CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

An English resource for 8-11 year olds

TEACHERS' OVERVIEW

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Introduction

Children's Rights has been one of Oxfam's most popular resources for 8-11 year-olds for many years. In this revised and updated version, we have linked each session more strongly with the current English curricula in England and Wales and with the Literacy and English experiences and outcomes in Scotland. You can therefore now improve your learners' English skills at the same time as making the rights of the child both relevant and interesting. *Children's Rights* includes real-life case studies and exciting activities to develop learners' spoken language, reading and writing.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted by governments worldwide in 1989. These rights describe what every child needs to survive, grow and live to their full potential. All children have these rights, wherever they live in the world and whether or not their lives are affected by conflict or disasters. The political, economic, civil, social and cultural rights of the 54 UNCRC articles cover all aspects of children's lives and explain how adults and governments must work together to ensure all children everywhere have their rights met. Four general principles behind the 54 articles – without which other rights cannot be met – are expressed in articles 2, 3, 6 and 12: the right to non-discrimination, the right to the child's best interests being met, the right to life, survival and development and the right to be heard. For further information see *www.unicef.org.uk.*

Oxfam's *Children's Rights* focuses on three case studies featuring children from Syria, Uganda and Sierra Leone which provide vivid examples of how children's access to their rights is not equal in different parts of the world. Extreme inequality – which refers to wide differences in a population in terms of their wealth, income and access to essential services such as health and education – slows down the rate at which people can lift themselves out of poverty. These differences can occur between communities in the same country, or between countries. Inequality can also apply to unequal opportunities (life chances) and outcomes.

A rapidly growing gap between rich and poor is now being seen in many countries around the world. Seven out of ten people in the world live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years. If the entire wealth of the planet were divided into two, almost half would go to the richest one per cent and the other half to the remaining 99 per cent of the population. Inequality is an increasing problem in the UK. The richest five families in the UK are now wealthier than the bottom 20 per cent of the population (12.6 million people).

Overall, inequality undermines the development of human potential, with children from disadvantaged families whose rights are not fully met quickly falling behind in terms of early learning and other outcomes. For further information see _What Inequality Means For Children: Evidence from Young Lives_ by Woodhead, Dornan and Murray, Young Lives, Jan 2013: _www.younglives.org.uk_.

Curricular links

The resource focuses on the English curriculum, in particular persuasive argument and role-play. Some activities link to other areas of the curriculum such as Geography or Social Studies. Although not statutory, you might be interested to know that the resource meets some key recommendations of the PSHE Association, for example:

- _Living in the wider world_: understand that everyone has human rights, and that children have their own special rights set out in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- _Health and wellbeing_: learn that bacteria and viruses can affect health and that following simple routines can reduce their spread.

Aims of _Children's Rights_

- To use real-life case studies to engage learners and enable them to see how children's rights are important and relevant both in the UK and in other countries.
- To develop learners' English skills in a range of areas including: using persuasive argument and emotive language, using connectives to link ideas, participating in role-play activities and writing speeches for target audiences.
- To encourage learners to use the inspiration of a school health club in Sierra Leone to set up their own school health or hygiene club.
- To encourage participatory, investigative and collaborative teaching and learning styles and develop critical thinking.
- To develop an understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- To help enable teachers to fulfil the demands of the English national curricula in England, Scotland and Wales. Note that in the case of England, the 2014 curriculum has been used.

Structure of *Children's Rights*

- One slideshow
- Two videos
- Six session plans
    - Session 1: Needs and wants
    - Session 2: Rights of the child
    - Session 3: Exploring rights
    - Session 4: Right to good health - water and sanitation
    - Session 5: Right to good health - writing a persuasive speech
    - Session 6: Right to good health – our school health club

For further information, see *Detailed session outline* below.

Differentiation

Most sessions include suggestions for differentiating the language work, while some lend themselves to differentiation by outcome and therefore there is no specific reference to differentiation in the session plans. Sessions also include further ideas, many of which can be used to stretch more able learners.

Title – detailed session outline

Session overview	Learning Objectives	Learning Outcomes	Key Questions	Activities
Session 1: Needs and wants *Learners will work in small groups to prioritise items into what they 'need' and what they 'want'. In this context, learners will start to use spoken language to persuade others of their viewpoints in a structured way.*	• To structure a persuasive argument through a series of logical points, opening and ending with the strongest arguments. • To link their persuasive argument to a target audience. • To differentiate between needs and wants.	• Learners will distinguish between needs and wants and prioritise them in a ranking exercise. • Learners will try to persuade others to agree with their opinions about priorities. • Learners will listen carefully to others' opinions. • Learners will collate persuasive phrases into a class phrase bank.	• What is the difference between something you 'need' and something you 'want'? • What do you really need in order to live? • What do you consider to be very important, even though you could survive without it? • What do you think everyone has a right to? • Should these be rights for all children or just children in the class?	Starter: Introducing the idea of persuading others Activity 1.1: Prioritising needs Activity 1.2: Structuring an argument Plenary
Session 2: Rights of the child *Learners will read selected articles from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and discuss which three they consider to be most important. They will write a sentence to justify their choice of articles and use persuasive language to encourage others to accept their viewpoint.*	• To develop skills in using both spoken and written persuasive language. • To develop an understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and recall at least three of the UN articles on the Rights of the Child.	• Learners will group selected articles from the UN Rights of the Child into categories such as health, happiness or safety and then rank them in their order of importance. • Learners will use appropriate language to persuade others to agree with their choice of the top three most important articles. • Learners will create posters using persuasive language to support their choice of the top three most important articles.	• What is the aim of this article? • Which three articles do I think are most important? Why? • How can I make this sentence sound more persuasive? • Which were the most popular articles chosen by the class? Why was this? • Are all children are given these rights?	Starter: Introducing the Rights of the Child Activity 2.1: Prioritising Rights Activity 2.2: Using persuasive language Plenary
Session 3: Exploring rights *Learners will look at two case studies, one about*	• To develop skills in using connectives to link ideas. • To develop understanding of the rights that some children in other parts of the world do and do not have	• Learners will read either Reema or Charles' story and discuss which of the 12 selected rights from the Session two they do or do not have.	• How do Reema and Charles meet their needs for clean water, shelter and education? How do these compare with the way we meet our needs and wants?	Starter: Reema's story, Charles' story Activity 3.1: Exploring Rights Activity 3.2: Using connectives to link ideas Plenary

Reema, a Syrian girl living as a refugee in Lebanon and another about Charles, a boy living in Uganda's capital city, Kampala. Learners will discuss which rights the featured children do or do not have and then participate in role play to explore these rights. Learners will finish by using this context to develop their skills in using connectives to link their ideas.	and some of the reasons for this.	• Learners will gain further understanding of Reema and Charles' rights by participating in a role play. • Learners will select appropriate connectives to link their ideas.	• Which rights do Reema and Charles have met and which do they not have met? How do we think they feel about these? • Can we use a connective to link our ideas?	
Session 4: Right to good health - water and sanitation *This session focuses on the Right to good health (Article 24). Learners will find out about water and sanitation in Sierra Leone, one country which struggles to ensure that everyone has access to good health, especially following the Ebola crisis of 2014-15. In role as members of a school health club in Sierra Leone, learners will think of ways to use emotive language to describe the benefits of new pit latrines and water pumps to others. The notes they create will prepare them for Session five.*	• To use emotive language to describe features. • To develop understanding about a country where access to good health is limited. • To explain ways in which communities are trying to overcome health challenges.	• Learners will use emotive language to write about the benefits of pit latrines and water pumps. • Learners will use photos to find evidence to support given statements.	• What continent is Sierra Leone in? Where have you heard about it? • Which photo shows evidence of this challenge? • What are the benefits of the new pit latrine and water pump? • Why do you think some communities have not invested in the new pit latrines and water pumps? • Why could investment in pit latrines and water pumps save communities money in the long run?	Starter: Welcome to Sierra Leone Activity 4.1: What are the challenges? Activity 4.2: What are the solutions? Plenary

Session 5: Right to good health - writing a persuasive speech *In role as members of a school health club in Sierra Leone, learners will consolidate their learning about persuasive argument by giving a speech to persuade members of a community to invest in building pit latrines and water pumps. Note that learners will need to refer to the notes they made in Session four for key ideas.*	• To write a structured persuasive speech based on prior learning, incorporating emotive language and connectives. • To list ways in which communities with limited access to clean water and sanitation are trying to overcome these challenges.	• In role, learners will write a structured persuasive speech including emotive language and connectives to persuade members of their imagined community in Sierra Leone to invest in building pit latrines and water pumps.	• What is the purpose of school health clubs in Sierra Leone? • Who is the target audience for your speech? • How will you structure your speech? • Have you included persuasive features in your speech?	Starter: Community awareness event Activity 5.1: Key ideas Activity 5.2: Writing a persuasive speech Plenary
Session 6: Right to good health – our school health club *Learners will consider which good hygiene practices in Sierra Leone could also be applied to their own school (such as careful hand washing). They will then set up a real or imagined school health club to promote these messages in a way that will persuade others in the school community to adopt them.*	• To apply knowledge about sanitation, water and good hygiene practices to their own school environment. • To present a persuasive message in either spoken or written form to a wider audience.	• Learners will devise good hygiene messages for their own school. • Learners will present these messages in a persuasive way to the rest of the school community in either spoken or written form.	• What is the purpose of our health club? • Why do we think that good hygiene is important? • Are there any good hygiene practices that are particularly important? Why? • Are there any good hygiene practices that the school does not do very well? What can we do about this? • How will we present our messages in a persuasive way?	Starter: The Health Club Activity 6.1: Good hygiene messages Activity 6.2: Taking action Plenary

Global Citizenship

Children's Rights is a global citizenship resource written for English teachers. Education for global citizenship is a methodology to help young people to develop as active global citizens. Oxfam suggests a Learn-Think-Act approach to help structure global citizenship activities and give young people the opportunity to learn about issues, think critically about how to solve them, and act as responsible global citizens. Actions may simply be to find out more or think more deeply about an issue. They may also involve making others more aware of an issue or engaging in specific fundraising or campaigning activities. For more information, see: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship

The key elements of responsible global citizenship are:

Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Values and attitudes
• Social justice and equity • Diversity • Globalisation and • Interdependence • Sustainable development • Peace and conflict	• Critical thinking • Ability to argue effectively • Ability to challenge injustice and • inequalities • Respect for people and things • Co-operation and conflict • Resolution	• Sense of identity and self-esteem • Empathy • Commitment to social justice and equity • Value and respect for diversity • Concern for the environment and commitment to sustainable development • Belief that people can make a difference

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For further information about Oxfam Education, including a wide range of other curriculum-linked resources, see: http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education.

Useful resources linked to the English curricula

- **English and Global Citizenship** – download this four-page guide for teachers from www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides.
- **Stories from Haiti** (7-11s and SEN) – an innovative resource supporting key elements of the English curriculum. www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/stories-from-haiti-7-11
- **Food for Thought: Learn resources for English** (8-11s): www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/food-for-thought-english-learn-resources
- **Bullying** (6-8s) - Reading, writing and spoken language activities exploring fairness, feelings and resolutions: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/bullying
- **Nelson Mandela** (7-14s) - English activities based on Mandela's life exploring fact, opinion and bias and distinctions between biographical and autobiographical writing: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/nelson-mandela
- **Message in a book** - An opportunity to write persuasive letters about global issues which will then be inserted into second-hand books for sale in Oxfam shops: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/message-in-a-book
- **The World Cup: A Fair Game? English Resources** (9-14s) - A look at media coverage and a role play exploring the benefits and challenges of hosting the football World Cup: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/the-world-cup-a-fair-game
- **Climate Challenge** (7-11s) **-** Develop English skills while investigating the human impact of climate change: www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/climate-challenge-7-11

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