

## **BIG IDEAS** (concepts for the year... and life!)

**Conflict:** Actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. A conflict can be internal (within oneself) or external (between two or more individuals). Conflict as a concept can help explain many aspects of social life such as social disagreement, conflicts of interests, and fights between individuals, groups, or organizations, or nations.

**Balance:** Implies there is nothing in excess; the middle way; a balance of power between multiple opposing forces. It is an equilibrium between the elements of confrontation and cooperation. People, cultures and systems require balance to continue to thrive. When something gets out of balance, that system often incurs damage or destruction. This may be in the form of disease when the immune system isn't functioning, political upheaval when power is used unfairly, or the collapse of a structure when forces are unbalanced.

**Cause and Effect:** The relationship between an event (the cause) and a second event (the effect), where the second event is a direct consequence of the first. It is the relationship of past to present and from present to future. The understanding of cause and effect can help us to make good choices, better judgements and give a sense of control over the possible outcomes of our actions.

**Justice:** The concept of moral rightness based on ethics, rationality, law, natural law, fairness, religion and/or equity. Justice concerns the proper ordering of things and persons within a society. Justice allows all participants in a culture or society to participate without fear of oppression due to an imbalance of power, money, or social status.

**Hope:** Belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life. Hope is a driving force in human culture to persevere in spite of obstacles or hardships encountered.

**Freedom:** The right to act according to one's will without being held up by the power of others. From a philosophical point of view, it is the capacity to determine your own choices. It can also be defined negatively as an absence of subordination, servitude and constraint.

**Equality (of Opportunity):** a social environment in which people are not excluded from the activities of society, such as education, employment, or health care, on the basis of unchangeable traits.

**Democracy:** any definition of democracy includes equality and freedom. These principles are reflected by all citizens being equal before the law, and having equal access to power.