

Lesson 2**At what age?****How should the law apply to young people?**

Learning objective	To examine how the law applies to young people.
Student tasks	To work out the legal ages at which young people become entitled to take part in different adult activities in their country. To consider how appropriate the current law of their country is for young people.
Resources	Three large signs labelled “A”, “B” and “C” put up on three different walls of the classroom. Copies of student handout 8.1 – one for every two students. Marker pens and a large piece of paper each for groups of 4–6.
Method	Pair and small group work and whole class discussion.

Information box

This lesson involves a lot of physical activity. If you think this is inappropriate for your students, the main exercise can be adapted so that students remain seated at their desks – for example, voting with a show of hands, or holding up cards “A”, “B” or “C”, instead of moving to different parts of the classroom.

The lesson

The teacher begins the lesson by asking the class if they think it is fair to have a law making young people go to school, when there is no law like this for adults:

- Do you think it is fair to have a law that forces young people to go to school? Why or why not?

The teacher then divides the students into pairs and gives them a questionnaire (student handout 8.1) to fill in. The questionnaire relates to the legal age at which young people become entitled to take part in different adult activities in their country.

The teacher asks for some volunteer pairs to read out one of their answers. After each answer, the teacher pauses and, if necessary, corrects the students' answer. The students then write down the correct answer on their questionnaires.

For each answer, the teacher should ask the pairs:

- What do you think? Is this age:
 - a) too low?
 - b) too high?
 - c) about right?

The teacher gives the pairs a minute to think and decide, then asks them to move to a different part of the room depending on their answer. (The teacher has already put up large signs labelled "A", "B" and "C" to show the students where to stand.)

The teacher then asks randomly chosen pairs to explain their thinking to the class and to justify their opinions. The teacher also gives other students an opportunity to question them about their decision.

To end this section of the lesson, the teacher asks:

- Do you think it is fair that the law treats young people differently from adults? Why or why not?

The teacher then divides up the class into groups of 4-6 students and gives each group marker pens and a large piece of paper. The teacher asks the groups to think of a change in the law in their country that would benefit young people. They can propose an entirely new law – for example, that every school should have a student parliament or a minimum wage for young people at work, or they can propose a change in the existing law – for example, about the law on the voting age or the age for obtaining a driving licence. Each group should prepare a presentation to the class on their chosen topic, outlining their arguments and exactly how they think their law would benefit young people. After the presentations, the class can take a vote as to which group's suggestion was the best.

As a final exercise or for homework, students should consider the steps that they, as young people, or as a school group, can take to persuade the government to accept the change(s) in the law that they are proposing.