

TEACHER GUIDE 1.3: Discussion Notes (Democracy in Action)

Scenario 1: Fundamental Freedoms

- The Charter protects freedom of expression, meaning people can express opinions, even if others disagree. However, schools may limit expression if it promotes hate or disrupts learning.
- Expression that causes violence, spreads hate or endangers the safety of others can be restricted. In schools, administrators may have rules about dress codes, but these must be fair and not discriminate against viewpoints.
- People can challenge unfair restrictions, speak up when freedoms are at risk, and support media and groups that defend free speech.

Scenario 2: Fair Elections

- When elections are free, anyone who is eligible can vote without fear, pressure, or interference. When they are fair, all candidates and parties have an equal chance to share their ideas and compete for support, and the results accurately reflect the will of the people.
- If false information spreads unchecked, democracy is weakened because people may base their decisions on false information.
- Do not share unverified or false information, even if it seems shocking. Instead, check the facts, share accurate sources, and engage in respectful discussions, both online and offline, to counter false claims.

Scenario 3: Accountability & Transparency

- Leaders must answer to the public. Without accountability, politicians could act in their own interests or certain groups, rather than representing citizens.
- The media investigates government actions, reports corruption, and informs citizens about government decisions. Without a free press, politicians could hide information.
- People can ensure politicians act in good faith by asking questions, voting, writing to representatives, and supporting journalism. People can also protest or petition when leaders act unfairly.

Scenario 4: Rule of Law

- The rule of law ensures that everyone, including protesters, must follow established legal guidelines. Peaceful protest is protected, but breaking laws can lead to legal consequences.
- Some people believe civil disobedience is necessary to force government action.
- Alternatives: contacting representatives, organizing petitions and legal demonstrations, media campaigns, and lobbying politicians.

Scenario 5: Citizen Participation

- Democracy is not just about voting—it's about speaking up on issues that affect your community. If people don't participate, decisions may not reflect the needs of all citizens.
- Students can engage in conversations with friends and family, start a petition, attend public meetings, write letters to city council, organize a social media campaign, or work with other affected groups to advocate for keeping the library open.
- People can advocate for issues, join community groups, join political parties, stay informed, volunteer, and engage with their elected representatives.

Scenario 6: Fundamental Freedoms

- In a democracy, different perspectives should be heard and respected, not censored.
- Libraries and schools play a role in providing diverse and inclusive materials.
- Citizens can challenge bans through inquiring with authorities, engaging in public discourse to build support, and organizing petitions or town halls.