







Human rights

This module gives teachers and pupils tools to reflect about the meaning of human rights

-  10-14
-  9 x 60 min.
-  board/flip chart;
-  **Cosmopolitan issues**



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Introduction

Background information and didactical perspective

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an approach that was developed by Professor Matthew Lipman, who was influenced by educational psychologists and philosophers such as Vygotsky, Piaget and Dewey as well as by the tradition of Socratic dialogue. P4C builds on higher order thinking (critical, creative and caring thinking), inquiring, reasoning, listening and dialogical skills. Children are encouraged to create their own philosophical questions. The facilitator supports children in their own thinking, reasoning and inquiring, as well as in building on each other's ideas in a dialogue. In P4C, the facilitator fosters student-led discussions on philosophical questions. The role of the facilitator is crucial to ensuring quality dialogue and progress, as well as integration within the curriculum. It is well documented that P4C has an impact on children's cognitive, personal, social and emotional development. P4C encourages children as well as young adults to think for themselves and develop dialogical skills.

Learning outcomes

Competencies

critical thinking, creative thinking, reflective skills, inquiry skills, dialogical skills

Lesson plan

Abbreviations:

A = Activity
D = Discussion
GW = Group work
IW = Individual work

HW = Homework
PW = Partnerwork
PTS = Previous Teacher's Study

PO = Pupils opinions
PP = Pupil's presentations
TP = Teacher's presentation

Lesson No 1 : Rights and obligations

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|---|---|
| Introduction (5 min.) PTS TP | What is a right? What is an obligation? Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher studies previously the leading idea <i>Rights and obligations</i> in order to have a guide to stimulate reflection in the students during the discussion raised by the exercisePrepare a circle of chairs Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>What is a right? What is an obligation?</i> to each pupil, then introduces subject asking students to answer the questions contained in M2, giving reasons for each of them | M1 Leading idea "Rights and obligations" M2 Exercise "What is a right? What is an obligation?" |
| Main section (10 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students work individually on the exercise | |
| Discussion (40 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher invites pupils to discuss the issues that they think are more relevant with their classmates, referring in particular to the last two questions of the exercise | |

Lesson No 2 : The Declaration of Human Rights

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|--|---|
| Introduction (10 min.) TP | Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a circle of chairs• Hand out a copy of the Declaration of Human Rights Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher introduces subject reading the content of exercise <i>The Declaration of Human Rights</i> and asks the pupils to try to discover which obligation or obligations are connected to each of the rights that appears in the Declaration of Human Rights | M3 Activity "The Declaration of Human Rights" |
| Discussion (40 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils confront each other and discuss about which obligation or obligations they think are connected to each of the rights that appear in the Declaration of Human Rights giving reasons for their agreement• The exercise can be also done as an activity | M3 Activity "The Declaration of Human Rights" |

Lesson No 3 : Do children have the same rights and obligations as adults?

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|--|--|
| Introduction (5 min.) TP | Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a circle of chairs• Prepare a flip chart• Hand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher writes the questions listed in exercise <i>Do children have the same rights as adults?</i> on the flip chart. Then asks students to choose one or more questions to reflect on. After choosing the questions, the teacher divides students into groups and asks them to discuss the topics arisen by the questions and to make notes. Finally, asks students to share their own conclusions with each other | M4 Exercise "Do children have the same rights and obligations as adults?" Additional material <ul style="list-style-type: none">• board/flip chart |
| Main section (15 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students work into groups discussing on the topics and making notes about them | |
| Discussion (30 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students share with each other their own conclusions | |

Lesson No 4 : Rights

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|---|--|
| Introduction (5 min.) PTS TP | Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher studies previously the leading idea <i>Rights</i> in order to have a guide to stimulate reflection in the students during the discussion raised by the exercisePrepare a flip chartHand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>Rights</i> and asks pupils to think about the questions | M5 Leading idea "Rights" M6 Exercise "Rights" Additional material <ul style="list-style-type: none">board/flip chart |
| Main section (35 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students work individually on the exercise | |
| Discussion (10 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher invites pupils to discuss their answers and share their conclusions | |

Lesson No 5 : Children rights

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|---|---|
| Introduction (5 min.) PTS TP | Exploring Children's Rights Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher studies previously the leading idea <i>Children's Rights</i> in order to have a guide to stimulate reflection in the students during the discussion raised by the exercisePrepare a circle of chairsHand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>Exploring children's rights</i> to the pupils and introduces the subject asking students to think about and answer the questions in this exercise | M7 Leading idea "Children's rights" M8 Exercise "Exploring children's rights" |
| Main section (15 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Students work individually on the exercise and answer the questions | |
| Discussion (30 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher invites pupils to discuss and reflect on the questions with their classmates | |

Lesson No 6 : Children's Rights

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|---|---|---|
| Introduction (5 min.) TP PO | Do children have rights? Imaginary Island Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher studies previously the leading idea <i>Children's Rights</i> in order to have a guide to stimulate reflection in the students during the discussion raised by the exercisePrepare a flip chartHand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher asks pupils to think about children's rights | M7 Leading idea "Children's rights" M9 Exercise "Do children have rights?" Additional material <ul style="list-style-type: none">board/flip chart |
| Main section (50 min.) PO TP D | Step 1 Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>Do children have rights?</i> . Students work individually and think whether they agree or disagree with the statements Step 2 Teacher invites pupils to discuss the statements and their reasons with their classmates Step 3 Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>Imaginary island</i> and asks pupils to write a list with three rights their island should offer Step 4 Teacher invites pupils to discuss the rights they think are important | M9 Exercise "Do children have rights?" M10 Exercise "Imaginary Island" |

Lesson No 7 : Rights of children and youngsters

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Introduction (5 min.) TP | Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a circle of chairs Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher introduces subject asking pupils to make a list of their rights and to explain which conditions are necessary in enforcing them (e.g. the right to receive an education implies the need for a family to bring you up and a school near home; the right to food implies having access to food). | M11 Exercise "Rights of children and youngsters" |
| Main section (10 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students work individually writing their own list of the rights. | |
| Discussion (40 min.) D | Step 1 In order to encourage discussion, teacher asks students the following questions: To what extent do you think the rights on your classmates' lists are respected in your particular case? To what extent do you think those rights are present at school? In the rest of the country? In the rest of the world? Step 2 After that, the teacher emphasizes the existence of other rights, (some of which appear in the exercise <i>Children rights</i>). These other rights are probably unknown to most students, and are therefore less likely to appear in spontaneous discussion. As the teacher goes through this new list, s/he could ask them the same question s/he asked about their own lists. | M12 Exercise "Children rights" |

Lesson No 8 : “Privacy”

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|---|--|---|
| Introduction (5 min.) TP | Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a flip chart• Hand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher introduces the subject by writing the quote in leading idea <i>Privacy</i> on a flip chart and asking the students to think about it | M13 Leading idea “Privacy” |
| Main section (15 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students work in pairs or groups and discuss whether they agree with the statement concerning privacy or not. They should justify their answer | |
| Discussion (35 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>Privacy</i> and asks pupils to discuss the questions with their classmates | M14 Exercise “Privacy” |

Lesson No 9 : Social pact

| Phase | Content | Media, Material |
|--|--|--|
| Introduction (5 min.) PTS TP | What would happen if...? Preparation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher studies previously the leading idea <i>Social pact</i> in order to have a guide to stimulate reflection in the students during the discussion raised by the exercise• Prepare a flip chart• Hand out a copy of each exercise to each student Execution <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher hands out a copy of exercise <i>What would happen if...</i> to each pupil, then introduces subject asking students to write a brief essay | M15 Leading idea "Social pact" M16 Exercise "What would happen if..." |
| Main section (15 min.) PO | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students work individually on the exercise | |
| Discussion (40 min.) D | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher invites pupils to discuss with classmates the issues arisen from their brief essays | |

M1 Leading idea “Rights and obligations”

Since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, there has been widespread interest in its contents being present in children’s and teenager’s education. This interest has evolved at the same rate as the reflections generated by the Declaration. Throughout the 50’s and 60’s, the main goal of education in, and for, Human Rights aimed at educating both toward individual rights (civil and political), which were called ‘first generation rights’, and toward economic, social and cultural rights (the so-called ‘second generation rights’). However, since the 70’s, there has been a shift in the goals of human rights education that is derived from a general interest in ‘third generation rights’ which focus on encouraging mutual respect and collaboration between different peoples in the international community. Human rights education has thus diversified so as to include contents which were not present in the Declaration in 1948 <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>. Among this new content, we can find a focus on environmental rights, rights related to peace, as well as those focused on social and cultural diversity, all of which have been promoted in the educational context.

However, although the Declaration of Human Rights is now more than 60 years old, we still do not have a Declaration of Human Obligations to complement the former. It is generally accepted that we cannot deal with rights without, at the same time, referring to obligations. José Saramago, the Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1998, died while working on a Declaration of Obligations. From this Portuguese writer’s point of view – one in which rights only gain their full meaning in connection with obligations - we could ask the following question: Which human obligations are universal enough to be included in a Declaration?

M2 Exercise “What is a right? What is an obligation?”

Try to answer the following questions, giving reasons for each of them. Then discuss with your classmates the issues that you and your friends think are more relevant, referring in particular to the last two questions.

1. Do we have the right to health?
2. Do we have the obligation of being healthy?
3. Do we have the right to be respected?
4. Do we have the obligation to respect ourselves?
5. What about the obligation to respect others?
6. Do we have the right to live in the country where we were born?
7. Do we have the obligation of living in the country where we were born?
8. Do we have the right to live in a country where we were not born?
9. Do we have the obligation to do so?
10. Do we have the right to think differently? And the obligation of thinking differently?
11. Do we have the right to behave differently? Do we have the obligation to do so?
12. What is a right?
13. What is an obligation?

M3 Activity “The Declaration of Human Rights”

We generally accept that Human Rights go hand in hand with certain obligations. We cannot speak about rights without speaking about obligations. The article 29 of the Declaration says: “Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.” However, the Declaration makes no further reference to the obligations of mankind towards the community. In order to research the idea of obligations, we suggest that the students try to discover which obligation or obligations are connected to each of the rights that appear in the Declaration

<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

This exercise can be done as an activity:

- Have four groups working on different rights, and then each group will consider the obligations related to each right.
- Each group will create a very short play or a statue (even a photo, but with them as part of the statue or the photo) representing that obligation.
- Then, in order (one right for each group), they tell the others the right and represent the obligation. The rest of the groups will have to guess.

M4 Exercise “Do children have the same rights and obligations as adults?”

The teacher writes the following questions on the flip chart. Then asks students to choose one or more questions to reflect on. After choosing the questions, the teacher divides students into groups and asks them to discuss on the topics arisen by the questions and to make notes about them. Finally, the teacher asks students to share each other their own conclusions.

1. Do children have the right to food? Do they have the right to housing? Do adults also have those rights? What about the obligation of eating? Do adults and children have the obligation to eat?
2. Do children have the right to work? Do adults have the right to work?
3. Do adults have the obligation to work? Do children?
4. Do children have the right to play?
5. Do adults have the right to play?
6. Do children have the obligation to play? Do adults have that obligation? Do parents have the obligation to play? Do parents have the obligation of playing with their children?
7. Do children have rights? Do they have obligations?
8. Do adults and children have the same rights and obligations?

When dealing with the topic of child labor, we must bear in mind that article 32 of the 2006 Convention states: “States, Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development”. <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

M5 Leading idea “Rights”

There is a close relation between rights, justice and laws or norms. Some approaches establish that rights are only those recognized by the law. For them, something is just if it is within the law or legal norms. Others demand certain independence between justice and legality, and between personal rights and law as a body of rules. According to these people, there may be legitimate and just conduct that can clash with established legality. There may be rights not recognized by certain laws, which brings us to the issue that laws that don't recognize rights are not legitimate laws. If the law doesn't recognize my rights, the law has to change.

In the absence of law or written legal norms, custom may acquire force of law and objectify the rights and duties of a community (customary law). This is an important concept when we discuss rights from the cosmopolitan point of view.

Human rights can be considered a global framework of common principles that go beyond national or local perspectives, and considered in dialogue with principles and practices in a local context. That is to say, local cultures may assess themselves in light of global concerns, perspectives, and frameworks, and make generalizations born out of local contexts. It is interesting not only to be conscious of what human rights are, but to also think about the problems that arise when trying to apply them and in what situations these rights are honored. This is of primary importance when there is a conflict of interest between different rights or between what some groups consider their rights and what the rights of other groups are.

M6 Exercise “Rights”

Begin by asking more specific questions about certain areas where rights are applied (right to property, right to food, right to choose, right to work etc.) and then, using their answers, ask the later, more general questions which focus on the origin and status of rights.

1. The teacher gives out tickets for the cinema and everyone in the group has one.
2. If Elena is part of the group, does Elena have the right to a ticket?
3. There is one ticket less than the number of people in the group and it is impossible to get another one. Does Elena still have the right to a ticket?
4. Elena does not want to wait until the traffic lights turn to green so she crosses the road while the lights are still red. Does she have the right to do that?
5. When Elena gets home, she starts reading the comic section in the newspaper but her twin brother Pedro takes the newspaper away from her. Does he have the right to do that?
6. Elena’s family is having roast turkey for dinner. Does she have the right to a piece?
7. Elena’s brothers, Pedro and Juan both want turkey drumstick and so does Elena but there are only two. Does she have the right to one?
8. Elena’s dog, Fritz, is getting old and her parents decide to put him to rest.
9. Does Fritz have the right to live?
10. Pedro, who is 12, sees his father smoking and wants to try it. Does he have the right to try?
11. Juan has just finished high school. Does he have the right to a job?
12. There is an assembly meeting in the neighborhood and Kevin, who lives in the area, wants to speak. Does he have the right?
13. There is an assembly meeting in the neighborhood and Juan, who does not live in the area, wants to speak. Does he have the right?
14. Are there rights we are born with, and other rights we acquire as we grow up?
15. Where do rights come from?
16. Are there things that are rights in one community or country, but not in another community or country?
17. Can some people’s rights annul other people’s rights?
18. Are there any rights that can never be annulled?

M7 Leading idea “Children’s rights”

Children didn’t have any recognized rights until the time of the enlightenment. Only since the beginning of the 20th century can we speak of the development of children’s rights, which had the aim of granting children their own rights.

In 1989, world leaders officially recognized the human rights of all children and young people under 18 by signing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children often need special protection – in 54 articles the convention spells out the basic human rights for children everywhere, and sets out standards in education, health care and legal, civil and social services. Some of these rights include: the right to be protected from harmful influences, violence, abuse and exploitation; the right to life, survival and development, to participate fully in family, cultural and social life; the rights to respect the views of the children.

However there are many disagreements about human rights in general, and also there are disagreements about children’s rights. Even when national governments have committed themselves to protecting and ensuring children’s rights, many of them have not included the articles of the convention into their constitutions.

We know that children have a number of rights, which are food, shelter, education and love. But are we aware of children’s rights as such? Are they universal, natural rights and inalienable?

What do children know about children’s rights? Can they “learn through” children’s rights? Should children be encouraged to make use of their rights in school and in class?

M8 Exercise “Exploring children’s rights”

1. What do you know about children’s rights?
2. Why do we need special rights for children?
3. What are children’s rights?
4. In what way can the principles of children’s rights be observed in your community/your school/your family?
5. How do you experience children’s rights in class?
6. What do children’s rights imply?
7. Do children’s rights match with our idea of wants and needs?
8. What is the difference of understanding between wishes and needs?
9. What can we do when children’s rights are hurt and violated?

M9 Exercise “Do children have rights?”

Please discuss the following statements and give reasons for if you agree or disagree.

| | Agree | Disagree | ? |
|---|-------|----------|---|
| Children have the right to education. | | | |
| Children have the right to have their own mobile phone. | | | |
| Children have the right to be respected. | | | |
| Children have the right to have their own room. | | | |
| Children have the right to be protected against starvation. | | | |
| Children have the right to form their own opinions about their football team, their favorite comics, their teachers and their religion. | | | |
| Children have the right to decide themselves what their rights are.” | | | |

M10 Exercise “Imaginary Island”

Imagine you and your friends have discovered an island. There are no other human beings and there are no rules and no laws.

- Write down three rights that you think are important and that should be guaranteed for everyone on this island.
- Put together the suggestions on a list – now discuss the suggestions!

M11 Exercise “Rights of children and youngsters”

The teacher asks students to make a list of their rights and to explain which conditions are necessary in enforcing them (e.g. the right to receive an education implies the need for a family to bring you up and a school near home; the right to food implies having access to food).

In order to spark discussion, the teacher asks students the following questions: To what extent do you think the rights on your classmates' lists are respected in your particular case? To what extent do you think those rights are present at school? In the rest of the country? In the rest of the world?

After that, the teacher emphasizes the existence of other rights, some of which appear in M6. These other rights are probably unknown to most students, and are therefore less likely to appear in spontaneous discussion. As the teacher goes through this new list, s/he could ask them the same question s/he asked about their own lists.

M12 Exercise “Children rights”

The teacher asks students to read the following list about children rights and to explain which conditions are necessary in enforcing them (e.g. the right to receive an education implies the need for a family to bring you up and a school near home; the right to food implies having access to food).

In order to spark discussion, the teacher asks students the following questions: To what extent do you think the rights on the list are respected in your particular case? To what extent do you think those rights are present at school? In the rest of the country? In the rest of the world?

1. Right to express yourself and for adults to take what you say seriously (art.12)
2. The rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child (art.14)
3. Right to choose your friends (art.15)
4. Right to be protected from all kinds of violence (art.19)
5. Right to a clean environment (art.24)
6. Right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (art.27)
7. In those states in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practice his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language. (art.30)

M13 Leading idea “Privacy”

The right to privacy is a human right: “No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon his or her honor and reputation”. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

M14 Exercise “Privacy”

1. What is privacy?
2. Is there a right to privacy? If so, who has that right?
3. Do children have a right to privacy?
4. Is it your right to keep a diary private?
5. Do you have a right to privacy from your parents?
6. Do your parents have a right to privacy from you?
7. Who defines what the limits of privacy are for a person?
8. What is the relation between privacy and freedom?

M15 Leading idea “Social pact”

One of the conflict that should arise in a forced co-existence within a group of teens, is related to the claiming of the right on something that is considered ‘public’, as to say, of everybody.

When people have the same rights to everything, the possibility of conflict is inevitable. Hence, in order to guarantee a peaceful co-existence within a space chosen as a space for socialization, there is the need to make pacts with people, even people who aren’t particularly nice (to us). Under this perspective, we could refer to the idea of a social pact and in particular to the thought of the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes who theorized the existence of a hypothetical state of nature in which human beings have all the same rights to everything. Because one of the natural laws is that of survival, every human being takes possession of whatever is within reach, including the life of others. That is, every man is a wolf for the other man (*homo homini lupus*). In the state of nature, human beings are in the condition of permanent war. Reason allows human beings to leave the state of nature, pushing them to form pacts between themselves in order to stop a war of all against all, which would otherwise be counterproductive for their survival. In leaving the state of nature, humanity establishes its natural laws. Of these, the first law is aimed at maintaining peace and the second law is aimed at respecting pacts. Through reason, human beings realize that one’s liberty is necessarily limited by the liberty of the Other. This can be interpreted as a form of social pact.

In a cosmopolitan society, the differences and conflicts that can come up affect the predetermined social conditions, and what might be taken for granted in regard to the sharing of spaces might change. If, for example, we think of the places where boys and girls informally spend their free time, how might the introduction of different cultures affect the encounter in terms of territory? Would the ‘outsiders’ be accepted or rejected? Would the initial occupiers be overturned? What conflicts might arise? What informal solutions could be adopted to solve these possible conflicts?

M16 Exercise “What would happen if...”

Imagine you and the other students in your school have the opportunity to use a theme park for one afternoon. The rides are all great, but three of them are fantastic. Of course, everyone wants to have a ride on these ones. Since there are no rules about who uses the rides and when, and since adults aren't allowed to enter (there are only the workers, but they are too busy, so you won't have the possibility of engaging their help), you must manage the use of every ride on your own. What do you think will happen? Will there be any abuse of power? Will you succeed in using all the rides? If so, how would that be possible and why? If not, why not?

Write a brief essay about what you imagine could happen on this special day in a theme park.