Free to Learn, Safe to Speak

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

AGE: 11 - 16 years

LEARNING POINTS

1. You have the right to have and express your own opinions.

2. You should not be stopped from sharing information with others, including people from other countries.

3. You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others.

MATERIALS

- Talking Stick
- Class Roll
- Class Rules
- Story, Malala Yousafzai
- Student copies of the UDHR and CRC
- CRC Article 13, child-friendly version
- Flip-chart or large piece of paper
- Markers and pencils
- Paper
- Timer or watch
- Famous people quotes
- Illustrations for political posters
- Mini posters from previous lessons, including Freedom of Expression

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF
Human Rights

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; [and] to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information.

THE CONVENTION ON THE
Rights of the Child

Article 13

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression, . . . freedom to seek and impart . . . information of all kinds.

The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions:
(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
(b) For the protection of national security or of public order or of public health or morals.

SIMPLIFIED

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms the rights of other people or hurts their reputation.

WELCOME
Before class, place the mini posters where everyone can see them.
Greet the participant warmly by name as they enter and sit.

Song: This Little Light of Mine
Sing with enthusiasm and delight. (See Lesson 5 for music if needed.)

REVIEW: **Mini Poster Round-up**

Ask: Did anyone find another person you could talk to with a different religion or belief? Would you like to share what you learned?

Say: I need some volunteers to read our posters as we review them.

Give each volunteer a poster to hold. One at a time, have a volunteer step forward and read his or her poster.

Ask: What do you remember about this right? What do we need to do to make sure everyone has this right?

Then have the next volunteer step forward and read the next right, and ask another question about the right he or she is holding, and so on.

For example:

- The Right to Freedom and Dignity.
  What is dignity? How should we treat other people?
  (Dignity means being worthy of respect and consideration or having worth or being valuable.)

- The Right to Protection from Discrimination.
  What is discrimination? (Discrimination is not treating each other with equal value or with dignity or the same rights.)
  What can we do to protect other people from discrimination?

- The Right to Marriage and Family.
  What is the basic unit of society? (The family)
  Who should protect the family? (The government and society should protect the family.)
  What are the family rights that should be protected?

    1. The right to marry when you are of full age – usually 18 or older.
    2. No one should force you to marry someone you don't want to marry.
    3. Both spouses have equal rights.

INTRODUCTION

Have one of the youth hand out the simplified versions of the UDHR and CRC.

Say: Let's look at another human right today, one that talks about freedom of speech or expression.

Activity: Story, Malala
Read and show the image (at the back of the lesson) or ask a student to read it.

When you finish the story, say: Please turn to Article 19 in your copies of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights.*

Ask: Will someone please read Article 19 for us*?*

> *Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; [and] to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information.*

Ask: How does the story about Malala relate to Article 19? Let's read Article 19 again.

> Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; [and] to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information.

Ask: What does the word "impart" mean? (To share)

Explain: You have a right to hold and express your own opinions, and to look for information and ideas and share those things with other people.

Activity: Quoting Famous People
Divide the class into four groups.

Say: Let's look at some ideas from a few other famous people.

- Give each group one of the quotes found at the back of the lesson on Freedom of Expression by famous people.
- Explain who each person is.
- Give each group **5 minutes** to come up with an explanation of what the quote means, and then say if they believe it is true.
- Set the timer for **5 minutes**. When the timer goes off, have everyone come back together. Have each group read their quote and explain it.
- If you don't have a timer, use a watch and ring a bell or clap your hands at the end of five minutes.
- Have the group say whether they think it is true or false, and give the reason. Continue until all the groups have talked about their quote.
- Place the quotes where everyone can see them.

Say: Remember you have the right to find out things and share what you think with others.

Hold up a copy of Article 13 from the CRC with the bottom half covered so that only the first part of it is visible. (Found at the back of the lesson.)

Have a student read the first part:

> *You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way . . .*

Explain*:* That sounds like the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* that we read earlier. The people who wrote the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* added something more about when we should NOT say anything.

Remove the cover from the bottom part of Article 13, and have the students read it out loud together:

> *. . . unless it harms or offends other people or hurts their rights.*

Explain*:* This is what the last part of Article 13 says about saying things that are damaging or hurtful to other people.

Ask: What kinds of things do you think we should not say, even when we think them?

- Are there ever times when we shouldn't say what we're thinking? What kinds of things? (Allow all answers.)

- Have you ever heard someone say something that wasn't true about someone else?

Explain: We shouldn't always say what we're thinking. For example, if you don't like someone's food or their clothes or the way they look, it's not necessary to say anything that might hurt their feelings. Yelling "Fire" in an airport or other crowded public places just for fun could cause a riot.

DEVELOP

Activity: Village Whispers
Purpose: To show that information passed through word of mouth gets confused very quickly and may not necessarily be correct.

How to Play*:* Ask the participants to make two equal lines. The two teams stand alongside each other but at some distance apart so they can't hear each other when whispering.

- The students face forward so that they are looking at the back of the person in front of them.

- Whisper a sentence into the ear of the person at the front of each line. Be careful not to let anyone else hear. It can be the same sentence or a different one for each team.

- After the count of "One, two, three, ACTION!", the students at the head of each line whisper the sentence they heard to the person behind them. The message travels in this way down to the end of the line.

- Students have only **one** opportunity to whisper the sentence into the ear of the person next in line. If that person cannot hear or understand it, they must pass on what they think they heard.

- Once the message has reached the end of each line, the leader asks the person at the end to say the sentence they heard.

- The two students at the beginning of each line tell the original sentence and compare it with the final message at the end of the line. The team with the most accurate final message wins.

FACILITATOR TIP: Begin with the first sentence you whisper that is short but not too familiar. As confidence grows, the sentences can be longer and more challenging. Examples: Dogs dig big holes to hide their bones. My mother goes shopping every Wednesday.

Explain: Information passed through word of mouth gets confused very quickly. Small misunderstandings can end up making a huge difference.

Ask: Can messages in real life end up being completely different than what was intended?

- Why do we have a responsibility to be careful about what and how we say things?

(Adapted from *Youth Refugee Curriculum, Canadian Orientation Abroad***,** International Organization for Migration, 2013, "Village Whispers," p. 127**)**

EXPAND

Activity: Political Cartoons
Explain: Some people draw cartoons or make posters as a way of expressing their opinions.

As an example, show the cartoon and posters from the end of the lesson.

Have someone read them.

Ask: What is the cartoonist or artist trying to say?

- Let's make our own cartoon.

Activity: Make a Poster (10 minutes)
Divide the children into three different groups.

- Provide each group with markers or pencils and papers, and have them collaborate to create a cartoon or poster of their own.

Explain: It can be about any situation that is a challenge or worry to them: strict parents, clean water, food, fair treatment from leaders, bedtime or curfews, not enough free time.

- The poster should not be harmful or offensive to the rights of other people.

- Encourage the students to make them simple, not too complicated – allow about 10 minutes.

- DISPLAY THE POSTERS and have each group choose a spokesperson to explain their work.

CONCLUSION

Point out "The Right to Freedom of Expression" mini poster on the wall with the others.

Explain*:* Freedom of Expression is great but it is also complicated. Like all of our human rights, it also includes a responsibility.

Ask*:* What does this right include? (The right to our own opinions and the right to express them, and to look for new ideas and the right to share them.)

- And what is our **responsibility**?

Guide the participants to understand that we have a responsibility to make sure we don't say things that will:

- Hurt other people
- Or put them in danger
- Or that are not true

Explain: We **also** have the responsibility to make sure the things we hear are **true and accurate** before we repeat them to other people.

CHALLENGE

Say: This week, speak kindly to those around you, including your family and friends. Continue to look for people to share your ideas with, and listen to their ideas.

- Tell your friends and family about Malala, the courageous young girl who stood up for girls' education.

- Play *Village Whispers* with your friends, the whisper game that we learned today.

FACILITATOR TIP
Collect the copies of the UDHR and the CRC.
Save the posters or cartoons made by the students to display at a later lesson.

FACILITATOR NOTES AND REFLECTIONS

How do I feel about what happened with today's lesson?

What would or should I do differently next time?

(Adapted from Keating-Chetwynd, Sarah, ed., *How All Teachers Can Support Citizenship and Human Rights Education: A Framework for the Development of Competences.* Council of Europe, 2008, p. 61.)

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Malala was born in Pakistan in 1997. Pakistan is a beautiful country and she loved her country, but more than half the girls there didn't go to school even though most of the boys did. This bothered her a lot.

Malala's father was the headmaster of a big school where she was a student and a big defender of education for girls. When the Taliban army came to her town, they said girls couldn't go to school, but Malala and her friends refused to obey them. So the Taliban issued a death threat against her but that still didn't stop her from going to school and telling other people about it. Nobody thought the Taliban would actually kill a young person. She even gave a talk called, "How dare the Taliban take away my basic right to education?"

One day when Malala was 15 years old, she was riding a bus with friends on their way home from school, when a masked gunman stopped the bus and got on board, and shouted, "Who is Malala?" Her friends looked in her direction, accidentally giving her away. The gunman immediately fired at her, hitting Malala in the head. Two of her friends were also injured in the attack, before the gunman ran away.

Malala almost died. People around the world were outraged to think that someone would try to kill a girl just because she wanted to go to school. Over two million people signed a petition for the right to education, and the National Assembly of Pakistan swiftly approved the first Right to Free and Compulsory Education bill in that country's history. That was really amazing.

Malala survived after many surgeries, and today she continues to speak out in favor of education, especially for girls. In 2014, two years after the attack, when she was only 17 years old, Malala received the Nobel Peace Prize, which is given to someone who has done the best work in the whole world to promote peace. Malala was the youngest person ever to be given that award. The U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon described her as "a brave and gentle advocate of peace who through the simple act of going to school became a global teacher."

On the day that Malala turned 18, she was at the opening of a school for girls in Lebanon. She said, "Today on my first day as an adult, on behalf of the world's children, I demand of leaders that we must invest in books instead of bullets."

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and share what you think with others,
by talking, drawing, writing
or in any other way . . .

. . . unless it harms the rights
of other people or
hurts their reputation.

Article 13

THE CONVENTION ON
THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

CENSORSHIP

It goes both ways . . .

Free Speech Doesn't Mean *Careless* Talk!

Political cartoon

The pen is mightier than the sword

I want freedom
for the full EXPRESSION

of my personality.

Mahatma Gandhi
Leader of the Indian independence movement

If we do not believe in
FREEDOM OF SPEECH
for those we despise,

we do not
believe in it at all.

Noam Chomsky
American writer

I DO NOT
APPROVE
OF WHAT
YOU SAY,
BUT I'LL
DEFEND
TO THE
DEATH
YOUR
RIGHT
TO SAY IT.
Voltaire
French philosopher and writer

I RAISE UP MY VOICE –
not so I can shout but so that those without a VOICE MAY BE HEARD.
We cannot succeed when HALF OF US are held back.

Malala Yousafzai
Pakistani activist for female education

Photo by Chinh Le Duc, Myanmar