

Lesson 3

Survey: what people around us think and know

Students undertake a short survey about human rights

Learning objectives	The students further their learning experience by interviewing adults about their attitudes to and their knowledge of human rights. They notice how differently individual human rights can be valued.
Student tasks	The students prepare a survey and practise working with it in the classroom. The survey itself should be done as homework during the following week.
Resources	Handouts, paper, pencils and pens.
Methods	Surveys in groups.

Lesson description

The class now possesses a list of human rights (this is deliberately not a complete list). It becomes evident from the list that even without knowledge of the concept of human rights, everybody knows that people have got needs and that these needs are very similar to the rights presented in the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. By learning this, the students have partly reconstructed the history of human rights, which, after all, were not randomly created in isolation, but developed out of the idea that all human beings have got basic rights that nobody can take away from them.

In the third and fourth lessons, the students should conduct a short survey. In their local community, they should try to find out what is being associated with human rights, how human rights are judged and what level of basic knowledge about human rights people have.

The students should create, conduct and evaluate a short survey, with the aim of understanding how human rights are present in their immediate surroundings. The teacher provides them with a handout on which they can note various different categories of answers: personal attitudes to human rights, knowledge of human rights, and the current situation in their country. The students should interview adults, (relatives, friends, neighbours, passers-by) and ask them the following questions:

- Do you think it is important that human rights have been established for the whole world? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Which rights need protecting the most worldwide?
- Who is responsible for doing this?
- Which rights need protecting the most in our country?
- Who is responsible for doing this?

The students should be careful not to judge whether the attitudes, opinions or knowledge expressed are correct. Rather, they should simply note down the answers.

Interview situations are not easy and it might be helpful to simulate them in the classroom. A small group of students could take on the role of the interviewers, and two students could take on the roles of unknown passers-by. Interviews with friends or relatives could also be rehearsed. It is important that students should not forget to introduce themselves and to explain the goal of the interview. When watching the interview rehearsals, the other students can give constructive feedback. In this way everybody learns.

Questions to be thought about:

- How are notes taken?
- What is the division of roles within the interview group?
- How are the results going to be presented in the next lesson?

The teacher gives the students one week in which to conduct the interviews. It is best to conduct the interviews in small groups.