

26. What are the Rights of the Child and Why are they Important?

INTRODUCTION

Ask children what they know about the Rights of the Child. Explain there are 54 articles or statements and that these are children's rights which cover all aspects of a child's life. They also explain what adults and governments must do to ensure children can enjoy their rights.

ACTIVITY

Start by asking children to think of two or three rights that they have and think every child should have. For example children may say, "Every child has a right to food; an education; toys; family".

Now show children a child-friendly version of the Rights of the Child:

<http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/uncrcchildfriendlylanguage.pdf>

They could start by highlighting the ones they have thought of themselves and then start to think about the ones that are most important.

ACTIVITY: Diamond Nine

Tell the children that they can work individually, in pairs or small teams for this activity. Present them with several statements, each printed on a square card, from the child-friendly version of the Rights of the Child (or choose nine in advance) and ask them, if not done already, to pick out their top 9 statements.

[Some key statements that could be used, e.g: Articles 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 17, 20, 22, 24, 28, 29, 30, 31, 36, 37, 39. A template for the cards can be found here: www.tes.com/teaching-resource/diamond-9-templates-11521827 You will need to have a free TES account to download resources.]

Ask the children then to think about which statements are more important than others and to arrange their nine statements in a diamond shape, with one card at the top, two in the next level, three in the next followed by two and one again. The statement at the top of the diamond is seen as the most important and the one at the bottom as the least important.

Explain that the statement at the bottom is still important and valuable. This exercise is just for them to think about what they see as most important.

Share ideas about which are the most important statements and why.

ACTIVITY

Encourage the children to design a poster showing the right they feel is most important. This could be done in a fairly literal way, for example by showing a meal to depict [Article 24: You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.](#)

Alternatively, invite children to show the statement in a more abstract way by the use of colour, pattern and mark making.

Two books that will provide inspiration are:

We Are All Born Free: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Pictures. Paperback published by Amnesty International.

For Every Child. Published by UNICEF.

CONCLUSIONS

Ask the children if they know some times when children might lose their rights. For example when children have to leave their own country due to war, they might not be able to go to school for a while.