

Introduction

Often we witness human rights being dealt with at schools as part of a special project ("Solidarity Week", "Human Rights Day",...). Such an explicit focus on human rights is necessary and can prove very useful as a way of realizing human rights education. Our experience as human rights educators shows us, however, that this "specific" approach is best complemented by a genuine integration of human rights throughout the whole curriculum. After all, human rights (knowledge and understanding, skills and attitudes) are relevant to any subject. Only by mainstreaming human rights in every subject, pupils can truly experience human rights' relevance to every aspect of life.

Moreover, being teachers (in service and in training) ourselves, we believe it best not to add learning materials to an already packed curriculum. This is why we started from the final objectives of subjects such as, in this case, English class, looking for opportunities to help pupils reach those objectives through human rights education. Teachers won't need to cram more into their classes: by applying activities from this package, they work on their own subject's final objectives - while teaching human rights at the same time! To compile this package, we were very grateful and happy to be able to accept the support and creative minds of Ruben Buts, Elien Van Limbergen, Gijs Wyffels, 3 Teacher Education students of the Teacher Education from the Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen. Together we took the challenge to develop some activities to integrate human rights in 2nd grade English class.

The package mainly focuses on the four skills - reading, writing, listening and speaking - although it also contains some grammar evaluations and vocabulary. We tried to use as many authentic materials as possible, because bringing reality into the classroom is an important element in foreign language teaching.

The final result has become a mixture of annual human rights events, extras on the annual plans and pupils' own interests. It's also a series of 15 activities in which teachers can pick and choose depending on the skills they want to practise, the theme they want to discover or the grammar items they want to treat. Each activity can be used as such, but teachers can also choose to combine them, create a corner work out of them, cooperate with other courses or integrate them into a school project. The activities that were created are ready-to-use materials, that can easily be adapted to the needs and wishes of different groups. They also offer possibilities and ideas to step outside the classroom and integrate human rights and English, not only in different courses, but in the entire school.

Because in order to build a culture of human rights in our society, it's important that all pupils learn about their own rights and the rights of others. To respect them, stand up for them and make them real.

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