpful: what purpose would it serve?
- Involve students in this discussion. They may have contacts or further ideas
- Consider whether the whole year group would benefit from meeting the visitor. Can this be effectively arranged, and can the drawbacks of meeting in very large groups be overcome?
- Give your visitor plenty of notice.

9. EVALUATION

Not available in translation

APPENDIX

SUPPLEMENTARY LESSON:

THE SETTLEMENT

Aims: To indicate the value of trying to settle a dispute before taking the case to court.

To indicate the binding nature of legal contracts.

To indicate how the law is applied by the courts

To indicate to pupils the nature of the discrimination sometimes shown towards mentally ill people.

To enable pupils to develop their skills of negotiation.

Time: 1 ½ to 2 hours

Preparation: Pupils begin the lesson working in twos or threes, but will later need the space to work in larger group of five or six.

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.

Activity

In 1989, two large houses on a new estate near Bath in the UK were bought by the local regional health authority to provide homes for eight people who had recently been moved from long term psychiatric care. However, the developers (C&G homes) objected, claiming that the health authority was breaking two parts of the covenant that had been placed on the homes.

In the first part of this unit, pupils role play negotiations between the health authority and the developers and try to reach a decision without *recourse to the courts. In the second part, pupils are told what happened in real life and take on the role of the judges when the case moves on to court.*

The Negotiations

Provide all pupils with page 51,**Building Plot.** Go through the story with them. Ask pupils to suggest what should happen next. How should the dispute be resolved? Could either side use force? No, it's against the law. Could they go to court? Yes, eventually, as a last resort. Encourage pupils to

see the value of trying to reach an agreement without resorting to the courts. Explain to the class that this is what they will try to do.

Give out pages 52 and 53 where the builders' and hospital's views are explained. The key legal points of the case are stated in pictures 2 and 3 of the **Builders' story**. When buying the houses, the hospital signed a covenant undertaking not to cause a nuisance to neighbours and to use the houses only as private homes. Check that pupils understand these details. Divide the class into two, and explain that one half will act as builders, and the other will take on the role of the hospital which bought the houses in which the patients live. Ask both halves to divide again into smaller groups of two or three. There should be the same number in each half.

Ask pupils, now working in role, to prepare for a meeting between the builders and the hospital. Explain that the builders' group must put together a case which supports their point of view, and that the hospital should prepare a case defending the interests of their patients. Encourage each side to consider how it will try to persuade the other, and to think of concessions or reassurances they might give in order to reach a mutually satisfactory solution.

Tell students that it is in the interests of both sides to reach a settlement. If they cannot reach agreement, the case will be heard in court and each side is likely to be faced with legal costs of at least 20,000 pounds.

Allow pupils 15 to 20 minutes to prepare their case, and then pair up each small group with one of the groups representing the other side. In the form of a meeting, pupils negotiate with their counterparts and try to reach agreement. Again allow 15 to 20 minutes for this, making sure that there is enough time in the final part of the lesson for groups to report back on the outcome of their work.

Now with the whole class, ask the members of each meeting to indicate whether they were able to reach a settlement. If they did, what are the terms of the settlement? What were the difficulties faced by those who failed to reach agreement? What is the pupils' own view of the situation? Can they think of any other groups who might be opposed in this way by some members of the public.

The High Court

In real life, the builders and health authority were unable to reach an agreement and the case was taken to the High Court of Justice. In the second part of this unit, pupils put themselves in the position of a judge hearing this case, and use the evidence to interpret the two parts of the covenant which are at the centre of this dispute.

> Give out page 54, and ask pupils, in pairs, to decide what each part of the covenant means and then to decide whether either had been broken by the health authority in moving the patients to the two houses.

The details of the agreement given in the pupil material have not been simplified. They are extracts from the original agreement and indicate the type of language that is sometimes used in legal documents.

In the first part of the covenant, buyers agree not to do or cause anything to be done which is a detriment to the owners or occupiers. In the second part, an undertaking is given to use the houses only as private dwellings, although an exclusion is given to certain professional occupations.

> Explain to the class that the judge found in favour of the building company on both counts, He decided that:
>
> • The builders had suffered a detriment, because there was evidence that potential buyers had been deterred from purchasing a house on the estate and had sought a reduction in price.
>
> • The use to which both houses were being put was very different from an ordinary family unit occupying a private dwelling house.

The Appeal

The health authority asked the court to reconsider its decision, and so the case was heard by three different judges in the Court of Appeal. This process is explained to pupils on page 55.

In England and Wales, most appeals are dealt with by a higher court which rehears the case, using a transcript of the evidence heard in the lower court.

The judges in the Appeal Court allowed the appeal in part. They decided that there was no evidence to show that the patients had annoyed their neighbours on the estate and that the terms of the covenant of numbers 21 and 22 did not extend to any financial losses which might be suffered in exploiting the remaining land, and therefore ruled that the first stipulation in the agreement had not been broken.

However the judges did uphold the decision of the lower court regarding the second part of the agreement. They said that the houses were being used, in effect, as a hospital annex of mental health hostel and could not therefore be described as private *dwellings.*

> Ask pupils for their view of this verdict. Do they think it is fair? Encourage them to think of other groups,(such as young offenders, or AIDS sufferers) who might be treated in the same way. Is there any need to change the law? Should it be against the law to discriminate in this way.

Despite the decision of the Appeal Court that part of the covenant had been breached, the patients were not moved from their new homes. The developers and their parent company received a lot of unwelcome publicity from the case and following the appeal, reached an out of court settlement with the health authority. Under this, the patients were discharged from hospital care and each given a tenancy in one of the new houses. As private tenants the terms of the covenant were no longer being broken.

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION

1. A building company buys some land in the village of Hallcroft, on which it builds an estate of large and expensive houses.

2. Two houses-numbers 21 and 22- are bought by a hospital, for eight people who have spent much of their life in a hospital for the mentally ill. The houses will be home for these people for the rest of their lives, unless they choose to move away.

3. The builders find it difficult to sell all the houses on the estate. They think some people are put off from buying a house when they learn that their neighbours have been mentally ill.

4. The builders feel that the people in Numbers 21 and 22 should leave.

Mental illness is a general term for illness which affects the way a person thinks, feels or behaves. For some people the illness does not last long, but for some others it is very serious and they need a lot of care and attention.

THE BUILDERS' STORY

1. This is a big building project. If the houses are not sold we shall lose millions of pounds and a lot of people will be without a job.

2. Everyone who has bought a house on the estate has signed a document. In it they agree that they will not cause damage or be a nuisance to neighbours, and that they will use their house only as a private home.

3. The hospital has broken its agreement. The houses are not being used as private homes. They are part of the hospital, and people don't want to live next door to someone who has spent a lot of time in a mental hospital. You don't know what this sort of person might do.

4. Several customers decided not to buy a house when they found out they would be living so close to the patients. Someone else demanded that we reduce the price of their house.

5. We want the hospital to move these people somewhere else. If it does not do this, we shall take it to court.

THE HOSPITAL'S STORY

1. For more than 30 years it has been the government's policy wherever possible to move people with mental illness from large hospitals into the community.

2. These patients will not harm themselves or other people, and it is not good for them to live cut off from everyone else.

3. The eight people living in numbers 21 and 22 have been in a hospital for a long time where everything was done for them. They need help with learning how to live in the outside world.

4. Each house has two members of staff to help the patients with cooking, shopping and running the house. A member of staff will be in the house day and night.

5. Eventually the residents will learn how to look after themselves, and will take over as much of the running of the house as possible.

IN COURT

The case:

The builders and the hospital could not agree. So the builders took the case to court, where a judge would listen to their evidence. He or she would decide whether the hospital had broken the agreement(called a covenant) that it had made when it had bought the house.

This is the covenant which the hospital signed…….

Part One
I agree not to cause or permit or suffer to be done in or upon the property any act of thing which may be or become a nuisance, annoyance or detriment* to the owner or occupiers of other houses.

Part Two
I agree not to carry on from the property any trade or business or manufacture whatsoever with the exception of a solicitor, doctor, dentist, private teacher, accountant, architect or other professional person, and not use said dwelling house for any purpose other than those incidental to the enjoyment of a private dwelling house.

**Detriment: something causing harm, injury, or damage.*

- **Read parts one and two. What does each one mean?**
- **Put yourself in the position of the judge. Has the covenant been broken by the hospital?**

THE JUDGEMENT

The judge decided that the hospital had broken both parts of the covenant.

Part One

The judge agreed with the builders when they said that they had suffered a detriment because having patients from the hospital living at numbers 21 and 22 made it difficult to sell other houses on the estate.

Part Two

The houses were not being used as private dwellings, as the covenant states, because the patients were not living as a family in the normal sense of the word.

THE APPEAL

If it is thought that a court has made a mistake in applying the law it is possible to ask for another court to check that the law has been properly applied. This court is called the Court of Appeal.

The hospital asked the Appeal court to look again at the evidence that had been given and to check whether the decision made by the first judge had been correct.

The Appeal Court's decision

The Appeal Court judges did not completely agree with the judge in the first trial.

Part One

The Appeal Court judges said that this part of the covenant only applied to losses suffered by people living on the estate and not by the builders. As none of the neighbours had been annoyed by the patients there had been no detriment, and so this part of the covenant had not been broken.

Part Two

The Appeal court agreed with the first judge. The Houses were being used as part of the hospital, and could not be called normal private dwellings.

This meant that the hospital would have to sell the houses and find somewhere else for the patients to live.

- **Do you think the verdict of the Appeals Court was fair? Give reasons for your answer.**
- **Do you think the patients should have to leave their houses?**