

WE ALL HAVE RIGHTS!

Lesson plan on:

Children's rights.

Adaptation tips to suit different contexts and realities:



- You can discuss children's rights in general, and children's rights violations in other parts of the world with older children because they can think more easily in abstract terms than younger ones. With younger children, it is better to provide examples that are relevant to your community.
- If you are working with a large group of children, you can substitute the pair work in the **Start** activity for small-group work.

Learning objectives:



By the end of this lesson, the children should be able to:

- Recognize that every child has rights.
- Identify some children's rights.
- Understand that some children do not enjoy the same rights.
- Embrace actions and behaviours which reflect commitment towards the values promoted by the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

How to use this lesson plan:



The lesson plan is divided in three parts: **Start**, **Learn** and **Reflect**. There are also **Guidance** boxes to help you deepen your knowledge of the specified topics. In addition, there are **Family** activity and **Extension** activity boxes that suggest optional activities and ways of further exploring the topics of the lesson.

Lesson overview:



Children need special care and protection because they are more vulnerable than adults to exploitation and abuse.

The United Nations has developed a rights' framework that addresses and protects children to ensure that adults and Governments support them to live safe, healthy, happy and full lives. Upholding children's rights ultimately contributes to create an inclusive, just and peaceful society: teaching children about these rights is a stepping stone towards these goals.

In this lesson, children will learn about their rights and why they have them. They will also learn why these rights should be appreciated and to recognize that sometimes they can be undermined or violated.

At the end of the lesson, the children will plan activities to support the implementation of children's rights in their classroom, school and community.

Key question:

What are children's rights and how can defend the values they represent?

Age:

9 -12

Values:



Skills:



Time:



Preparation and materials:

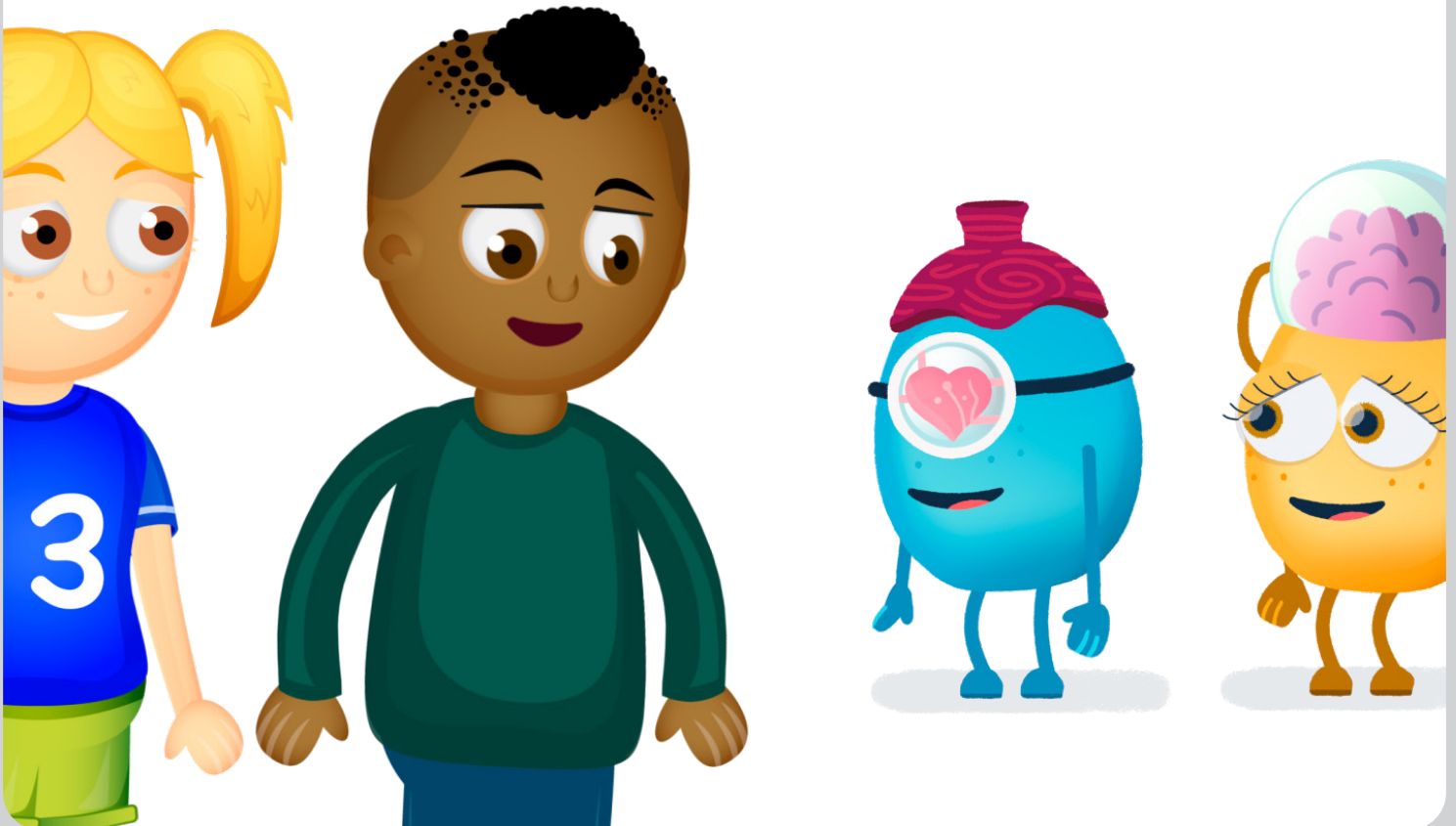
- If possible, one copy per child of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in child-friendly language: <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf> If not, make a large copy and hang it on the wall.
- Old newspapers and magazines.
- 5 scissors.
- 5 bottles of glue.
- 6 flipchart or poster papers.
- 5 markers pens.
- 1 ball.
- If possible, The Zorbs [video](#) *Lucky to Learn* or the corresponding [comic book](#), both available on the GRACE website

In addition, check out the [colouring book](#) and [children's book](#), both available on the GRACE website.

Start



1. On a flipchart, write the heading **Children's Rights**. Explain to the children that you are going to talk about children's rights and why they need these rights to grow up **happy, healthy and safe**. Also, explain that you will explore how these rights contribute to create an inclusive, just and peaceful community.
2. Ask the children to individually reflect on the following:
"What are your rights?"
3. Invite the children to share their ideas with the person sitting to their right.
4. After a few minutes, ask each pair to share their ideas with the class.
5. Note their answers on a flipchart and try not to correct them. Let the children identify possible mistakes by starting a dialogue. For example, ask "Who has a different idea? What makes you think that?" Keep the flipchart at hand for the **Learn 1** and **Learn 2** activities.
6. After everyone has had the chance to speak, ask the children:
"Why do we have special rights for children? Is this important? Why is it important?"
"How do children's rights contribute to create inclusive, just and peaceful communities?"
7. If necessary, emphasize that everyone needs rights to make sure that we are always treated fairly and can reach our full potential. Treating children fairly, addressing their needs, listening to their voices, tackling any injustice they might be exposed towards, helps construct inclusive, just, and peaceful communities. Explain that children (everyone aged between 0 and 18) need special rights because they are more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, and that it is important to make sure that adults and Governments support them in living happy, healthy, safe and full lives.



Start



Guidance box: how to create a human rights-based classroom environment

Children learn from the example set by adults, especially trusted adults like teachers. Therefore, it is important to build a classroom environment that is rights-based and encourages respect, sharing, participation and cooperation. This will help the children learn that human rights are a key part of everyday life.

The following is general advice on how to create a human rights-based classroom environment. For more detailed information, check out the resources listed below.

1. Use a broad, relevant and inclusive curriculum

- Ensure a bias-free learning experience (e.g., no gender, ability or ethnicity bias).
- Use a broad-based curriculum that combines literacy, math, science, etc. with play.
- Use teaching that is relevant to the children's interests and needs.
- Use bilingual or multilingual education to help children who may not fully understand the main teaching language.

2. Use rights-based learning and assessment

- Use a child-friendly approach to teaching. Use participatory and inclusive teaching methods (e.g., avoid rote learning) that take into account the uniqueness of each child.
- Ensure the active participation of family and community members because learning does not stop at the school doors.
- Use assessment strategies that take into account a child's uniqueness and are designed to promote self-esteem (a portfolio approach instead of standardized tests).

3. Create a child-friendly, safe and healthy physical environment

- Introduce minimum health and safety standards in education, including health and safety management and the teaching of health and safety in the curriculum.
- Create a physical learning space that is designed with children in mind. For example, create a space that is free from hazards and is inclusive (one in which everyone can move around easily, including children with impaired vision or who use a wheelchair), and in which materials are placed in a way that children can access them easily.

4. Create a child-friendly, safe and healthy emotional environment

- Create an environment that is caring, respectful and friendly, and in which progress and learning are rewarded.
- Promote cooperation rather than competition.
- Generate supportive and open communication.
- Prevent any kind of physical and emotional violence (e.g., bullying or harassment).
- Avoid bias (e.g., gender, ability or ethnicity bias) in the classroom at all times.

Resources:

• World Health Organization Information Series on School Health, *Creating an environment for emotional and social well-being: an important responsibility of a health-promoting and child-friendly school*

<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/42819>

• United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), *Child Rights Education Toolkit: Rooting Child Rights in Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Schools*, www.unicef.org/crc/files/UNICEF_CRE_Toolkit_FINAL_web_version170414.pdf

• United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), *Manual for Child Friendly Schools*, www.unicef.org/publications/files/Child-Friendly_Schools_Manual_EN_040809.pdf

Learn 1

**Guidance box: Learn 1 and 2**

The **Learn** part of this activity is divided into two parts: **Learn 1** focuses on identifying children's rights and in **Learn 2**, the children talk about violations of these rights.

It is recommended that you complete **Learn 1** before moving to **Learn 2**. However, you can choose how much time you spend on each activity. You can complete the lesson plan over more than one day.



Note: If it is possible to watch The Zorbs [video](#) *Lucky to Learn* or read the corresponding [comic book](#) with the children, you should follow all the steps below. If it is not feasible, skip step 6.

1. Place the old newspapers and magazines on a table in the middle of the classroom.
2. Invite the children to form five groups and provide each group with glue, a pair of scissors and flipchart paper.
3. Explain that each group should make a poster that depicts two children's rights using images from the newspapers and magazines. Tell them that they can be creative and turn their posters into comic strips, or that they can just choose a few images that they think could correspond to the rights that they have in mind. You can help them choose the rights that they want to focus on by reminding them of the rights that they came up with during the **Start** activity.
4. Give the groups 20 minutes to make their posters. When this time is up, invite each group to present what they have created and invite the rest of the class to guess which children's rights are depicted on the poster.

Learn 2



5. Invite the children to look at the rights that they have noted in the **Start** and **Learn 1** activities. Start a discussion about violations of children's rights by using the following question:
"Do you know any children's rights that are frequently violated around you?"

Guidance box: violations of children's rights

The children might struggle to identify violations of rights, or they might list things that they find unfair but are not violations of rights.

It is important to remind them that children's rights are things that make sure that they receive the special care and protection they need to grow up healthy and happy.

Violations of children's rights happen when children's needs are not met. Reflect together on what needs are and distinguish between needs and wants.

If necessary, give examples of violations (e.g., children forced to abandon school or work in unhealthy conditions). Invite the children to think about which needs are being neglected in these cases.



Learn 2



6. Invite the children to watch The Zorbs [video](#) *Lucky to Learn* or distribute the corresponding [comic book](#). After watching the video or reading the comic book, use the following questions to start a discussion.
 - “What do you think the story is about?”
 - “What is the story trying to teach us?”
 - “Why does Intella think that Lilly and Kofi should feel lucky that they get to go to school?”
 - “Why couldn’t Mundo and Anita go to school anymore?”
 - “Do you think it is important that all children have the opportunity to go to school and play? Why?”
 - “What do you think you would have done if you were Intella?”
7. Ask the children to form a circle and give them a ball. Explain that they have to throw the ball gently to each other and that every time someone catches the ball, they have to give one possible consequence of a violation of children’s rights that you provide. Start with: children are forced to abandon school.
8. After a while, provide another example of a violation of children’s rights and invite the children to continue throwing the ball and giving consequences. Feel free to use an example that the children came up with in step 5, or use one of the following:
 - Children are forced to work in harmful conditions and are not paid
 - Children are taken away from their parents
9. Give each child a child-friendly copy of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and ask them to read two articles out loud. If you don’t have copies for each child, read from the copy on the wall.
10. Together, identify the rights that were not listed in the [Start](#) activity. Add these rights to the flipchart. Display the finalized flipchart in the classroom.

Guidance box: contextualization and age-appropriateness

It is important to keep the lessons as relevant as possible to the children’s lives, in particular when teaching younger age groups.

The examples of rights violations can be adapted and contextualized so that they correspond better with what the children already know or are aware of. For example, if in your community the exploitation of children for street begging is a common occurrence, you can use this as an example.

When you are teaching older children, you can introduce examples of violations of children’s rights that happen in other parts of the world. Such examples can also be given to younger children later in the lesson or in a subsequent lesson. These examples give the children a broader view of what children experience in different cultures and countries.



Reflect



Guidance box: allocating time for the Reflect activity

Depending on the age and interests of the children and the local context, the **Reflect** activity can promote a very simple action.

For example, the children can focus on the “right to give your opinion” (article 12) and agree to always be respectful of other people’s opinions, including when they disagree with them.

The **Reflect** activity can also be something more challenging. For example, it can focus on “special education and care for children with disabilities” (article 23) and involve a campaign project addressed to the head teacher and the community.

Therefore, the time needed for the **Reflect** activity can vary. It can be completed over more than one day. For suggestions on how you can do this, see the **Extension** activity.



1. Invite the children to identify an action that they want to take in the classroom, school or community to help promote children’s rights. Invite them to choose a children’s right that they feel is not consistently implemented in their school or community.
2. Discuss possible strategies for achieving change and improving the implementation of rights in the classroom, school or community.

Family activity

Invite the children to ask their parents the following question:

“How was your life as a child different from mine today? What about the lives of your parents and grandparents?”

Invite the children to discuss with their parents the children’s rights that were less protected compared with today and how the protection of children’s rights has changed. Invite them to ask their parents to share anecdotes from their lives or parents’ lives that show how children’s rights have changed.

If possible, in a subsequent lesson, invite the children to report on anecdotes that they have heard from their parents and what they have learned about children’s rights.



Reflect

**Extension activity: taking action to support and promote children's rights**

Why not use the **Reflect** activity as a longer class project? You can think about actions to support and promote children's rights locally, nationally, regionally and internationally.

Invite children to form small groups. In their groups, ask the children to identify a right that they feel particularly passionate about and that they want to support.

Invite each group to present the right that they have chosen and explain why they chose it. Make a list of the choices on a flipchart and let the class vote on which one they want to focus on together.

After the class has chosen a right, agree on possible strategies to promote it. Let the children think big:

- You can work on an awareness-raising campaign.
- You can draft a shared set of rules for a children's rights-based school to present to the head teacher.
- You can try to raise money to donate to a charity that supports the right that you have picked.

As you approach the topic, it is essential that you ensure that the process is child-centred and participatory. It should not be about the rights that you want to focus on, but about the rights that the children perceive as the most important. Let them make their choices independently while you work as a guide and ensure that everyone is participating equally and that everything happens in a safe way.

