Introduction

This book has been written for teachers who are looking for tools to teach children's rights to students at elementary and primary schools. The key features of the manual are the following:

- Nine small projects of four lessons each, for students in their first nine years of school.

- Detailed lesson instructions that can be followed by beginners or used in teacher training.

- A lesson plan including the key questions and key tasks in each at the beginning of each project description.

- An approach of task-based learning, focusing on problem solving and learning by example, which supports the pupils in conceptual learning, skills training and the development of values and attitudes.

- Following the key principles of Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC), methods and setting of open and co-operative learning support the message of content and principles in children's rights learning. (Learning through, about and for children's rights.)

- A tool to support reflection and discussion in class (see below).

- A section on materials for teaching and further studies in children's rights.

Conceptual framework

Children should know what rights they have, but they should also learn how to appreciate and to use them. To achieve this, school must allow for a wide range of learning experiences in children's rights education that may be summed up by three key categories of EDC:

- Learning about children's rights: the students know and understand what rights they have (knowledge and understanding). Learning "about" children's rights involves teaching within a particular class, by an individual teacher with a specific teaching assignment.

- Learning through children's rights: the students experience children's rights as principles that govern the classroom and school community (attitudes, values and skills).

- Learning for children's rights: the children are encouraged to make use of their rights in class and in school. In this way, they are trained for their future role as informed and active citizens in a democratic community (participation, both in school and in adult life). Learning in the spirit of children's and human rights ("through") and learning how to participate in a democratic community ("for") is a commitment for the whole school community. All teachers and head teachers must play their part, as must the students and their parents.

These three dimensions of learning in EDC support and complement one another. This manual demonstrates how this can be done. "Learning through" children's rights implies a careful choice of teaching methods that allow the students to experience school as a micro-community that is governed by principles of human and children's rights. For example, children must feel that they are respected as persons, and that their opinion is heard in discussions or decision making. Experience needs to be reflected, and here real life experience is linked to information and thinking about human and children's rights. This is "learning about" children's rights.

Learning from example (inductive approach)

This manual adopts the classic inductive approach of teaching by example. By studying or experiencing one or several examples the students may grasp a general, abstract principle or insight. This manual demonstrates the three steps that teachers need to take when teaching by example:

1. The teacher carefully selects an example and decides by which media and methods it will be presented to the students.

2. In phases of discussion and reflection, the students develop their general understanding and come to grasp the key concepts that the example has demonstrated.

3. The students reapply their newly acquired insights and categories.

To support the teacher in carrying out step 2, the following matrix is used for all units, addressing the three dimensions of EDC and children's rights education. Key questions are suggested to guide the student's reflection in class. This effort of reflection by the students is important, as learning objectives should not stay at the back of the teachers' or students' minds, but need to be expressed by the students in their words, as something they have understood, experienced, trained in, or wish to do in future. By sharing their insights in class, the students will benefit from one another, as will the class community as a whole.

Processes of learning will become most powerful and effective if the students know why and for what they are learning certain pieces of information, concepts and categories, skills, or modes and principles of behaviour in democratic communities. Phases of reflection and discussion should therefore not only draw general conclusions from concrete examples, but also address the whole process of learning. In terms of constructive learning, the students will become aware of their own personal approach to learning in general, and they will find out what type of learner they are, and what specific strengths and learning needs they have. Teaching in the spirit of human rights ("through") encourages teachers to give learners the space and time to learn according to their needs. We may then become aware of our profiles as learners as part of our identities.

Viewed from the perspective of democratic leadership, the teacher should not keep the learning objectives at the back of his or her mind but share them with the students, which in itself turns lesson planning into an exercise in democratic decision making.

Finally, this form of meta-learning in children's rights classes gives a model of how to teach students to organise their own processes of learning. In modern societies, processes of change, for example, in society, technology, economy, globalisation or the environment, are becoming more dynamic and complex. This poses new challenges for future generations – to succeed in their jobs and to participate in decision making, they will engage in a lifelong process of learning, having to tackle problems no one in school can anticipate today. Our students therefore need to become experts in co-operative learning, project work, process assessment and problem solving. In this manual, we have suggested some small steps for children at the beginning of their lives as learners.

To support the teacher, each unit description includes a box with suggestions for key questions that the teacher may use in these phases of reflection. The user will find this tool at the beginning of each chapter.

The framework for this tool to reflect the dimensions of learning processes in children's rights classes is the following:

– Both the teacher and the students should think about what the students have learned. The first set of questions is for the teacher. The second set of questions has been phrased for the students, but addresses the same dimensions of learning. It is useful for the teacher to try to anticipate what his or her students might say when answering these questions.

Key questions for reflection in children's rights classes		
About	Through	For
Teacher		
What do the children know now about children's rights?	In what way have the principles of children's rights been observed in the classroom and school community?	Learning how to take action outside school: What have the students learned for their future lives?
Pupils		
What have I learned about children's rights?	How did I experience children's rights in class?	What kind of action am I able to take now?

The user will find that the tools in the unit descriptions include the answers that the teacher or students may give. This has been done to demonstrate how the tool can be used and what results it can be expected to deliver in class. Of course, the teacher is free to answer the questions differently, and the students can give no "wrong" answers when thinking about their experience ("through") or how they can apply what they have learned ("for"). In all cases, their feedback will contribute to the evaluation of the lessons, and will support the teacher in improving the quality of his or her work. The material delivered by this reflection tool can therefore also be used in a teacher's or student's portfolio.

Task-based learning and the new roles of teachers

The units are conceived as small projects; the students are confronted with problems that are typical in project work – related to subject matter, organisation of work, communication, time keeping, etc. By finding ways of how to identify and solve these problems, the students develop a wide range of competences (task-based learning).

In Unit 1, the children are given the task to create a flower which carries their name and their photo. It is left up to them, for example, how they will design their flower, where they will obtain the materials, how they will find a photo, how they will plan their time. This way, the children will learn a lot "on the job", but the teacher needs to think carefully about the framing of the task, deciding questions like the following. How much time will the children have? Which materials must I provide? Should I supply some parts for the flowers ready made? (See the variations for the project laid out in Unit 1.)

This example shows that at a very early age, the children are encouraged to take responsibility for their work in class, in effect sharing responsibility with the teacher. This kind of learning experience is important if the students are to plan their work more independently at a more advanced stage.

In children's rights education, as a branch of EDC, the teacher will act within a wider spectrum of roles and activities.

Teaching "about" children's rights corresponds to the classic function of instruction and information – by a lecture, a reading task, a video clip, etc. Teaching "through" and "for" children's rights, on the other hand, requires the teacher to reflect his or her behaviour and his or her personality as a role model. Children will perceive an adult's message as credible if his or her behaviour supports it, for example, by the tone of voice, understanding, tolerance, fairness or encouragement. As all units in this book show, the methods of teaching and learning correspond closely with the subject matter. The approach of task-based learning requires careful planning and preparation by the teacher, who may then seem more inactive in class. However, while the students

are working, the teacher should watch them closely, as he or she will identify their competences and learning needs in terms of knowledge and understanding, skills training, and values.

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Rolf Gollob and Peter Krapf

Part I

Short projects on children's rights for classes 1 to 9

	Project	Key concept	Competence building
Class 1	I have a name – We have a school	Individual and community Right to education	
Class 2	Names are more than just letters!	Personality	
Class 3	We are wizards!	Problem Rights of children: growing up in health, liberty, dignity	Acting
Class 4	Our rights – Our treasure	Children's rights	Co-operation
Class 5	We make rules for our classroom	Society Rights, duties and rules Discipline, liberties and order	Making choices Negotiation Co-operation Arguing for one's choice of values
Class 6	Children's rights: a work of art!	Fundamental principles of children's rights	Planning a project
Class 7	Is what I want also what I need?	Wishes and needs, both material and immaterial	Finding agreements
Class 8	I make my own poster!	Violation and protection of children's rights	Organising teamwork Reflection and feedback on one's work Planning a project
Class 9	Why must we obey rules?	Purpose of rules and laws School as a micro-community	Critical thinking

The four basic principles of the children's rights convention[1]

I. PLAYING A PART: OUR RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE

Article 3   Priority of children's needs in political decisions, legislation and jurisdiction
Article 12   Freedom of opinion and the right to be heard in all personal matters
Article 13   Freedom of expression
Article 14   Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
Article 15   Right of association and peaceful demonstration in public
Article 16   Protection of privacy
Article 17   Access to media and sources of information

II. REACHING OUR POTENTIAL: OUR RIGHT TO DEVELOP WHO WE ARE

Article 5   Protection of the rights of parents
Article 7   Protection of a child's name and nationality
Article 8   Protection of a child's identity
Article 10   Facilitation of family reunification
Article 21   Monitoring of child adoption
Article 23   Special care for disabled young people
Article 28   Right to education

III. LIVING WELL: OUR RIGHT TO SURVIVAL

Article 6   Protection of survival and development
Article 9   Principle of non-separation from parents
Article 18   Responsibility of parents and guardians
Article 24   Protection of health and access to health care
Article 26   Social security
Article 27   Adequate living standards
Article 31   Right to rest and leisure

IV. BEING FREE FROM HARM: OUR RIGHT TO PROTECTION

Article 2   Principle of non-discrimination
Article 11   Protection from kidnapping and abduction
Article 19   Protection from abuse and neglect
Article 20   Care for young people without families
Article 22   Protection of child refugees
Article 32   Protection from economic exploitation
Article 33   Protection from drugs
Article 34   Protection from sexual exploitation
Article 35   Protection from sale and trafficking
Article 36   Protection from all other forms of exploitation
Article 37   Protection from torture and cruel treatment
Article 38   Wars and armed conflicts
Article 39   Social reintegration of child victims
Article 40   Treatment of children by penal law

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1. This is an excerpt from: *Say It Right! The Unconventional Canadian Youth Edition of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.* For the full text, see Part II, page 68.