

Short Answer Questions

Q.1. How democracy allows us to correct its own mistakes?

Ans. In democracy, there is space for public discussion on government's or ruler's mistakes and there is a room for correction. Either the rulers have to change their decisions, or the rulers can be changed.

Q.2. How does democracy enhance the dignity of citizens?

Ans. Democracy is based on the principle of political equality, on recognising that the poorest and the least educated has the same status as the rich and the educated.

Q.3. Define the term 'Democracy'.

Ans. Democracy is a form of government in which the rule over the country is of the people, for the people and by the people.

E.g: India.

Q.4. Giving an example of Mexico, prove that although having a democratic system, they were not practising democracy.

Ans. (i) Since independence in 1930, Mexico holds elections every six years to elect their President. PRI was a party called Institutional Revolutionary Party of Mexico. All those who were employed in government offices had to attend its party meetings. Even the teachers of government schools used to force parents to vote for the PRI. Media largely ignored the activities of opposition political parties except to criticise them.

(ii) But until 2000, every election was won by a party called PRI. Opposition parties did contest elections, but never managed to win.

(iii) The PRI was known to use many dirty tricks to win elections. The PRI spent large sums of money in the campaign for its candidates and booths were shifted from one place to another in the last minute, which made it difficult for the people to cast their votes.

Q.5. Compare the democratic system in China with Mexico.

Ans. China:

(i) In China, the elections do not offer people any choice.

(ii) They have to choose the ruling party and the candidates approved by it.

Mexico:

(i) In Mexico, the people seemed to have a choice but practically they did not have any choice.

(ii) There was no way that the ruling party could be defeated, even if the people were against it.

Q.6. Give examples of the countries which do not provide equal rights to vote.

Ans. There are many examples of countries which do not provide equal rights to vote.

Examples:

(i) In Saudi Arabia, women do not have the right to vote.

(ii) Estonia has made its citizenship rules in such a way that people belonging to Russian minority find it difficult to get their right to vote.

(iii) In Fiji, the electoral system is such that the vote of the Fijian has more value than that of an Indian Fijian.

Q.7. Give arguments against democracy.

Ans. The arguments against democracy are:

(i) Leaders keep changing in a democracy. This leads to instability.

(ii) Democracy is all about political competition and power play. There is no scope for morality.

(iii) So many people have to be consulted in a democracy that it leads to delays.

(iv) Elected leaders do not know the best interest of the people. It leads to bad decision-making.

(v) Democracy leads to corruption because it is based on electoral competition.

(vi) Ordinary people don't know what is good for them, so they should not decide anything.

Q.8. Give arguments in favour of democracy.

Ans. The arguments in favour of democracy are:

(i) A democratic government is a better government because it is a more accountable form of government.

(ii) It improves the quality of decision-making.

(iii) It provides methods to deal with differences and conflicts.

(iv) It enhances the dignity of citizens.

(v) It is better than other forms of government as it allows rulers to correct its own mistakes.

Q.9. What according to you is the broader meaning of democracy?

Ans. Democracy is a form of government in which representatives of an area in a country sit together to take decisions. Elections are held to choose the representatives and native people or citizens are allowed to participate in the elections. Democracy is also a principle that can be applied to any sphere of life.

Q.10. What is democracy? Give examples of non-democratic countries.

Ans. Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are elected by the people.

Examples of non-democratic countries:

(i) The army rulers of Myanmar are not elected by the people. Those who happen to be in control of the army become the rulers of the country. People have no say in the decision making.

(ii) Dictators like Pinochet are not elected by the people.

(iii) The king of Nepal and Saudi Arabia rule, not because the people have chosen them to do so but because they happen to be born into the royal family.

Q.11. How does democracy provide a platform to deal with differences and conflicts?

Ans. In any society, people are bound to have differences of opinions and interests. These differences are particularly sharp in a country like ours which has an amazing social diversity. People of our country belong to different regions, speak different languages, practise different religions. So they look at the world very differently and have different preferences. Democracy provides the peaceful solution to this problem. In a diverse country like India, democracy keeps our country together and united.

Q.12. Why is democracy considered the best form of government?

Ans. Democracy cannot give us everything but is clearly better than any other alternative. It offers better chances of a good decision, it is likely to

respect people's wishes and allows different kinds of people to live together. Even when it fails to do some of these things. It allows a way of correcting its mistakes and offers more dignity to all citizens. That is why democracy is considered the best form of government.

Q.13. How does democracy improve the quality of decision making?

Ans. A democratic decision involves consultation with and consent of all those who are affected by that decision. Those who are not powerful have the same say in taking the decisions as those who are powerful. This can apply to a government or a family or any other organisation. The chance of rash or irresponsible decision is also less in a democracy.

Q.14. How democracy can enhance the dignity of the citizens?

Ans. (i) Democracy is based on the principle of political equality on recognising that the poorest and the illiterate has the same status as rich and the educated.

(ii) People are not subjects of a ruler, they are the rulers themselves.

(iii) Even when they make mistakes, they are responsible for their conduct.