
LESSON 2

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE UK

Students are introduced to the Human Rights Act in the UK and use speaking, listening and writing skills to analyse and present a range of real life cases in a courtroom drama.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To be able to name rights contained within the Human Rights Act
- To be aware of how judges have to make difficult choices in human rights cases
- To use persuasive techniques and appropriate language when writing and presenting

STARTER 15 MINS

Students are introduced to the concept of human rights and the objectives of the lesson.

- Show and read through slides 2 and 3 and check everyone understands.
- Explain to students that in the UK our human rights are protected by the Human Rights Act (HRA) and they are going to find out what those rights are. Hand out Resource sheet 1: *The Human Rights Act (Young people's version)*. Show slides 4-9 and after each slide ask students to refer to the resource sheet and indicate which article the picture is referring to. (The answer will come up on the screen on the second click.)

Note: The slides just give a few examples of the rights in the HRA, the rest are on the sheet.

- Explain that the HRA requires all public bodies (schools, hospitals etc) to protect the rights in the Act. If anyone feels their rights have been abused, they can go to court where their case is assessed by a judge. The judge sometimes has to make some hard choices between the rights of different groups of people, or between the rights of one person and the safety of the public. Explain that they are going to learn more about how this happens in the main activity.

MAIN 40 MINS

Courtroom drama

Students consider real human rights cases and role play the courtroom scene. Some act as prosecution and some as defence and they must convince the rest of the class using persuasive writing and speaking techniques.

- Divide the class into six groups.
- Allocate each group a case from Worksheet 1: *Courtroom drama*.
- Explain that each group must write a script and deliver a two-minute courtroom drama to present both sides of their case. The prosecutors and defenders in each case will try and persuade the class that they are right – the class will act as a collective judge (juries are not generally used in these cases).
- Each group reads the case together and discusses the human rights relevant to everyone involved in the case.
- The group then allocates roles – narrator, prosecution lawyers and defence lawyers (you can have more than one lawyer on each side depending on how many students you have in each group).



RESOURCES



- PowerPoint presentation: *Human rights in the UK*
- Resource sheet 1: *The UK Human Rights Act (Young people's version)* (one per student)
- Worksheet 1: *Courtroom drama* (each case on a separate sheet)
- Worksheet 2: Homework/extension – *Two sides to every story* (one per student)
- Teacher's notes
- Background information for teachers on Human Rights Act

- When writing and presenting their script, the students should try and use as many persuasive techniques as possible (show slide 10). The narrator should be asked to help with the scriptwriting for the lawyers as well as writing her/his part, so she/he gets a chance to practice persuasive writing as well. If you have more time, the students could research some relevant expert opinion or statistics to bring into the case.
- The prosecutors and defenders in each case should compete to persuade the rest of the class to agree with their view on the case.
- Each group delivers their presentation. After each one, ask the class who was the most persuasive – did they agree with the prosecution or the defence? Then give your quick feedback on the presentation and explain what judgment the real judge gave in each case. (Refer to Teacher's notes.) Ask the group to come out of role and give their personal opinion on the case.

Note: Each group has 10 minutes to read the case, discuss and write script. This allows two minutes for presentation, one minute to move about and two minutes feedback for each group.

PLENARY 5 MINS

- Refer back to the learning objectives on slide 2. Without looking at their resource sheet, ask the class to name some rights in the Human Rights Act.
- Ask the class to stand at one end of the room if they think the Human Rights Act is a good thing, and the other end of the room if they think the Human Rights Act is a bad thing. Ask a few of them to justify their opinion.

EXTENSION/HOMEWORK 5 MINS

Give each of the students a copy of Worksheet 2: *Two sides to every story* and ask them to compare the media coverage of the case of the Bolivian migrant and the cat.



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