UNIT 6



CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE BUILDING

Unit Description

This unit builds on moral education learning areas that you learned in various grades. It attempts to introduce you with the understanding of the concept of conflict, peace, analysis of the causes of conflict, mechanisms for conflict resolution, the importance of peace building and indigenous social institutions for resolving conflict in the community. As a result, it will equip students with the ability to resolve conflict and apply it in their daily lives.

Keywords

- **Conflict, Peace, Conflict resolution, Peace building, Indigenous conflict resolution institutions.**

Learning Outcomes:	Lessons:
At the end of this unit, learners will be able to - *Explain the concept of peace and conflict;* - *Explain the need for peace building;* - *Describe the causes of conflict;* - *Identify the different mechanism for conflict resolutions;* - *Demonstrate how to apply the skills of conflict resolution mechanism;* - *Evaluate the important role of indigenous conflict resolution institutions*	*6.1 . The concept of peace and conflict* *6.2. Causes of conflict* *6.2.1 Conflict resolution* *6.2.2 Mechanisms for resolving conflicts* *6.3. Peace building* *6.3.1. The importance of peace building* *6.4. Indigenous social institutions for resolving conflict in the community*

6.1 The concept of Conflict and Peace

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- ***Define what conflict is;***
- ***Explain the concept of peace;***
- ***Analyze the relation and difference between peace and conflict.***



- What do you think about conflict?
- Is conflict good or bad? What do you think?

Case study

It all started with an innocent incident. Nemera was patiently waiting in the cafeteria line when he was accidentally bumped from behind. He collides with Bayu, a classmate who is in line ahead of him. 'What exactly is the issue?' Bayu inquired, shoving Nemera aside. Nemera became angry and shoved Bayu back. When a school supervisor noticed the boys, he took them both to the vice principal's office. Nemera felt he had been wrongfully accused, but he was just as much to blame as Bayu for the conflict.

Activity 1

- What do you understand from the above case study? Work in pairs and reflect your understanding to the class?



Figure 6.1. Students Out of the Class Room are in Dialogue

Individuals and groups in any society have a variety of competing interests. A disagreement between people who have opposing viewpoints, ideas, or goals is referred to as a conflict. Conflict is defined as disagreements that arise due to differences or divergence of interests in a society.

People have varying needs and desires. As a result, conflict is an unavoidable part of our life. It takes place between people in all types of human relationships and social settings. Conflicts are not always negative. In fact, it can be a positive force in people's lives. Resolving conflict can assist people in settling their differences, getting along peacefully, and focusing more on positive action.

? *What comes to your mind when you hear the term Peace?*

Peace, on the other hand, is something more meaningful, valuable, and important in all aspects of our daily lives. It can be defined as the absence of wars, fights, and violence. It should be noted, however, that peace is more than just the absence of war; it also implies or includes the presence of justice, law, and order in society.



Figure 6.2. Martin Luther king Delivering Speech on the Stage

REMEMBER

True peace is not merely the absence of tension: It is the presence of justice. __ Martin Luther King, Jr

Activity 2

Individual activity and Group discussion.

- List any disagreements you've had in the last few months, what they were about, and who you disagreed with. Reflect to the class.
- What do you learn from Martin Luther King, Jr saying? Discuss in group and reflect on the class.

6.2. The Causes of conflict

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify the different causes of conflict;*
- *Evaluate causes of conflict at home, with their peers and at school;*
- *Show a good citizenship towards their parents, siblings and friends.*

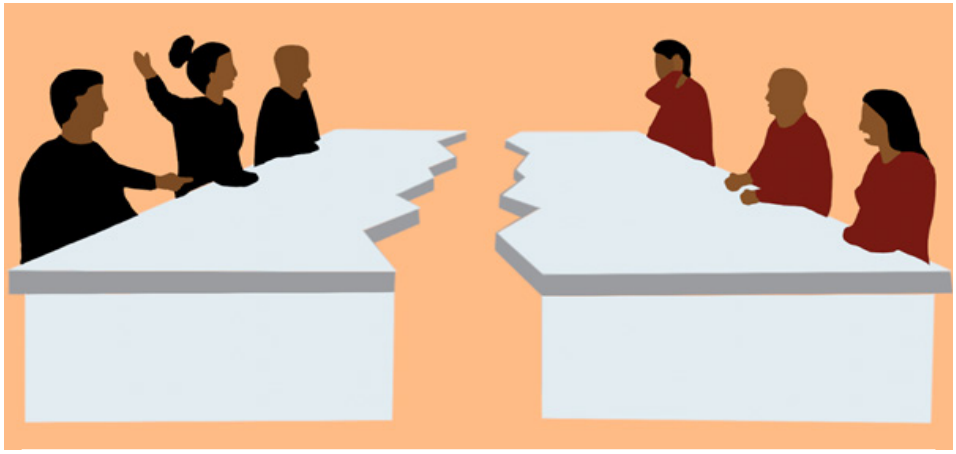


Figure 6.3. Conflicting Situations among individuals



Have you ever observed conflicts? If you had observed, what were the causes for those conflicts? Discuss with your classmates.

Depending on what and who is involved, conflict can take various forms. Some conflicts involve a simple exchange of words. These are minor disagreements. Others, such as group fights, can be on-going and severe, especially when weapons are involved, which can result in injury or death.

Many conflicts arise between two or more people as a result of differences in need, viewpoint, and desire. For example, you might want to watch one TV show while your sister prefers another. Others are internal, taking place within our minds. Consider being asked to judge a music school show in which your best friend is a competitor. You may be torn between loyalty to a friend and the responsibility of selecting the best act.

Activity 3

In group try to identify examples of interpersonal conflicts and reflect to the class.

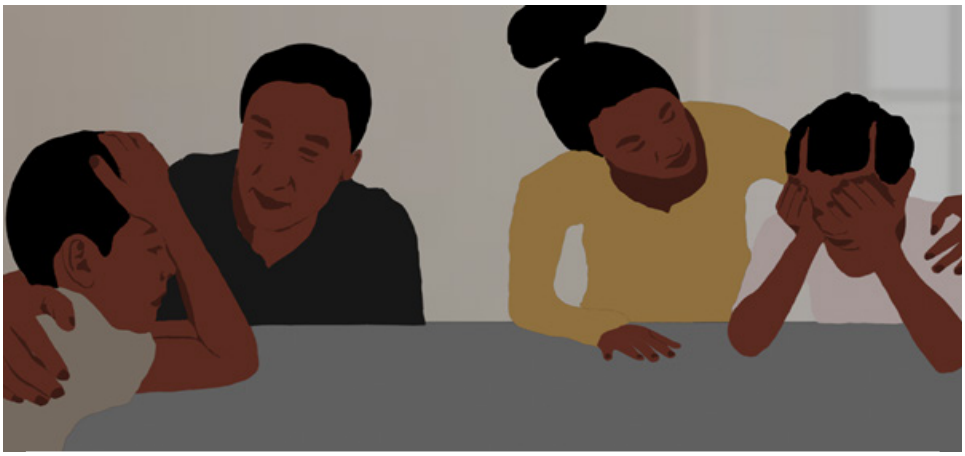


Figure 6.4. Parents are advising their children

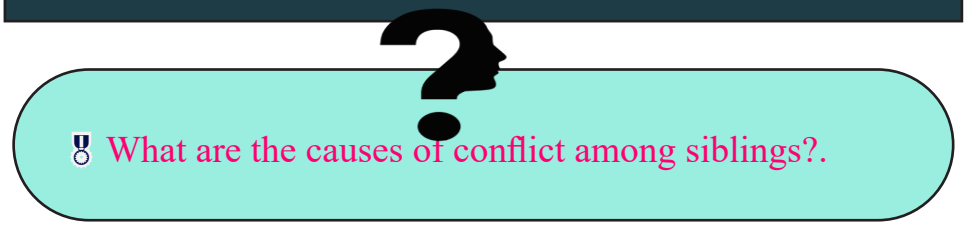
? *What are the causes of conflict at home?*

Typically, disagreements with parents or guardians arise over limits, responsibilities, or expectations. You may believe that a rule imposed by a parent is unjust. Perhaps you should be able to stay up or go out later in your opinion. Perhaps you believe you have been assigned more responsibilities than other family members. Your family, on the other hand, may have a different opinion. When conflicts like these arise, keep in mind that parents set limits to ensure their children's well-being. They are responsible as parents for keeping you safe and healthy. You, in turn, must respect their authority and strive to maintain a positive relationship with them.

Activity 4

Case Study.

Ojulu and his mother had a disagreement about how much time he spends watching TV. Ojulu is very angry at his mother. What do you think Ojulu could do to keep the relationship positive?



What are the causes of conflict among siblings?.

Property or space is frequently the source of conflict between siblings – brothers and sisters. Older siblings may be irritated when younger siblings enter their space or use their possessions without permission. Sibling rivalry is at the root of sibling conflict. Someone may believe that their child receives more attention from their parents than others.



Figure 6.5. Conflicting Situations among Students

? *What are the causes of conflict at schools?*

At this point in your life, you spend a significant portion of your day in school. As a result, many of your conflicts outside of the home involve school friends and peers. This conflict could be triggered by an incident similar to the one Nemera encountered in the lesson's opening case study. Conflicts can be one-sided and unprovoked at times. Someone may not take the time to understand another. A person may seek power and attention by putting others down. Bullying is one way for such conflict to manifest.

? *What are some of the contributing factors to bullying?*

- A bully is someone who targets people who are smaller or weaker.
- Another type of bully is labeling or name calling. Name-calling is hurtful, especially when it is motivated by prejudice.
- Prejudice is a negative and unjustly formed opinion, usually directed toward people of different racial, religious, or cultural backgrounds.

A student who has been labeled in this manner should try to resolve the situation by speaking with school officials, parents, or other trusted adults.

Activity 5

Case Study.

- Gizachew's hair has been cut in a new style ever since. He has been self-conscious about it. To make matters worse, every time Genet sees Gizachew, she makes fun of him. What kind of hurtful behavior is Genet employing to target Gizachew? What should Gizachew do?

Case study

Father and son story

Father and son are in a great mood in the morning. They leave their house joking with one another. The following scene depicts the father at work, where he is transporting heavy objects from one location to another. The manager approaches him while he is working and pushes him.

As a result, one of the boxes collapses and the contents break. Despite the fact that it is not the father's fault, the manager begins shouting and insulting him. The father tries to defend himself, but the boss becomes even more angry, accusing him of being contrary and uneducated. Finally, the boss tells the father that he must pay for the broken goods, which means that half of the father's monthly salary is lost. The father is angry but says nothing to avoid aggravating the situation. When the father returns home, he discovers that his son has already set the table for dinner. In a bad mood, the father greets him and they sit down to eat. The son wishes to fill the father's glass with water from a jar. By accident, he spills the water all over his father, who slaps him and begins shouting at him.

Activity 6

Role play scenarios

- Request that volunteers play the roles of actors. Assign roles to a father, a son, and the father's manager. Then, ask the class to identify the root cause of the father-son conflict. Is that a puddle of water? What are the reasons for and against this?

6.2.1. Conflict resolutions
6.2.2. Mechanisms of conflict Resolutions

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Explain what conflict resolution is;*
- *Differentiate different mechanism for resolving conflict;*
- *Identify traits for a good negotiation;*
- *State skills for a good mediator;*
- *Analyze the role of litigation in resolving conflict;*
- *Apply conflict resolution skills in their daily life.*



What do you understand about conflict resolution?

It is sometimes simple to find solutions to conflicts. When the task becomes more difficult, you may be tempted to ignore or set aside the conflict. However, if a conflict or other difference goes unresolved, it can harm relationships. Avoiding a conflict is also likely to aggravate it. Fortunately, there is a constructive approach to dealing with any conflict; in which the parties involved collaborate to achieve a positive, healthy outcome. This approach employs conflict resolution skills, which entails resolving disagreements in a way that is satisfactory to both parties.

REMEMBER

Conflict resolution involves finding a positive solution to disagreement or preventing it from becoming a large conflict.

People are wired to think of conflict in terms of winners and losers. This is not always true, but just because one person gets his or her way when a conflict is resolved does not mean that the other person automatically loses. Conflict resolution must be based on a win-win solution, which is an agreement or outcome that provides something to each party. It is more desirable because both parties produce something.

? *What are the specific methods of peaceful means of resolving conflicts?*

? *How are conflicts resolved in your locality?*

Conflicts are a normal part of life. It can happen in the family, among neighbors, and among various groups from various backgrounds. What is important, however, is how conflicts are resolved. As a result, it is critical to be well-versed in the art of handling and dealing with differences and contradictions. Different mechanisms are used to resolve conflicts. The following are the most common nonviolent conflict resolution methods:

- Negotiation
- Arbitration
- Mediation
- Litigation



Figure 6.6. Negotiating on Issues

1. Negotiation

? ***What is negotiation and how is it used in conflict resolution?***

Negotiation is the process of talking directly to another person in order to resolve a conflict or dispute in a peaceful manner. Two people face each other and share their feelings, expectations, what they want and what they don't want in order to find a solution. It entails bringing those who are at odds together. It necessitates the ability as well as a culture of tolerance and mutual respect.

A compromise is reached during negotiation when both parties in a conflict agree to give up something in order to reach an agreement. Collaboration, like compromise, is an important component of effective negotiations. When you collaborate or work together, you form a bond with another person while working toward a common goal. When presenting one's views and positions, one should also be careful not to offend or hurt the feelings of others. Negotiation necessitates civilized behavior on the part of both parties. The selfish behavior of the participants has a significant impact on the outcome of the negotiation. Instead, fairness on both sides may result in an acceptable agreement. In this case, there is no third person or party involved in this process. The conflicting parties will negotiate and eventually reach an agreement.

REMEMBER

- ***Negotiation requires the willingness of both sides to talk together about their problems.***

Activity 7

Case Study.

- Mohamed and Tsion were arguing about a problem. Tsion became angry and began raising her voice. What strategies should Mohammed employ in order to resolve the conflict through negotiation? Why are these strategies important?



Figure 6.7. An individual is Mediating Two Persons.

2. Mediation

? *What is mediation and how is it used in conflict resolution?*

? *Name the skills or values an effective mediator has?*

A process in which a neutral third person or party, known as a mediator, assists conflicting parties in reaching an agreement. In this case, the mediator has no authority to impose a decision on the parties. A friendly intervention is made by a neutral third party for the purpose of managing and resolving conflicts. A mediator must have neutrality, a promise not to take sides. It is possible to do so at both the individual and national levels. A good communicator is required for effective mediators. They must be able to hear both sides of an argument and have good listening skills. They must also be impartial and fair judges. They must be able to investigate root causes.

REMEMBER

- ***Mediation can be used in settling conflicts or disagreements that may occur between friends, husbands and wives, between different political groups, religious or ethnic groups.***

Activity 8

Role play scenarios.

- Consider a situation in which two younger students are in conflict. Role play how the mediator interacts with the students involved in the conflict.

3. Arbitration

? ***What is arbitration and how does it help with conflict resolution?***

Arbitration is a method of resolving disputes in which a neutral third party or arbitrator makes a decision after hearing a case. The arbitrator allows both parties to submit and present their arguments. The parties to the conflict choose their own arbitrator who has the authority to render a binding decision. Arbitration is thus an arrangement for the submission and binding decision of selected arbitrators in some disputed matters rather than taking the matter to court. This arrangement is intended to avoid the formalities, delays, and relaxation of court litigation.

Activity 9

Think pair activity.

- Assume two of your friends are fighting over a misplaced textbook. Determine the steps to be taken for arbitration in pairs

4. Litigation.

? ***What do you think is Litigation and how is it used in conflict resolution?***



Figure 6.8. A Judge is in a Court System

This is a formal method of resolving conflict in court in which the disputing parties appear before a judge who weighs the evidence and makes a decision. Typically, information presented in hearings and trials becomes part of the public record. Litigation is more expensive than other conflict resolution mechanisms and requires more time and energy from both parties.

In general, it makes sense to begin with less expensive, less formal conflict resolution procedures, such as negotiation and mediation, before making the larger financial and time commitments that litigation frequently necessitates.

Activity 10

Copy this table into your exercise book and compare and contrast formal and informal conflict resolution methods in terms of time, money, and commitment.

	Formal (Litigation)	Informal (negotiation, mediation and arbitration)
1	Time	
2	Money	
3	Commitment	

6.3. Peace building

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Explain the concept of peace building;*
- *Develop the values required for peace building;*
- *Analyze the importance of peace building.*



What comes to your mind when you hear about peace building?

Peace building is the process of building peace before, during and after conflict happens. Peace building is not just limited to conflict but also encompasses all activities that intentionally try to resolve conflict and bring about a deeper and more sustainable level of peace. It refers to the entire process of establishing peace before, during, and after violent out breaks. It is a more permanent and continuous process.

REMEMBER

- ***Peace building is processes and activities used in resolving violent conflicts and establishing peace.***



Figure 6.9. Nations, Nationalities and Peoples of Ethiopia Celebrating Nationality Day.

When all citizens and other stakeholders' i.e. religious leaders, civil societies, political parties, and trade unions fulfill their civic responsibilities, peace building becomes effective.

Citizens must learn to value tolerance of differences in order to build peace. Tolerance of diversity in life promotes mutual interest and cooperation for the greater good. As a result, tolerance of different races, languages, religions, ideas, social behaviors, and political beliefs contributes significantly to the flourishing of peace and stability.

Activity 11

Group Discussion.

In group discuss about the following issues and reflect to the class

- What conditions disturb peaceful coexistence of society in your Kebele?
- What roles can you play in ensuring peace in your community?

6.3.1. Importance of Peace Building

? ***What do you think is the importance of peace building?***

- Peace building prevents conflicts from escalating and helps prevent conflicts in areas where none exist.
- Peace building also helps create security and stability within our community and country at large.
- When there is conflict, life and property are destroyed; peace building thus helps safeguard lives and properties.
- Peace building fosters unity and togetherness among people and promotes democratic living.

ⓘ Peace building contributes to development by avoiding the additional costs of restoring damaged properties during conflicts.

Activity 12

Individual Activity.

On a piece of paper, describe your strengths and weaknesses in dealing with conflict as it arises. Make a list of ways to turn your weakness into a strength that will help you deal with conflict better.

6.4. Indigenous social institutions for resolving conflict in the community.

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify indigenous conflict resolution institution;*
- *Analyze the role of indigenous conflict resolution institution in maintain peace;*
- *Appreciate the role of indigenous conflict resolution institutions.*



List some of Indigenous social institutions that resolve conflict in your community?

Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms are grass-roots approaches to conflict resolution by society. The most important elements involved in this mechanism are the forgiveness tradition, respect for elders because of their symbolic authority to enforce decisions, and resource transfer as compensation. In contrast to formal conflict resolution mechanisms, indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms focus on reconciling disputing families rather than punishing them. Indigenous conflict resolution mechanisms manage and resolve conflicts among individuals and within or between societies by relying on local actors and traditional community based judicial and legal decision-making mechanisms.

Ethiopia has a rich cultural heritage and numerous indigenous community-based social institutions or self-sufficiency systems that play an important role in conflict resolution, community well-being, stability, and security. These indigenous institutions are extremely useful for conflict resolution mechanisms because they allow communities to address issues in their own unique way. As a result, some indigenous institutions for conflict resolution include the following:

Oromia- Jaarsumma



Figure 6.10. Elders are Gathering to Settle Dispute under ODDA Tree

Jaarsumma is an example of an indigenous Oromo conflict resolution mechanism. Jarsumma in its literal meaning is the process of reconciliation between conflicting individuals or groups by a group of Jaarsaas which is well known and widely used throughout Oromia.

Jaarsummaa is a conflict resolution process that involves individual clans both within and outside of the community. It is primarily managed by the community's council of elders and is thus linked to the Gadaa system. Jaarsumma is held under a massive tree known as 'odda.' The community elders are in charge of reconciliation. The council of elders is chosen based on their clan, which specializes in peacemaking and is not involved in conflicts.

Amhara –Shimiglina.



Figure 6.11. Shimglina or Erk –Amhara people's indigenous conflict resolution mechanism.

The traditional method of resolving disputes through mediation and conciliation i.e. Shimgilina and Erq is widely used among the Amhara people. Conflicts are frequently resolved through the mediation of elders, religious fathers, and prominent community figures.

It is the assembly of Yehager Shimagille or the land's elders' council that uses the services of a third party to assist conflicting parties in minimizing the extent of their differences and disagreements and reaching an amicable settlement. Shimglina, as the most prominent institution, has always been used to resolve serious disagreements that threaten peaceful relationships between friends, neighbors, spouses, and communities.

The Somalis- Xeer



Figure 6.12. The Xeer- Ethiopian Somali conflict resolutiomechanism

The Ethiopian Somalis have their own conflict resolution mechanism. It is known as xeer. Xeer is developed to settle disputes and maintain social order. Under xeer, elders serve as mediator judges and help settle cases, taking precedent and custom into account. Xeer is not a written legal code, but rather a tradition that has been passed down orally from one generation to the next, providing a rule of law permitting safe travel, trade, marriage, and so forth throughout the region. Much like the clan system, xeer is an ever present part of the Ethiopian Somali way of life.

Xeer is divided into two categories: Xeer Guud and Xeer Gaar. Xeer Guud includes criminal and civil matters and is applicable to all clans, whereas Xeer Gaar is only applied in a specific community or clan. In practice, when two parties are in dispute, the traditional body of elders of the two conflicting parties convenes a clan assembly to discuss the issues at stake.

The elders examine relevant precedents or relevant xeer on the matter. Generally, instead of being imprisoned or otherwise punished, law breakers are required to compensate their victims.

Guraghe-Yajoka



Figure 6.13. Yajoka- Gurage peoples conflict resolution mechanism

Yajoka is one of the Gurage people's most important indigenous institutions. This is an organization that includes all of the Sebat-bet Gurage people. Its mission is to provide a traditional system of conflict prevention and resolution, as well as to maintain social stability and good social relations among the people. The legal framework of the Yajoka is provided by Gurage customary law, known as the Kitchha; the Kitcha is a legal system that governs all aspects of human relations among the Guraghe people.

Afar-Mada'a



Figure 6.14. Mada'a –Afar peoples conflict resolution mechanism

Mada'a is the Afars' traditional legal system, which serves as a foundation for other administrative systems and a constitution. They believe that their indigenous conflict resolution methods are effective. In preventing and resolving conflicts, most commonly recognized mechanisms such as Shimglena or reconciliation by elders and arbitration by tribal leaders (including the Sultan) and religious leaders are used.

Activity 13

Field work and Presentation

- Individually ask your parents, relatives or community elders around you about the name of the indigenous conflict resolving institutions, how they resolve conflicts that arose in your community and present and report to your class.

Unit summary

This unit has introduced you with some of the key concepts relating to the study of peace building and conflict resolution. It also enables you to explore the most important key mechanisms for resolving conflict. Some of these mechanisms include negotiation, arbitration and litigation. These conflict resolution mechanisms are essential for building smooth relationships and building peace among individuals and the society respectively. Furthermore, you have discussed the concept of peace building and its importance from different points of view. Resolving conflict from escalating and safeguarding the life and property of individuals and groups are some of the importance of peace building. Finally, you have been introduced to the various indigenous conflict resolution institutions in Ethiopia. These institutions have a paramount significance in resolving conflict in their respective communities. With these, you will now have an appreciation of the various conflict resolution mechanisms and have an understanding on how to apply them in your day to day activities.

Glossary

Conflict: is a disagreement between people with opposing viewpoints, ideas or goals.

Conflict resolution: is an approach in which the parties involved in conflict work together towards a positive healthy outcome.

Indigenous conflict resolution institutions: are grass root and community based institutions for resolving conflict among individuals and within or between societies.

Peace: is a state of the absence of wars and the presence of law, order and justice in the society.

Peace building: is processes and activities used in resolving conflicts and establishing peace.

Unit Review Questions

Do these review exercises in your exercise book

Part I: True or False Items

1. Conflict is perceived as incompatibilities of views, goals and values.

2. Mediation can help two individuals to reach agreement on their own.

3. Litigation is a conflict resolution mechanism which is less expensive.

4. When conflict is resolved to the satisfaction of both parties it implies win-lose solutions.

Part II: Multiple Choices questions

1. In arbitration:

A. Decisions are binding
B. Decisions are not binding
C. Arbitrator propose decision
D. A judge provides final decision

2. Conflict is:

A. An avoidable part of life
B. Sometimes constructive
C. Can be resolved peacefully
D. all are correct answers

3. Peace building is:

A. The processes intended to resolve conflict and prevents future conflicts

B. Processes of resolving conflict only after conflict happened.

C. Involves only government institutions.

D. All are correct answers.

4. Which one of the following is different from the others?

A. Mada C. Mediation

B. Arbitration D. Negotiation

6. Among the following one is not the skill required from a good negotiation?

A. It requires the ability to compromise with others.
B. It needs the ability to collaborate with others.
C. Emphasizes the habit of aggression and selfishness.
D. Requires farness from both sides of negotiators.

Part III: Fill in the blank space with the correct answers.

1. _____ is a negative and unjust formed opinion, usually against peoples of a different racial, religious and or cultural group.
2. To be successful , a mediator must have _____which means a promise not to take side

Part IV: Give Short answers for the following questions.

3. Explain the causes of conflict at home, with your peers and at school.

4. Discuss some of the importance of peace building for the society.

5. List some indigenous conflict resolution institutions in Ethiopia.

6. Write the role of indigenous conflict resolution in resolving conflict in the community?

7. Analysis how can being good at conflict resolution have positive benefits to your life

UNIT 7



CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Unit Description

In seventh grade, you defined critical thinking as the process of using reasoning to determine what is true and what is false. It is critical to believe and act on the basis of evidence and reasons. Following that, you will learn about the definition of problem-solving, problem-solving steps, critical thinking steps in decision-making processes, critical thinking skills and habits, critical thinking strategies for students, and the importance of critical thinking skills in problem solving in this unit.

Keywords

- **Critical Thinkingm Problem solving ,Arguments, Decision making**

Learning Outcomes:	Lessons:
At the end of this unit, learners will be able to - *Explain the concept of problem solving;* - *Describe steps for critical thinking and problem solving;* - *Evaluate the importance of critical thinking in problem solving;* - *Demonstrate how to apply critical thinking skills and problem solving skills.*	*7.1 The meaning of problem solving* *7.2 Steps for problem solving* *7,3 Steps for Critical thinking in decision making processes* *7.4 Skills and habits of critical thinking and problem solving* *7.5 Strategies for improving critical thinking in students* *7.6 The importance of critical thinking skills in problem solving*

7.1 The meanings of problem solving

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- ***Define the concept of problem solving.***



Have you ever had to deal with a problem? How did you overcome it?

REMEMBER

Problem-solving is defined as the process by which an individual applies previously acquired knowledge, skills, and understanding to meet the demands of a new situation.

Problem-solving is a mental activity that aims to achieve a goal when solutions are elusive to the problem solver. It is the act of recognizing a problem, identifying its causes, selecting and prioritizing alternatives, and implementing a solution. It is a way of thinking within reason and acting on evidence.

Working on problems is an important way to learn how to solve them. This allows people to gain new knowledge by confronting problems that need to be solved. Students are expected to observe, comprehend, analyze, interpret solutions, and carry out applications that result in a comprehensive understanding of the concept. Three basic functions are involved in problem solving namely gathering information, creating new knowledge, and making decisions based on that knowledge.



Figure 7.1:People Discussing to Solve a Given Problem

Activity 1

What are the primary purposes of problem solving?

Case study

Two farmers named Hotesa and Zeberga lived in a rural area of Ethiopia. They relied on mixed agriculture, which included farming and cattle herding, for a living. Their cattle are used for farming as well as other purposes. Rain was the only source of water in the community. However, as a result of the drought and reduced rainfall, the grasses on grazing lands were depleted, and water shortages for animals and humans became chronic. As a result of unjustified human intervention, trees are also being deforested. For both animals and humans, the climate has deteriorated.

In the midst of this crisis, Hotesa and Zeberga were elected as community leaders. They invited some of the community's influential members, including Munira, Yemane, Bafa, and Kedir, and began discussing water scarcity and grazing land depletion. They had a meeting every three days. During the meeting, some of them suggested a novel idea, such as organizing a community-wide tree-planting campaign on communal and household lands. At the same time, other groups proposed replacing the depleted grass with a new drought-resistant variant.

Others advocate for the grazing land to be fallowed in order to recover from overgrazing. Others suggested reducing the number of cattle and changing the way they were raised.

Out of the four options presented, the community leaders chose the first two. This will necessitate a massive effort to plant trees and replace grass with drought-tolerant varieties for animal grazing. Then they finished it in a month, with a lot of help from the public. After a year, the climate in the community changed. Every tree that was planted grew and changed the weather. Water is now more readily available for both cattle and humans as a result of this.

Furthermore, the newly planted grasses recovered quickly and began to provide an adequate amount of grass for the cattle. The health and fitness of the cattle were restored, and agricultural productivity increased. The lives of both animals and humans in the community became more comfortable.

Activity 2

- What were the issues in Hotesa and Zeberga's community?
- What were the proposed and implemented solutions to community problems?

7.2 Problem-solving steps

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify problem solving steps;*
- *Explain each step of problem solving.*

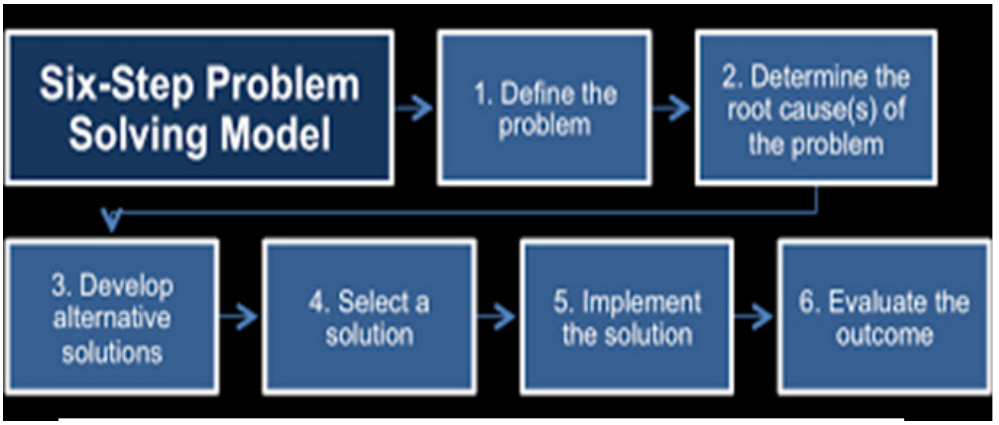


Figure 7.2: Six Step Problem Solving Model

Activity 3

Students, what steps did Hotesa's and Zebergaw's communities take to reach a final solution to the problem?

Nobody wants to live with an unresolved problem. As a result, problem solving is an ongoing process in which we use what we know to learn what we don't know. It entails overcoming a problem by making suggestions, testing those predictions, and coming up with satisfactory solutions. It could be purely mental activity or physical data manipulation. This, however, is a step-by-step process. Let us see steps in problem solving.

Activity 4

Is it possible to jump from one to the other before the step is finished? Is it possible to omit certain steps?

Step One- Define the Problem

? ***What were the issues identified by the Hotesa and Zeberga communities?***

Recognizing the problem is the first step in problem solving. It is necessary to identify the problem, which includes the context, background, and indicators of the problem. Following a clear understanding of the problem, it is possible to investigate the broader symptom to discover the problem's implications.

Step Two- Determine the Root Cause(s) of the Problem

? ***How did Hotesa and Zeberga become aware of their community's problem?***

Once the problem has been identified, the problem-solving process begins by attempting to determine the root cause of the problem. Exploring the problem is a critical step in problem solving. It is critical to understand the source of the problem at this stage. As a result, determining the root cause of the problem becomes critical. It is critical to hold a public discussion in order to identify the root cause of the problem.

Step Three- Develop Alternative Solutions

? ***What solutions did Hotesa's and Zeberga's communities devise to address the issues?***

After analyzing the problem, it is possible to look for different solutions to the problem. There could be several solutions to the problems. However, in this case, there is a need to weigh the solutions in order to determine which solutions are the best for solving the problem. Even if finding the best solution is difficult, reducing less effective options is important in problem solving. Concentrate on the negatives and positives; the benefits and drawbacks of various solutions.

Step Four- Select a Solution

? ***In the preceding passage, how did the community members with Hotesa and Zeberga choose a solution to a problem in their community?***

All potential solutions must be thoroughly evaluated before making a final decision. Weigh the benefits and drawbacks. Then, choose the option that best fits the problem. The one with more benefits than drawbacks is likely to be the best option.

Step Five- Implement the Solution

? ***In the preceding passage, the community members with Hotesa and Zeberga implemented the solution to the problem.***

Putting a solution into action simply means putting a decision into action. This step necessitates some action. It is more than just sitting and thinking; it is a practical stage in which a decision, plan, or agreement is put into action.

Step Six- Evaluate the Outcome

? ***What is the significance of evaluating the outcome of decision?***

What we put in place must be evaluated. Assessing the solution entails a thorough examination of the best solution. However, it must be monitored to ensure that recommendations are followed. This means that it is possible to determine whether or not the solution was effective. This stage aids in the improvement of the solution or the resolution of the problem. As a result, taking steps in problem solving is critical in order to eliminate bias and preconceptions and achieve greater objectivity. It facilitates decision-making and has the potential to ensure consistency. Furthermore, it eliminates the confusion that occurs when different problem-solving techniques are used. It also offers a justifiable solution.

7.3 Steps of Critical thinking in decision making processes

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify steps of critical thinking in decision making process;*
- *Explain each step for critical thinking in decision making.*



Do you make decisions? How and when?

In grade 7 you have defined critical thinking as a logical reasoning and questioning to check the validity of the statement. It is a critical evaluation of arguments. It refers to the ability to analyze information objectively and make a reasoned judgment. Critical thinking results in wise decision-making process.

REMEMBER

Decision-making is referred to as mental processing that leads to some action consciously or unconsciously.

In general, decisions can be made consciously or unconsciously. Critical thinking helps with conscious decision making. No decision shall be made haphazardly or emotionally.

Case study

Students named Fotoal and Gasara attended one of the public schools in Hawassa City Administration, Sidama National Regional State. They frequently quarreled in the school compound, disrupting the teaching-learning process. The situation was communicated by school security and other students to the director.

He also summoned both students' homeroom teachers as well as the unit leader to his office. The homeroom teachers confirmed that this is not the first time something like this has occurred. They claimed that the students were repeatedly advised and given oral warnings, as well as written warnings twice. The students, according to their findings, are unwilling to change their behavior. According to additional reports, the students harassed female students both inside the compound and on their way home. Everyone agreed that the students were interfering with the learning and teaching processes at the school. Based on the reported incident, the principal called the students and inquired about it. But, the students did not even regret for their action.

By exhaustively weighing all means of information and all evidences forwarded, the school administration lead by school principal decided and informed the students that they were dismissed from the school, despite the fact that this was not the intention of the institution. The students were dissatisfied with the decision, but the school was bound by its decision. The school, on the other hand, was greatly relieved of unnecessary disruptions from such students. Even other violent students changed their ways and started adhering to school rules and regulations. In general, the learning and teaching processes in schools have improved.

Activity 5

What do you understand from the preceding passage about critical thinking in decision making?

Making a reasonable and rational decision, as stated previously in the preceding case/story, necessitates critical thinking. The steps for critical thinking in decision-making processes are as follows.

Step 1: Identify the decision

? ***In the preceding story, what was the school administration's decision on violent students?***

When it is necessary to make a decision, it is best to define the nature of the decision that must be made. It is critical that the decision be defined. Without it, all other steps are impossible to take.

Step 2: Gather relevant information

? ***What kind of information did the school director gather about the aforementioned story?***

Before making a decision, it is critical to gather some relevant information. In this process, determining the type, source, and method of obtaining relevant information is a determinant of the decisions validity. Some of the data is internal and stems from his self-evaluation. Others could come from somewhere else.

Step 3: Identify the alternatives

? ***What are the school's alternatives to the above-mentioned story's violent students?***

Gathering information allows us to identify several possible courses of action, or alternatives. It is also possible to create new alternatives by using your imagination and additional information. This step will include a list of all possible and desirable alternatives.

Step 4: Weigh the evidence

? ***In the above-mentioned story, how did the school director weigh the evidence on violent students?***

Weigh until those who appear to have a higher chance of reaching the goal are distinguished from the rest. Consider whether the need discovered during the decision-making process can be met by using each alternative. It is not a simple process. When you go through these difficult internal processes, you end up favoring certain options. Finally, prioritize the alternatives based on your personal value system.

Step 5: Choose among alternatives

? ***How did the school administration arrive at a decision among alternatives before acting on the aforementioned story?***

Once all of the evidence has been weighed, it is simple to select the alternative that appears to be the best one from the alternatives that have been prioritized.

Step 6: Take action

? ***In the above-mentioned story, what was the school administration's decision to violent students?***

Because this is the actualization stage, you can now take some positive action by starting to implement the alternative you chose from among alternatives.

Step 7: Review your decision & its consequences

? ***What are the ramifications of the school administration's decision in the above-mentioned story for the school community?***

It is critical to review the outcomes of decisions and determine whether or not they addressed the need identified for decision making. If the decision does not address the identified need, certain steps of the process must be repeated in order to make a new decision.

7.4 Skills and habits of critical thinking and problem solving

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- ***Discover skills of critical thinking and problem solving;***
- ***Develop skills of critical thinking and problem solving;***
- ***Identify habits of critical thinking and problem solving.***



What does it mean critical thinking and problem-solving skills?

Skills are actions that people take on a daily basis. When we talk about thinking as a skill, we mean activities like analyzing, evaluating, and explaining, as well as challenges like problem solving and evaluating complex arguments. Skills are cognitive sets that can be developed, refined, and applied to achieve a goal.

Activity 6

- What are critical thinking and problem-solving abilities?
- What role does each skill play in critical thinking and problem solving?
- Have you ever had the experience of understanding and expressing the meaning of a statement, identifying the intended and actual inferential relationships, and drawing reasonable conclusions from it? Please compare your daily activities to these phrases.

Let us see some critical thinking skills in problem solving.

Comprehending and expressing: The ability to understand and express the significance of a wide range of experiences, situations, events, judgments, and beliefs.

Identifying the relationships: It is the ability to recognize the intended and actual inferential relationships between statements or other forms of representation that are intended to express beliefs, judgments, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions.

Assessing the credibility: It is the ability to judge the veracity of statements or other representations that are accounts or descriptions of a person's perception, experience, situation, or belief.

Furthermore, it evaluates the logical strength of the actual or intended inferential relationships between statements, descriptions, questions, or other forms of representation.

Drawing reasonable conclusions: It is the ability to identify and secure the elements required to reach reasonable conclusions; to form speculation and suggestions; to consider relevant information; and to mitigate the consequences of statements, opinions, or other forms of representation.

Explanation: The ability to state the outcomes of one's reasoning; justify that reasoning in terms of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, and contextual considerations upon which one's results were based; and present one's reasoning in the form of logical arguments.

Self-regulation: It is the process of consciously monitoring one's cognitive activities, the elements used in those activities, and the results educed, particularly by applying analytical and evaluative skills to one's own inferential judgments with the goal of questioning, confirming, validating, or correcting either one's reasoning or one's results.

Activity 7

Be honest with yourself and assess which of the above skills you possess. First, evaluate yourself against the details listed above, and then work in pairs and groups.

Case study

A large number of students were present in a classroom at one of Ethiopia's public schools. The classrooms were overcrowded and uncomfortably close to one another. The rooms were filthy, and the tables and dusks were shattered. Some students had brought their own chairs. The blackboard was filthy. The classroom walls had been shattered, and almost everything that happened outside was visible to the students inside.

Most students consider these circumstances to be normal and do not recognize them as a problem. Marshet and Mohammed, among others, began to wonder why this was happening. They went to the principal's office to get clarification on the situation. They also invited other students from the school to take part in the debate. Meanwhile, some students claimed that the same was true of other schools in the community.

Marshet and Mohammed were dissatisfied with the school's response and the reactions of the students. However, their inquiries drew the attention of other students and faculty, and they eventually became an issue for the entire school community. Following that, various task forces or committees were formed. On the scheduled date, the school, in collaboration with the local administration, held a large fund-raising campaign. A sufficient amount of money was raised during the campaign, and all of the aforementioned issues were resolved.

The school eventually became model school of the country.

Activity 8

- What critical thinking and problem-solving skills did Marshet and Mohammed employ to solve their school problem?
- How did they assess and interpret the issue at their school?

Habits of critical thinking and problem solving

? *What exactly does the term "habit" mean?*

Critical thinking and problem solving are both traits/habits and skills. A habit is a routine behavior that is repeated on a regular basis and is usually performed subconsciously. Here are some of the problem-solving habits.

- Uses evidence skillfully and impartially
- organizes thoughts and articulates them concisely and coherently
- suspends judgment in the absence of sufficient evidence to support a decision
- Acknowledge what they don't know regard problems and controversial issues as exciting challenges.
- Strive for understanding, keep curiosity alive, and are ready to invest time to overcome confusion
- Judgments based on evidence rather than personal preferences

- habitually questions one's own views and attempts to understand both the assumptions that are critical to those views
- recognizes the imperfection of one's own opinions, the probability of bias in those opinions, and the danger of weighting evidence according to personal preferences
- Seek and offer clear reasons, and be clear about their relationships with each other and the conclusion
- Try to be well-informed, open-minded
- Seek the truth when it makes sense to do so, and more broadly, try to 'get it right' to the extent possible or feasible and etc

Activity 9

Be honest with yourself and assess which of the above habits you have. Assess yourself against the above-mentioned details first, and then work in pairs or groups to share which habits you commonly have.

Case study

Ato Obong was a resident of Gambela town. He was teaching Citizenship Education to eighth-grade students. He acts as if he knows more than he does and believes his opinions are without flaws. Problems and contentious issues are perceived as threats to his personality, and he is impatient with complexity. He'd rather be perplexed than try to understand. His assessments of others are mostly based on first impressions.

He is preoccupied with himself and his own opinions, so he is unwilling to listen to the opinions of others. Furthermore, he frequently disregards the need for balance and favors viewpoints that support his pre-existing beliefs. He has a tendency to act rashly in response to his emotions.

Activity 10

How do you see the Obong's habit in critical thinking? Is he capable of critical thinking? Justify your response.

7.5 Strategies for Improving Critical Thinking in Students

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify strategies for improving critical thinking in students;*
- *Define strategies for improving critical thinking in students.*



Make a group of six students to discuss strategies for improving critical thinking skills. Present your findings to your group's representatives.

Children are not born with the ability to think critically, nor do they naturally develop this ability beyond survival-level thinking. Critical thinking is a skill that must be taught. The majority of people never learn it. Here are some strategies for improving students' critical thinking.

Trial-and-error methods-Allows students to engage in some repeated attempts at problem-solving.

Being a lifelong learner –Learners are naturally curious about the world and their profession. They read and converse with others. They basically educate themselves without being told to. This can be obtained through reading, speaking with subject matter experts, listening to teachers, or attending conferences.

Understanding the barriers- It is always important to encourage students to express their obstacles. They must be aware of any constraints that may be impeding their progress toward their goal.

Creating mental images – this is useful for problem solvers who face the "visual images" problem. This enables problem solvers to map out and clearly see many dimensions of a problem.

Seeking a pattern- A pattern is a regular, systematic repetition that can be numerical, visual, or behavioral in nature. Looking for patterns is an important problem-solving strategy because many problems are similar and follow predictable patterns.

Manipulative- By moving objects around on a table or desk, students can develop patterns and organize problem elements into recognizable and visually appealing components.

Considering unusual viewpoints- critical thinkers do not want to proceed in the usual way. They have a proclivity for looking for new solutions to old problems.

Avoiding the trap of too much information- Critical thinkers will avoid the trap of too much information and becoming trapped in the decision-making process by looking at the big picture as well as the details.

Identifying multiple solutions- there is no single solution. There are better options. After understanding the problem, students must choose one or more appropriate strategies to help resolve the problem. Students must understand that they have many strategies at their disposal and that no single strategy will solve all problems.

Monitoring a solution- Although it may be natural for students to "rush" through a strategy in order to arrive at a quick answer, encourage them to carefully assess the steps taken and monitor their progress, etc.

When opportunities present themselves, students have a natural proclivity to develop their critical thinking skills. The usual issue is that teachers and the school community force students to behave in predictable ways, or at least in ways that benefit teachers. However, it is critical to create some spaces for students to think and take action.

7.6 The importance of critical thinking skills in problem solving

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- *Identify the importance of critical thinking skill in good decision-making process;*
- *Understand the importance of critical thinking skill in good decision-making process;*
- *Appreciate the importance of critical thinking skill in a good decision-making process.*

It is necessary to be a critical thinker in order to make sound decisions in both personal and public matters. It ensures the use of one's mind and the ability to be governed by reason. Reason takes precedence over emotion. Information alone will not be able to sway critical thinkers. False beliefs and myths cannot rule him/her because they lack objective evidence. A critical thinker cannot switch positions arbitrarily, but can do so if and only if there is compelling evidence.

Take a look at the following story.

Story telling

Zerfe was a woman central Ethiopia. She usually goes to get water first thing in the morning. She occasionally returns from her journey when she comes across a singing bird along the road. She stumbled the other day as she was about to do the same thing in the morning, suffered a minor leg injury, and retuned from the way while she was still able to go ahead. Still, the other day, as she was walking to get water early in the morning, a person dressed in a black coat came in front of her, and she made an automatic return from the path.

Her 14-year-old daughter, who is in eighth grade, then asked her why she is doing so when water is desperately needed at home and she is eager to get it. “It is not good to go ahead while birds are singing in your path, when something stumbles your leg and someone comes with a black cloth,” she told the child. “These are warning signs that you are about to face some danger if you ignore the warning signs,” she continued. “That’s why she came back,” she explained.

Her child then brought the case to class and presented it to his Citizenship Education teacher. The teacher was taken aback by the case, so he brought it up in class for discussion. Then, other students shared their own stories, revealing that some of their families and neighbors are also doing so.

Finally, the teacher concluded the discussion by emphasizing unequivocally that Zerfu's actions had no bearing on her life. He stated that there could be no instances of her being in danger. For example, he stated that it is natural for birds to sing. He went on to say that not thinking critically wastes resources and causes problems in social relationships. As a result, students agreed to challenge their families and develop critical thinking skills in society

Activity 11

- What is the connection between a singing bird along the road, a stumbled leg, and wearing a brightly colored garment?
- Have you ever met someone like this in your community?
- What are the benefits of critical thinking?

Critical thinking is useful in a variety of problem-solving situations. It plays critical roles in thinking clearly, fairly, rationally, objectively, and independently. Critical thinking enables people to do the following:

- to discover and overcome personal preconceptions and biases.
- to formulate and present convincing reasons in support of conclusions.
- to make reasonable, intelligent decisions about what to believe and what to do.
- to become independent, self-directed thinkers and learners.

- to defend an argument against charges such as bias, lack of supporting evidence or incompleteness.
- to enables you as a reader to assess the evidence in what you are reading and identify fake or illogical reasoning.
- to create strong arguments of your own. This means that you will be able to present and justify any claims you make based on the evidence you have evaluated.
- to enable analyze and evaluate – and compare and contrast – the value of particular materials, including theories, methods, concepts and the major debates that have been presented.
- to allow you develop more reasoned arguments for your assignments, projects and examination questions.
- to use and draw on evidence to justify your own arguments and ideas.
- to synthesize your own thoughts, the thoughts of differing theorists/ researchers and those of the course materials authors and etc.

As a result, critical thinking is critical because it allows humans to fully develop as humans. Humans are distinguished from other animals by their ability to think. This ability to think should not be relegated to a lower level where we simply absorb what is told to us. Critical thinking, on the other hand, enables us to analyze, synthesize, and weigh the benefits and drawbacks of the claims. These processes ultimately result in sound decisions. As a result, every decision must be supported by critical thinking.

Unit summary

You learned problem solving in this unit. There are many difficulties and problems in the world. The process by which an individual applies previously acquired knowledge, skills, and understanding to meet the demands of a new situation is defined as problem-solving. Humans, on the other hand, have a one-of-a-kind ability to overcome such obstacles. Critical thinking is required in this case. Adopting problem-solving steps such as defining the problem, determining the root cause of the problem, developing alternative solutions, and evaluating the outcome becomes critical here.

Humans are instructed to base their actions on reasons and evidence. Humans must be able to control their emotions and act in accordance with objective realities. Critical thinking must be traceable back to the decision-making process. It must be partisanship-free. This is due to the importance of critical thinking and related decisions at both the individual and collective levels.

Glossary

Problem solving- is the act of defining a problem; determining the cause of the problem; identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for a solution; and implementing a solution.

Decision making- is the process of making choices by identifying a decision, gathering information, and assessing alternative resolutions.

Analysis- It is the skill of identifying forms of representation intended to express beliefs, judgments, experiences, reasons, information, or opinions.

Argument-using or characterized by systematic reasoning to reach a conclusion based on some evidences.

Unit Review Questions

Part I: Write True if the statement is correct and False if it is wrong.

1. Problem solving is a cognitive process that is based on reasoning and evidence.
2. Putting the solution into action in decision making is a step to ward weighing the benefits and drawbacks of various options.
3. Critical thinking is the foundation for making sound decisions.

Part II: Choose the letter of the alternatives that best suits as an answer for each of the following questions.

1. Problem solving impacts
    A. Knowledge
    B. Understanding
    C. Skill
    D. All
    E. None

2. Problem solving begins with

A. Defining the problem
B. Developing alternatives
C. Taking actions
D. Determining the cause of the problem
E. All

3. Checking whether decisions are met the identified needs or not in critical thinking refers

A. Reviewing your decision
B. Taking action
C. Choosing among alternatives
D. Weighing the evidences
E. All

4.Which one is the strategy to improve critical thinking in students?

A. Trial and error approach
B. Being continual learner
C. Explain barriers
D. Using manipulations
E. All

5. Which one is the importance of critical thinking?

A. To be independent
B. To be based on evidence
C. To self direct
D. To synthesis thoughts
E. All

Part III: Match variables of challenges of Human Rights under column 'A' against their attributes under column 'B'

No	"A"	"B"	
1	Avoiding information overload	A	Guesstimate
2	Seeking new solution to old problems	B	Being continuous learner
3	Search mind picture to a problem	C	Considering unusual opinions
4	Curiosity to know new thing	D	Creating visual image
5	Engaging in trial and error	E	Avoiding analyses paralyses

Part IV: Short answer

1. What exactly is critical thinking?
2. How does critical thinking help with decision making?
3. How important is critical thinking in an individual's personal and public life?