



Lesson 2 – Active Citizenship Evaluating Democracy at Work in Bhutan

Introduction and Motivation:

“Democracy is the worst possible form of government,” British Prime Minister Winston Churchill once joked, *“...unless you consider all those other forms that have been tried.”* What do you think he meant by that?

Do you know people who wish the Wangchuk Dynasty was back in charge instead of PM and the National Assembly? Why do they wish that?



SMART¹ Objective:

At the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

- Create a list of comparisons of the actions taken by citizens who set out to solve problems at the school, in town or in the national government.
- Evaluate which of the two strategies worked best.
- Analyze the different approaches of each group in a paragraph.

National Standards met in this lesson:

- ✓ The Ministry of Education’s mission statement calls on Bhutan’s schools to *“create the necessary learning space and opportunities to engage the genius and potentials of all the children and youth of the country in keeping with provisions of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan...”*, which this lesson does by introducing students to democratic skills necessary for action under Bhutan’s Constitution.
- ✓ Where appropriate, use this lesson to reinforce national grade-level curriculum and standards.

News Literacy concepts or skills to be incorporated

- ✓ The Power of Images: Did photos of either the problem or of the participants influence other citizens or the government (administration)?
- ✓ Balance, Fairness & Bias: Were the participants in this democratic action described fairly and accurately?
- ✓ Opinion: Were people influenced by online comments or letters to the editor or statements given on TV?
- ✓ Power of Information: Where did people get their information about this situation and was it trustworthy?

¹ SMART is an acronym that reminds us our lesson can be more effective if the objective is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.



Values/Life Skills:

The concept of GNH, coined by His Majesty the Fourth King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, focuses national efforts by measuring four pillars: good governance, sustainable socio-economic development, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation.

This lesson develops student understanding of good governance and skills in democratic participation.

Suggested Vocabulary:

- Contrast
- Compare
- Summarize
- Issue
- Research
- Example
- Persuade
- Voting
- Activism

Teachers should explain and replace vocabulary words as needed.

Strategy for the lesson:

(I do, we do, you do)

Guided Practice: Teacher reviews key vocabulary from prior lesson through the story of a Bhutanese group or person who solved a problem using the democratic institutions in place in Bhutan.

Group Practice: Teacher helps students build a similar review of a second case, perhaps having students read or watch about it and take notes. Students should end up with two lists that summarize the problem and who did what to solve it.

Independent Practice: Now students break into small groups to discuss which group or person's approach was more effective, faster, kinder or more in keeping with GNH. They conclude by writing a paragraph about each group's work.

Pivotal Questions:

- During the Guided Practice, ask students for examples of democracy at work from their own family or from favorite books or movies.
- During Group Practice: Are there vocabulary words you're not sure about? Are there any actions a democratic leader can take that are similar to those a king could take?
- After Independent Practice: When you describe the actions of someone you disagree with, are there words you use that you would not use in describing someone with whom you agree?



Lesson Summary:

(Best if there is at least one at the midpoint and another at the end)

If you had to teach a little brother or sister, a very young one, about democracy, what part of a children's story could you use?

Formative Assessment for assignments 1-3:

Students outline the democratic process on their own when presented with another case study.

Lesson extensions and connections:

(Often bridges the lesson to future instruction and may, at times incorporate the original aim/problem. May be part of a final or concluding summary.)

-Use this vocabulary in a history lesson, describing the actions of a ruler or a nation being studied.

-Use this vocabulary to describe a story that is read in a writing or language class.

Attachments, materials and sources:

To be collected by teacher