

Teacher's Notes: Exploring the rights of children

Objective

As part of discovering what it means to be a citizen, students learn that there are rights that apply to all children. Exploring a few of these rights, students develop their thinking skills by evaluating and ranking these rights according to their own priorities. In an optional activity students also consider the difference between 'needs' and 'wants'.

This activity is more suitable for students in middle and upper primary.

Resources

- 1 x copy Student Handout – “Rights Image Cards” either per student or per group
- 1 x copy Student Handout – “Diamond Ranking Activity” per student
- Teaching Resource – The Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Optional copies of the blank “Rights Image Cards” and colour pencils or glue and suitable magazine pictures
- Optional 1 x copy Student Handout – “Wants and Needs” per student

Note: It is recommended that you print “Rights Image Cards” in colour. These cards will need to be cut out to make individual cards.

Activity

Based on the information provided in the Teaching Resource, tell students about the Convention the Rights of the Child. For example, the convention lists the things that governments of the world, including the Australian and Ugandan governments, believe all children need to have in order for a safe and healthy life – these are called ‘rights’, and it is the responsibility of all people, both children and adults, to try their best to ensure these rights are met.

Go through each image card with students. Advise them that each card has a word and a picture that relates to some of the rights all children are entitled to have. Explain each right. The class may like to discuss what each item is, and why they think it is important.

Ask students, either individually or in pairs, to rank the rights using a diamond ranking system. They should rank the rights according to their opinion of order of importance. Note to students that all of these rights are important, but they may feel one right is more important than another. Also there are no correct answers in this activity – it is about working out what their opinion is, and why they believe that. The Student Handout – “Diamond Ranking Activity” explains the diamond ranking system.

Students then complete the two questions on the handout.

Option: Using the blank templates, create a card for each of the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child to help students learn about and understand the convention as a whole. This larger set of rights cards could also be used in a diamond ranking activity. Another option would be to have students organise the rights cards into the four categories of child rights – Survival; Development; Protection; Participation (as outlined in the Teaching Resource document – refer page 6).

Option: Rights are about the things we need in order to have a safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling life. Ask students to give an example of something that they ‘need’, and something that they ‘want’. Explain the difference between wants and needs. Ask students to complete question 1 in the student handout “Wants and Needs.”

Using the blank template for the image cards, either create your own or ask students to create their own additional cards of examples of 'wants'. These cards can then be used to categorise 'wants' and 'needs'. Students can undertake a diamond ranking, using both 'wants' and 'needs' cards to identify which of these things they think are most to least important. Note that they do not need to use every card in their diamond ranking. They can then complete questions 2-5 in the student handout.

Notes

The Teaching Resource The Convention on the Rights of the Child outlines the articles in the convention. The final page sets out the Convention at a Glance.

A child friendly/simple language version of the convention is available for download at:
www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf

The "Rights Image Cards" relate to the following articles in the convention:

Word	Rights
Cared For	Articles 3; 18; could also be associated with 5; 9; 10; 20; 21; 22; 25; 26; 39
Friends	Article 15
Water	Articles 24; 27
Food	Articles 24; 27
Shelter	Articles 24; 27
Clothing	Article 27
Health	Articles 19; 23; 24; could also be associated with 6; 25; 27; 32; 33; 37; 39
Education	Articles 13; 17; 23; 24; 28; 29; could also be associated with 14; 27; 32; 42
Play	Article 31
Safety	Articles 11; 19; 20; 22; 27; 32; 34; 35; 36; 37; 38 could also be associated with 9; 16; 24; 25; 33; 39; 40

In the Student Handout "Diamond Ranking Activity" and the Student Handout "Wants and Needs" a 12-card diamond is used. This would require all 10 image cards provided, plus 2 additional rights/wants cards will need to be created.

Other diamond options could include a 9-card diamond of 1 card, 2 cards, 3 cards, 2 cards, 1 card, or a 10-card diamond of 1 card, 2 cards, 4 cards, 2 cards, 1 card.

The United Nations refers to 'basic needs' as including "food nutritive enough to avoid malnutrition, shelter, clothing, public services for education, clean water, and health care."¹

¹ Source: United Nations Bibliographical Information System. <http://unhq-appspub-01.un.org/LIB/DHLUNBISThesaurus.nsf/MultiEng/2172B200B763C03A85256AA0005FD446?OpenDocument> [accessed 15 Dec 2010]