

Unit 6 (Primary school, Class 6)

Children's rights: a work of art!

A Lesson plan

	Key questions/lesson topics	Main activity	Resources
Lesson 1	What is an art project? How can I represent children's rights by artistic means?	The pupils choose a single article from the children's rights convention to present as a work of art, and they develop their initial ideas.	Some magazines; children's rights on cards or slips of paper.
Lessons 2 - 4	How can teachers and pupils support each other? How do we deal with slow and fast workers?	The pupils carry out one or several art projects. They learn to give and to accept help in class.	Paper, colours, glue, magazines, etc.

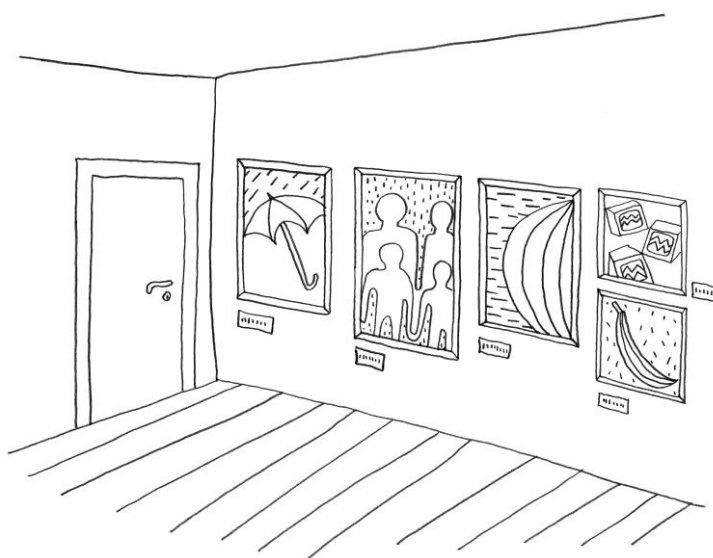
B Background and educational objectives

Children's and human rights are often related to complex political, social and personal problems. In addition, this project resumes a long-standing tradition of artistic interpretation of children's and human rights, which can be referred to and used as inspiration for this project.

Artists received the task of expressing the contents of a certain article - or part of one - creatively. In this way, many wonderful cards, calendars, books, and even films have been made.

For those pupils who have already worked on the treasure box project in Unit 3, this art project will offer a further opportunity to study children's rights from a creative angle in more depth.

Using this artistic tradition (which was already the case in Unit 3 with the treasure chest project) follows our conviction that a creative and integral approach to learning is very valuable: children should learn about a challenging theme not only cognitively, but artistically and musically. A spoken or written statement can only be expressed as an image if it has been fully understood.



We recommend planning the teaching sequences early enough to allow the pictures to be exhibited on Universal Children's Day, (20 November) in the school, town hall or another public building.

This objective of the project is both climax and motor in one, stimulating the pupils to carry out the task with the necessary care and creativity.

Note: the first lesson or even the entire project could also be carried out in collaboration with another Art teacher or Design and Technology teacher or in collaboration with a local artist. The pupils may also have suggestions that may also be integrated into the planning. It may also be possible to carry out the project together in partnership with another class.

C Key questions for reflection in children's rights classes

Experiencing children's rights	Getting to know children's rights	Implementing children's rights
Teacher		
In what way have the principles of children's rights been observed in the classroom and school community?	What do the children know now about children's rights?	Learning how to take action outside school: What have the pupils learned for their future lives?
Particularly in art classes, the pupils can understand that developing their individual means of expression is both possible and important. They find individual ways of representing the different children's rights articles through artistic means.	Pupils have broadened and deepened their knowledge and understanding about children's rights and have critically evaluated some of the key rights from the Universal Convention on the Rights of the Child.	The pupils are emotionally capable of grasping violations of children's rights and are able to judge them. They have developed this competence through their very personal approach to studying and presenting violations of children's rights.
Pupils		
How did I experience children's rights in class?	What have I learned about children's rights?	What kind of action am I able to take now?
This project has turned the classroom and the whole school building into a place that I have taken part in decorating and where I feel at home. I can express my individual personality and I am perceived as an individual.	Together with my fellow pupils, I have extensively studied children's rights. I have asked a lot of new questions, and I have realised that I need not worry if I have not yet understood all the articles on children's rights. I will continue with my studies.	I have become more aware of my artistic talents, and now I have become bolder in using and training them. They are part of my personality and sometimes they enable me to express more than I could by many words or texts. I could think of a similar children's rights arts project with my friends, sell some pictures and donate our proceeds to support projects for children.

D Procedure

Lesson 1 (duration approx. 1 ½ lessons)

The teacher introduces the class in detail to the new project. The important thing is that the children:

- possibly have another introduction to the subject of children's rights;
- understand the underlying principles and aims of the project;
- are able to estimate what the time schedule demands of them;
- have seen examples of artistic expression of children's (or human) rights.

In view of the last point, the teacher must not only show examples illustrating different human or children's rights. He or she must also demonstrate different styles, media and work processes used to support the children in finding their personal means of expression.

After the introduction, the teacher or the pupils form small groups (of around six children). (This will form the basis of the subsequent fixed groups.) Each group receives a copy of the children's rights declaration (see appendix). Task: Find three children's rights for which you would like to create a matching work of art (picture, painting, sculpture, object).

A reading and discussion phase follows. After this, a plenary discussion is held to finalise the groups who will work on the chosen children's rights (for example, on each main copy of the declaration, each group marks the rights they have chosen). Then the class compare and clarify overlaps, so that the most satisfying solution can be found for all groups.

The groups should clarify questions such as the following:

- first thoughts on the concept of the planned picture or object;
- chosen colours, material, tools;
- time schedule (note: the teacher must monitor and advise the children to ensure that their chosen project is realistic in terms of the time available);
- ideas for the planned exhibition (can also be discussed later during a plenary session).

The groups then discuss and exchange their ideas and concepts in class.

The task for the next lesson is for the groups to formulate ideas for the project, to look for inspir-

ation and information in newspapers, on the Internet and in the library, to make sketches or descriptions and to possibly begin with collecting material. Each group prepares a short presentation of their plans for next lesson, whereby the starting point is a chosen children's right, illustrated by examples.

Lesson 2 (first half)

The pupils share and comment on the ideas that they have developed since the last lesson and show each other the sketches or notes they have made. It is important for the pupils to have understood the children's right underlying their concept and they should be able to give examples in class of how these rights could be respected or violated. As such, they should be ready to clearly and plausibly inform the class of their plans: which right they have chosen to illustrate creatively, the steps they need to take to do this and at which point(s) they will need the assistance or input of the class or their teacher.

Clarification of the definitive concept for the project that will be concluded with the exhibition to be held on or around 20 November (an option would also be to assign the planning and finalisation of the project as a homework task-to be discussed in the third lesson).

Lessons 2 (second half) to 4

The pupils may use all the time in the last half of the second lesson and the following two lessons to carry out their project (depending on the type of project they have planned, homework time can also be allocated for this). Experience has shown that the pupils will be more motivated if working together rather than isolated from one another. The teacher should encourage them to modify, develop and optimise their ideas.

The teacher may support the class by bringing a collection of posters, illustrations from advertisements, diagrams, etc., cut out of newspapers and magazines, art books, websites etc. The pupils may also bring suitable documents from home. This collection of illustrations need not necessarily be related to the topic of children's rights, but is there to offer various different options for the children to express themselves.

Some tips for the exhibition:

- If an exhibition is foreseen in the school building, in the classroom or in a public building, then a particular format for displaying objects in the exhibition should be agreed upon (e.g. using the same print and format for the exhibition plaques).
- A competition could also be held before a jury panel. The jury could be put together out of pupils as well as local public figures for example a local artist or journalist.
- If the project (with or without premier) is mentioned in the local press, this can contribute greatly to the pupils' motivation.