

# 1 We are all born free

## Introduction

This unit supports learners to begin thinking about human rights and what their own rights are. What do they think should be rights for everyone?



Key Stage: 2

Time: 60 mins

Learning Style: teacher-led  
(+ group learning)

## Why should we think about this ?

Human rights have been at the core of creating a peaceful and co-operative global community since the end of the second world war. They have become a mainstay of international and national politics and understanding and have been made especially relevant to children following the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1989. In keeping with this all learners have the right to understand and explore their rights as children, but also more widely as humans. This unit provides them with an opportunity to consider human rights and what they mean for us all.

## When should we think about this ?

There are many different ways in which human rights could be introduced to learners. It could be in connection with topical issues in the news - seeking an opportunity to explore an issue from this perspective - but could equally be in more mainstream areas such as Geography, History, Citizenship, PSHE etc.

As a moral and cultural issue, discussion of human rights also fits well with the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural) requirements expected of schools since January 2012.

## Learning Activities

### What do I think about... HUMAN RIGHTS ?

It might be useful to explain the word 'rights' or the phrase 'human rights' and give example sentence starters such as "We should all have the right to..." or "I have the right..." without finishing the sentences, and set children the task of coming up with a few ideas for sentences, or rights.

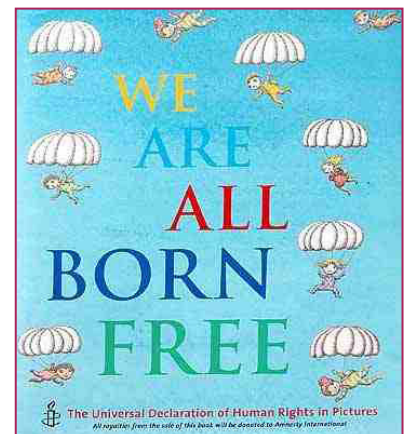
These could then be pinned up somewhere in the room, to refer back to.

### How can I develop my thinking ?

The children's book, *We are all born free*, produced by Amnesty International in collaboration with leading children's illustrators, shows 'The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures', and is a creative way of thinking and learning about human rights depicting humans and animals. It illustrates the 30 rights in the Declaration and helps learners to think about what it means to live with others, and to develop respect for each others' rights. The following activities have been developed for use with this book as a stimulus.

1. Put learners into pairs, and give each pair a colour photocopy of one double page spread of the book. (An alternative would be to buy a class set of 15 books).
2. Each pair are going to work on their specific human right and present it to the rest of the class. Ask the pair to discuss the human right shown on their page and to think about its meaning.
  - How does the picture link to the human right that is shown?
  - Does the picture show people in a positive way, where everyone's rights are respected, or in a negative way, showing people not protected by their rights?

Each pair should prepare to present their picture/right to the class, with the aim that everyone understands the rights that are described, and is able to see an example of each right either being protected or being taken away.



As the teacher you may need to aid discussion in places. **Please be aware** of sensitive issues, for example the image for torture is far more real and graphic than some of the others - the pair with that image may need to be chosen carefully and offered extra support.

You may like to review the **Time 2 Think** CPD materials on **Creating a Safe Space** and **Controversial Classrooms** before using this activity.

## What do I think now ?

At this stage it might be useful and interesting to return to the rights that were suggested by the class at the beginning of the unit. How do their ideas compare with the rights in the book that they have been using as a stimulus?

**Ask the question:** *How do human rights affect the way people live together?*

Give pairs 2 minutes to discuss this together, before contributing to a class discussion. Try and tease their responses into a broader discussion by inviting other learners to build upon or counter the views of others in a supportive and constructive manner. You may need to use prompts such as

*“does anyone have anything to say in response to that?”* or  
*“does anyone hold a different opinion to ....”*

## Why do I think this ?

This question deepens the critical literacy skills of learners. Where learners are able to trace the origins of their thoughts and feelings (family, experience, peers, media etc) they can become confident to challenge their own thoughts and engage with the ideas and opinions of others.

This is also the most challenging part of the process and teachers/facilitators will need to decide whether to include this stage when working with younger or less able learners. We feel it remains vital for teachers/facilitators to be aware of and reflect on this stage for themselves as it may help to deal with responses and reactions from learners, and identify future learning needs.

If you feel confident to explore your learners' thoughts and feelings in greater depth you could gently encourage learners to think about the following questions/issues in relation to this activity:

- *What has my own experience of human rights been? Have I grown up with my rights protected? Would my thinking be different if my life experience had been different?*
- *Who has been working to protect my rights? Who might I go to, to protect my rights?*

## Extension ideas

### Where can we take this thinking ?

Amnesty International have produced a teaching resource as part of their Protect the Human resources called *Right Up My Street*. It is aimed at KS3 and KS4 and designed to encourage learners to investigate and understand human rights by looking at a picture of an everyday street scene.

With careful application you could use the image together with the suggested discussions and other elements of the resource. You could adapt this for younger learners.



If you have used this activity in your classroom and have any examples you would like to share or would like to provide any comments or feedback as a teacher then we'd love to hear from you.

We want **Time 2 Think** to evolve into a community of practice to further develop ideas and organise events and opportunities, but for this we need the involvement of users such as yourself.

Send any contributions, or contact us to find out more, at [ask@lifeworldslearning.co.uk](mailto:ask@lifeworldslearning.co.uk)