

Very Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is the basic outcome of democracy?

Ans. The most basic outcome of democracy is that it produces a government that is accountable to citizens and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.

Q. 2. What are the common features of democracy in most of the countries of the world?

Ans. Most of the democratic countries of the world today have formal constitutions, they hold elections, they have parties and they guarantee rights of citizens.

Q. 3. Are non-democratic rulers quick and efficient in decision making? Explain.

Ans. It is true that non-democratic rulers do not have to bother about deliberations in assemblies or worry about majesties and public opinion. So, they can be very quick and efficient in decision making and implementation.

Q. 4. “In comparison to non-democratic government, decision of government takes time.” Does democracy pay its price? Explain.

Ans. The democratic governments take more time to follow procedures before arriving at a decision. But because it has followed procedures, its decisions may be both more acce

Q. 5. What do you understand by ‘transparency’ in democracy?

OR

Explain the meaning of transparency in democracy. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. In democracy, decision making are based on norms and procedures. A citizen has the right and the means to examine the process of decision making. This is known as transparency.

Q. 6. Are democracies corrupt? Explain your argument.

Ans. Democracies often frustrate the needs of the people and often ignore the demands of a majority of its population. The routine tales of corruption are enough to convince us that democracy is not free of this evil.

Q. 7. How far does economic inequalities exist in democratic countries?

Ans. In democracies, a small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and incomes. Not only that, their share in the total income of the country has been increasing. Those at the bottom of the society suffer.

Q. 8. How democracy is considered best to accommodate social diversity?

Ans. In democracy, we can certainly learn to respect social differences and we can evolve mechanism to negotiate the differences. In fact, democracy is best suited to reduce this outcome.

Q. 9. How does democracy remove the gap between majority and minority in the country?

Ans. Rule by majority means that in case of every decision or in case of every election, different persons and groups may and can form a majority. Democracy remains democracy only as long as every citizen has a chance of being in majority at some point of time.

Q. 10. Do you agree that democracy promotes dignity of the citizen? Explain.

Ans. Often conflicts arise among individuals because some feel that they are not treated with due respect. The passions for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy. Democracy no doubt promotes dignity of the citizen and treats everyone equally.

Q. 11. Has democracy in India straightened the claims of discriminated castes for equal status?

Ans. In India, these are instances still of caste-based inequalities and atrocities but these lack the moral and legal foundations. Democracy has helped providing equal status and equal opportunities to the discriminated castes in India.

Q. 12. Explain the dilemma with respect to the practical aspect of democracy.

Ans. As per principle, democracy seems good but fails to impress in practice. This dilemma provokes to give a thought to the outcomes of democracy. Do we prefer democracy over moral reasons? Or there are some sensible reasons to support democracy too?

Q. 13. Explain any one difference between a pressure group and a political party. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. One difference between a pressure group and a political party is

Political parties contest elections and hold power in the government while pressure groups attempt to influence government policies.

Q. 14. Why is there an overwhelming support to democracy all over the world? Explain one reason. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. There is an overwhelming support to democracy all over the world:

Because it is accountable, responsive and legitimate government.

Short Answer Questions

Q. 1. What is democracy? What are its various characteristics?

Ans. In modern usage, democracy is a system of government, in which the citizens exercise power. It is formed by two Greek words 'demos' and 'Kratia'. 'Demos' means people and 'Kratia' means the government. Democracy, thus means 'rule by the people.' In a democratic set up, every citizen has a right to take a part in the decision making process. According to Abraham Lincoln, democracy is 'government of the people, government by the people and the government for the people' Citizens choose their representatives who would form the government.

Characteristics:

It promotes equality among citizens.

It looks after the interest of the people.

It allows room to correct mistakes.

Q. 2. What are the prudential reasons to support democracy?

Ans. Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practise some kinds of democratic politics.

They have formal constitution, they hold elections, they have parties and they guarantee rights to citizens.

While these features are common to most of them, these democracies are very much different from one another in terms of their social situations, their economic achievements and their cultures.

Q. 3. Should we blame democracy for socio-economic and political problems?

Ans. If some of our expectations are not met, we start blaming the idea of democracy.

The first step towards thinking carefully about the outcomes of democracy is to recognise that democracy is just a form of government. It can only create conditions for achieving something.

The citizens have to take advantage of those conditions and achieve their goals.

Q. 4. What are our expectations from democracy?

Ans. In a democracy, we are most concerned with ensuring that people have the right to choose their rulers and people have control over the rulers.

Whenever possible and necessary, citizens should be able to participate in decision-making that affects them all.

Thus, the most basic outcome of democracy should be that the government is accountable to the citizens and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens.

Q. 5. What is the normal procedure of a democratic government?

Ans. (i) It should hold regular, free and fair elections.

(ii) Open public debates on major policies and legislations.

(iii) Right to information about the government and its functioning should be provided to citizens.

Q. 6. On the basis of which values will it be a fair expectation that democracy should produce a harmonious social life? Explain. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. The values that are associated with democracy producing a harmonious social life are:

(i) Equality among all human beings.

(ii) Respect for individual freedom.

(iii) Democracies accommodate various social divisions.

(iv) Democracies reduce the possibility of tensions becoming explosive or violent.

(v) Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts.

Q. 7. How does democracy promote the dignity and freedom of an individual?

Ans. (i) Every individual wants respect from fellow beings.

(ii) Often conflicts arise among individuals because some feel that they are not treated with due respect.

(iii) The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy all over the world—in countries with democratic regimes as well as countries without democratic regimes.

For societies which have been built for long on the basis of subordination and domination, it is not a simple matter to recognise that all individuals are equal.

Q. 8. On what factors does the country's economic development depend?

Ans. A country's economic development depends on the following factors:

(i) Country's population, size

(ii) Its global situation

(iii) Cooperation from other countries

(iv) Economic priorities adopted by the country

However, the difference in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorship and democracies is negligible.

Q. 9. Is it true that democracies are not very successful in reducing economic inequalities?

Ans. It is true. The following points justify that:

(i) A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a disproportionate share of wealth and income. Not only that, their share in the total income of the country has been increasing.

(ii) Those at the bottom of the society have very little to depend upon. Their incomes have been declining.

(iii) Sometimes, they find it difficult to meet their basic needs of life, such as food, clothing, housing, education and health.

In actual life, democracies do not appear to be very successful in reducing economic inequalities.

Q. 10. How can you say that democracy is better than dictatorship?

OR

Which values make democracy better than any other form of government?

Explain.

[CBSE (F) 2017]

OR

Analyse any three values that make democracy better. [CBSE Delhi 2017]

Ans. (i) Democracy promotes equality among citizens as it is people's own government.

(ii) It enhances the dignity of the individual

(iii) It also improves the quality of decision-making

(iv) It provides methods to resolve conflicts, if any

(v) Only democracy allows room to correct mistakes

(vi) It is a legitimate government

(vii) Gives equal status and respect to women and weaker sections.

(viii) It promotes transparency.

(ix) Values of social justice, equality, fraternity.

(x) It gives importance to public opinion.

(xi) It provides rights to people.

(xii) It gives the feeling of collective belonging.

(xiii) It encompasses the feeling of integrity secularism and tolerance.

(xiv) It inculcates the feeling of integrity feeling of integrity and dutifulness.

(xv) It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. A democratic government is the people's own government.

(xvi) There is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world—in countries with democratic regimes as well as with non-democratic regimes.

Q. 11. How much time is taken in democracy to take decisions as compared to other governments?

Ans. (i) A government may take decisions very fast but it may take such decisions that are not accepted by the people and may, therefore, face problems.

(ii) In contrast, the democratic government will take more time to follow procedures before arriving at a decision.

(iii) But because it has followed procedures, its decisions may be both more acceptable to the people and more effective.

So, the cost of time that democracy pays is perhaps worth it.

Q. 12. How much transparency is there in democracy as compared to other governments?

Ans. (i) A citizen who wants to know if a decision was taken through the correct procedures can find that out. He/She has the right and the means to examine the process of decision-making. This is known as transparency.

(ii) This factor is often missing from a non-democratic government. Therefore, when we are trying to find out the outcomes of democracy, it is right to expect democracy to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to the people.

(iii) We can also expect that the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable and mechanisms for citizens to take part in decision-making whenever they think fit.

Q. 13. "Democracy is accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens." Evaluate the statement. [CBSE (Comptt) 2017]

OR

"Democratic government is known as responsive government." Assess the statement.

[CBSE (Comptt) 2017]

Ans. Democracy is accountable and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens:

(i) The most basic outcome of democracy is that it produces a government that is accountable to the citizens, and responsive to the needs and expectations of the citizens. Economic growth and development –level of economic development is slow because of delay in decision making. Accommodation of social diversity – majority should work with minority. Dignity and freedom of citizens-every individual wants to receive respect from fellow beings. Equality of women.

Q. 14. How does democracy stand better to any other form of government in promoting the dignity and freedom of the citizens? Explain with examples. [CBSE (Comptt) 2017]

Ans. Democracy stands better to any other form of government in promoting the dignity and freedom of citizens:

(i) The passion for respect and freedom are the basis of democracy which is recognized throughout the world in principle.

(ii) Dignity of women : Democracy provides dignity to women by giving them the freedom to fight for their rights.

(iii) Right to equality: equal status and equal opportunity has a legal sanction in democracy.

(iv) Individual freedom : In democracy every individual has the freedom to pursue his goal.

Q. 15. Explain briefly the outcome of democracy.

Ans. (i) The first step towards evaluating outcome of democracy is to recognise that democracy is just a form of government. It means democracy provides an opportunity and it is the citizens who can take advantage of it.

(ii) The most basic outcome of democracy is that it is accountable to citizens and responsive to their needs and expectations.

(iii) Another outcome of democracy is that it is a legitimate government. It means all decisions are taken as per the constitution only.

Q. 16. Why is there a sound support for the idea of democracy all over the world?

Ans. (i) It is so because a democratic government is people-run government duly elected by them.

(ii) It is a legitimate government since it follows all the laws provided in the constitution.

(iii) People wish to be ruled by the representatives elected by them. The voters enjoy to form political parties and elect the government of their choice.

Q. 17. “The economic growth rate in dictatorship is better than that in democratic rule.” Why is it so?

Ans. (i) The economic growth rate in all dictatorial regimes was 4.42 per cent as compared to all democratic regimes’ 3.95 per cent during the period 1995–2000.

(ii) In dictatorial regimes, the rules and regulations are rigid and compulsory. The citizens who disobey are severely punished.

(iii) In democratic regimes, as the leaders and bureaucrats think about their profits only, the government is not much keen to remove poverty and develop the country economically.

Q. 18. Suggest some broad guidelines that can be kept in mind while devising ways and means for political reforms in India. [CBSE Sample Paper 2016]

Ans. Guidelines for political reform:

(i) Any legal change must carefully look at what results it will have on politics. Sometimes, the results may be counter-productive.

(ii) The main focus of political reforms should be on ways to strengthen democratic practice.

(iii) Any proposal for political reforms should think not only about what is a good solution but also about who will implement it and how?

Q. 19. “Democratic government is legitimate government”? Support the statement with arguments. [CBSE Delhi 2016]

OR

How is ‘democratic government’ a ‘legitimate government’? Explain with examples.

[CBSE Delhi 2017]

Ans. Democratic government is a legitimate government: It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean. But a democratic government is peoples’ own government. That is why there is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world. People wished to be ruled by representatives elected by them. They also believe that democracy is suitable for their country. Democracy’s ability to generate its own support is itself an outcome that cannot be ignored.

Democratic Government known as legitimate government:

(i) Democracy produce a government that follows and is accountable to the people.

(ii) It provides mechanism for citizens to hold the government accountable and allows citizens to take part in decision making whenever they think fit.

(iii) If you wanted to measure democracies on the basis of this expected outcome you

would look for the following practices and institutions regular free and fair election, open public debate on major policies.

Q. 20. Democracy accommodates social diversities. Support the statement with examples. [CBSE (AI) 2016]

OR

How is social diversity accommodated in democracy? Explain with examples. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. “Democracy accommodates social diversities”.

Democracy develops a mechanism which successfully negotiates difference among ethnic population.

(i) Democracies develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.

(ii) No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups. But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and can evolve mechanism to negotiate these differences.

(iii) Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is thus a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

(iv) For example: Belgium has successfully negotiated differences among ethnic population. This reduces the possibility of tensions.

Q. 21. “Democratic governments in practice are known as accountable.” Support the statement with arguments. [CBSE (F) 2016]

Ans. Democratic governments in practice are accountable:

(i) It is right to expect democracy to produce a government that follows procedures and is accountable to the people.

(ii) It is also expected that the democratic government develops mechanisms for citizens to take part in decision making whenever they think it is fit.

(iii) The democratic government is accountable to the people. If it ignores the will of the people, they will not elect their ruler in the next general election.

(iv) The procedures and decision making process should be transparent for democratic government to be accountable to the people.

Long Answer Questions

Q. 1. Do democracies lead to peaceful and harmonious relations among citizens?

Ans. Democracies usually develop a procedure to conduct their competition. This reduces the possibility of these tensions becoming explosive or violent.

No society can fully and permanently resolve conflicts among different groups.

But we can certainly learn to respect these differences and we can also evolve mechanisms to negotiate the differences.

Democracy is best suited to produce this outcome.

Non-democratic regimes often turn a blind eye to or suppress internal social differences. Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is, thus, a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

Q. 2. Is economic growth in democracies accompanied by increased inequalities among the people?

Ans. Democracies are based on political equality.

All individuals have equal right in electing representatives.

Parallel to the process of bringing individuals into the political arena on an equal footing, we find growing economic inequalities.

A small number of ultra-rich enjoy a highly disproportionate share of wealth and incomes. Not only that, their share in the total income of the country has been increasing.

Those at the bottom of the society have very little to depend upon. Their incomes have been declining. Sometimes, they find it difficult to meet their basic needs of life such as food, clothing, housing, education and health.

Q. 3. How far are democracies able to handle differences between various ethnic groups?

Ans. Democracies are able to accommodate various social divisions.

These usually develop a procedure to reduce the possibility of tension between ethnic groups as they become explosive or violent sometimes.

Democracy is best suited to reduce this outcome.

Non-democratic regimes often turn a blind eye to or suppress social differences.

Ability to handle social differences, divisions and conflicts is, thus, a definite plus point of democratic regimes.

Q. 4. “What the most distinctive about democracy is that its examination never gets over.” Comment.

Ans. As democracy passes one test, it produces another test. As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better.

That is why, when we ask people about the way democracy functions, they always come up with more expectations and many complaints.

The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy. It shows that people have developed awareness and the ability to expect and to look at power holders critically and the high and the mighty.

A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of the democratic project; it transforms people from the status of a subject into that of a citizen.

Q. 5. What outcomes are expected of a democracy?

Ans. (i) People should get a chance to choose their representatives without any fear.

(ii) Elections are held periodically on the basis of universal franchise.

(iii) Free and fair elections are conducted by an independent machinery.

(iv) The elected representatives are accountable to the people.

(v) There is more than one political party which competes for power.

(vi) Pressure and Interest groups play a prominent role in the system.

(vii) People are guaranteed fundamental rights like right to life, liberty, equality and religion by the constitution.

(viii) The constitution provides for an independent and impartial judiciary, which protects the rights of the people.

(ix) There should be a strong opposition which should act as a watchdog on government both inside and outside the Parliament.

(x) There should be an enlightened public opinion so that people can put pressure on government.

(xi) The constitution provides for a written set of roles, which divides power between the Centre and the state.

(xii) Freedom of the press should be allowed.

(xiii) Public order and decency should be maintained.

(xiv) The unity, integrity and sovereignty of the country should be maintained.

(xv) People should be vigilant and participate actively in the process of governance.

The first thing towards thinking carefully about the outcomes of democracy is to recognise that democracy is just a form of government. Democracy can only create conditions for achieving something.

Q. 6. Evidence shows that in practice, many democracies did not fulfil the expectation of producing economic development in the country. Validate the statement with the help of relevant example. [CBSE Sample Paper 2016]

Ans. If we consider all democracies and all dictatorships for the fifty years between 1950 and 2000, dictatorships have slightly higher rate of economic growth.

Economic development depends on several factors: country's population size, global situation, cooperation from other countries, economic priorities adopted by the country, etc.

However, the difference in the rates of economic development between less developed countries with dictatorships and democracies is negligible. Overall, it cannot be said that democracy is a guarantee of economic development. But we can expect democracy not to lag behind dictatorships in this respect.

When such a significant difference in the rates of economic growth between countries under dictatorship and democracy, it is better to prefer democracy as it has several other positive outcomes.

Q. 7. How are the democratic governments better than the other forms of governments? Compare. [CBSE Delhi 2016]

OR

“Democracy is a better form of government than any other form of government.” Analyse the statement with arguments. [CBSE Delhi 2016]

Ans. The democratic governments are better than other forms of governments:

- (i)** Democratic governments have formal constitution, while not in other form of governments.
- (ii)** They hold regular elections, while not in other form of governments.
- (iii)** They have political parties, while not in other form of governments.
- (iv)** They guarantee rights of citizens, while not in the other form of governments.
- (v)** Such governments allow room to correct mistakes, while not in the other form of government.
- (vi)** Such government accommodates social diversities, while not in other form of government.

Q. 8. Describe any five characteristics of democracy. [CBSE (AI) 2017]

Ans. Democracy is a better form of government from any other form of government:

- (i) Democracy promotes equality among citizens.
- (ii) Enhances the dignity of the individual.
- (iii) Improves the quality of decision making.
- (iv) Provides method to resolve conflicts.
- (v) Accountable, responsive and legitimate government.
- (vi) Reduction of inequality and poverty.
- (vii) It promotes transparency.

Q. 9. “Democracy stands much superior in promoting dignity and freedom of the citizens.” Justify the statement. [CBSE Delhi 2017, CBSE (AI) 2016]

Ans. “Democracy stands much superior in promoting dignity and freedom of the citizens”:

- (i) Every individual wants to receive respect from fellow beings.
- (ii) The passion for respect and freedom are basis of democracy.
- (iii) Democracies throughout the world have recognized this. It has been achieved in various degrees in various democracies.
- (iv) Long struggles by women have got them respect and equal treatment and now accepted as necessary ingredients of a democratic society
- (v) In many democracies, women were deprived of their right to vote for a long time which they have achieved now.
- (vi) In India, 1/3rd of seats have been reserved for women in local bodies.
- (vii) Democracy has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged and discriminated castes for equal status and equal opportunity.
- (viii) Legal basis which works on the principle of individual freedom and dignity.

Q. 10. How does democracy produce an accountable, responsive and legitimate government? Discuss by giving five reasons. [CBSE Sample Paper 2016]

Ans. (i) In a democracy, people have the right to elect their rulers and participate in decision making that affects them all. Government thus, is accountable to the citizens and responsive to their needs and expectations.

(ii) Democracy is based on the idea of deliberation and negotiation, though it results in delays. It ensures that decision making is based on norms and procedures and allows transparency. Develops mechanisms for citizens to hold the government accountable.

(iii) Set up following practices and institutions: regular, free and fair elections; open public debate on major policies and legislations; and citizens' right to information about the government and its functioning.

(iv) It may be reasonable to expect from democracy a government that is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and is largely free of corruption. Though the record of democracies is not impressive on these two counts.

(v) Democratic government is a legitimate government. It may be slow, less efficient, not always very responsive or clean, but is people's own government. People wish to be ruled by representatives elected by them.

Q. 11. "A democracy must look after the interests of all, not just one section." Support the statement with arguments. [CBSE (F) 2017]

Ans. Democracy must look after the interest of all because:

(i) Democracy believes in and work for equality.

(ii) It has the ability to handle social differences irrespective of religion or race or linguistic group, etc.

(iii) It gives equal treatment to women.

(iv) It cares equally for majority and minority.

(v) Democracy in India has strengthened the claims of the disadvantaged.

(vi) It tries to provide equal opportunities to minority and depressed classes.

(vii) Ordinary citizens value their democratic rights.

(viii) Democracy shows that people have developed awareness.

(ix) It has the ability to expect and look critically at power holders.

Q. 12. "No party system is ideal for all countries and in all situations." Analyse the statement. [CBSE (AI) 2017, CBSE (F) 2016]

Ans. Party system is not something any country can choose:

(i) It evolves over a long time, depending on the nature of society.

(ii) It depends on social and regional divisions.

(iii) It depends on history of politics and its system of elections.

(iv) These cannot be changed very quickly.

(v) Each country develops a party system that is conditioned by its special circumstances.

Hots (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

Q. 1. "There is an overwhelming support for the idea of democracy all over the world." Support the statement.

Ans. Over a hundred countries of the world today claim and practise some kind of democratic politics.

They have formal constitution, they hold elections, they have parties and they guarantee rights to citizens.

While these features are common to most of them, these democracies are very much different from one another in terms of their social situations, their economic achievements and their cultures.

Democracy is a government that is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and largely free of corruption.

Q. 2. "Democratic government is attentive to the needs and demands of the people and is largely free of corruption." Support your answer with arguments.

Or

Is democracy attentive to the needs of people? Is it free from corruption?

Ans. The record of democracies is not impressive on these two counts.

(i) Democracies often frustrates the needs of people and ignore the demands of a majority of its population.

(ii) The routine tales of corruption are enough to convince us that democracy is not free from this evil.

(iii) Democracies also give right to the citizens to choose their representatives. Whenever possible, people are able to participate in decision making. But their decisions are not often followed.

(iv) At the same time, there is nothing to show that non-democracies are less corrupt or more sensitive to the people.

Q. 3. How has corruption become a serious problem for Indian democracy?

Ans. Democracies often frustrate the needs of people and ignore demands of a majority of its population.

It is an accepted fact that leaders use money to win votes and capitalists are supporting them.

Now a days we find that richer people are getting into politics, just to support parties and get their say in the parliament.

The native tales of corruption are enough to convince us that democracy is not free from this evil.

Now many leaders are involved in scams which become a daily news in the newspaper. These leaders are mostly involved in corruption charges.

Q. 4. How are complaints treated as testimony to the success of democracy?

Ans. (i) Every individual wants to receive respect from fellow beings.

(ii) As people get some benefits of democracy, they ask for more and want to make democracy even better.

(iii) That is why, when we ask people about the way democracy functions, they will always come up with more expectations, and many complaints.

(iv) The fact that people are complaining is itself a testimony to the success of democracy.

(v) It shows that people have developed awareness and the ability to expect and to look critically at power holders and the high and the mighty.

(vi) A public expression of dissatisfaction with democracy shows the success of the democratic project. It transforms people from the status of a subject into that of citizens.