



The power of the pen

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Using a current Amnesty International case study, students aged 11-14 are introduced to the power of writing for human rights. The resource can be taught over one or two lessons to develop literacy across the curriculum. Refer to the curricular links to see how it can be used across the UK.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To develop key literacy skills in reading and writing
- To identify human rights and human rights abuses
- To take action for human rights

RESOURCES

- Lesson plans 1-2
- PowerPoint presentation
- Case study
(download from www.amnesty.org.uk/powerofpen)
- *Bullet* film (download from above)
- Activity Sheet 1 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights summary version*
- Activity Sheet 2 *Bingo Card*
- Activity Sheet 3 *Guided Annotation*
- Activity Sheet 4 *Writing a Solidarity Letter*
- Activity Sheet 5 *Writing an Appeal Letter*
- Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard*
- Teacher Notes
- Curriculum links
- Academic wall planner
- Teacher cover sheet

Optional (you provide)

- Class dictionaries
- Coloured pens and pencils
- Large envelope

Amnesty International

LESSON 1

READING ABOUT RIGHTS



ABOUT THIS LESSON

This lesson introduces students to human rights and provides a live and current case study of a person or group who would benefit from their letters. Students have the opportunity to develop their reading skills and expand vocabulary.

RESOURCES

- PowerPoint slides 1-8
- Activity Sheets 1-3
- Case study
- *Bullet* film (2 minutes)
- Teacher Notes
- Different coloured pens for students
- Dictionaries

‘From the bottom of our hearts, each member of our community thanks you for the solidarity action which allows us to be alive and keep resisting.’

Members of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia



Children of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó

STARTER 15 MINUTES

Use pictures to introduce key vocabulary and concepts

- Share the learning objectives on PowerPoint slide 2.
- Show students PowerPoint slide 3 and give them one minute to write down a one-word answer to the question: what may have been taken away from this person?
- Repeat for slides 4 and 5. Refer to *Teacher Notes* for details of the images.
- List the words students have written and compare this to the vocabulary list on slide 6. Are there any words the students don't understand? Model these words in sentences (refer to *Teacher Notes* for guidance).
- Ask students to make their own vocabulary list in their exercise books. Remind them to check spellings.

Resources

- PowerPoint slides 2-6
- Optional: Class dictionaries

MAIN 40 MINUTES

STEP 1 HUMAN RIGHTS BINGO (15 minutes)

- Show PowerPoint slide 7. Define human rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Refer to *Teacher Notes* for more information on the UDHR. Allow students to add to their vocabulary list.
- Hand out a copy of Activity Sheet 1 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR) to each student to stick in their books. Explain that this document describes all the rights people should have.
- Divide the class into pairs or teams. Distribute copies of Activity Sheet 2 *Bingo Card* (also shown on PowerPoint slide 8). Explain they will now play 'Human rights' bingo by matching up the number of the UDHR Article to the corresponding pictures, until they have a 'full house'.
- After the first 'full house', discuss these rights as a class (refer to *Teacher Notes* for guidance on rights).
- Allow students to add to their vocabulary lists.

Resources

- PowerPoint slides 7-8
- Activity Sheet 1 *UDHR*
- Activity Sheet 2 *Bingo Card*

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LESSON 1

READING ABOUT RIGHTS

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• STEP 2

CASE STUDY (15 minutes)

- Download a case study: www.amnesty.org.uk/powerofpen. Distribute copies to students.
Note: All case studies will be changed regularly. They all have end dates to ensure relevance, effectiveness and safety for individuals concerned. Please don't use outdated cases.
- Ask students to complete the tasks on Activity Sheet 3 *Guided Annotation*. They will need their copies of the UDHR for reference. Students should then add to their case study and vocabulary list. It will be useful to have dictionaries available.

■ Resources

- Case study
- Activity Sheet 3 *Guided Annotation*
- Different coloured pens
- Dictionaries

• STEP 3

DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

- Feedback student answers and discuss. Refer to *Teacher Notes* for prompts to expand discussion of the case study.
- Ask students: Is there anything they could do to defend human rights at risk in the case study?
- Show short film *Bullet* (www.amnesty.org.uk/powerofpen). Refer to *Teacher Notes* for more on the film. What does the film suggest people can do to defend the rights of others?

■ Resources

- *Bullet* film (2 minutes)



PLENARY 5 MINUTES

- Tell students that they will write a letter taking action to defend the rights in the case study.

FOR HOMEWORK (eg, you are not teaching Lesson 2)

- Hand out copies of Activity Sheet 4 *Writing an Appeal Letter* or Activity Sheet 5 *Writing a Solidarity Letter*.
Note: the case study will indicate which activity sheet to use.
- Hand out Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard*.
- Students will write a letter using Activity Sheet 4 or 5 as guidance, and use the scorecard to check they use literacy features.
- Tell them you will collect the letters next lesson and post them to Amnesty International.

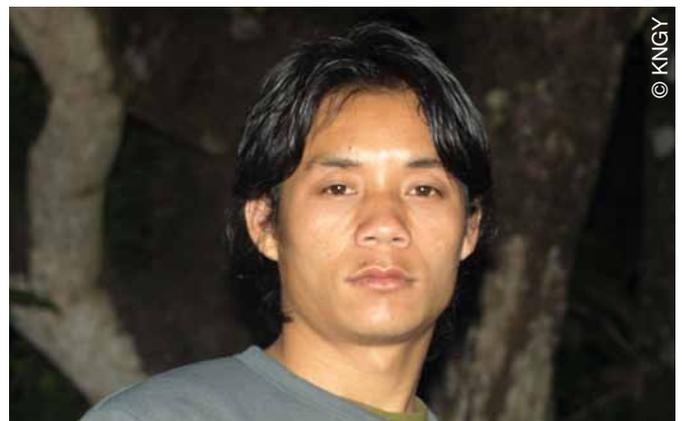
FOR WRITING THE LETTER IN THE NEXT LESSON

- Ask students to review their vocabulary list for homework and learn how to spell new words.

■ Resources

- Activity Sheet 4 *Writing a Solidarity Letter*
- Activity Sheet 5 *Writing an Appeal Letter*
- Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard*

‘Thank you all so much. I will keep working for democracy and human rights development in Burma. I hope to meet you all personally some time; I want to send my best regards to you all.’
Human rights activist Khun Kawrio’s message to Amnesty members and others who campaigned for his release, Burma, 2012



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LESSON 2

WRITING FOR RIGHTS



ABOUT THIS LESSON

Students will investigate and understand how rights apply to everyday life, draft their own letter, make use of new vocabulary, learn how to check their own work and discover the power of persuasive writing.

RESOURCES

- PowerPoint slides 9-13
- Activity Sheets 4-6
- Teacher Notes

Note: Lesson 1 Activity Sheets are used for reference in Lesson 2

STARTER 15 MINUTES

STEP 1 EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS (10 minutes)

- Review content of Lesson 1 and read through learning objectives (PowerPoint slide 9).
- Show PowerPoint slide 10 – *Right Up Your Street* illustration.
- The picture illustrates at least 30 different human rights. Ask students to use their UDHR sheet to find at least 10 of them. Refer to *Teacher Notes* for more information about the picture and alternative ways of using it to teach rights.
- Feedback answers.

- **Optional extension:** ask students to find examples of rights being denied, enjoyed or demanded. Discuss.

Note: A2 posters of the illustration can be ordered for free by emailing est@amnesty.org.uk, quoting Ref ED142 and delivery address.

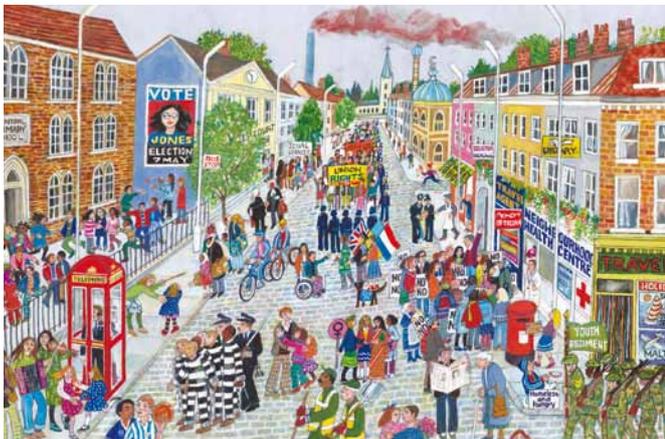
STEP 2 REVIEWING CASE STUDY (5 minutes)

- Re-read the case study from the last lesson, or use the questions on Activity Sheet 3 *Guided Annotation* as prompts.
- Which rights are being denied to the person in the case study?

Resources

- PowerPoint slide 9-10
- Activity Sheet 1 *UDHR*
- Activity Sheet 3 *Guided Annotation*
- Case study

Right Up Your Street illustration



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LESSON 2

WRITING FOR RIGHTS

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MAIN 30 MINUTES

• STEP 1

INTRODUCING LETTER WRITING (15 minutes)

- Remind students that they are going to write a letter to defend human rights.
- Show PowerPoint slide 11 and explain that in 2010 Amnesty International supporters wrote letters on behalf of Khun Kawrio. Discuss ways in which the letters may have helped him.

Note: refer to *Teacher Notes* for more information on his case and the benefits of letters.

- Show PowerPoint slide 12 revealing the outcomes in Khun's case. Then run through the Frequently Asked Questions on PowerPoint slide 13 about letter writing.
- Distribute copies of Activity Sheet 4 or 5 (the case study you have downloaded will indicate which).

Differentiation note: the letter framework is based around Level 5 literacy levels and can be modified as appropriate.

- Ask students to write the first paragraph of their letter on the case they annotated in Lesson 1. This should be done as a group where the teacher models a paragraph or as paired/individual writing.
- Hand out Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard* to each student and ask them to use it to score the model paragraph. Are there any mistakes? What would they do to improve the paragraph?

Differentiation note: scorecards are based on Level 5 literacy and can be modified as appropriate.

■ Resources

- PowerPoint slides 11-13
- Activity Sheet 4 *Writing an Appeal Letter*
- Activity Sheet 5 *Writing a Solidarity Letter*
- Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard*
- Teacher Notes

• STEP 2

WRITING IT OUT (15 minutes)

- Students should now complete their letters.
Note: it may be preferable to write letters on loose paper so they can be posted; if in books photocopy for posting, or use an ICT extension to allow word processing.
- At intervals the class can listen to examples of paragraphs from others. Keep reminding students to check their writing using the scorecard. Set up a competition to find the highest scoring group at the end of the lesson.



PLENARY 15 MINUTES

- In pairs, ask students to swap letters and use the scorecard to score their partner's letter for any errors – marking with a pencil where there should be corrections.
- Pairs swap back and any corrections are made.
- Which groups have scored highly? Feedback examples to the class.
- Ensure all students have signed their letters. Set aside any letters students do not wish to be sent. Put all the other letters in a large envelope addressed to Education Officer, Education and Student Team, Freepost RLUU-XXEY-CTEE, Amnesty International, 17-25 New Inn Yard, London EC2A 3EA.
- For discussion: How does it feel to have taken action to defend human rights? Share with the class (refer to *Teacher Notes* for discussion prompts).

Teachers: please complete the cover sheet with the school name and address, and enclose with the letters.

ICT extension: In another lesson, allow students to word process their letters.

■ Resources

- Activity Sheet 6 *Literacy Scorecard*
- Teacher cover sheet

'Your letters and cards are like bombs when they drop into the offices of ministers and government officials. When the cards and letters arrived into our barracks they were like rays of sunshine.'
Sanar Yurdatapan, former prisoner of conscience

