

Children's rights

Topic

International Day of the Child (celebrated on 20 November)

Aims

- To teach learners about children's rights, ideally for the International Day of the Child
- To develop the skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking
- To encourage pupils to think critically and creatively
- To recycle the use of modals (*can't, should, shouldn't, must, mustn't, have to*)

Age/level

Older primary (10- to 11-year-olds) with two or more years of English

Time

45–60 minutes (this lesson could be done over two classes)

Materials

The lesson plan, picture cards and worksheets can be downloaded below as PDFs.

1. Lesson notes
2. Worksheets A, B and C
3. Set of 12 picture cards
4. Paper or card for each group and coloured pencils or crayons.

Introduction

The United Nations has declared that 20 November is the International Day of the Child. To help raise awareness of this important issue, this lesson plan is about children's rights.

In this integrated skills lesson, pupils will learn about some of the rights listed in the United Nations 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' (CRC)*. First, pupils are introduced to the concept of 'rights' through a teacher-led discussion. Then they study a list of items (in the form of picture cards) and decide which ones are 'rights'. Next, they read some of the fundamental rights, share missing information and complete the gaps in their text. Finally, learners work in groups, using the ideas from the lesson to make a booklet about children's rights.

* In the treaty called the ‘Convention on the Rights of the Child’ (CRC), there is a list of all the rights for children that the world has agreed to protect. Every child in the world has the same rights. For example, all children have the right to go to school and the right to be safe from violence. You can find the complete list of children’s rights in the CRC treaty, which was created by the United Nations to protect children under 18. For a version in child-friendly language, see: <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>

Optional: Pupils can watch a video about child rights, which is on the LearnEnglish Kids website: <http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/video-zone/what-are-child-rights>. The video and accompanying online activities provide further classroom practice or make an ideal homework task.

Procedure

1. Before the lesson	<p>Download and make copies of the worksheets you need for the lesson.</p> <p>Download and cut up the picture cards. You need one set of cards for each group.</p> <p>(Alternative: cut up one set for the whole class. If possible, enlarge the pictures so that the class can see each one clearly when you hold it up.)</p>
2. Warmer (5 mins)	<p>Introduce the topic of child rights, using some simple drawings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the board, draw two children as stick people. Add a speech bubble next to each child. One child says ‘I haven’t eaten for days.’ Write in the other bubble ‘I work in a factory.’ • Point to each picture and ask ‘<i>Is this fair? Is it right?</i>’ Elicit an answer. (No.) Encourage pupils to think of some reasons why it isn’t right. • Use the examples on the board to elicit or explain the meaning of a ‘child right’. (Children’s rights are basic needs – things that every child must have to live a safe, healthy and happy life.) • (Optional) Write two sentences on the board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ‘Children have the right to eat.’ ‘Children have the right not to work.’ If necessary, explain the structure ‘not to ...’. • Explain that this lesson is about children’s rights. If appropriate, point out that 20 November 20 is the International Day of the Child.
3. Game and	<p>Give each group a set of picture cards.</p>

discussion
(15 mins)

- Before you hand out the cards, check that pupils understand the difference between 'rights' and things we would like. Ask, '*Does every child have the right to be safe?*' (Yes. It's a right. They must be safe). Ask, '*Does every child have the right to get lots of money from their parents?*' (No. It's not a right. We want it, but we don't need it).
- Divide the class into groups. Hand out one set of picture cards to each group.
- If necessary, go through the vocabulary on the cards with pupils before they play the game.
- Explain the game. The cards contain pictures of 'things we must have' (rights) and 'things we would like' (wants). Explain that learners should put the cards face down on the desk. They turn a card over, look at it and discuss if it is a 'right' or 'something we want'. When they are sure, they place the card onto one of two piles: 1) Needs and 2) Wants. They continue to the next card.
- Model the activity with a strong learner.

Tip: If you made one set of cards only, show each card to the class, one at a time. Read the card out to the class. Have pupils tell you if it is a right/want.

- Monitor the groups while they play the game. Give support where necessary.
- Check the answers with the class. Draw two columns on the board (label the first column 'Rights' and the second column 'Things we want'). Hand out marker pens to the pupils and have them come up to the board to write an answer in the correct column.

Follow-up discussion

For higher levels and native English speakers:

- Conduct a classroom discussion about the rights on the picture cards.
- Ask learners why children don't get some of these rights. Point to an example (e.g. the right to go to school) and encourage them to think of some reasons why some children don't get this right.
- Ask, 'Who do you think is in charge of protecting children? Why?' (Governments and parents, because young children can't get their rights without help).

For lower-level learners:

- Ask pupils to state the rights. Point to a 'Rights' card and call on learners to tell you the right. Remind students to use full sentences (e.g. Children have the right to .../not to ...).
- Ask 'Which rights are the most important, in your opinion?' Encourage pupils

	<p>to discuss in groups how they would rank the rights on the cards.</p>
4. Reading (15–20 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide learners into pairs (A and B) and give each learner the appropriate worksheet (Student A worksheet or Student B worksheet). Explain that they have part of a text. They have to take turns to dictate and write the missing sections of text. Student A should start. <p>*It is a good idea to model the activity first. Learners complete their texts about children’s rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor while they are dictating and writing and help where necessary. • (Optional) Write four headings on the board: 1) The right to be safe; 2) The right to be happy and healthy; 3) The right to learn and grow; 4) the right to be YOU. • Ask, ‘Which rights in your list belong in the “right to be safe” group?’ (19, 27, 33). Continue with the other categories. Note that some answers belong to more than one category. • (Optional) Point out that the CRC has more than 50 rights. Ask, ‘Can you guess some more rights that are in the Convention?’ Encourage groups to guess more rights for each category.
5. Making a booklet (15–20 mins)	<p>Put learners into pairs or groups to make a booklet celebrating children’s rights.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If possible, show learners the booklet produced by UNICEF. (Optional – before class, download and fold the booklet with illustrations, shown on: https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/rightsforeverychild.pdf) • Give each pair or group a copy of Worksheet C. Read through all the instructions with the whole class, checking that they understand what they have to do at each stage. For example, ask, ‘Do you have to include all the rights on this page?’ (No. You can choose your favourite ones.) • Groups work together, following the steps to make their child rights booklet. • If possible, allow learners to show their booklets to the class and/or make copies of their booklets to give to other people.

Contributed by

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