

Advertising Human Rights

Let's tell the world about Human Rights



Complexity



8-13 years



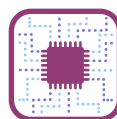
60-90 minutes



4-30 children



Human Rights



Digital Environment

Type of activity

Storytelling, drawing, writing, drama

Overview

Children develop a TV advertisement for children's rights

Objectives

- To develop critical thinking skills in relation to advertising and the media
- To practise creativity and communications skills
- To deepen understanding of human rights
- To develop ideas on how to promote children's rights

Preparation

If possible, set up video equipment to record the advertisements or use a mobile phone.

Children will already need to be familiar with children's rights. See the Adaptation for suggestions if they are not.

Materials

- Paper and art supplies

Instructions

1. Divide children into groups of three or four. Explain that they have been asked to advertise children's rights. Each group will make an advertisement for television or for the Internet that lasts between one and three minutes, to make people aware of and understand a particular right.
2. Ask children to describe some advertisements that have caught their attention. Brainstorm features of good advertisements (e.g. clever phrases, sound effects, music, humour, a serious message).
3. Explain that each group will need to decide on an audience for their advertisement – for example, is it to be aimed at children, parents, teachers, the general public or all of these? Brainstorm a few other possible audiences and discuss ways in which an advertisement can be made attractive to a chosen audience. Give some examples if necessary, for example, what would make it interesting to parents? To children?
4. Quickly refresh children's knowledge of children's rights, for example by brainstorming the rights that they can remember.
5. Start the work in groups, reminding them that each group should begin by choosing a right they want to advertise and the audience(s) they want to address. Encourage them to choose a right that they think people really need to know about, and an audience of people who really need to know about it. Ask someone from each group to report back on which right they have chosen for their advertisement, and which target audience.
6. Once groups have chosen a right, they should develop an idea to advertise it. Encourage them to consider different ways of presenting the right (e.g. acting out a story, singing a song, drawing the storyboard for a cartoon). Remind them that they will be making a video for TV or online use,

so it should be visually interesting and have action. Remind them to make it simple enough to be presented in less than three minutes.

7. Circulate among the groups to monitor their progress. Once a group has completed their advertisement, ask them to give it a title and begin to rehearse the scenario.
8. When all groups have planned their advertisements, bring the whole group together to share ideas and get feedback from others. Ask each group to explain their right, their audience, and their ideas. If they are ready, they can also try to perform it. Record any performances with a camera or mobile phone. After each description or performance, encourage constructive suggestions and feedback from others in the group, asking questions such as:
 - Will this idea appeal to the chosen audience?
 - Will it clearly convey the idea of the right to the target audience?
 - What do you like about the ideas presented?
 - Can you offer any suggestions for improvement?
9. Give the groups further time to improve and practise their advertisements.
10. Ask each group to present their advertisement and plans to each other.

Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
 - Were any parts of this activity especially challenging? Especially fun?
 - Do you think that the audience you were thinking of would like your advertisement?
 - Are advertisements always positive? Why or why not?
 - Were your characters realistic? Were there any stereotypes of people? How could you change this in your video?
 - Will this activity change the way you look at advertisements?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
 - Why did your group choose that particular right?
 - Why did you choose that particular audience?
 - How do you think people are likely to react to your advertisement? What will it make them think or do?
 - Is a TV advertisement a good way of sending people a message about human rights? Why or why not?
 - Can you think of any human rights that would be difficult to advertise or represent?
 - Why is it important for children to know about their rights?

Suggestions and follow-up

Upload the videos made by the children to your club or school website, or make a blog about 'Our rights' where you could post the videos. Make sure you have parents' authorisation for all children included in the videos.

Explain that many advertising campaigns combine TV advertisements with graphic advertisements in print media such as magazines or newspapers or as posters on kiosks, buses and in other public places. Start by asking the children to look through the print media or their neighbourhoods to find advertisements they like, and to discuss what makes them attractive. Then ask the children to develop a two-dimensional, graphic advertisement of a right. These graphic advertisements could

also be created on computer, if the technology is available. Make an exhibition of the images for the children's centre or school.

Point out that many advertising campaigns employ a famous personality. Ask for some examples from the group. Who would they choose to take part in their advertisement? Why would that person be appropriate for the right or audience they have chosen?

Discuss with the children what it would be like to make a longer human rights video that told a story:

- How would it be different from an advertisement?
- What would it be important to think about when writing the story and producing the video? (e.g. a good narrative; practical considerations such as expenses; the human rights message)?

Ideas for action

If at all possible, make good quality videos of these advertisements! You could ask for technical assistance with lighting and sound, or the loan of equipment from local TV stations or film schools. Remember, however, that even a "bad" video can be a learning experience.

If it isn't possible to make a video, you could perform the stories as if they were being filmed. Several of these advertisements could make a lively human rights lesson for other children or parents.

Encourage children to critique advertisements that they have seen:

- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the intended message?
- What are viewers supposed to do or think, as a result of the advertisement?

Tips for the facilitator

This is a complex activity that may challenge children and require them to use new skills (e.g. writing dialogue or songs, developing a storyboard). The facilitator needs to monitor the groups' progress carefully, helping children to keep on task, and moving them forward.

Some groups will move faster through the process than others. If a group completes one task, give them individual instructions for the next step. Give groups plenty of time to practise and to revise their advertisement after feedback.

Use the activity to encourage critical thinking about advertising and its purposes, and to practise giving and receiving constructive criticism.

Due to the nature of advertising – promoting a complex aspect in a very short amount of time –children might bring into play stereotypical representations of people belonging to certain groups. If that is the case, the facilitator should be ready to address this during the debriefing and/or in subsequent activities. At the very least, facilitators should raise children's awareness of the power of stereotypes in promoting aspects such as anti-Roma racism, antisemitism, disabilism, homophobia, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, etc.

Adaptation

This activity requires familiarity with human rights generally and children's rights in particular. You may want to extend the brainstorming at point 4 to cover general features of children's rights or human rights. If children appear to need more background to human rights, you could begin with a more introductory activity, e.g. 'Board Games'. To familiarise children with the CRC specifically, you could assign each child an article of the CRC and ask them to illustrate it; then ask children to read out their article and explain their illustration.