

## **ADVICE FOR STUDENTS: Using visual arts media to communicate Human Rights**

Human Rights are principles that describe standards of human behaviour. They are an *intrinsic* (essential) part of being human. All human beings are entitled to them regardless of their race, nation, religion or ethnic origin. They rely on *empathy* (deep understanding of the feelings and thoughts of others). They should be protected through the *rule of law* and only taken away through fair legal process.

“Human Rights may be generally defined as those which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings. Human Rights and fundamental freedoms allow us to develop fully and use our human qualities, our intelligence, our talents and our conscience and to satisfy our spiritual and other needs. They are based on humankind's increasing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity and worth of each human being are accorded respect and protection. Their denial is not only an individual and personal tragedy but also creates conditions of social and political unrest, sowing the seeds of violence and conflict within and between societies and nations.”

*ABC Teaching Human Rights Practical Activities for Primary and Secondary Schools* (United Nations, 2004, p6)

Human rights are abstract ideas. It is challenging to convey them using visual arts media. Use the following steps in the creative and critical thinking process to develop your ideas and produce your masterpiece.

*(Critical and Creative Thinking Continuum; Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority website, 2017)*

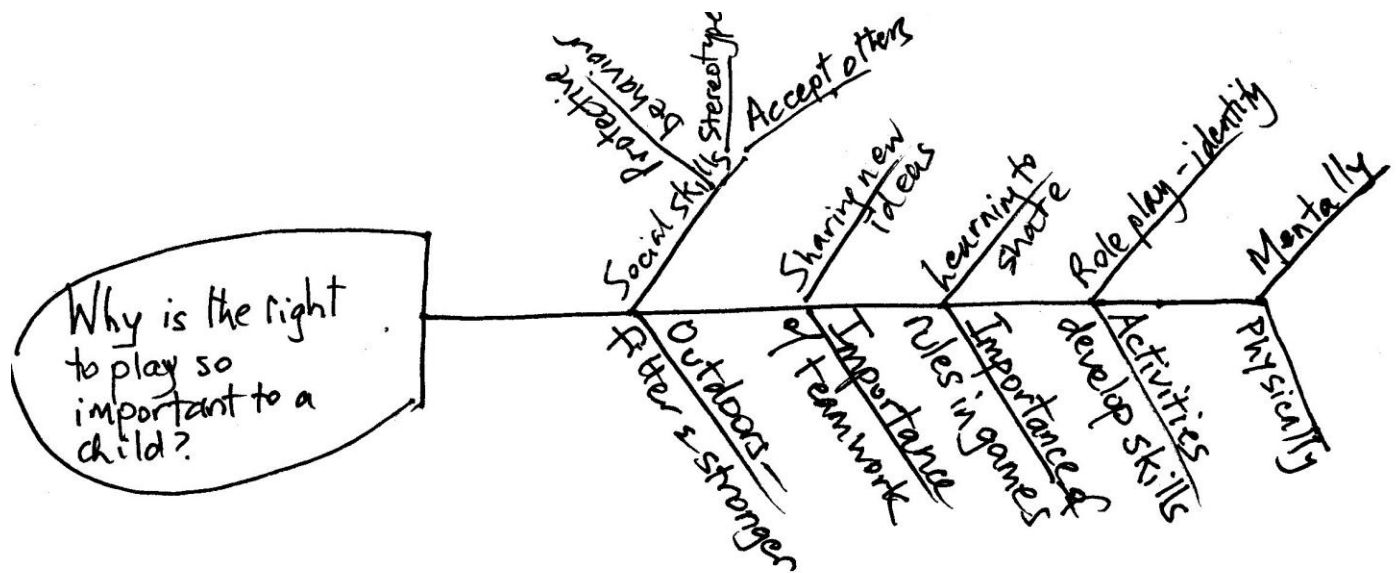
*The child's right to play* is used to illustrate the process.

### **Inquiring**

1. *Pose questions* - to expand your knowledge about the human right.  
e.g. What are human rights? Why is the right to play considered so important to a child? What are the different types of play? What happens when a child engages in play activities?
2. *Clarify information and ideas* – identify main ideas from a range of sources.  
e.g. What ideas and information have I gathered from my research on play?
3. *Organise and process information* – compare ideas and information gathered and arrange them in groups.  
e.g. Which are the more important ideas about play that I may be able to communicate?

### **Generating Ideas, Alternatives and Actions**

4. *Expand and combine ideas and information to generate some alternatives*  
e.g. Can I use a fishbone diagram to combine and categorise the ideas found in my research about the value of play? See example for the *right to play*



5. *Consider and select alternatives* -  
e.g. Which of these ideas could I visually convey? What image will I use to convey it? Which visual arts media would best suit that type of image?
6. *Put ideas into action* – having selected the idea and medium to represent it visually, start doing it.

### Reflecting on Ideas and Processes

7. *Think about thinking (metacognition)* – use own judgement (and perhaps gain feedback from others) to assess whether the visual image works. Does my image communicate the idea I intended?
8. *Reflect on processes* – Think about the visual arts media selected to communicate the idea. The range of media includes drawing, painting and collage on a range of materials. It may also include electronic art, photography, film, animation.
9. *Transfer knowledge to new context* – After thinking about the effect of the idea and medium selected, is there a better way or a better idea to show the value of this human right?

### Evaluating

10. *Apply logic and reasoning* – Having considered and implemented the alternatives evaluate (assess value) of the ideas and media tested. Consider reasonable criticism.
11. *Draw conclusions and design a course of action* – Make a decision and finish the product.
12. *Evaluate procedures and outcomes* – What do others think of my work? Did it communicate the idea I intended? Did my selected media work as intended? How might I approach this sort of challenge in the future? What did I learn about human rights?