

Teaching the rights of a child with comic strips

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Target group: Elementary school students

Introduction

Children's rights concern all children.

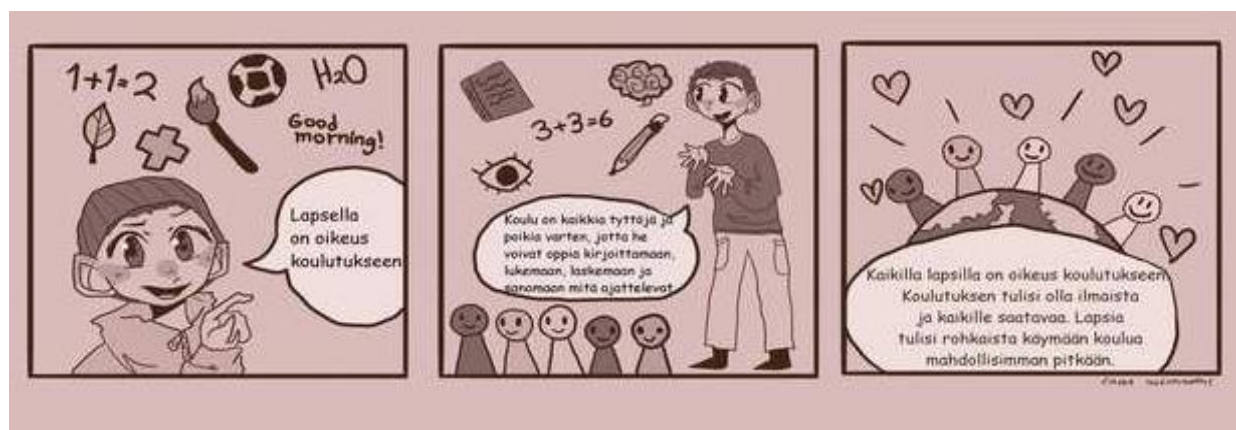
The theme can be incorporated into practical teaching and classroom design. This material presents a plan for teaching the theme of children's rights with comic strips. The artwork can be used as it is as a teaching material.

The texts for the comic strips were written in 2019 by students who helped to develop the exercise. The illustrations were drawn by Emina Sulejmanovic in 2020.

These exercises contain seven comic strips with three frames.

The general themes of the comic strips are:

1. Culture and education
2. Education
3. Free time
4. Nourishment
5. Sleep
6. Relationships
7. Freedom of expression



In each comic, the first two illustrations should be filled with texts written by your students. The text in the third frame will be taken from The Rights of the Child United Nations Convention of Children's rights. The comic strips can be used individually or as a series. There are many online examples of the text. A good example can be found here: [CLICK¹](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/15932/pdf/UNICEF%202019%20convention%20on%20the%20rights%20of%20the%20child.pdf)

The main aim of the exercises is to encourage the students to create their own texts and add them to the comic strip templates. The exercises should prompt dialogue between students and their cultures. The comic strips give an opportunity for the students to distance themselves from possibly difficult topics and present their thoughts as a part of a light-hearted comic series.

Basics:

- **Duration:** minimum 2x45min of preparation + presentation or exhibition (can be continued over multiple classes)
- **Materials:** good quality paper, large sheets of paper or cardboard for making posters, whiteboard and writing equipment
- **Materials for the presentation or exhibition**
 - prints of comics without text
 - prints of UN Convention of Children s rights
 - prints of the comic strips with the students' texts in them

Steps to follow:

Option 1: Discussing the rights of the child and creating posters for the general public

Step 1: Working in a bigger group. Ask students what they think are their rights.

- Make sure that all voices are heard.
- Perhaps, you will have to establish or re-ensure the “speaking rules” of the group before you ask this question. Remind the students to take turns and listen to each other.
- Decide the time or criteria that need to be fulfilled in order to finish this discussion assignment. For example:
 - Give the students 7 minutes.
 - Write and brainstorm until the board is full.
 - Work until everyone had added something.

Step 2: Write down all the answers.

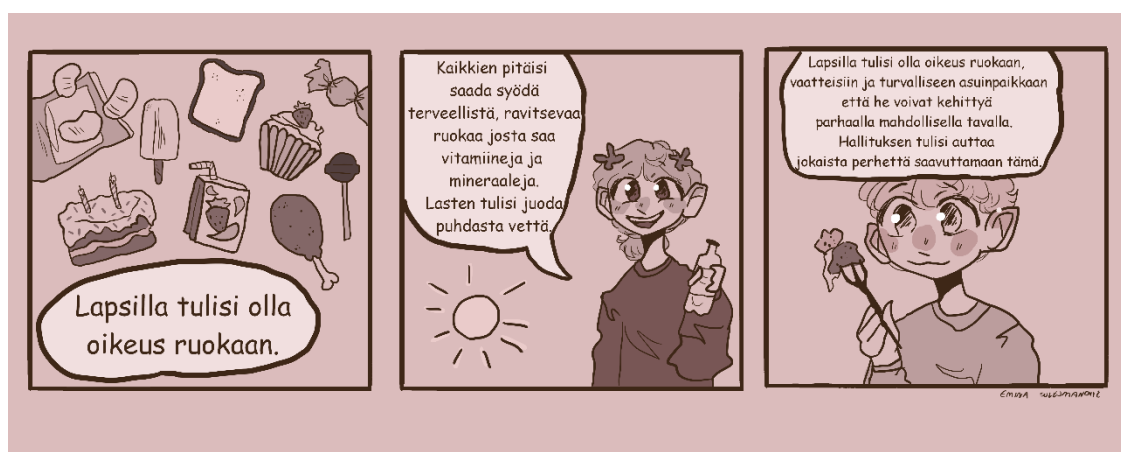
- Make sure you collect all words or sentences. Acknowledge if a word or sentence is repeated on the board so that all students feel they have contributed to the discussion.
- Ask your students to help with the word or sentence collection process if you are working with a bigger group

Step 3: Read aloud the results and group them.

- Read the words or sentences like you are hearing about the theme of children's rights for the first time. Be excited about the topics and words you now have on your board. This reserve of words and sentences will be used in the later steps.
- Ask your students if some topics, words or sentences fit together (perhaps in a surprising way).

Step 4: Select words, sentences and topics for the comics.

- Divide the students into small groups or let them pick the groups themselves.
- The students decide which of the words and sentences prepared together will be used in the comic strips. The full series of the comics will be arranged into a poster.
- Each group selects a theme that came up in the discussion during steps 1-3 and fills in the FIRST TWO PANELS of the comic strips with the words and sentences they selected. The students can also add other words, sentences and illustrations to the poster while they work in their small group.



Step 5: Filling in the third panel with text from the Rights of the Child declared by The United Nations Convention

- Provide students with a printed version of the Rights of the Child text. Introduce students to the general idea behind the text.
- Ask the students to read through the text in their small working groups. The students should keep their theme of choice in mind and find the sentences in the Rights of the Child text that fit the theme.

Step 6: Presentation

- Give time for each group to present their poster in the front of the classroom.
- Encourage everyone to contribute to the presentation or discussion (acting out the comic strips, presenting the theme, describing the additional illustrations etc.).
- The presentations and posters can be developed into a longer, more in-depth presentation targeted to younger students, parents or teachers.
- "Publish" the posters in school corridors, social media or in local newspapers. Pick a medium popular in your area.

Option 2: Working with the Rights of the Child comics in the classroom

This option can continue the previous exercise or it can be done separately.

Step 1: The teacher presents a practical example.

- Introduce the Rights of the Child theme, its history and meaning through a practical example from your country or community.

Step 2: Examine the comic strips in small groups or individually

- Provide the students with printed versions of the comics. Give each group or student a comic strip or let them pick randomly.
- Instruct to describe or write down what they see and what they find interesting about the comic in the context of the practical example given in Step 1.

Step 3: Group discussion

- Ask students to share what have they found interesting about comic strip they examined. They can present the contents and also share their personal opinions.

Step 4: Opinions, thoughts and comics

- Let the students choose one or more comic strips they want to make their own and add personal messages to.
- The characters in the comics should act as messengers for the student's ideas. The goal is to give the students a safe platform to express their thought without being personally attached to certain words or sentences.
- The students can present their characters to each other. The characters may "agree" or "disagree" with the student's own thoughts, ideas and dreams.

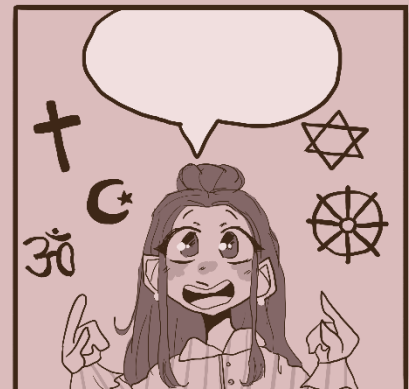
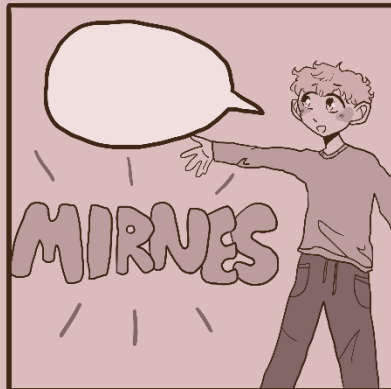
Step 5: Public gallery or discussion

- You can put up the comics in the classroom or arrange a group discussion as described in Option 1.

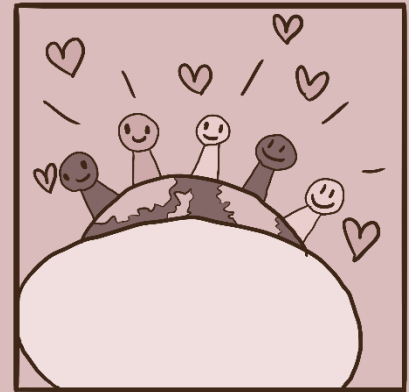
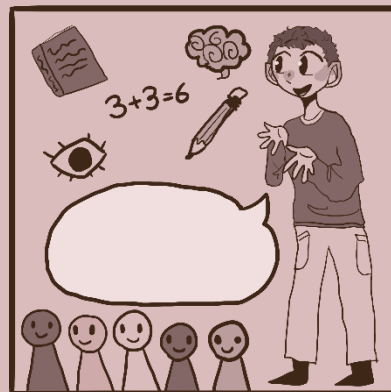
Step 6: Closing up

Encourage the students and tell them that they are the best advocates for children's rights are themselves. Now that they are experts on the subject, they can stand up for all the kids in the world. The best place to support other kids is in the classroom, playground and at home.

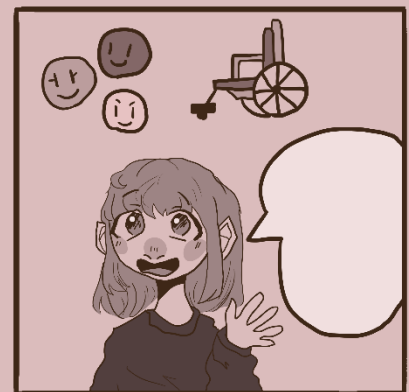
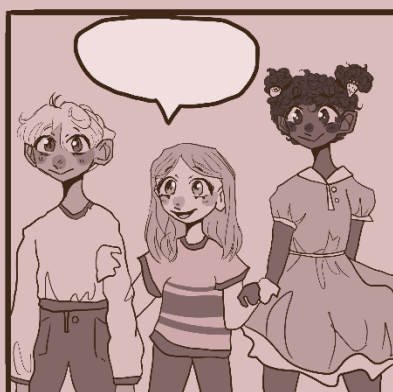
The full comic strip material for the exercises:



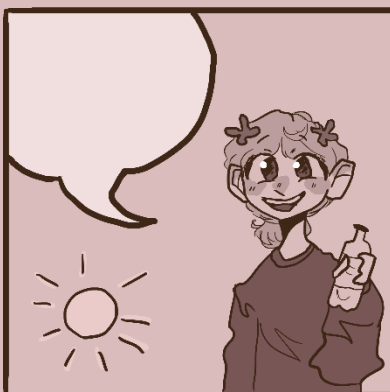
Emina Sulejmanović



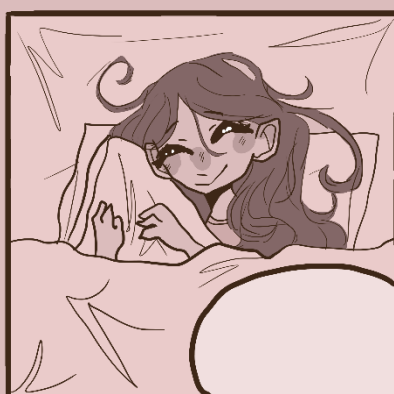
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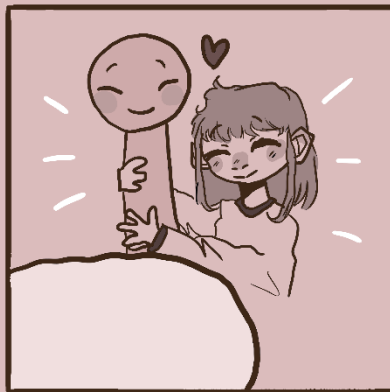
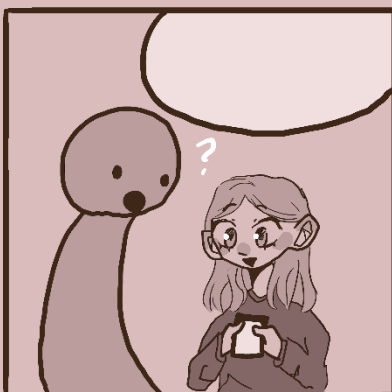
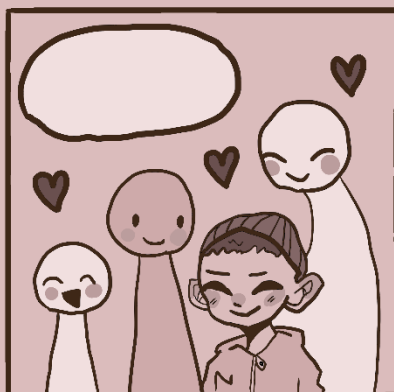
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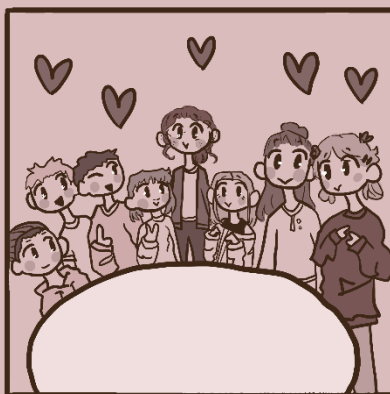
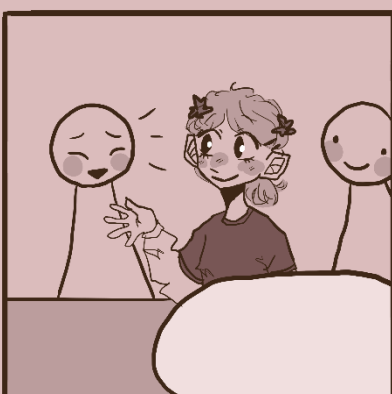
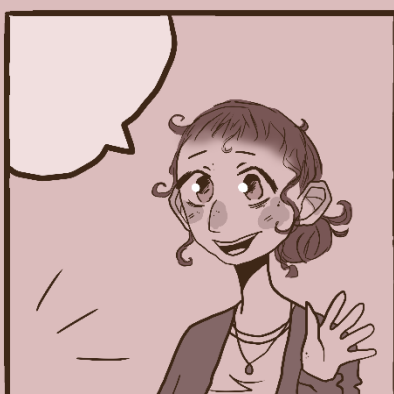
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