

Variations

Compose other statements, or ask members of the group to make up their own.

Suggestions for follow-up

Organise a formal debate on one of the issues, asking people to prepare their arguments in advance, and then take a vote at the end of the debate. You could invite other young people or members of the public to attend.

Knowing about human rights is important, but being an active citizen is also essential if rights are to be safeguarded. You may like to try the activity, "Electioneering", on page 164. This looks at the question of persuading others over to your opinion.

When talking about human rights it is important to be aware of the words you use and the impact they have. For instance, you should consider whether to say "gay" or "homosexual", or whether to use the term "disabled people", "handicapped people" or "people with disabilities". The group may like to discuss the issues of plain speech and political correctness through the activity "White future" in the All Different – All Equal Education Pack.

Ideas for action

Get in touch with a local organisation that works for human rights or social welfare and find out how you can contribute.

Further information

Chapter 4 of the manual contains background information on the different generations of rights, including an introduction to "third generation" rights.

Handouts

Sheet of statements

- It's more important to have a home, food and basic necessities than to be able to say what you like.
- People have a duty to work, but not a right.
- The most basic responsibility of any government is to make sure that all citizens have enough to eat.
- The right to "rest and leisure" is a luxury that only rich people can afford.
- It's not the government's job to make sure that people don't starve – but the people's!
- The way we choose to treat our workers is no business of the international community.
- Poor countries should concentrate on ensuring a basic standard of living for all before worrying about the civil and political rights of their citizens.
- Extreme economic inequality is an infringement of basic rights.
- Social and economic rights express an ideal for the future, but the world is not ready to guarantee them today.
- If rights can't be guaranteed, there is no point in having them.
- Some rights are more important than others.
- Some people have, naturally, more rights than others.
- Some people are homeless because they want to be.
- Rich people are happier than poor people.
- It's impossible to eradicate poverty totally.
- We aren't born with rights; we get them.

KEY DATE



5 December
International
Volunteer Day for
Economic and Social
Development

