

Studies of Society and Environment

Upper Primary: Level 4

Children's rights, children's lives

A module of study developed by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian

The Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian (CCYPCG) is actively involved in promoting and safeguarding the rights of children within the community and is committed to engaging children and young people in decision making on matters which affect them.

To enhance the participation of children as citizens, the Commission seeks to inform them of their rights and help them to develop qualities of judgement and responsibility. In this way the Commission seeks to assist children to exercise their rights in reflective and morally intelligent ways.

Through this module, the Commission hopes to engage teachers and students in an ongoing conversation about rights, responsibilities and what it means to be a child in today's world. The module provides teachers with a suite of activities and resources which may be used to structure a unit of inquiry into children's rights.

Module activities are designed to promote discussion about values underpinning the concept of children's rights, and present information about the mechanisms available to safeguard children's rights. As part of the unit, opportunities are provided for students to participate in advocacy activity to promote awareness of children's rights and respond to situations where children's access to their rights is compromised.

Students are also invited to share their views and ideas with the Commissioner for Children and Young People and Child Guardian, and to participate in the advocacy work of the Commission. Several unit activities include invitations to submit student work to the Commission for possible publication on its website. Each of these activities is accompanied by a design brief or publication guide to enable teachers to assist students prepare material that will be suitable for this purpose.

Teachers are also invited to share their comments on the module, along with information about how they have implemented it, with the Commission. This information will be used to continue development of the module and may be shared with other teachers to illustrate effective approaches to teaching about children's rights in Queensland classrooms.

Learning outcomes

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|--|
| <i>Time, continuity and change</i> | TCC 4.1 | Students use primary sources to investigate situations before and after a change in Australian or global settings |
| | TCC 4.3 | Students share empathetic responses to contributions that diverse individuals and groups have made to Australian or global history |
| <i>Culture and identity</i> | CI 4.3 | Students debate how media images concerning gender, age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong |
| <i>Systems, resources and power</i> | SRP 4.5 | Students classify values that underpin campaigns and organisations associated with human or environmental rights |

Unpacking the outcomes

| Outcomes | What students are expected to know | What students are expected to do | Opportunities for assessment of outcomes |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>TCC 4.1 Students use primary sources to investigate situations before and after a change in Australian or global settings</p> | <p>Primary sources provide first-hand accounts and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artefacts • Photographs • Oral histories • Diary extracts <p>How understandings of childhood and children's rights have changed over time</p> <p>How understandings of childhood and children's rights vary across cultures</p> | <p>Collect first-hand information about current understandings of childhood and children's rights and compare situations across a range of cultures and at various times</p> <p>Reflect upon how experiences of childhood have changed and the forces which have shaped these changes</p> | <p>Activity 3.5 (Investigating Childhood) Assessment task: Students write a personal response to the inquiry question 'Is childhood always the same?' Task may be assessed against the standards descriptors provided.</p> <p>Activity 6.2 (That was then, this is now) Reflective text: Students write a reflection comparing how beliefs and understandings about children's rights may be different today from those held in Australia 100 hundred years ago. Students should describe influences which may have shaped differences. Task may be assessed against the standards descriptors provided.</p> |

children's rights, children's lives

A module of study developed by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian

| Outcomes | What students are expected to know | What students are expected to do | Opportunities for assessment of outcomes |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>TCC 4.3 Students share empathetic responses to contributions that diverse individuals and groups have made to Australian or global history.</p> | <p>Contributions made by diverse individuals and groups involved in advocacy for children and children's rights For example: UNICEF CCYPCG</p> <p>Ways to communicate perspectives to others</p> | <p>Respond empathetically to learning about contributions made by individuals and groups involved in advocacy for children and children's rights</p> <p>Communicate perspectives to others</p> | <p>Activity 4.2 (Advocates for children's rights) Individual or group presentations: Students design PowerPoint/written presentations communicating information about individuals or organisations involved in advocacy for children's rights. Presentations should include an evaluation of the contribution made by the person/organisation towards advancing the rights of children. Task may be assessed against the standards descriptors provided.</p> |
| <p>CI 4.3 Students debate how media images concerning age, ethnicity and disability reflect groups to which they belong</p> | <p>Group membership can be defined by shared attitudes, beliefs and behaviours</p> <p>Media images associated with group membership may or may not accurately reflect the characteristics of those groups</p> | <p>Describe the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours which the media uses to define identification within the category 'child'</p> <p>Discuss how age, ethnicity and disability feature in media images associated with childhood</p> | <p>Activity 3.4 (What is childhood?) Media collage Students create collages by locating and cutting out media representations of children. Students respond to these images, making judgments about how accurately these images reflect their own experiences as children and those of other children. Task may be assessed against the standards descriptors provided.</p> |
| <p>SRP 4.5 Students classify values that underpin campaigns and organisations associated with human or environmental rights</p> | <p>The concept of advocacy</p> <p>Values associated with advocacy For example: Justice</p> <p>Campaigns, organisations and mechanisms developed to advocate for children's rights For example: The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> | <p>Identify and classify the values underpinning mechanisms such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</p> | <p>Activity 7.2 (Ambassadors for children's rights) Oral presentations: Students develop and perform presentations on children's rights and the role of the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian in advocating for children's rights. Task may be assessed against the standards descriptors provided.</p> |

Module structure

The activities and resources provided in the module relate to the seven phases identified by Hamston and Murdoch in their *Integrating Socially* planning and inquiry model¹. These phases provide a framework for organising inquiry and are described briefly below.

The first activities in each phase (with the exception of the 'Going further' and 'Taking action' phases) represent the module's 'core' content. In order to structure a well-integrated inquiry unit, it is recommended that teachers plan to complete at least these activities and select from others presented as student inquiry proceeds. Should teachers wish to present a single lesson related to the topic of children's rights, many of the activities presented are suitable for use on their own.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Tuning in | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' curiosity about the module topic is aroused.• Students begin to engage with the inquiry topic. |
| Preparing to find out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' prior knowledge related to the topic is established.• Students express personal experiences related to the module topic. |
| Finding out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• New information is presented in response to student questions.• Additional questions are raised for later exploration.• Students' knowledge, beliefs and values are challenged. |
| Sorting out | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students are provided with opportunities to process information gathered.• Information gathered is presented in a variety of ways. |
| Going further | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students' understandings related to the topic are challenged and extended. |
| Making connections | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students draw conclusions from what has been learned.• Students reflect on the learning processes of the module and their participation in those processes. |
| Taking action | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students make links between their new understandings and real-life experiences.• Students make choices which demonstrate understanding of their role as social participants. |

To help plan a sequence of inquiry which includes activities from each phase, an *Overview of Module Activities* has been included in the module's resources section (See *Resource 1*) along with a *Sample Learning Pathway* (*Resource 2*) which illustrates one possible way of organising module experiences to form a unit of study.

¹ Hamston, J. and Murdoch, K. (1996). *Integrating Socially: Planning Units of Work for Social Education*. Melbourne: Eleanor Curtin.