

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP: ASSEMBLY IDEAS

Introduction

Education for global citizenship supports young people of all ages to explore and question the world around them. It promotes critical thinking, advocates social justice, and encourages learners to apply their learning to real-world issues.

The following assembly ideas¹ get learners aged 5-11 thinking about justice, equity, and sustainability. Topics include reducing waste, co-operation, our links with others across the world, diversity, and local and global news. There is also an assembly calendar to help you keep up to date with topical issues.

See Oxfam's *Global Citizenship Activity Ideas* for creative suggestions to engage young learners in the classroom.

- 3-5 years

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/global-citizenship-in-the-whole-school/early-years

- 5-7 years

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/global-citizenship-in-the-whole-school/key-stage-one

- 7-11 years

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/global-citizenship-in-the-whole-school/key-stage-two

Oxfam's *Curriculum for Global Citizenship* provides a useful outline for progression across the key elements for developing active and responsible global citizenship, from early years through to the 16-19 age range. For further details, see our *Education for Global Citizenship* guide:

www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/education-for-global-citizenship-a-guide-for-schools

Assembly idea 1

Acting it out

Aim

- *To encourage learners to think about rights and responsibilities in the way they treat, and are treated by, others.*

What to do

- Ask learners to play out several scenarios showing different kinds of behaviour.
 - *First scenario*

A new child in school gets lost taking the register to the office and asks for help from two other children. One is unkind and doesn't help the newcomer, the other is kind and helps.

¹ This content (including the accompanying activity and resource sheets) was first published by Oxfam in 2007.



- *Second scenario*

It is playtime and some friends are playing together. Another child comes up, wanting to join in. Some of the original group say they can't play, others say that they can.

- *Third scenario*

At lunchtime, a child takes an apple from another child's lunchbox. This child asks for it back: one person supports them and another person backs the child who took the apple.

- Just as each scenario is being completed, "freeze frame" the scene and ask the audience what they think each person in role feels like inside. Discuss what the "victim" in each scenario has learned from the behaviour of the others. Draw out that we all have rights (such as to be treated kindly by others and to be included) as well as responsibilities for making sure that everyone can have these rights.

Assembly idea 2

Links across the globe

Aim

- To give learners a sense of the wider world, and highlight links and connections between different places and between our lives and the lives of others.

What to do

- You will need:
 - An enlarged paper copy of a world map (or alternatively displayed on an interactive whiteboard)
 - A selection of photographs of children in different countries around the world.
- Ask learners what they can see in each photograph that they recognise (and which therefore connects them to the person in the picture). For example, it could be that the person is wearing a necklace, is on a bicycle, or is playing. There will always be a connection if you look hard enough!
- With help from learners, locate where each of the photographs was taken on a world map. Ask learners to describe any other connections they may have with these countries. For instance, they may have visited one of the countries, or have family or friends living there. Ask if anyone knows anything about any of the countries, such as the capital city, someone famous living there, or a language spoken there.
- As a follow-up, in class, record information on sticky notes to add to one big world map showing the world links and connections from across the school.

Assembly idea 3

What's my job?

Aim

- To challenge stereotyped ideas and offer an alternative view.



What to do

- Invite one or two visitors who have unusual jobs into the school. Introduce the visitors by name, and allow three guesses from the learners as to what job each person does. Then encourage learners to ask the visitors questions about their job, to which they can only answer “Yes” or “No”. After a period of questions, or if the correct job is guessed, ask the speakers to describe their work.
- Classroom follow-up could focus on the difference between the initial guesses and the actual job each person did. Discuss why learners’ initial ideas might have been suggested and the dangers of stereotyping.

Assembly idea 4

Sustainable lifestyles - reducing waste

Aim

- To encourage learners to think about their own lifestyle in our consumer society, and to reflect on how we can live in a more sustainable and less wasteful way.

What to do

- Take a selection of ordinary household “rubbish” (suitably washed!) into assembly.
- Hold up and discuss each item in turn, for example, an unwanted shirt, an apple core, a plastic bag, some junk mail, an empty tin and a plastic yoghurt pot.
- Display headings such as “*Recycle*”, “*Reuse*”, “*Refuse*”, “*Compost*”, “*Give to charity*”. Hold each item up and ask learners what could be done with it. If “reuse” is suggested, ask learners to suggest what new life the item might have.
- Other ideas include:
 - Historical investigation. What rubbish would have been recognised by people 100 years ago?
 - Looking at examples of packaging. What is necessary and unnecessary? What is environmentally sound and unsound? What can we do about it?
 - Comparing relative amounts and types of rubbish from households here and in other countries.

Assembly idea 5

Co-operation!

Note: The poster “The Two Mules” from the Quakers in Britain Peace Education Programme provided the idea for this activity (www.quaker.org.uk/our-work/peace/peace-education).

Aim

- To encourage learners to think about how difficulties can be resolved through compromise and co-operation.

What to do

- Put a PE hoop on the floor, and ask two children to stand in it, facing in opposite directions. Put one apple on each side of the hoop, just out of reach. Ask the children inside the hoop to hold hands, pull in opposite directions and try to reach their apple. Explain to them that they must not pull each other over!
- Then ask other learners to suggest why this is not a good idea, and how the children in the hoop could each reach their apples in a more co-operative way. The most obvious way is for the children to move together to pick up the apple first from one side and then from the other.

Assembly idea 6

Local and global news

Aim

- A regular assembly slot for local and global news provides an opportunity to present important issues to learners in a clear way, and allows updates of ongoing issues. It also enables learners to be involved by contributing relevant newspaper or Internet articles for inclusion.

What to do

- Topics for such news assemblies will obviously depend on what happens, but they might include the following:
- **A local issue which has caused disagreement**
 - For example, a new bypass, a new shopping development, the housing of asylum seekers locally, or the arrival of a community of travellers.
 - Outline the arguments that have been given for and against. Discuss these in terms of which are facts and which are opinions. Ensure that there is a balance of views and that prejudices are not fuelled.
 - Ask learners what they think, why they think this, and whether these views are fact or opinion.
 - This could be followed up in class by asking some learners to role-play a dispute. Invite the rest of the class to discuss each situation and suggest possible solutions.
- **A local or national injustice to people, animals or property**
 - For example, damage to the school or local area, hurtful graffiti, cruelty to animals, a mugging incident, or even a murder.
 - Explain the circumstances to learners and encourage them to think of ways in which such injustices can be prevented in the future.
- **A current world crisis such as a war or natural disaster**
 - Explain the reasons for different situations, and focus on ways for learners to do something positive in response.
 - Encourage learners to find out more about the issues. Oxfam's *Dealing with Disasters* resource explores why disasters happen and what can be done to help.
www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/dealing-with-disasters



- Support learners to research the role of aid agencies and other bodies in relief work. Oxfam's *Message in a Book* activity helps learners understand how Oxfam works with partners to end poverty. www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/message-in-a-book
- **An annual or regular event**
 - For example, the Nobel Peace Prize awards or the publication of an influential report like UNICEF's *The State of the World's Children*. This report contains statistics on health and poverty worldwide. As with the last suggestion, it is important to provide background information and context to such work.

Assembly idea 7

A global citizenship assembly calendar

- See the *Global citizenship assembly calendar* (Resource sheet 1) for some ideas for raising awareness of specific days related to global citizenship throughout the year. We hope that our suggestions will give you a starting point to develop ideas to suit your own educational context.
- We have intentionally not included religious festivals and saint's days because there is a wealth of information available elsewhere already. There are also other important national days that could be recognised, such as that in Scotland on 25 January to celebrate the life of the poet Robert Burns.
- Learning linked to events in this calendar could either be confined to assembly time, or extended for the entire day, with activities to reflect the theme. Some ideas for exploring these themes are provided in the calendar. Here are some more suggestions:
 - Use the assembly or day to concentrate on exploring one or more people, events or issues that illustrate the focus of the day.
 - Draw on the school community for individuals who could give advice and enrich the assembly or day, for example, people giving testimonies, a storyteller or performer, a local expert such as a Development Education Centre worker or charity volunteer.
 - Use an extended assembly or a day to run a simulation game, or have a quiz or debate. For more learning resources from Oxfam, see: www.oxfam.org.uk/education
 - Another idea is to roll the days into a Global Citizenship Week with events going on for all or part of each day. You could take one theme of Global Citizenship each day, such as "social justice and equity", or "sustainable development". Alternatively, concentrate on one topic within a theme; for example, for social justice and equity, concentrate on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, focusing on a different "right" each day for a week. Another possibility would be to profile five people who worked for social justice and equity.

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Global Citizenship Assembly Calendar

Resource sheet 1a

Assembly date	Assembly topic	Background information and suggestions
4 January	Ogoni Day	International Day to celebrate the Ogoni people of West Africa. Ogoni leader and peaceful activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and others were executed in 1996 for their beliefs and actions in defending the Ogoni culture, land and environment.
Third Monday of January	Martin Luther King Day	Focus on King's "I have a dream" speech and discuss learners' ideas about what they want the future to hold.
27 January	Holocaust Memorial Day	Use a children's book exploring diversity (or for older learners, the diary of Anne Frank) as an introduction to the issues. Discuss the reasons for, and consequences of xenophobia.
20 February	World Day of Social Justice	Focus on people who have worked for equality in their lifetimes, for example, Mahatma Gandhi, Olaudah Equiano, Aung San Suu Kyi, the Dalai Lama, Mother Theresa and Nelson Mandela.
Last week in February/first week in March	Fairtrade Fortnight	Find out about activities taking part in your local area, or organise an event in your school or community. Raise awareness of food injustice issues and the need to ensure a fairer deal for small-scale farmers and producers.
Early March	World Book Day	Share stories and poems from different traditions. Engage a storyteller or author, especially one who uses a range of languages, dialects, or accents.
8 March	International Women's Day	Focus on the life of someone who has promoted respect and equality for women, for example, Emmeline Pankhurst, Mary Seacole or Mary Robinson. Alternatively, invite a local businesswoman or a female community activist into school to speak about her work.

Second week in March every two years	Red Nose Day	Explore the reasons for the situations for which money is being raised. Share examples of positive and negative media coverage linked to “charity”. Support learners to find out more about the issues.
Second Monday in March	Commonwealth Day	Organise a world knowledge quiz about an aspect of the Commonwealth, for example, focus on a country, or on famous people or places of the Commonwealth. Tell learners in advance, so that those who wish to can do some research in preparation.
5 June	World Environment Day	Investigate and explore ideas for taking action on a local or global environmental issue.
Week around 20 June (World Refugee Day)	Refugee Week	Focus on the difficult situation many refugees are in when they are forced to leave their homes quickly, or investigate the contribution made to our society by refugees. Invite a refugee speaker into school to talk with learners or read a testimony from a refugee or asylum seeker.
9 August	Indigenous Day of the World’s Indigenous People	Discuss what can be learnt from the wisdom and traditions of indigenous people, and raise awareness of the discrimination and loss of rights they often face.
21 September	International Day of Peace	Raise awareness of the impacts of conflict around the world. Consider why we might fall out with family and friends, and what we can do to resolve conflict in our own lives.
October	Black History Month	Celebrate Black History. Find out about and take part in any local initiatives. There are many influential black people in history, for example, Cleopatra, Noor-un nisa Inayat Khan, Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.
16 October	World Food Day	This could introduce different facets of food such as: the variety of food we eat, where it comes from, the pros and cons of local and global food production, healthy eating, global supply chains and whether the people who produce our food get a fair deal.
Late October	One World Week	Contact One World Week to find out more about this week of educational activities and celebration of world issues following an annual theme.

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11 November	Remembrance Day	Discuss the significance of red and white (for peace) poppies. Read the work of a war poet. Investigate the contributions of black and Asian communities to the war effort. Think about the many conflicts happening in the world today and remember the people affected by them.
19 November	World Toilet Day	Explore issues related to a lack of access to toilets and handwashing facilities.
20 November	Universal Children's Day	Base the assembly on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
1 December	World AIDS Day	Challenge stereotypes and raise awareness of the disease, its treatment and prevention.
10 December	Human Rights Day	Find out about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Discuss what we all need to be doing well in life.