

Politics and Partition

Activity 4

Pictures of the Punjab
Activities for ages 8 - 12



A British family living in India

"We moved to India nearly 30 years ago when my father was given a job helping to build the telegraph and postal network in India. I was born here and I go to a special school for English children. I like living in India, all of my friends and family are here and I have a nice house and gardens to play in. If India becomes independent father says he will have to find a job back in England and we will all have to return there. I have never visited England and do not want to live there. If I had to leave would I see my English and Indian friends ever again?"



Soldiers in the Indian Army

"I am a soldier in the Indian army of the British Empire and have fought in the Second World War. In the army Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and Christian soldiers worked together and helped one another, we lived together like brothers. Now that I have returned to India things are changing. The British may leave India and the country may be divided into 3 parts (East Pakistan, West Pakistan and India) based on religion. The army might be divided too and soldiers will have to decide which army they want to serve - the Indian army or the Pakistani army? I am a Hindu but I have always lived in Karachi and do not know where I will go if India is divided. If the army is divided I do not know if I will see my British commander or my Muslim friends again."



A student activist

"I am a student at Bombay University and believe that India should be governed by Indian people. I have listened to the speeches given by Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah and support the 'Quit India' campaign. However if India is divided, I do not know if I will be able to continue to study at the university, as my family are from Gujranwala and I am a Muslim. I do not think that India should be divided based on religion, if the Punjab is divided many people, including Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims will suffer."

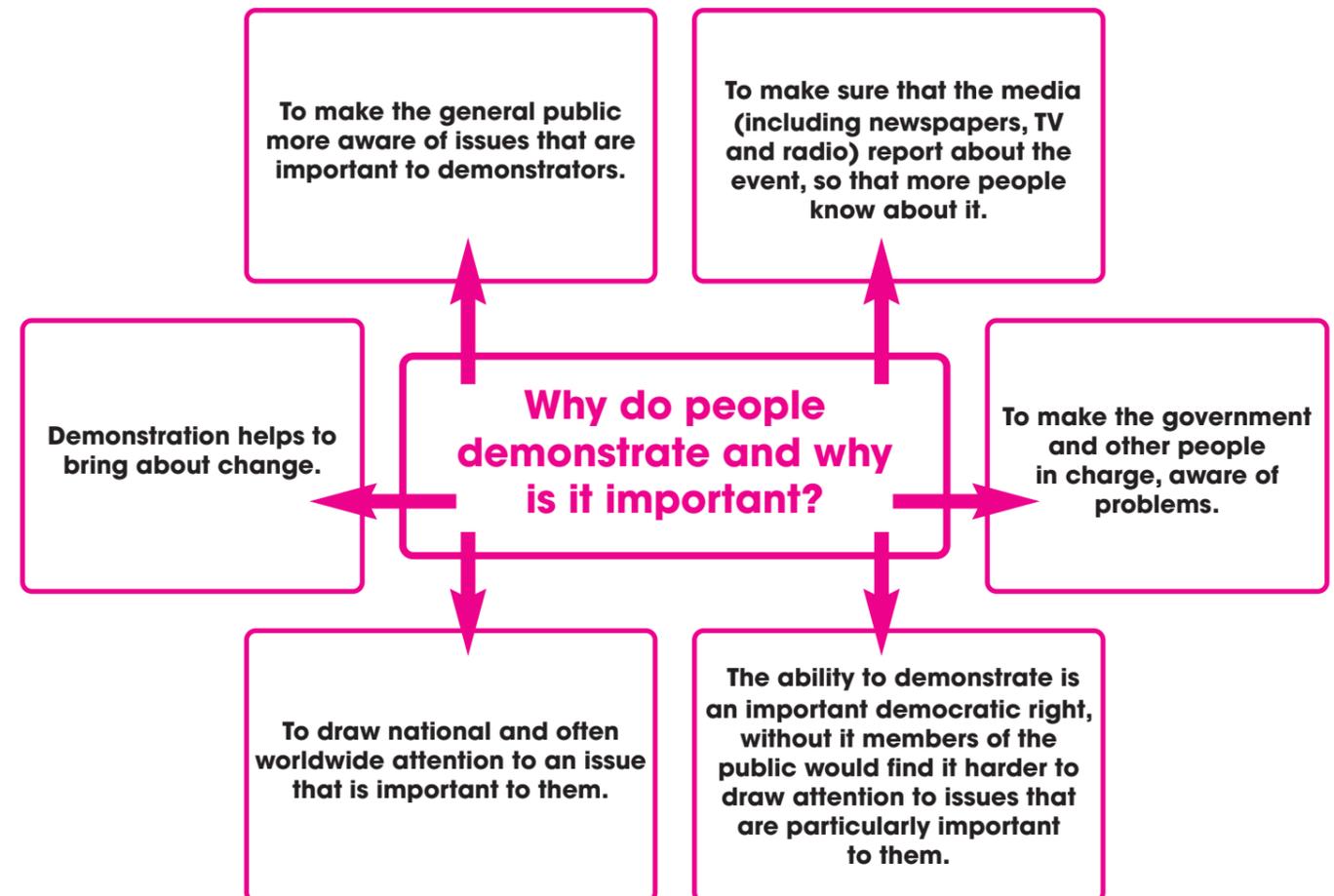
Resources needed:

- Blank poster paper
- Felt tip pens
- Image cards (from activity 2)

This activity focuses on analysing the reasons for and aims of protest and draws students attention to the effects of partition and independence on Indian people through an in role activity.

Activity - Why protest?

- Begin activities by dividing students into small groups of 3-4. Provide each group with a blank piece of poster paper. Ask students to construct a brainstorm based on the following question:
Why do people protest and why is it important?
- Obtain feedback from the class.
A sample brainstorm is provided below for teacher reference and provides a brief guide to the aims of protest.



Extension Activity - Current Protests

- As an investigation into current protests in the media, students can be asked to monitor media including newspapers, television and the internet.
- Students should collect relevant clippings from any newspapers they read, print articles they discover on the internet and make notes based on any protests that are reported in the news programmes they watch.
- Information gathered can be shared with the class in subsequent lessons.

- Working in the same small groups ask students to make a list of the different forms of protest of which they are aware. Obtain feedback from the class.
Examples of different forms of protest are provided for teacher reference below:

- Public demonstrations**
- Public rallies**
- Hunger strikes**
- Picketing**
- Written demonstration (letters and petitions)**
- Strikes**

- Ask students to consider the form of protest made particularly famous by Mahatma Gandhi (this was mentioned as part of activity 2).
- Share with students Mahatma Gandhi's support of non-violent non-cooperative action (or Satyagraha). Gandhi pioneered resistance through mass civil disobedience based on the principle of total non-violence. He was sent to prison for his non-violent protests many times, but succeeded in leading India to independence in 1947. His life and teachings have inspired movements for civil rights and freedom all over the world.
- Now provide each group with image card 8, 9 or 10 (further photocopies of images may be required, depending on the number of children in your class). Ask students to consider the following questions:

Does protest lead to change?
Would India have become independent without the protests of the people in the photographs?

Obtain feedback from the class.

- Divide the class into 6 groups and provide each group with a role card consisting of a photograph and statement (role-cards should be photocopied and cut in order to separate them). Explain to students that they must step into character and remain in character from this point onwards. They must extract information from their statement and photograph to answer the following question:

Why might you have supported/discouraged the independence protests taking place in India?
Use evidence from your role-card to explain your views.

Ask students to consider the following questions during their group discussions:

- Who are you and what do you do for a living?**
- What kind of life do you live in India?**
- Where do you live in relation to the proposed border?**
- How do you feel about the partition of India? What do you think this will mean for you?**
- What positive and negative effects do you think partition will have on your job, your family, your friends and your home?**

Students should provide a detailed explanation for their responses using evidence from their role card and image to build their argument. Students may also wish to refer to the archive map of India as well as a modern map of India in order to locate cities and villages mentioned in the rolecards and the likely implications of the creation of a new border on the character they represent.

Ask groups to present the views of their group at the end of the lesson. Groups should:

- Introduce who they are**
- What they do for a living**
- Provide their response to the question "Do you support the independence protests taking place in India?"**
- Be encouraged to provide explanations for their responses and may wish to ask one another questions about the groups they represent.**



A farmer and his family living in Lahore

"My family and I have lived in Lahore all our lives, our family home is in the centre of Lahore and many of our Hindu and Muslim friends live nearby. We own a farm just outside the city and grow many fruits and vegetables to sell in Lahore's markets. All of the money we earn comes from our farm. Now that India is going to be divided into India and Pakistan, we are worried because we do not know where the border will be. There have been reports that all Sikh and Hindu people must live in India and all Muslims must live in Pakistan. We are a Sikh family and do not know what we will do if we are on the wrong side when the border is drawn."



A shop keeper and his family living in Amritsar

"My family and I have been living and working in Amritsar for many years. We own a shop that sells cloth. Many tourists come to Amritsar to see the Golden Temple which is a holy site for Sikh people, many of them visit our shop and buy our products. My children go to school in this city and all of my brothers and sisters live here too. We are Muslim and have always lived peacefully with our Sikh and Hindu friends. Now with the dividing of the country, things are going to change. If we have to move what will happen to our business? Where will we go? Will we ever see our friends again?"



British Government Officials - Bombay

"We came to India many years ago to work on the railways, roads and canals. We have helped to plan and build many of India's transport links that now deliver goods to shops and markets across the country and abroad. We have also helped the farmers of the country by constructing canals to deliver water to their crops. In the past many crops failed because the monsoon rains came late or were too heavy and damaged crops. Now that India is becoming an independent country, we think we may have to leave. Our jobs and family are in India, what will we do if we have to return to England?"