

# TEACHER NOTES



This pack introduces primary school pupils to the power of writing letters for human rights. Key literacy skills are developed in combination with global learning and taking action to defend human rights.

This resource comprises two one hour lessons (you may wish to extend Lesson 2 into two lessons to allow more time for drafting and editing).

The notes below do not describe the whole lessons but are intended for use in conjunction with the lesson plans.

## LESSON 1 READING ABOUT RIGHTS

### Starter

#### Pictures in PowerPoint slides 3 and 4

**Slide 3:** This is a photograph of a boy being bullied.

**Slide 4:** This photo of a girl child soldier was taken in El Salvador during the civil war.

#### Discussing the vocabulary list

The lesson plans and resources suggest that the class creates a word bank or word wall that they add to over the lessons. They can then use this vocabulary in their writing task.

Some students may find it useful to refer to a class dictionary to define a word. Others may find it more useful to have new vocabulary modelled to them in sentences. For example, 'every pupil in Year 6 should treat others with *dignity* and *respect*'; 'we all have the *freedom* to make up our own minds'; 'bullying can make school children feel they can't learn in *safety*.'

#### Activity Sheet 1 Picture Match

These pictures are from the book *We Are All Born Free* published by Amnesty International and available free from our website [www.amnesty.co.uk/education](http://www.amnesty.co.uk/education) You can order a free copy of the book (£4.95 shipping and handling) for your primary school at [www.amnesty.org.uk/primary](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/primary) Each illustration represents a right from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, abridged into child-friendly language. Teachers may find it useful to ask:

- Why have you matched illustrations with particular rights?
- What do the illustrations show about each right?

- Are there details that you find surprising?
- What do the colours suggest?

Talking about the pictures will help students understand what is meant by the rights described.

#### Introducing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948

After the Holocaust and the horrors of the Second World War, the newly formed United Nations came together to try to work out how to build peace. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was written. It was the first international document to state that all human beings have fundamental rights and freedoms, and it is still the most famous and important of all human rights documents in the world.

Many primary school pupils are already familiar with the idea of the children's rights described in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Teachers may wish to ask the class to consider what will happen when they become adults and they are no longer entitled to all the rights in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. After hearing their ideas, explain that children have certain special rights but that adults have rights too. The UDHR sets out the rights to which all humans are entitled throughout their lifetime.

#### Activity Sheet 2 Reading the Case Study

This is designed to guide students' reading and annotation of the case study. It is not intended to elicit long answers but to act as an aid to reading and understanding. It can be modified by teachers to differentiation for specific classes. Teachers may wish to make class dictionaries and thesauri available to help with new vocabulary.

## LESSON 2 WRITING ABOUT RIGHTS

### Starter

Activity Sheet 3 *Freedom Park* can be photocopied in black and white on A4 but we recommend that it is copied in colour. Pupils can share copies of the pictures in pairs.

### Main activity

#### PowerPoint Slide 10 Frequently Asked Questions

Amnesty International's letter writing campaigns have supported many victims of human rights abuse. In some cases, the human rights abuse has stopped after Amnesty

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members have written letters: prisoners of conscience have been released and laws have been changed.

Through experience we know that letter writing can have many benefits including giving strength and support to a person in difficult, frightening and abusive circumstances, and offering hope and comfort to their family and friends. Receiving letters can also result in people being treated better as the authorities realise there is interest in the case, and can also lead to changes in the law.

- Reassure students that if they hear nothing back (which is probable), each individual letter, added to hundreds of others, will make a difference.
- Students can follow up the case they have supported at [www.amnesty.org.uk/powerofpen](http://www.amnesty.org.uk/powerofpen)



Teachers may wish to discuss the Amnesty International candle logo and words 'It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness', which is based on a Chinese proverb.

## Activity Sheets 4 and 5

### Letter writing task

There are two types of letter task:

- writing a card of support to the person or group suffering abuse;
- writing an appeal letter to the authorities on behalf of the person or group.

For simplicity, we suggest teachers do one type of letter with the whole class, or allow students to choose. Teachers can decide as appropriate to their pupils.

### Differentiation note

To modify the task, students can write a solidarity or appeal postcard, design a creative solidarity card or write a three paragraph letter. Primary teachers may refer to the Secondary version pack to guide high attainment students or classes.

### Vocabulary list and literacy checklist

This is modifiable so teachers can differentiate according to need. The list encourages students to review and correct writing as they work. The checklist gives pointers that focus on the word, sentence and whole text level. Teachers may wish to set up a competition where students use a literacy checklist to score their letters as pairs or in a group.

### ICT extension

Teachers may wish to add an ICT extension for students to word process letters. This can encourage the review of whole texts. Word processed letters can be sent in the post or emailed to: [est@amnesty.org.uk](mailto:est@amnesty.org.uk)