



Working for a Just World

## *Give Peace a Chance*

### *A Resource on Gaza for Primary School Teachers*

*3<sup>rd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> Class / Key Stage \**

#### **Introduction**

There are vital ethical and moral issues that arise relating to war, peace, human rights and justice. This resource is a small attempt at giving educators the tools to critically explore some of these issues.

Be sure to send in any photos of projects or activities to Maria Casey, Education Officer – Primary, Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare or email photos to [mcasey@trocaire.ie](mailto:mcasey@trocaire.ie)

We would be delighted to see your group's work.

#### **Activity 1: Causes of Conflict**

Step 1: What do you think of when you hear the word 'conflict'?

Step 2: What is the meaning of the word 'conflict'? Look it up in a dictionary.

Step 3: In groups, write down a list of words that mean conflict to you.

Step 4: Fill in the following grid.

Step 5: If you wish, share the information with the person next to you and then with the whole group.

Conflict Situation	What I usually do	How I feel
When someone steals my pencil or money.		
When someone makes fun of me or laughs at me.		

When someone pushes or hits me for no reason.		
When someone blames me for something I didn't do.		
When someone talks behind my back and tells lies about me.		
When someone calls my brother a name.		
When teacher tells me to do something I don't want to do.		

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## Activity 2: To be Safe I Need...

Objectives: Children will be enabled to:

- Become aware of their surroundings and the things they need to be safe and protected from harm.
- Create a connection between their safety needs and the needs of children living in conflict areas.

You will need: Blackboard, stickers – for dots, paper, colouring material.

### 1. Group activity: Visualisation

- Invite the class to close their eyes.
- Ask them to think of every aspect of a normal day from the moment they wake up to bedtime. Each pupil takes a turn at describing a part of their day.
- When the day has been described ask what the children feel they need during their days in order to feel safe and protected.

### 2. 'Dotmocracy'

- When the list has been written on the blackboard, each pupil should put a dot beside the most important thing they need in order to be safe.
- Ask the class to count the total number of dots on each item.
- The items with the most dots will become the 'Top 3' priority items for the class in terms of their safety needs. Discuss why these are important.

### 3. Class Discussion

- The teacher should then discuss with the class the situation in Gaza and ways in which children are affected by the conflict and the violence.
- What kinds of things might children living in Gaza have on their lists?
- What do they need in order to be safe and protected from harm?
- Pupils generate a new list based on this discussion and can do ‘dotmocracy’ again to come up with another ‘Top 3’.

4. Extension Activity: Pupils draw pictures to illustrate the ‘Top 3’ things they need in order to be safe and protected from harm.

Send your ‘Top 3’ to Maria Casey, Education Officer – Primary, Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare or email your ‘Top 3’ to [mcasey@trocaire.ie](mailto:mcasey@trocaire.ie)

### **Activity 3: What’s the Story?**

Objectives: The children will be enabled to:

- Research, discuss and debate a topical issue: the crisis in Gaza.
- Distinguish between fact and opinion.
- Evaluate how the media present information.

The situation in Gaza is the main item featured on all our TV news programmes and in all our major newspapers at the moment. Each has their own story to tell.

Note for teacher: Foreign journalists are not allowed into the Gaza strip.

But what is the real story?

- Track the media coverage of Gaza over a 2-day period.
- As a class, take turns to watch different news broadcasts and examine different newspapers (both broadsheet and tabloid).
- How have they chosen to tell their side of the story (look at photographs and headlines)?
- Are the reports similar / different?
- Make a class display showing newspaper cuttings and photographs from Gaza.

### **Activity 4: War and Poverty**

- Divide the class into three groups. Give each group a fact card and invite them to present the facts on their card in a creative way.
- This could be done through role play, a drawing, a song etc.
- Give the groups about fifteen minutes before asking them to report back to the whole class.
- Ask the children to talk about what they have seen presented.
- What did they learn about the link between global poverty and war?

## FACT CARDS

The cost of one missile could plant 200 million trees.

The cost of one Trident submarine is the same as the cost of a year's schooling for 16 million children in the developing world.

There are twice as many soldiers in the world as there are nurses, doctors and teachers.

Source: Bread and Bombs, Trócaire

### Activity 5: We all have rights



Learning objectives:

Children will be:

- Introduced to the idea of themselves as rights holders and the importance of protecting their rights outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
- Enabled to make the link between their rights with children who are denied theirs.

Materials: Blackboard, copy of the UNCRC.

#### 1. What Every Child Needs

- In groups of four, participants talk about the things they need each day:
- Suggestions are shared and written on the blackboard.
- The class talks about each suggestion to determine if it is a survival need or a 'want'. An example of a 'want' could be television or non-necessary food (for example, chocolate).
  - Shelter, food and water (survival)
    - Education and play (development)
    - Protection (safety)
- Explain that children who live in conflict-affected areas, such as Gaza, often do not have their basic survival and protection needs met.
- It is only when a child's health, education and protection are ensured, that they can develop their full potential.

#### 2. Group brainstorm – What are Children's Rights?

- Introduce the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC is based on the idea that everyone deserves fair treatment. Almost every country in the world has signed up to it so it relates to most of the world's children

regardless of who they are, what they look like, where they live and what their beliefs are.

- Distribute the simplified version of the UNCRC to the class and allow them to read through each article. Discuss the rights children all over the world have. Can the children think of any more? (Remind them that there are many more articles in the official UNCRC document.)



### 3. Gimme 5!

Ask the children to trace around their hand. Inside each finger they must list four Rights of the Child and inside the thumb they must write the one they think is the most important. If they are able, let them trace both of their hands and write down ten rights!

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## Activity 6: Who's got the Right?

Objective: To examine the human rights that are threatened or denied in times of war.

- Distribute Asil's Story (below). Tell the children that Asil is a Palestinian girl.
- The children read the story individually and silently.
- When everyone has finished, invite the children to form small groups and talk about the story.
- In groups, children fill in the 'rights' grid listing Asil's rights that are threatened, enjoyed or denied.
- Ask the students what they notice about the grid. How does Asil feel? Who decides what rights Asil enjoys? How would they feel if their rights were denied?

### Asil's Story

My name is Asil and I am eight years old.

I live in the Jabalya refugee camp, a short walk from my school. I live on the ground floor of a big building with my mother, my father and my four brothers and sisters.

A few days ago, my brother Muhammad and I woke up early and decided to get some bread. We went looking but the bakeries had none, and sadly we returned empty-handed.

My mother decided to bake bread in a small electric pan we have. We all sat in the yard in front of the house while she made the bread. I was so hungry I could hear my stomach

rumbling.

While waiting for the bread to be ready, I heard another sound. It was the sound of bombs and gunfire.

Suddenly there was a huge explosion next to us, and smoke covered the yard. I couldn't see my family.

My body hurt all over.

After a few minutes, the smoke began to clear. I saw my sister covered in blood. She groaned in pain.

My uncle lifted her up and walked with her to the main road. My sister is only five years old.

There were lots of dead and wounded people. People were running around helping the injured. An ambulance came and took my sister to hospital.

The hospital is running out of medicine and has no electricity.

My parents just don't know what to do.... Neither do I...

I miss my sister so much.

## Rights Grid

Rights Enjoyed	Rights Denied	Rights Threatened
Right:		
UNCRC Article:		

## Follow up Activity

After allowing sufficient time for the class to come to terms with Asil's story, children should do the following:

- Think of your own life.
- Fill out a similar grid.
- Look at the different rights enjoyed.
- How does this make you feel?
- Write a prayer for Asil, her community and family.

Send prayers for peace to Maria Casey, Education Officer – Primary, Trócaire, Maynooth, Co. Kildare or email prayers to [mcasey@trocaire.ie](mailto:mcasey@trocaire.ie)

## Activity 7: Quotes

'I wondered why somebody didn't do something, for peace, then I realised I am somebody.' Anonymous.

'If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner.' Nelson Mandela, South Africa.

'There is no way to peace, peace is the way.' Mahatma Gandhi, India.

'Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies a theft from those who are cold and are not clothed.'  
Dwight Eisenhower, USA

'Peace and security cannot be won at the barrel of a gun.' Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

'If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.'  
Mother Teresa, Calcutta.

Choose one of the statements and discuss in groups. Then take a large sheet of paper and let each member of the group draw or paint his/her thoughts on the topic.

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## Activity 8: Poem for Peace

Let us read to a poem written by a 10 year old boy called Roberto from Croatia:

*If I were President,  
The tanks would be playhouses for the kids.  
Boxes of candy would fall from the sky.  
The mortars would fire balloons.  
And the guns would blossom with flowers.  
All the world's children  
would sleep in a peace unbroken  
by alerts or by shooting.  
The refugees would return to their villages.  
And we would start anew.*

Invite individual children to compose and read out their own Peace Poems.  
Send poems to Maria Casey, Education Officer – Primary, Trócaire, Maynooth, Co.  
Kildare or email poems to [mcasey@trocaire.ie](mailto:mcasey@trocaire.ie)

For more information and to show your support, please visit [www.trocaire.org](http://www.trocaire.org)  
Thank you.

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