



Grade 6 Term 3 History Summary

How People Govern Themselves in A Democracy

What is a democracy?

- A democracy is a way of running a country where the people have a say in how things are done.
- In a democracy, citizens vote in elections to choose their leaders. These leaders make decisions on behalf of the people.
- But democracy is not just about voting.
- It also means everyone must follow certain rules—both the people and the government.
- Here are some important parts of a democracy:



- **Rights and freedoms:** Every person in the country has rights, like the right to speak freely, believe what they want, and live safely.
- **Respect and law:** People must obey the laws and treat others fairly. Everyone's rights should be respected.
- **Limits on government:** The government must follow the law too. It can't do whatever it wants. It must follow the Constitution, which is a set of rules that protects the rights of the people and explains how the government should work.

South Africa's First Democratic Government

- Before the year 1994, South Africa was not a democratic country. Most people were not allowed to vote in elections. Only white South Africans had the right to vote.
- Many citizens were not allowed to share their opinions in newspapers, on the radio, or on television. If someone spoke out against the government, they could be sent to jail.
- There were unfair laws that treated black South Africans very badly. These laws stopped black people from owning land, starting businesses, or living, working, or going to school in the same places as white people.



- After many years of fighting for change, the people of South Africa forced the government to agree that the country should become a democracy.
- In 1994, something important happened—every adult citizen aged 18 and older was allowed to vote for the first time. That election was the beginning of South Africa's first democratic government.
- The African National Congress (ANC) won the election, and Nelson Mandela became the first president chosen by all the people of South Africa in a free and fair vote.

Political Parties and Voting in a Democracy

- In a democratic country, people are allowed to join together to create a political party.
- A political party is a group of people who share the same ideas about how the country should be run.
- During elections, each political party explains its plans and promises to the public.
- They tell people what they will do if they are chosen to lead.
- Citizens then vote for the party whose ideas they support the most.

How Voting Works in South Africa

- In South Africa, all citizens who are 18 years or older have the right to vote in elections.
- They choose the political party they think should lead the country. National elections happen every five years.
- Before someone can vote, they must register as a voter. This means adding their name to the official voters' list.
- On election day, registered voters go to a voting station close to where they live.
- They take their ID book or ID card with them.
- An election officer checks their name on the voters' list to make sure they are registered to vote at that station.
- Once their name is found, the officer draws a line through it and puts a mark with permanent ink on the voter's thumbnail.
- This mark shows that the person has already voted and helps stop anyone from voting more than once.
- Next, the voter is given a ballot paper.
- This is a special piece of paper with the names and symbols or pictures of all the political parties taking part in the election.
- The voter then makes a mark next to the political party they want to support. Voting is private—no one else will know who you voted for.
- People are encouraged to vote for the party whose ideas and plans they agree with the most.



What Happens After the Election

- Once the voting is finished, all the votes are counted.
- The political party that gets the most votes wins the election and becomes the ruling party.
- The leader of the winning party becomes the President of South Africa.
- The new President then chooses people from their party to take charge of different areas of government, like health, education, and transport.
- These leaders are called ministers.

What Is a Constitution?

- After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the newly elected Members of Parliament formed a special group called the Constitutional Assembly.
- This group spent two years creating a new Constitution for the country.
- A Constitution is the most important set of laws in a country.
- All other laws, government actions, and decisions must follow what the Constitution says.
- The Constitution also explains the rights and freedoms that every person in the country has.
- Most of these are listed in a special section called the Bill of Rights.
- The government is not allowed to make any laws or take any actions that go against these rights.
- At the same time, all citizens must respect the rights of others.
- The Constitution also explains other important parts of how the country works:
 - It tells how the government is formed and what powers it has.
 - It explains how Parliament is chosen and how it makes new laws.
 - It describes how the court system works. The courts are independent, which means they do not take orders from the government—they follow the law and the Constitution.
- At the beginning of the Constitution, there is a special paragraph called the Preamble. The Preamble explains the goals and purpose of the Constitution.

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 - Preamble

We, the people of South Africa,
Recognise the injustices of our past;
Honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land;
Respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and
Believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united in our diversity.
We therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the
supreme law of the Republic so as to

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law;
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

Role of Parliament

- Parliament is a place where leaders from different political parties, including the ruling party and the opposition, come together to make decisions for the country.
- They talk about important issues and try to solve problems by discussing them in open debates.
- Parliament has two main parts, called the two Houses of Parliament.
- Both parts must agree before a new law can be passed.



National Assembly

- The National Assembly is the part of Parliament that creates the country's laws.
- It also checks that the government follows the laws properly. Members of the National Assembly talk about new laws and vote on them.
- These discussions, or debates, happen in public, and any citizen can go to listen.
- The Speaker of Parliament is the person who leads the meetings and makes sure everyone follows the rules and gets a chance to speak.

National Council of Provinces

- The National Council of Provinces makes sure that the voices and needs of people from all provinces are heard and that they agree with the laws being made.

Why Laws and Rules Matter

- Every community needs rules so that people can live together in a safe and fair way.
- These rules help everyone understand what is right and wrong, and how they should treat each other.
- We need rules for many things—how people should behave, how property can be owned, how parents should care for their children, how agreements (called contracts) are made, and much more.
- In a country, the most important rules are written down as laws.



- In a democracy, these laws are created by leaders who have been chosen by the people. These leaders are called Members of Parliament.

The Justice System and Fairness in the Law

- In South Africa, we have a court system that helps make sure people—and even the government—are following the country's laws.
- When someone is believed to have broken the law, the courts decide what should happen next.
- Courts are led by judges. These are people who are specially trained to understand and apply the law.
- Judges must always listen to both sides of a case and make a fair decision based on the evidence they hear.
- South Africa's Constitution says that everyone is equal under the law.
- This means that no one is above the law—not even the government.
- It also means that if different people break the same law, they should be treated the same and receive similar punishments.
- There are two main types of cases that courts deal with:



Criminal Cases

- When the police believe someone has committed a crime, they take the case to court.
- The court then examines the evidence to decide if the person is guilty and, if so, what punishment they should receive.

Civil Cases

- When two people (or groups) have a disagreement and cannot solve it themselves, they can go to court.
- The judge will listen to both sides and decide who is right.

Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens in a Democracy

Understanding Rights

- Rights are the freedoms and chances that every person should have to live a good and fair life.
- In South Africa, many of these rights are protected by the Constitution.
- Here are some important examples:
 - Equality: Every person is equal. No one should be treated unfairly because of their race, the language they speak, or their religion.
 - Freedom of religion, belief, and opinion: People have the right to follow the religion they choose, believe what they want, and share their opinions.
 - Political rights: Everyone can join any political party they support and vote in elections for the party they believe in.
 - Housing and the environment: Each person has the right to have a place to live and to enjoy a clean and safe environment.
 - Education: Everyone has the right to go to school and learn in a language they can understand.
 - Access to courts: All people have the right to be treated fairly by the courts and to get justice through the legal system.



Our Rights and Responsibilities

- In a democracy, every citizen has certain rights. But with those rights come responsibilities.
- This means we must also respect the rights of others, because everyone is equal and deserves to be treated fairly.
- Here are some of the responsibilities we have:
 - Do not treat others badly because of their race, the language they speak, or their religion.
 - Respect other people's right to believe in things that are different from what you believe.
 - Follow safety rules at home, at school, and in public places.
 - Help keep your surroundings clean, safe, and healthy.



- Take your education seriously by working hard and making the most of what you are taught at school.

The Constitutional Court

- South Africa's Constitution protects the rights and freedoms of all people and helps keep our democracy strong.
- The Constitutional Court is the highest court in the country, and its main job is to make sure that the Constitution is followed.
- This special court is made up of a president, a deputy president, and nine other judges.
- If any person believes that a law or something the government has done goes against the rights of the people, they can ask the Constitutional Court to look at the issue.
- The court will then decide if that law or action needs to be changed to protect the rights of all citizens.



Children's Rights and Responsibilities

The Children's Charter of South Africa

- Before South Africa's first democratic election in 1994, a new Constitution was being created.
- To help with this important job, the people writing the Constitution looked at different charters.
- A charter is a list of ideas and promises made to protect certain rights.
- In 1992, children from across South Africa joined an international meeting to talk about children's rights in the country.
- From that meeting, they created the South African Children's Charter, which shared their hopes and needs for a better future.

Children's Rights

- The right to a name and nationality
- The right to a place to live.
- The right to live without being discriminated against.
- The right to practice their own religion, culture or beliefs.
- The right to grow up with love, affection and security.
- The right not be made to work before a certain age.
- The right not be beaten or abused.
- The right to be cared for when sick.
- The right to special treatment and education when handicapped.
- The right not be used as soldiers in times of war.
- The right to free education.
- The right not be arrested and put in jail.

- The right to enough food to eat.

Children's Responsibilities

Just like children have rights, they also have important responsibilities. These are the things every child should do to help their family, school, community, and country.

Living in a Safe Environment

- Look after nature and help protect it.
- Take care of animals and plants, and help stop pollution.
- Don't waste water or electricity.

Freedom of Religion, Belief, and Opinion

- Let others follow the religion they choose.
- Respect different beliefs and opinions.

Family and Parental Care

- Show love and respect to your parents.
- Be caring and loyal to your family.
- Help make your home a warm and kind place.



Human Dignity

- Always treat people with kindness and respect.
- Be thoughtful and caring toward others.

Work and Effort

- Try your best in everything you do.
- Be proud of your hard work.



Freedom and Safety

- Never hurt, bully, or threaten anyone.
- Settle disagreements peacefully.
- Keep yourself and others safe.

Freedom of Expression

- Don't use words to spread hate.
- Never lie or share false stories, and help stop others from doing so.

Education

- Go to school regularly, learn as much as you can, and do your best.
- Show respect to teachers and classmates.
- Follow your school's rules and behaviour code.

Equality

- Treat everyone with fairness and respect.

Property

- Respect what belongs to others.
- Don't take things that aren't yours.

Being a Good Citizen

- Follow the country's laws.
- Do your part to make South Africa a better place.



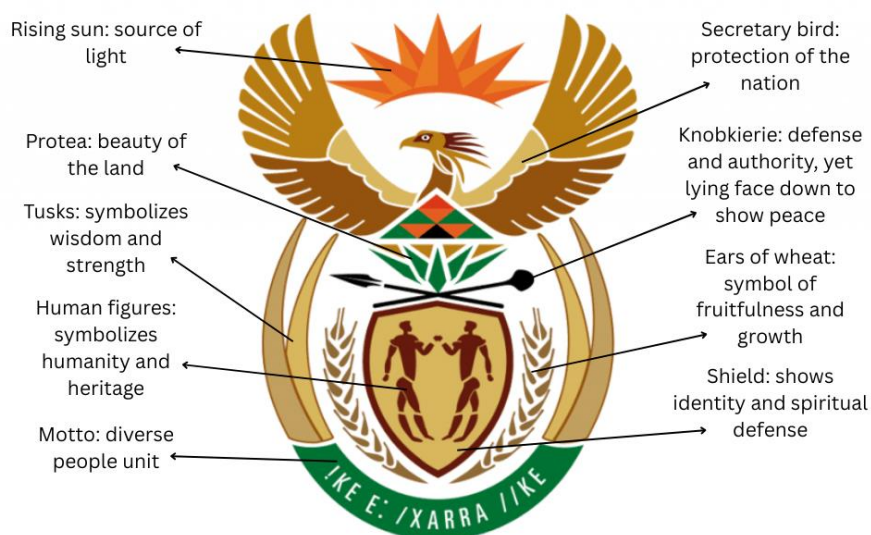
The Right to Life

- Protect the lives of others.
- Don't do anything that puts someone's life in danger.
- Take care of your own health and well-being.

National Symbols Since 1994

The National Coat of Arms

- A coat of arms is a special emblem or symbol that shows what is important about a country, place, or group.
- It acts like a badge that represents the values, history, and identity of the country.



The National Flag

- Red symbolises the hardships fought in the Struggle.
- White symbolises cleansing.
- Black symbolises the chaos that was once here.
- Gold symbolises the riches of the land and our mineral wealth.
- Green symbolises our fertile land.
- Blue symbolises the ocean and water.
- The Y symbolises the merging nationalities.



The National Anthem of South Africa

- South Africa's national anthem is a mix of two songs: Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika and The Call of South Africa.
- The anthem includes five of the country's official languages: isiXhosa, isiZulu, seSotho, Afrikaans, and English.
- Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika, which means God bless Africa, was written in 1897 by Enoch Sontonga.
- The first verse was a hymn in Xhosa, and later, poet Samuel Mqhayi added more Xhosa verses.
- The Call of South Africa, known in Afrikaans as Die Stem, was written by C.J. Langenhoven in 1918.
- The music was created by Reverend M.L. de Villiers in 1921.