



A life like mine

Assembly sheet 1



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Day 1 What are children's rights?

The Convention on the Rights of the Child promises that every child has the right to:

- **Survival** Water and food, housing and healthcare
- **Development** Play and education
- **Protection** Love and care, freedom from dangerous work and from fighting in wars, equal opportunities for disabled children
- **Participation** Identity – name, nationality and religion, expression of opinions

Further info: visit www.therightssite.org.uk

Think about it (to be read out)

Rights always go together with responsibilities. By knowing you have the right to a good life, you become responsible for making sure that life is as good as it can be both for yourself and for others. That's why Sibasish is a team leader in a project in Calcutta, India. He teaches people living in slums about a highly infectious disease called polio. Sibasish says, "We walk down the streets with posters. Mine says, 'Get vaccinated and lead a good life'."

"We play music and sing songs to get the message out."

Sibasish says, "Sometimes we go to people who throw us out. We don't give up. Instead we go back a day or two later when they've calmed down and tell them about polio."

All around the world, children like Sibasish are working to improve their communities. What could you do to help improve yours?



Sibasish, 13, promotes vaccination in India

At assembly What's in the box?

Objective: to introduce the concept of human rights to children by teaching them to differentiate between WANTS and NEEDS.

Preparation: gather together several different objects and place in a large box. Some of the objects are things we might NEED, others are things we might WANT.

Invite the children to come up one at a time and pick out an item at random from the box. Hold it up to the others and then discuss: is it something we WANT, or something we NEED?

Suggested objects could include:

- A can of fizzy drink
- A bottle of water
- A magazine
- A school text book
- A games console (for example, GameBoy)
- An inhaler
- A pair of shoes
- A pair of trainers
- A pair of spectacles
- A mobile phone
- A loaf of bread
- A bar of chocolate
- A radio/personal stereo
- An article of clothing
- A sheet of paper
- A pencil

Encourage the children to explain why they think any given object is one they NEED, as opposed to one they WANT.

Having debated which items are WANTS and which are NEEDS, ask children what life would be like without WANT items. What about the NEED items?

Discuss: how children's needs differ, e.g. an inhaler will be a need for some children, warm clothing for children in a cold climate, etc.

Explain the link between life's necessities and the promises of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. **For more information, visit www.therightssite.org.uk**



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Assembly sheet 2



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Day 2 **Survival**

Every child has the right to water and food, housing and healthcare

Think about it (to be read out)

This morning, after we all woke up, we washed ourselves, brushed our teeth, went to the toilet and flushed it. Some of us had a cup of tea. What do these things have in common? They all use water. We all take water for granted – we turn on our taps, and out it comes. But seven out of ten people in the world don't get their water straight from a tap. In some countries, one bucket of water is all you would have to use in a whole day.

Nou is a nine-year-old girl who lives in a village in Laos, a country near China. Two years ago, Nou's village had no water pump. To collect water, they had to go to the stream. The water wasn't safe, but it was all the villagers had. Now, Nou's village has a pump, life has improved enormously. Nou says,

“Now that there is safe water to drink, people have stopped getting sick.”

Nou and her friends often missed school because they had to collect water for their families. They had to walk up a steep hill and across a rickety bridge. It used to take Nou ten minutes to walk to the stream, but twenty minutes to walk back because she had heavy buckets of water. Nou says, “Life is better now!”



Natalie, nine, from Bedfordshire, England, uses two inhaler sprays to control her asthma

At assembly **Water chart**

Objective: to make children aware of the amount of water we use daily.

Preparation: make a simple chart and write these activities down the side.

- Washing teeth with tap running twice a day (one bucket)
- Taking a bath (nine buckets)
- Taking a shower (four buckets)
- Three visits to the toilet (three buckets)
- Washing machine (12 buckets)
- Make a pair of shoes in a factory (six buckets)

Write the following numbers on cards:

1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12

Invite the children to guess how many buckets of water each activity involves. Place the cards against the relevant activity when they have guessed the correct number. Are they surprised? Discuss the ways you might cut down on water consumption, and follow-up with a 'design a water saving poster' competition.

Every child has the right to water, as laid out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For more information, visit www.therightssite.org.uk

Think about it (to be read out)

Factories and traffic in developed countries such as the UK tend to create pollution. This can cause problems for asthma sufferers. One child in eight in the UK suffers from asthma, and many suffer from eczema, too.

Natalie lives in the UK and suffers from eczema and asthma. Eczema affects Natalie's skin, making it dry and sore in places, and the asthma affects her breathing. Natalie says,

“When I have an asthma attack, my chest feels all tight. Sometimes I cannot stop coughing.”

Natalie manages her condition with two inhaler sprays. She leads an active life, going swimming, rollerblading and doing gymnastics.



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Assembly sheet 3

Day 3 **Development**
Every child has the right to play and education

Think about it (to be read out)

You might not always like school, but you probably take it for granted as something every child does. However, many children around the world are unable to go to school. In fact, one out of every seven people around the world can't read or write.

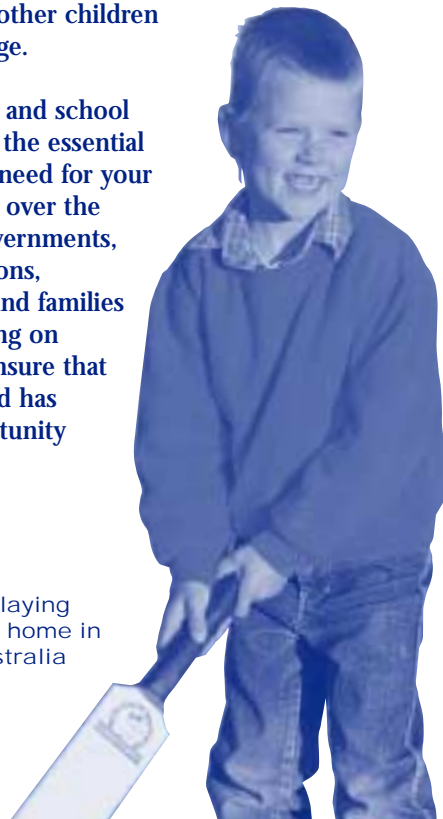
Michael, six, lives at an isolated sheep and cattle station in the South Australian outback with his sister, Rebecca, and his parents. Because he lives so far from school, Michael does his schoolwork alone and talks to his teacher over a two-way radio. Although his best friend, Naish, lives 630 km (390 miles) away, they stay in touch. Michael says,

“I talk to Naish on the school radio after lessons every day.”

Michael spends a lot of time outdoors. Twice a year, he goes to camp where he meets other children his own age.

Education and school teach you the essential skills you need for your future. All over the world, governments, organisations, charities and families are working on ways to ensure that every child has the opportunity to learn.

Michael playing cricket at home in South Australia



At assembly **name the game**

Objective: to explain why children have a right to play, and to show how playing is essential to children's development.

Ask the assembled children to raise their hands if they like literacy. Who likes maths? Who likes geography? What about art? Cover off the subjects taught in the school curriculum. You will get a few hands for everything. Then ask them, who likes playtime? Almost everybody will put their hands up.

Invite the children to think of their favourite games, at school or at home. Make a list of all the games, and have a representative of each type holding up a sample (boxed board game, action figure, football, etc).

Playing teaches you to use your imagination.

Discuss: does anyone know of games played in other countries? What games do the adults remember playing when they were young? How can games help you learn, and why are they important? What's everyone's favourite game?

Every child has the right to education and play. **For more information, visit www.therightssite.org.uk**

Class task **My dream school**

Objective: to explain the importance of education and why children have a right to education.

Ask children to imagine what their Dream School would be like. Then ask them to draw a picture explaining all their ideas and inventions that would make up their Dream School.

Ideas can be wacky, fun, practical, colourful and as imaginative as the children like. All the pictures can then be displayed at assembly and children can vote on their favourites. Discuss if any of the ideas are practical enough to be implemented in your own school.

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Assembly sheet 4



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Day 4 **Protection**

Every child has the right to love and care, freedom from dangerous work and from fighting in wars, and equal opportunities for disabled children

Think about it (to be read out)

Isa is 10 and lives in Sierra Leone in Africa. One day, soldiers came to his house and took him away. After two years, Isa was finally released, along with other children caught up in the war. He is now back at home. Isa says,

“I lost three years at school because of the fighting. I am really happy at the school I go to. I want to be a doctor.”

Civil war in Sierra Leone resulted in many deaths, and one in three people were forced to flee from their homes. War can affect everyone, not just the soldiers who get caught up in the fighting. When wars are over, it takes time to rebuild all that has been destroyed.

Isa from Sierra Leone wants to be a doctor



At assembly **care chain**

Objective: to demonstrate to children the network of people who love and care for them.

Preparation: invite a child to come and stand at the front of the assembly. Ask the child to name someone who loves or cares for her. Ask another child to step up and hold the first child's hand to represent that person. Ask the second child to choose a person who looks after them when they're ill. Ask another child to step up and represent that carer. Gradually a chain of children is built up to represent parents, grandparents, foster parents, step-parents, teachers, doctors, brothers, sisters, etc.

Invite the children to think about their own care chain. How many people does that involve?

Every child has the right to love and care according to the promises of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. **For more information, visit www.therightssite.org.uk**

Class task **SSSh! Don't say a word**

Objective: to help children think about living with a disability, and how disabled people have to be resourceful to find practical solutions.

Preparation: make two sets of cards, each with four simple requests:

- I would like to go shopping
- I want to go to the toilet
- Can you turn the TV off?
- May I go to sleep?

- Can you read me a story?
- May I have a glass of water?
- What is the time?
- Would you scratch my back?

The children work in pairs. Each child takes turns to communicate the four requests on his or her card to their partner **WITHOUT** speaking or writing any words down.

Discuss: how difficult was it to get your message across? Did you have to concentrate hard to understand your partner's request?

