# English Session 2: Inequalities in Young Lives

**Age range: 11–16 years**

## Outline
Learners will use role play to develop empathy with some of the young people interviewed by the Young Lives researchers. They will create freeze frames and use thought tracking to describe aspects of the lives of eight featured young people from the four Young Lives countries (Ethiopia, India, Peru and Viet Nam). Learners will then use written case studies to explore what inequality means for these young people. They will produce spidergrams to support their thinking and identify potential ways in which the lives of young people in the four Young Lives countries and the UK are unequal.

## Learning objectives
- To use written sources to develop broader knowledge about the lives of young people in the four Young Lives countries and some of the inequalities that exist between them.
- To use dramatic presentation to portray the feelings and actions of others.
- To use written sources to aid discussion.
- To develop empathy for others.

## Learning outcomes
- Learners will use freeze frames to describe aspects of the lives of featured young people from the four Young Lives countries.
- Learners will use case studies to identify and infer ways in which the lives of young people in the four Young Lives countries and the UK may be unequal.
- Learners will use a spidergram to summarise and organise their ideas about how the lives of these young people are unequal and may discuss the consequences of inequality with others.

## Key questions
- What can you see in this freeze frame? What aspects of this young person’s life do you think it is describing? How do you feel?
- What does inequality mean?
- How do you think the lives of the young people in the Young Lives study may be unequal?
- What inequalities are there between the lives of these young people and your own life?

## Resources
- English slideshow A (slides 16–29)
- Resource sheets:
  - Welcome to my life: Netsa and Hadush (Ethiopia); Sarada and Salman (India); Elmer and Eva (Peru); Phuoc and H’Mai (Viet Nam)

## Curriculum links

### England
**KS3 English**
- Pupils should be taught to:
  - **Spoken language**
    - Speak Standard English confidently and effectively in a range of formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion.
    - Justify ideas with reasons and ask questions to check understanding.
    - Develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising and exploring ideas.
    - Adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role.
  - **Reading**
    - Make inferences and refer to evidence in a text.
  - **Writing**
    - Write accurately, fluently, effectively and at length for pleasure and information through summarising and organising material.

### Wales
**KS3 English**
- **Oracy: skills**
  - Listen and view attentively, responding to a wide range of communication.
  - Evaluate their own and others’ talk and drama activities, extending their understanding of how to improve, considering how speakers adapt their vocabulary, tone, pace and style to suit a range of situations.
- **Oracy: range**
  - Speaking and listening individually, in pairs, in groups and as members of a class.
  - Presenting, talking and performing for a variety of audiences.

### Scotland
**Literacy and English**
- I can make notes and organise them to develop my thinking, help retain and recall information, explore issues and create new texts, using my own words as appropriate.
- When I engage with others I can make a relevant contribution, ensure that everyone has an opportunity to contribute and encourage them to take account of others’ points of view or alternative solutions.
- I can respond in ways appropriate to my role, exploring and expanding on contributions to reflect on, clarify or adapt thinking.

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Note:

- These are suggested activities and resources to support your teaching rather than guide it. Additional teaching input may be required to develop learners’ knowledge, skills and understanding of some of these concepts.

- The profiles of the featured young people in this resource are based on in-depth interviews conducted with them in 2007 when they were 12 to 16 years old. This age group was chosen so that the young people would be of a comparable age to learners in the UK. Although there have been some significant changes in the communities and lives of these featured young people since 2007, there will still be some young people in these communities today with similar lives and stories.

- For this session learners will need an understanding of the term ‘inequality’, introduced in the Introduction session. You might also like to consult the Background notes for teachers.

Activity 2.1 (40 min)
Empathising with Young Lives

- Organise learners into pairs. As a warm-up, ask learners to take turns at miming a scene from a typical day in their lives. Their partner should guess what scene is being described.

- Explain to learners that in this activity they are going to be using role play to develop empathy with some young people who were interviewed as part of the Young Lives research project.

- Photographs from the Young Lives communities showing different aspects of everyday life are provided in slides 17 to 23. You might like to show these at the start and/or end of the activity.

- Organise learners into groups of three. Distribute copies of Welcome to my life so that each group has a profile for one of the eight featured young people. Learners will already have been introduced to these young people in English session 1. You can decide whether each group is given the same profile as the one it had in English session 1 or a different one.

- Ask each group to read the profile of its featured young person and discuss its ideas about what this person’s life is like. Learners could also refer to the Introducing… activity sheet for this young person, completed in English session 1.

- Ask each group to devise three freeze frames to illustrate three different aspects of its young person’s life. Possible scenarios include:
  - Helping with household chores such as collecting water or firewood.
  - Working on the family farm or in the family business.
  - Working for pay outside of the family home.
  - Going to school or at school.
  - Free time.
  - Going to the health centre.

- Learners could take turns in taking on different roles such as the featured young person, family members, friends, teachers, employers and health workers.

- Invite each group to present its freeze frames to the rest of the class. Ask other learners to comment on what they can see in the freeze frame. Use thought tracking to allow different
learners in the freeze frame to step outside the picture to explain how they are feeling and why. Thoughts should be described in the first person. The whole class could also be asked to create a ‘soundscape’ for the freeze frames, for example the noise of the school playground, cattle or a bustling market.

- This activity could be extended by asking learners to create a series of freeze frames to describe a day in the life of their featured young person.

**Activity 2.2 (30 min)**

*Inequality in Young Lives*

*Note: Some background information about inequality is also provided in the Introduction session and Maths session 1. You may therefore wish to adapt this activity and/or the slideshow to suit learners’ needs. Learners also investigate inequalities in young people’s lives further in Maths sessions 3 and 4 and Geography sessions 3, 4 and 5.*

- Ask learners what they think inequality means and then use slides 24 to 27 to explore the concept with them.
- Discuss the statement “Everyone in our society should be equal.” Draw out the point that there will always be some inequality and we shouldn’t necessarily expect everyone to be the same. For example, some people will have more senior positions of responsibility in the workplace, or prioritise their work–life balance differently. The needs of different people will also vary (for example, children will have different needs to adults), so it wouldn’t be fair if everyone had exactly the same.
- Show slide 28 and explain that inequality becomes a problem when it reaches such an extent that it is unjust.
- Organise learners into pairs and give each pair an A3 sheet of plain paper. Show slide 29 and ask each pair to write ‘Inequality’ in the middle of their sheet of paper. Learners should then create a spidergram of any ways in which they think the lives of the featured young people may be unequal. This could include inequalities between the lives of young people in the same country, or inequalities between the lives of these young people and learners’ own lives. Remind learners to think about any similarities and differences they identified in *English session 1*. An example of a partly completed spidergram is provided below.
Further ideas

- Do some creative writing in the form of a diary, recount or letter from the perspective of one of the featured young people.

- Use a consequences wheel to support critical thinking about the potential consequences of some of the previously-identified inequality issues on the lives of the featured young people, for example not being able to go to school. See p.14 of *Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides)

- Discuss some of the reasons why certain inequalities might exist, for example why some children have more work to do in/outside the home than others. Learners explore some of these reasons in *Geography sessions 4 and 5*, so you may like to look at these sessions for further information and ideas. A why–why–why chain could be used to as a framework for this. See p.12 of *Global Citizenship in the Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*: [www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship/global-citizenship-guides). Refer to the *Background notes for teachers* for further information about the causes of inequality.

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Welcome to my life

My name is Netsa (Ne-as-sa) and I am 12 years old. I live with my foster mother in a slum area in the city of Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. I am an only child.

I am in grade 5 at a government school. I started kindergarten when I was four. I stayed there three years and then I did grades 1 and 2 in a private primary school. After that, I moved to a government school. I had to drop out of private school because the fees went up and my mother couldn’t afford them any more.

If you are a new student in the government school, they force you to begin again from grade 1 unless you have a release paper from your other school, which I didn’t have. If I hadn’t had to start from grade 1 again, I would be in grade 7 now.

I like my school. There is a library and they gave us new books. I study English, Amharic, maths, science and geography.

I get home from school at 4.30pm and then help at home until 6.00pm. I help my mother by washing the dishes, cooking, cleaning the house and making the beds. My foster mother bakes injera to sell in the neighbourhood.

On Sundays I go to church in the morning. After that I eat my breakfast and have a bath. Then I wash my school uniform and do household chores. I play from 5.00pm to 6.00pm and I study in the evenings before going to bed.

My foster mother cares for me. She teaches me how to do things and buys me shoes, clothes and educational materials. I think that parents should support their children until they finish their education, get a job and start living independently. I will support my foster mother after I complete my education.

I think I will have a better life than my mother because if I finish my education and get a job I will live a better life. My mother studied up to grade 7. I want to finish at grade 12 and go to university. I would like to be a doctor in the future.

Key word

Injera is a type of flat bread.
Welcome to my life

My name is Hadush (Haa-doo-sh) and I am 13 years old. I live with my father, stepmother and older siblings. We live in a village in a rural area in a northern part of Ethiopia called Tigray. My mother died when I was small and my father married again six years ago.

I don’t go to school but my sisters do. I look after the cattle instead. From time to time I go to a traditional school at the house of a teacher who is a priest. I like this school. I plan to start regular school next year.

Our home is in a compound. Inside there are three buildings – the hidmo, seqela and the adarash. The hidmo (which means ‘home’) is a small room made of stone. The floor is made of earth, and its walls are rough. The seqela is a cattle pen. The adarash is a sleeping room with a traditional mattress on a bed made of mud. We have a lamp and a radio but no tables or chairs. We don’t have electricity but there are plans to install an electricity supply in our community in the future.

I work to support my family. I like my work and I am proud to do it. I work around ten hours a day, from 8.00am until 6.00pm. I also help my stepmother to collect firewood and fetch water.

I am happy at the moment because my older brother has returned home from the army. He arrived back from the battlefield alive and wasn’t affected by the war. I was very happy about that! My brother brought me all the things I asked him to, like a pair of shoes, a suit and some sandals. People who live well have all these things – shoes, trousers, jackets and meat like lamb and chicken.

Our most important holidays are Easter, New Year and Epiphany. We celebrate by eating chicken or lamb and buying new clothes.

I am good at everything – nothing is impossible for me.
My name is Sarada (Saa-ru-daa) and I am 12 years old. I live in a rural village in the south of the state of Telangana in India. I live with my mother, sister and brother. I have been disabled since birth. I can walk short distances but I find it difficult to stand for any length of time.

I am in the last year of upper primary school. I think education is very important. At school, I take part in a number of extra-curricular activities and I have won some prizes. My mother wasn’t educated herself and she thinks that it is very important that my brother and I go to school. I have learned many things from my mother, such as how to cook rice. The first time I tried to cook rice, I burned my fingers but now I know how to do it.

I love my family, although I argue with my brother sometimes. My father remarried and lives with my stepmother and stepbrothers and stepsisters in Mumbai. They come to visit once a year.

I don’t have many friends at school. My best friend was an older girl called Sabeena, but she was married at the age of 15. I don’t see her much any more and I miss her. I don’t think that young women should get married too early. Many girls in my village are married at 14 or 15. I think they should wait until they are 20. My stepsister in Mumbai was married at 12 and now has three children.

I used to play outside but now my mother won’t let me and I have to stay in and do chores in the house. I felt sad that I couldn’t play any more, but then I agreed for the sake of my mother. It is the same in most homes here. Once girls reach puberty, they are no longer allowed to play outside.

In the future I would like to study and go to high school. However, the high school is eight kilometres away and you have to go by bus. Travelling on the bus makes me feel dizzy and sick. Many girls in our village drop out at this stage because their parents don’t want them to travel on public transport on their own as they fear for their safety.

I would like to be a judge so that I can improve society and stop people doing wrong things and harming others. Or I would like to be a businesswoman and start a small tailoring centre or open a shop to sell goods that I have sewn. One day, I would like to own my own house and maybe get married.
Welcome to my life

My name is Salman (Sull-maan) and I am 12 years old. I live in a poor neighbourhood in the city of Hyderabad, the capital of Telangana state in India. I come from a Muslim family. I live with my mother and two younger and two older siblings. My father died of a heart attack when I was six years old. We live close to the city centre. I like where we live. The other people in our community are nice people. You can trust them.

I dropped out of school in grade 5 and I now work as a sales assistant in a shoe shop. My mother works as a servant, looking after the house of a rich person. My mother says that she can’t afford to send us to school. Life is very hard for her without my father. I miss my father too. I keep a photo of him with me.

I earn 30 rupees (about 30p) a day, most of which I give to my mother. I keep five rupees as my own spending money. Sometimes the customers give me tips because I am poor. My mother gives me a packed lunch for work every day. My friends work too, one as a street trader and one in a clothes shop.

There are three other boys working in the shoe shop. The younger one works in the afternoon and studies in the morning. I like the owner of the shop where I work because he looks after the other boys and me. He also has a good sense of humour and tells jokes.

Each day I normally spend ten hours sleeping, eight hours working and six hours playing. When I was younger we used to play in the mud. We used to eat mud and some children put mud on their heads! We also used to play marbles. But now I can only play when I come home from work. I also watch television. I like comedy programmes such as Mr Bean.

I think that I have to work hard to earn money and have good health. I have no choice but to continue to work.

I’m not sure about what I would want to do in the future. Perhaps one day I will start my own shop. Or maybe I will go back to school.

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Welcome to my life

My name is Elmer (El-mer) and I am 12 years old. I live with my older sister Eva in Lima. Lima is the capital city of Peru. I came to the city from my village earlier this year so that I could start secondary school. I miss my family but I know that I will be going home one day.

My sister Eva is 25 and has two small children. Her husband is a carpenter. I also moved to the city to help look after Eva’s children. I take care of them in the afternoons and on Saturdays when she works in a restaurant. My nephews are aged three and six. Sometimes they are naughty. They don’t do what they are told and play with the stereo.

We live next to a busy road in a densely populated part of the city. It is close to my school. Our apartment is on the second floor above a car repair shop. The living room and kitchen are spacious and we have electrical appliances: a television, a DVD player, a stereo, a fridge and a cooker.

Moving to Lima meant a big change in my life. I moved from the primary school in my village to a large secondary school in the city. I like the playground in my new school though I wish it was cleaner. I think secondary school is more difficult than primary school because there is more homework and there are more teachers.

At home in my village, I helped my parents on our farm. I took care of the animals, worked the land and picked coffee. Sometimes I got paid a small amount for this. I spent a lot of time playing with my little sister and taking care of my youngest brother.

In Lima, I like going out and playing in the park. I don’t like all the cars and noise. My village is nicer because there are more trees.

I want to complete secondary school, to go to university and become a doctor. I would like to have a wife and children but not until I am at least 25 years old. In the future I would like to travel and visit other places.
Welcome to my life

My name is Eva (Aa-va) and I am 14 years old. I live with my mother and father in a small rural village in the southern Andean highlands in Peru. I go to a school in a nearby city – it takes me 45 minutes to get there. I would like to live in the city one day.

My father became ill last year. He had a back injury and can't work any more. Since then I have had to work on the farm at weekends and during school holidays. I need to work to be able to afford clothes and the return fare for the school bus. I like to work but I don't like it when we have to work late.

Everyone in my family reads and writes but we have very few books at home. I liked primary school more than secondary because there was less work and I had more friends.

In the mornings during the week, I cook and do chores before school. I have to wash our family's clothes. I like to do this. In the last year my mother has taught me to cook much better. In the evenings, I watch television.

They teach us well at my school. There is a library, gardens and a workshop. We grow vegetables at school and I play volleyball.

There aren't enough classrooms at school but they are building new ones. Some classrooms have two study sections where some students go in the mornings and some go in the afternoons. I study in the afternoons at the moment but I would prefer to study in the mornings.

I want to learn and complete school. I think school will be useful for my future. My dream is to go to university to study nursing.
Welcome to my life

My name is Phuoc (F-ooo-c) and I am 16 years old. I live with my family in the city of Da Nang. I am in grade 11. My school is one of the largest in the city. I am very proud to go there. There was an entrance exam and I had to study hard to pass it.

It takes me 20 minutes to cycle to school each day. I have an older sister who is in her final year of studying architecture. I try to study as much as I can. I am specialising in English, literature and maths. I also take part in some extra-curricular activities such as karate, and I go to Boy Scouts on Sundays.

In my free time, I help my parents to look after their store. I also help my mother to mop the floor and sometimes to cook. In the Boy Scouts I learned how to cook, go to the market and find wood. Sometimes I go on outings and picnics with my class. As well as studying, I also like to read books and listen to music. Sometimes I watch television or read newspapers. I like horror and action movies the most. When I watch television, I usually watch the Science Channel though I also watch cartoons once in a while for fun.

Sometimes I go back to visit my mother’s hometown in the countryside. I like the countryside. Life is relaxing there and more comfortable. I think I prefer the city, though. It’s easier to work in the city and the quality of life is higher.

I want to graduate from high school and get accepted into a university. My dream is to obtain a Master’s degree in the future or maybe even a PhD. I would like to work in the tourism industry or in foreign relations. I want to try hard and study overseas, maybe in the UK or Australia. Even if I go away to study I would like to return to Da Nang one day.
My name is H’Mai (H-My) and I am 13 years old. I live with my family in a poor rural area in Phu Yen province, Viet Nam. I am the second oldest of four children. We are from the H’Roi ethnic minority group.

I had to drop out of regular school in grade 6 because my parents didn’t have enough money to pay the fees. Although primary education is free in Viet Nam, there are a number of additional fees. Many children here drop out of secondary school because their parents can’t afford the school fees or other expenses, or because they live too far away from school and don’t have any form of transport, or because they have to work in the fields and so fall behind with their school work.

We live in a small house with two rooms: a living room and a bedroom. There is another traditional building behind the house, with a kitchen and a bedroom, where we spend most of our time. In front of our house there is a well. We don’t have a table or chairs and there isn’t any electricity in our house. There is an electricity supply in our village but we can’t afford the connection. I dream of having electricity at home one day.

I work on the family farm during the day and go to night school from 7.00pm to 9.00pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. I am now in grade 9. On the farm I help herd the cows and cut grass for them to eat. We own about one hectare of land and we grow rice, beans, cassava and wheat.

When I am not working or studying I look after my younger siblings, including my younger brother who is still a baby. I also help my mother with the housework. I do the laundry and cook. I spend some free time with my cousin, who lives next door to us.

Our family are generally healthy, which is a good thing as the nearest clinic is five kilometres away and the closest hospital is nine kilometres away. The road to the clinic and the hospital isn’t very good so it can be difficult to get there. Children under the age of six get free treatment at the clinic and my mother takes my younger brother and sister there for regular check-ups. There are private doctors in the area but I don’t know many people who use them. We also sometimes use traditional medicines and doctors. There are two traditional healers in our village. We don’t have to pay the healers anything – we just give them chicken or pork.