



The
STEVE
SINNOTT
FOUNDATION



CREATING CHANGE: the world I want to live in

A resource for educators
with activities to explore
Human Rights.

Introduction

‘The World I Want to Live In’ is a competition launched by the Steve Sinnott Foundation together with The Gambia Teachers’ Union and the National Education Union.

The competition aims to encourage young people to make their voices heard on human rights and to support teachers with human rights education in the classroom.

Climate change, poverty, education, gender equality, equity and inclusion, Black Lives Matter - young people’s voices must be heard on issues that impact their lives, their communities

and their world.

Young people’s voices matter. However, all too often their voices are not heard.

This is why the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child enshrined in international law confirms children’s right to be heard.

This resource serves as a mini-guide to the competition which seeks to promote human rights education for children and young people in the classroom and to provide a platform for their voices on this issue.

What is the World I Want to Live in Competition and how can my class/ group participate? - [Click here for competition entry information.](#)

Creating Change: the world I want to live in

Human rights education is one contribution towards a broader human rights project of achieving greater justice and peace in the world.

It is about enabling individuals to work together, to learn from each other, to identify with the struggles of strangers, whether these strangers live in distant places or in our own communities.

When we think about human rights we often talk about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

These are both very valuable but not necessarily easily actionable. Many countries have signed up to the conventions but each country faces different challenges in implementing them in law.



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Aims and Objectives

- To support participation of children and young people in “The World I Want to Live In” competition.
- To encourage young people to make their voices heard on human rights and to support teachers in exploring human rights with their pupils.
- To provide young people with the opportunity to explore human rights, the relevance of human rights in their own lives, and what they can do to support the realisation of human rights.
- To encourage students and educators to work together to critically examine and interpret what human rights mean in their context and to express their views in a creative way via “The World I Want to Live In” competition.

We encourage everyone to use this resource to learn about human rights creatively, regardless of race, gender, educational needs, disability, sexual orientation, or age.



What is Human Rights Education?

The United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training (UNDHRET, 2011) states that HRE encompasses education:

- a) About human rights, which includes providing knowledge and understanding of human rights norms and principles, the values that underpin them and the mechanisms for their protection;
- b) Through human rights, which includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners;
- c) For human rights, which includes empowering people to enjoy and exercise their rights and to respect and uphold the rights of others.

Our starting point for human rights education is to empower young people to understand the difference they can make in the world.

We want to encourage the voices of tomorrow to understand that they can always make a difference to someone or something and bring about change.

Often it is not a large campaign that brings about changes, it is the small revolutionary acts of solidarity that build a movement for change in society.

By educating people to understand their human rights, we are all better equipped to make these small changes that add up to world change.

Young people have always been drivers of social and economic reform, and today's global youth population is more numerous and interconnected than ever before.

They can play a key role in innovating and imagining rights-based solutions to emerging problems for the human rights framework.

To make sure that young people are not excluded from discussions around human rights norms and how to monitor their protection and defence, we aim to encourage human rights education in schools and community groups.



Image from: Gender Equality and Gender Based Violence workshops in schools for pupils and teachers run by the Steve Sinnott Foundation in Sierra Leone and The Gambia.

Education as a Human Right

Education has been recorded as a basic human right in international law since 1948. It is included in many documents and treaties including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960).

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) is the education goal for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, “a plan of action for people, planet and

prosperity”.

SDG4 aims to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” The 10 SDG targets are listed below.

The violation or lack of access to one right may affect an individual’s ability to access or enjoy other rights. Arguably, education underpins all of the other sustainable development goals.

1

Free primary and secondary education.

2

Equal access to quality pre-primary education.

3

Equal access to affordable technical, vocational and higher education.

4

An increase in the number of people with relevant skills for financial success.

5

Elimination of all discrimination in education.

6

Universal literacy and numeracy.

7

Education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

8

Building and upgrade inclusive and safe schools.

9

Expansion of higher education scholarships for developing countries.

10

An increase in the supply of qualified teachers in developing countries.



The Steve Sinnott Foundation runs a range of initiatives to make sure girls have access to education.

Get Involved

In this section some of our partner educators share some exercises they have used successfully which you can adapt for your own setting to get you started.

The main things to note are that:

- There is no right or wrong way to express your creative side.
- The themes and tips in this resource are just a guide to get you started, you and your students will think of many other human rights themes to explore.
- There are no tests at the end, students are in control of their own learning.
- The aim is to build on everyone's strengths and encourage each other.
- Keep sessions short, start simply and build upon your learning at each session.

Have fun!



Do you Support Human Rights Education?

Audrey Osler and Hugh Starkey have developed an instrument that teachers and students can use to assess whether their school environment is in keeping with the provisions of the CRC. It is printed below and is also available in [Human Rights and Schooling: an ethical framework for teaching for social justice](#) along with other HRE materials.

Children and young people do not simply have the right to education but also the right to human rights education (HRE).

This right was first articulated in the morally binding 1948 [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#), and confirmed in the legally binding 1966 Covenant on Economic, Social and

Cultural Rights (CESCR).

The right to HRE was further developed in the 1989 [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC), the most widely ratified human rights instrument.

Teachers cannot always be confident that it is safe for them to teach HRE despite governments ratifying relevant conventions.

Teachers of young children may wish to use a [child-friendly version](#) of this instrument with their students.

Audrey Osler and Hugh Starkey have also written [Teachers and Human Rights Education](#) which clarifies the relevance of human rights to teachers' everyday work.

Does your school environment give everyone a chance to enjoy their rights?

Young people and adults can both experience the denial of their rights and freedoms. The list below will enable you to judge quickly and easily whether the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is followed in a variety of situations in your school.

Provision

Always Sometimes Never

1. Girls and boys have equal access to all subjects and lessons (Articles 2, 28, 29).

☐ ☐ ☐

2. Any intelligence or skills tests administered by the school authorities take account of cultural differences in minority populations (Articles 2, 28, 29.1c, 30).

☐ ☐ ☐

3. In the teaching of national history, due weight is given to women and minorities and to their versions of history (Articles 2, 13, 28, 29.1c & d, 30).

☐ ☐ ☐

4. Resources for sport (including equipment, activities, times of use) are equally accessible to girls and to boys (Articles 2, 28, 31).

☐ ☐ ☐

5. Extra-curricular activities organised by the school are available to all regardless of ability to pay (Articles 2, 28, 31).

☐ ☐ ☐

6. The school is accessible to people with disabilities (Articles 2, 23, 28).

☐ ☐ ☐

7. The curriculum is organised so that students may opt out of religious education and this possibility is made known (Article 14).

☐ ☐ ☐

Protection

Always Sometimes Never

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8. People are careful not to cause physical harm (articles 19, 28.2). Eg:
a) adults are not allowed to hit young people.
b) young people are not allowed to hit adults.
c) young people are not allowed to hit each other. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. Students' lockers are considered to be private property (Article 16). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. Any personal files on a student kept by the school can be inspected by the student whose file it is and the parents, if appropriate. The file can be checked and corrected if necessary (Articles 5, 16, 17, 18). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11. The contents of any files, whether personal or vocational may not be communicated to a third party without the permission of the student and her or his parents if appropriate (Articles 15, 16, 18). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12. Any person receiving information from a school file accepts that they are bound by confidentiality (Article 16). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13. No posters, images or drawings of a racist, sexist or discriminatory kind may be displayed anywhere on school premises (Articles 2, 17, 29.1b, c, d). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14. People encourage each other to be tolerant, particularly of those who appear different (Article 29). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15. When there is an incident that may lead to the exclusion of a student or disciplinary action, an impartial hearing is organised. In other words, all those involved get a hearing (Articles 28.2, 40). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16. A student accused of breaking the rules is presumed innocent until proven guilty and carries on with classes (Article 28.2, 40). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17. Where a student has infringed someone's rights - student or adult - reparation is expected (Articles 2, 19). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18. Adults infringing students' rights are also expected to make reparation (Articles 2, 19). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Participation

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 19. In their schoolwork students have the freedom to express their own political, religious or other opinions, whatever the opinions of the teacher (Articles 12, 13, 14, 17). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20. The student newspaper is treated like any other publication and is not censored in any way (Article 13). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21. Young people have created or can create an independent student union, recognised by the school authorities as representing all the students in the school (Article 15). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. Young people have as much right to respect as adults (Articles 12, 19, 29.1c). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. Students and adults (including parents, teachers and administrative staff) are consulted about the quality of the teaching in the school (Article 5, 12, 18). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Investigations

Here are some questions to get you thinking about human rights.

Which rights
do you have

?

What does it
mean to have
human rights

?

Do you have
human rights

?

What do you
understand
about
migration

?

What action
can you
take in your
community

?

Are your
rights the law

?

Do you
respect girls
rights in
school

?

Which of your
rights are not
accessible

?

Do rights
conflict with
each other

?

Do your rights
conflict with
the rights of
others

?



Benefits of Creative Learning

It has been said that everyone is creative – we believe this to be true.

Often when we ask students to put their hands up if they are creative, not every student raises their hand.

This is often because we have it instilled in our minds that being creative means being artistic or being good at painting or drawing.

We are all creative in different ways every day, whether it's how we approach

a challenge, how and what we say, how we plan our day, cook a meal, or how we do our homework.

We believe that everyone has a desire to be seen and heard. It is a human right that can be encouraged through learning and play.

Studies have shown that when we express ourselves and learn through creative arts, we become better learners.

Some of the benefits to students are:



Creative Flow Exercises

This section has some ideas from educators across the globe for awakening our creative flow.

Engage the Body and Mind

Stand in a circle and create a rhythm using your whole body. It can be passing the clap as can be seen in this video. [CLICK HERE](#) to watch the video.

The Blind Painter

This exercise is from the Centre for Philosophy for Children, to develop the ability to communicate clearly and the ability to listen actively. One child acts as the 'eyes' the other as the 'painter'. [CLICK HERE](#) to find out more.

Getting Our Voices out into the World

Start by asking the group about any songs they may know that deal with issues connected to human rights. Possibly play them Bob Dylan's *Blowing in the Wind*, Woody Guthrie's *This Land is my Land*, John Lennon's *Imagine*, Bob Marley's *Redemption Song* or Sam Cooke's *A Change is Gonna Come*. Discuss the importance and the meaning of the lyrics.

Organise the group into smaller groups. Ask everyone in each group to write a sentence about one of the chosen themes to be explored and to share with the rest of the group. Can they then put together one verse to be sung from the sentences they have written? Next bring these verses back to the wider group and combine the best verses together into a song. Think about setting it to music, either using percussion instruments and rhythmic speaking or perhaps making use of the melody heard from pre-recorded songs they know.

Another idea is to ask students to bring traditional songs that they might know from home to sing and share. You can then spend time learning about what they mean and ask students to devise a song that they could pass on in their own family or community.

I Am Posters

My Name
Where I live
Something I love about where I live
Something I love to do
My favourite food or music
One of the hardest things I have ever had to do
A challenge I have overcome.

Timed Free Writing

You can give prompts or allow students to write on themes of their own choosing. The most important thing is that everyone just writes freely and without stopping the flow of creativity for a given time. Spellings and grammar etc can be checked once the ideas have been captured on paper.

Watch and Listen Activity

Watch short [animated films](#) about Human Rights, listen to what each other has discovered. Make your own animated film.

Strengths Exercise

This will work well with a group who know each other quite well. Get into groups of 4 and write 3 strengths or positive qualities about each person. Film them in pairs telling each other the strengths and watch the reactions.

Standing up for Change

Who do you know that has stood up for change?
Use the questions below to start a conversation.

Standing up
for justice

?

Acting
courageously

?

Child rights
and climate
action

?

Creating a
world, we
want to live in

?

Ensuring
everyone has
opportunities
to learn

?

Facing our
difficult
history

?

Creating
independent
communities

?

Mastering
independence

?

Valuing
women and
girls

?

Disability and
SEN

?



Stories of Young People who Stood up for Change

Malala Yousafzai

As a young girl, **Malala Yousafzai** defied the Taliban in Pakistan and demanded that girls be allowed to receive an education. She was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman in 2012 but survived. In 2014, she became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.



Frank Mugisha

A Ugandan LGBT advocate and Executive Director of Sexual Minorities Uganda (SMUG), who has won the Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Award and Thorolf Rafto Memorial Prize 2011 for his activism. **Mugisha** is one of the most prominent advocates for LGBT rights in Uganda.



Candice Chirwa

A South Africa-based menstruation activist, speaker, and academic working towards destigmatising menstruation while also lobbying for an end to period poverty in South Africa. In [this interview](#) she talks about what influenced her to become an activist and the importance of NGO's.



Amika George MBE

A British activist who campaigns against period poverty in the UK with her not-for-profit group **Free Periods**. In 2019, the Government committed to funding period products in every single state school and college in England. Find out about her [achievements and motivations](#).



Greta Thunberg

A Swedish environmental activist who at age 15, protested outside the Swedish Parliament to call for stronger action on climate change. Later that year she addressed the 2018 United Nations Climate Change Conference, and inspired by her, student strikes took place every week somewhere in the world. Find out more about [Fridays For Future](#).



Sam Sharpe

In Jamaica, 1831, planned a passive resistance protest, the slaves refused to work on Christmas Day unless their grievances concerning better treatment and the consideration of freedom were accepted by the estate owners. Find out more with [this video](#).



Malawi

Jessy Nkhoma raises about the devastating effects of climate change in Malawi and believes that education will have a real impact on climate change. [Read more here](#).



The Gambia

Both Fatoumatta Jabbi and Therese Mendy have worked with Send My Friend to School and The Steve Sinnott Foundation, campaigning to help women and children in their communities understand the importance of education and enrol at school. [Read more here](#).





My name has been changed...

“I live in a country where my voice cannot be heard.”

Why do you think a person's voice may not be heard?

In what situation might someone have to change their name in order to tell their story?

In your opinion, what impact would it have on someone if they could not tell their story?

Our Stories

One way of learning from each other and understanding ourselves and others is by sharing our stories. When we hear or see stories it allows us to reflect on our life experiences.

If we feel safe and valued, we feel able to share our stories and share them in ways that might not be the same as how other people share theirs; we want to encourage everyone to feel safe to share their stories.

Stories can be shared through drama, mime, movement, dance, spoken word, writing, drawing, painting, animation, sculpture, gardening, singing, drumming, a combination of creative arts or any creative medium you feel is just right for you.

Creative arts are essential to growing young people's voices, to them taking risks to be heard, to them growing together, to raising their voices to stand up for change in the world.

We are all connected and as human beings we want to belong.

So let's start a creative human rights movement, championing education for all children everywhere.

Let's know each other, let's understand each other, let's champion change for those who are less advantaged. Let's embrace all our stories with kindness and love.



Storytelling Around the World

Krik Krak

In Haiti, if someone is going to tell a story, they'll say "Krik?" If the people listening want to hear the story, they'll respond with, "Krak!" It's a way for a storyteller to get the audience ready, similar to, "Come gather round..." in English, but it makes the audience more active.

You could start off by asking students to tell a story for 3 minutes on a theme of their choice and do a go round. You might also invite each person to add to a story timing them 1 minute, by adding "yes and"

Oral storytelling

The people from The Gambia and Sierra Leone and other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa have a strong tradition of oral storytelling. In many parts of Africa, the whole village comes together after dinner to listen to the storyteller.

Like in other cultures, the storyteller entertains and educates people. It is an important way of passing down traditions and ways of learning about oneself and you don't have to be able to read and write to learn.

Griots and griottes

Griots are very important in west African culture. Griots are people who tell stories, sing songs, and help kings. It is how much knowledge is passed on through the generations.

Usually, the job is passed from an older member of the family to a younger member. Both men and women can be griots, but women are called griottes.



The Dot: Storytelling Inspiration from Holtsmere School

Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School is located in Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire. It caters for pupils aged from four to seven years old. We chose to share The Dot by Peter H Reynolds with all of our children.

This story of resilience and uniqueness really resonated with our children. It provided lots of opportunities to talk about how one person's actions can change the life of another person.

We spoke about the power of positivity and encouragement as well as the need to be resilient.

We found lots and lots of ideas online to support our children's creative journeys.

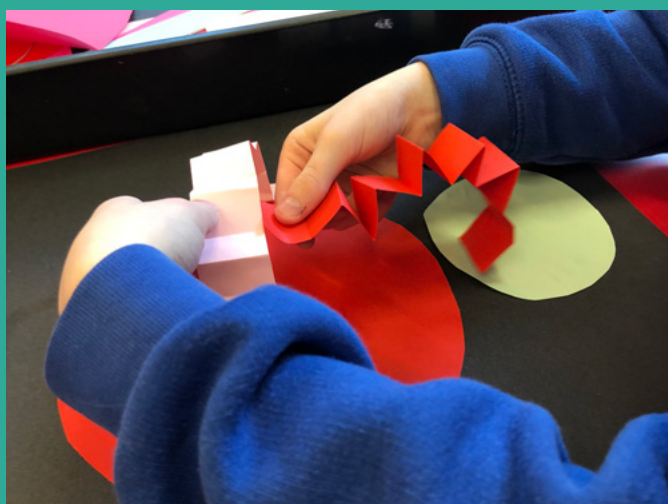
The children started with a dot to create a giant collage.

The photos below show examples of the children's creations.

Everyone's efforts were represented and valued which sent a really powerful message about inclusion and community.



Our Nurture Class particularly enjoyed creating dot sculptures using paper or taking a dot for a walk using pens or finger paints. All of the activities inspired the children to think about what makes them unique and to value the talents and differences of other people.



Inspiration from Artists

Ellie Barrett shares how art can be made from accessible materials you will find around the home, in your school or local community.

Myah Jeffers shares how understanding who we are as human beings is important to knowing our sense of place in the world and therefore understanding our human rights.

Alfonso Montellano López shares how we can start a creative conversation with others or ourselves using simple drawings with or without words.



Ellie Barrett

I make sculptures which represent the material encounter with the environment, and the impact this has upon behaviour, ethics and social exchange.



Imagine a 'sculpture'. What comes into your mind? The first thing you might think of is a huge marble figure, or solid bronze shape, or a tall form of welded metal.

For a long time, 'sculpture' has been something that is 'done to' us, rather than 'with' and 'for' us. When it appears in front of us – in the gallery, in the street – it's monumental, towering and immovable. It's made of materials using processes and equipment that most of us have no familiarity with and no way of accessing. Whether it's a marble figure on horseback or a polished steel cube, 'sculpture' often feels like something we can't participate in and have no cultural ownership of.

In the last 100 years, some artists have pushed against this traditional idea of what 'sculpture' can be and started to experiment with other materials: stuff they found in the street like old car tyres and scrap metal; stuff they found in their houses like cardboard, string and fabric; and stuff they found that connected to other processes outside of art like concrete, animal fur, fat and plants.

This shift in sculpture is important when we

think about learning, empowerment and human rights. It can be easy to think about these concepts as invisible things that we can't hold in our hands. Whilst this is partly true, it's also the case that learning and empowerment can be influenced by things we can grasp - objects, materials or even other bodies we encounter in our daily lives. These things have a profound effect on the way we absorb, process and share information, and therefore how we view ourselves, one another and the world we live in together.

Sculpture is the perfect place for thinking about material interaction and discovering more about ourselves. Getting our hands dirty making things is a way of taking up space, gaining confidence and sharing our stories. These activities are deeply connected with learning, identity and empowerment. A key element of ensuring that sculpture is an accessible activity that all sorts of people can engage in is making sure that the materials we use are familiar and accessible to as many people as possible. Once we expand the materials we use to make sculpture, we also expand the things that sculpture can do for us.

<https://elliebarrett.com>

Case Study

One of my recent projects demonstrates how **salt dough (how to make it)** can be a useful tool to promote accessible learning and collaborative empowerment. **Personal Histories** was a socially engaged sculpture project supported by the National Festival of Making, based in Blackburn UK. This project enabled me to think about accessibility, production and participation as a means of creating spaces for shared learning.

For the first phase, I researched sculpture plinths in towns across Lancashire notably in Preston, Lancaster and Blackburn. These were made from marble or stone, and most of them supported statues of powerful men. In my studio, I recreated them using only salt dough. Replicating solid, powerful structures in an everyday material is a way of removing their authority.

In the second phase, I invited people who live in Lancashire to make their own sculptures that would go on top of the plinths. I ran a series of online workshops using Zoom where we experimented with making salt dough sculpture. Material played such an important role again: these workshops were during lockdown, so we were restricted to what we could find in our homes. Salt and flour were ideal.

It was important to me that these workshops weren't formal technical methods based, but encouraged everyone to experiment and share their discoveries. This format is called a "makerspace" and promotes non-hierarchical mutual learning from everyone in the room. I learnt a lot of new tips and tricks from the people who came to these workshops.

Afterwards, all of the participants had time to make a new sculpture using the ways of working we'd learnt from the workshops. I asked people to make something which represented their experience of the "everyday". It was important to me that we were sharing something about ourselves using a material we have in our homes. When the sculptures were brought together, it was a way of being with each other to share our experiences, even though we weren't able to do this in person.

The project encouraged people to think about sculpture as an accessible activity we can all use to raise our confidence levels, share our stories and learn more about each other. The completed sculptures were displayed on top of the plinths I'd made in Blackburn Bus Station in May and June, 2021.



Myah Jeffers

A Barbadian-British award-winning documentary and portrait photographer, dramaturg and director, living in London and working across the UK and internationally.

How Often Do You Truly See Yourself?

How often do you look in the mirror?

How often do you study the details of your face, by taking in every intricate detail?

How often do you look into your own eyes and experience the power of your own gaze?

How often do you allow yourself to deeply consider your desires, fears, achievements, and insecurities?

How often do you truly see yourself?

For the past five years, I've used portrait and documentary photography as a tool to tell socially, culturally, and politically rich stories. To document truth.

Part of the reason why I decided to become a photographer, was the opportunity to intimately study a person and to mutually engage in a vulnerable practice.

I always seek to create an environment where the person I'm photographing feels comfortable enough to share themselves in their entirety. To allow themselves to be seen.

By acknowledging someone's existence through taking their portrait, I'm able to honour the truth of who they are at that moment. Documentation is incredibly important because it also allows me to show people how I see them, which can often help them to further understand themselves.

However, I recently realised that I wasn't

doing the same thing for myself. I wasn't giving myself space to honour my truth or to see myself for who I was.

I began to understand that truly seeing yourself helps to gain a deeper sense of empathy for not only yourself but also for others. Empathy has the power to revolutionise our personal relationships, as well as combat inequality, prejudice, and conflict.

The dots were beginning to connect. Standing up for justice has always meant using photography as a weapon against racism, classism, sexism, etc, but I began to realise that it also meant understanding who I was within that context.

So, I decided to set myself a challenge. A challenge that would make me extremely uncomfortable and vulnerable, but a challenge I knew I had to take. I gave myself the task of taking a series of self-portraits.

Below is an image from the self-portrait series, using a technique called multiple exposure. I wanted to capture the moments when I have felt overwhelmed by life and instead of drowning under that weight, I decided to acknowledge those vulnerable parts of myself. This helped me to further understand those closest to me, who were also dealing with difficult emotions. It led to a deeper sense of empathy for myself and others.

I now challenge you to take a step towards truly seeing yourself, in whatever way you feel is right for you.

<https://www.myahjeffers.com>

TASK: Take your own self-portrait



Things to think about:

How will you set up your space?

Will it just be your face, half body or full body?

Will you hold the phone or set it on timer?

What props will you use? If any?

What type of light will you use? A lamp? Natural light from window? Fridge light?

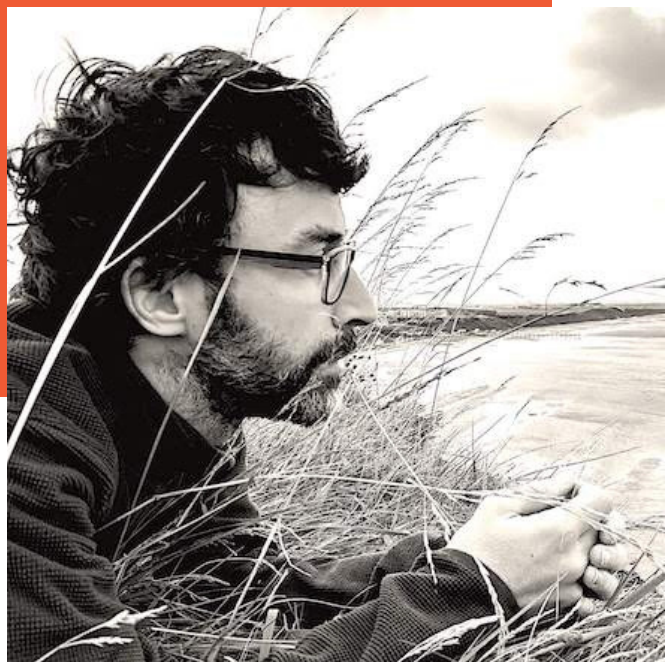
Will you look at the camera or away from the camera?

What story are you trying to tell with this image?

Good luck! And remember to acknowledge all of the vulnerable or difficult parts of you.

Alfonso Montellano López

I am a Spanish author-illustrator of children's picture books who fell in love with drawing and writing the first time I held a pen (which wasn't necessarily thin) and a brush (which wasn't necessarily thick). I also write poetry and short stories as well as play the guitar and compose calm piano music. I work as an engineer and live in Cambridge (UK) with my wife and two children who encourage and inspire my creativity.



Thin Pen and Thick Brush

Or how I draw (and why)

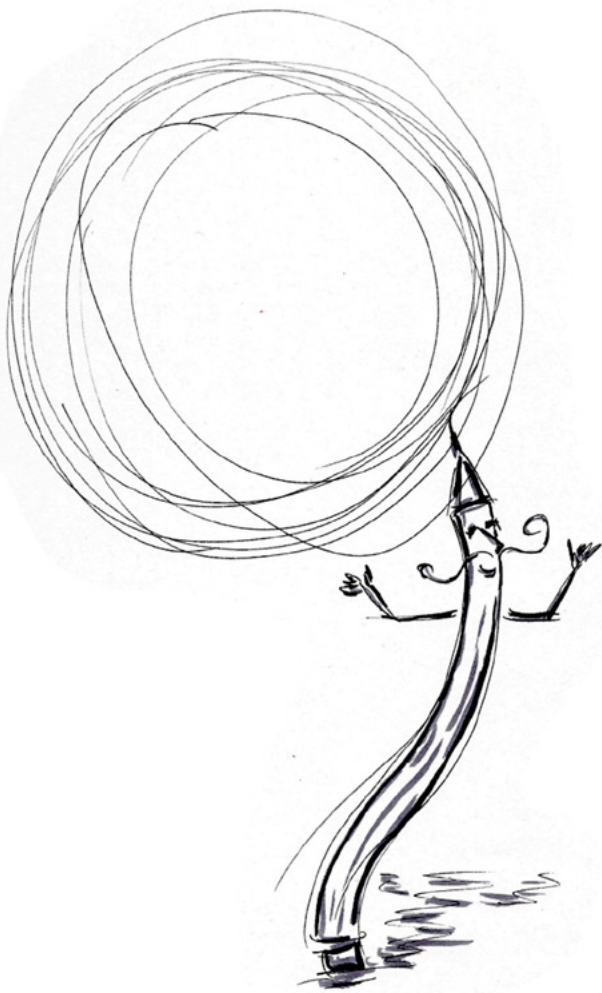
Usually, the first thing I draw is the face of the characters in a scene. I start with a circle, with many lines that I draw with a thin pen, a fine liner. Once I have all the lines I feel might be necessary, I change the thin pen for a thick brush and redraw over the lines that will make the final features of the character's face. I draw brushstrokes for the nose, the eyes, the mouth, the contour of the head, the hair... Then I do the same with everything else in the drawing, the body of the characters and the landscape or objects that surround the characters.

For most of my drawings, I like to leave all the thin lines I drew while thinking what the character would look like when doing whatever it is that she or he is doing. I think this shows the many possibilities the artist thought (or drew) for the character and it also adds dynamism to the scene - people and things are in a particular position in the final drawing but they could have been placed slightly upwards or downwards or slightly to the right or the left. The thick line that shows the features of the people and the other things focuses the eyes (and maybe rests the mind) of the reader.

To me, letting all the thin lines be part of the final drawing is an important part of the creative process. In fact, it is a way to make the creative process part of the final drawing. It helps me observe and accept that the final drawing is what it is but that it could have been different. The thin lines also show that things are in constant motion, constantly changing, like the reality around us. The thin lines sometimes show a position or shape that the artist initially thought not to be good enough for the final drawing. But what is good enough? Is there such a thing? Maybe all the shapes and compositions a particular drawing could have taken are equally interesting?

Making all those thin lines part of the final drawing is a way of posing the question of the many shapes reality can take and accepting that they are all valid. Having the thin lines that construct the drawing next to the thick lines that show the final drawing are also a reminder that things are never perfect and that perfection is not a requisite for beauty or happiness.

<https://www.alfonsoml.com>



TASK: the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush

I wrote and drew the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush to share these ideas and show this technique to others. I hope this inspires you to create and represent all the beauty around you in a way that helps you make peace with the things you don't like and celebrate those that you do.

You can download the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush below - both with and without words (you can put your own). There is also an ideas and activity sheet to inspire conversation and creativity.

Download the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush With Words - [CLICK HERE](#)

Download the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush Without Words - [CLICK HERE](#)

Download the story of Thin Pen and Thick Brush Activities and Ideas Sheet - [CLICK HERE](#)

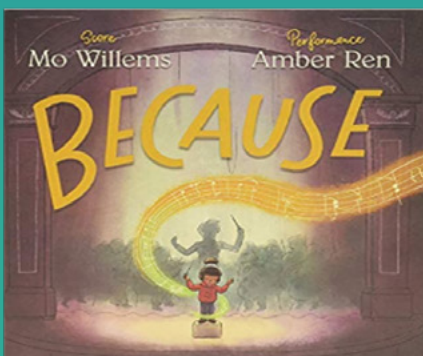
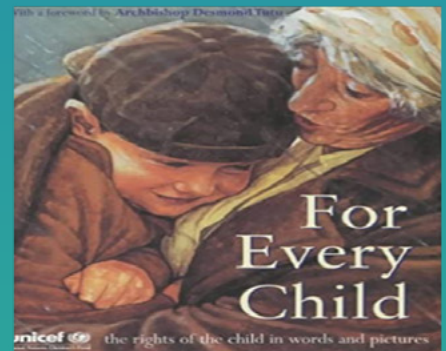
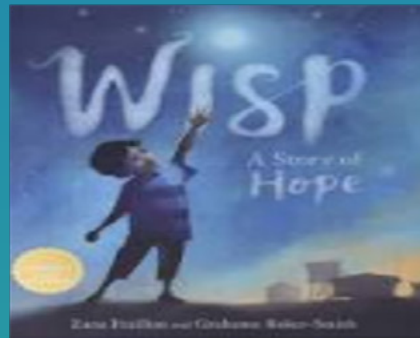
Primary School Reading List

Check out the following websites for ideas for stories for younger children to teach them about human rights.

Amnesty: primary school teaching human rights literature - [CLICK HERE](#)

Book Trust: books about refugees and asylum seekers for younger children - [CLICK HERE](#)

The lists include many accessible picture books to gently introduce children to the concepts of equality, empathy, resilience and activism.























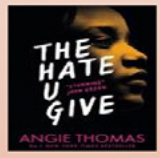





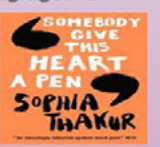



Secondary School Reading List

Amnesty: secondary school teaching human rights literature - [CLICK HERE](#)

Book Trust - [CLICK HERE](#)

Stonewall website - [CLICK HERE](#)

<p>How High the Moon Author: Karyn Parsons Interest level: 9-14 Reading age: 9+</p>  	<p>White Eagles Author: Elizabeth Wein Interest level: 12-15 Reading age: 8+</p>  	<p>Watch Us Rise Author: Renée Watson and Ellen Hagan Interest level: 13-16 Reading age: 10+</p>  	<p>Noughts and Crosses Author: Malorie Blackman Interest level: 12+ Reading age: 12+</p>  
<p>Nothing Ever Happens Here Author: Sarah Hagger-Holt Interest level: 10-14 Reading age: 9+</p>  	<p>Where the River Runs Gold Author: Sita Brahmachari Interest level: 10-13 Reading age: 9+</p>  	<p>Inheritance Author: Balli Kaur Jaswal Interest level: 14-18 Reading age: 10+</p>  	<p>Here I Stand Author: Various Illustrator: Chris Riddell Interest level: 12-18 Reading age: 12+</p>  
<p>Illegal Author: Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin and Illustrator: Giovanni Rigano Interest level: 10-16 Reading age: 10+</p>  	<p>Until We Win Author: Linda Newbery Interest level: 12-16 Reading age: 7+</p>  	<p>The Road of Bones Author: Anne Fine Interest level: 11+ Reading age: 11+</p>  	<p>The Hate U Give Author: Angie Thomas Interest level: 12-18 Reading age: 12+</p>  
<p>Child I Author: Steve Tasane Interest level: 9-11 Reading age: 9+</p>  	<p>The Other Side of Truth Author: Beverley Naidoo Interest level: 11-16 Reading age: 10+</p>  	<p>Somebody Give This Heart a Pen Author: Sophia Thakur Interest level: 12-18 Reading age: 12+</p>  	

More titles:

When We Speak of Nothing by Olumide Popoola

Resisters: 52 Young Women Making Herstory Right Now by Lauren Sharkey and Manjit Thapp

Unheard Voices collected by Malorie Blackman

I am Alfonso Jones by Tony Medina

A Game for Swallows: To Die, To Leave, To Return by Zeina Abirached

Black Brother, Black Brother by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Other Resources

We hope you find this guide useful. Our partners for this resource are – National Education Union (NEU), Gambia Teachers Union (GTU).

Here are some other resources that you might find helpful.

Human Rights Resources:

1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights - [CLICK HERE](#)

1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child - [CLICK HERE](#)

Rights of the Child: child-friendly version - [CLICK HERE](#)

Human Rights and Schooling: an ethical framework for teaching for social justice - [CLICK HERE](#)

Teachers and Human Rights Education - [CLICK HERE](#)

Seen and HEARD, secondary school resource pack - [CLICK HERE](#)

Amnesty International, Human Rights Academy - [CLICK HERE](#)

ACT Association for Citizenship Teaching - [CLICK HERE](#)

Youth Forum, Human Rights Tool - [CLICK HERE](#)

Creative Storytelling Resources:

Steve Sinnott Foundation: My Life Changed storytelling resource - [CLICK HERE](#)

PositiveNegatives Org, What Are Human Rights animated video - [CLICK HERE](#)

Mike Fleetham Surprising Stories to Stimulate Creativity - [CLICK HERE](#)

A Conversation with Sam Sharpe on Death Row: Fighter for Human Rights - [CLICK HERE](#)

