



The World Around Us

A Thematic Primary-Level Curriculum
for Children's Rights Education ©

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Contains Excerpts from Original Curriculum Materials

**The World Around Us:
A Thematic Primary-Level Curriculum
for Children's Rights Education ©**

CURRICULUM MATERIALS

**Teaching Overviews
Learning Activities
Annotated Resource Lists**

Curriculum materials developed and written by

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

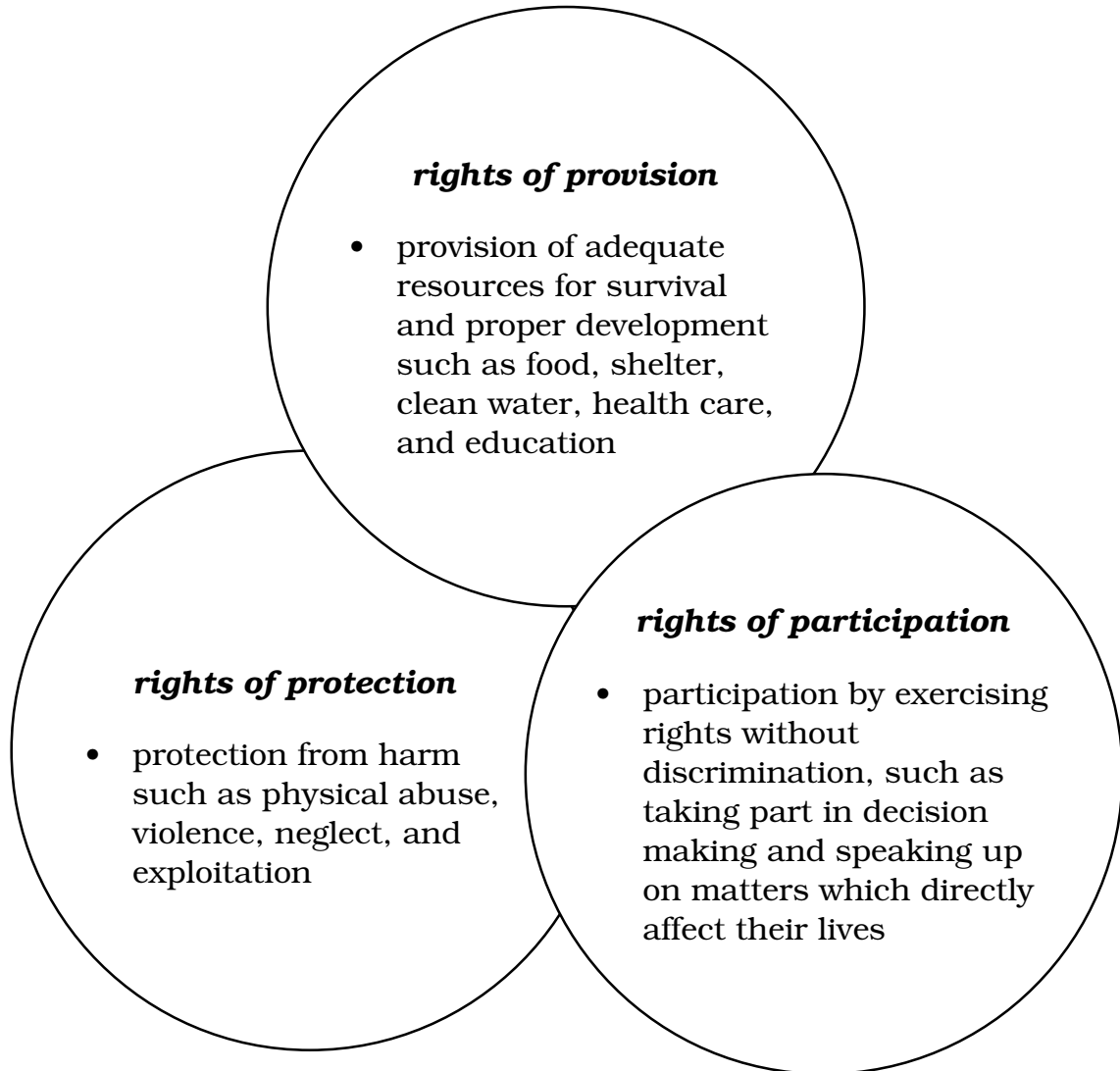
Introducing this Curriculum for Children's Rights Education

The World Around Us curriculum for children's rights education has been researched and developed to help young students explore themes, concepts, and issues relating to respect as well as children's rights and responsibilities. In the spirit of children's rights advocacy, the design and content of this curriculum supports the present *United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education* (1995 - 2004). This decade advocates that children and adults alike should learn about human rights as stated in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). Within the context of this United Nations document, in general, **children's rights** are seen as the special human rights of every child and youth, or claims to things which are essential to their dignity, security, and reasonable freedom. In particular, children's rights and freedoms include rights of provision, protection, and participation, as described on page 2.

The World Around Us curriculum materials address children's rights of provision, protection, and participation within five thematic modules:

- Module #1 Respect, Rights, & Responsibilities
- Module #2 Children, Families, & Friends
- Module #3 Education, Learning, & Growing
- Module #4 Food, Health Care, & Homes
- Module #5 Safe, Friendly, & Peaceful World

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* is a human rights document that recognizes the rights and freedoms of every child and youth.



Responsible Citizenship

Since the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* reaffirms children's rights of provision and protection rights, and with the inclusion of participation rights for children, it recognizes children as developing persons who are capable of eventually participating in civic life. Article 29 of the covenant addresses the goals of education, which include the development of children to their fullest potentials and their preparation for responsible life in a free society.

The key purpose of *The World Around Us* curriculum is to promote responsible citizenship through education. This approach to education offers students opportunities to develop their citizenship skills such as expanding conceptions of rights and responsibilities, as well as fostering a sense of respect and responsibility. What is meant by the term **respect** is a regard for human rights, dignity all human beings, and our environment as all life is sustained by it. Fulfilling obligations related to rights, taking care of oneself and others, and making the world around us a better place to live and grow are considered aspects of personal and social **responsibility**.

Developing such skills of responsible citizenship can involve the interactive processes of thinking, feeling, and acting. An implication for schools and families is that both institutions should offer children access to suitable information and experiences which lead to an awareness of rights and responsibilities as well as a means to enact them, such as through *The World Around Us* curriculum.

Curriculum Goals

The World Around Us curriculum promotes responsible citizenship, while it encourages children's understanding and exercising of rights and responsibilities, within the limits of their capacities. To this end, the main goals of this curriculum include:

- fostering respect for rights and dignity of oneself and others;
- taking some responsibility for choices and actions;
- encouraging just and caring interactions;
- conceptual development — expanding learners' understanding of respect, rights, and responsibilities;
- developing social skills — listening, speaking, and sharing;
- practising literacy skills — reading and writing;
- participating in decision making and problem solving; and
- making the world around us a better place to live and grow.

So that students can develop their skills of responsible citizenship and learn to exercise rights with appropriate guidance and direction within their capacities to do so, they need to recognize consequences of their choices and actions. Giving children ongoing opportunities to exercise their participation rights — such as expressing opinions, helping make decisions, group membership, and privacy — is emphasized in the content and strategies of this set of curriculum materials.

MODULE # 1

Learning Activities

Content:

Learning Activity #1	Showing Respect
Learning Activity #2	Wants, Needs, and Rights
Learning Activity #3	Rights to Think, Feel, Do, and Say
Learning Activity #4	Taking Some Responsibility
Learning Activity #5	Making Decisions
Learning Activity #6	Red, Yellow, and Blue

Strategies:

Comparing and contrasting

Concept mapping (Ideas Map)

Critical thinking and inquiry

Decision making and problem solving

Guided questioning and discussion

Independent learning and interdependent learning

Puppetry

Responsive writing process

Role playing

Sentence frames

Venn diagram (Circles Page)

Module #1

Learning Activity #1

Showing Respect

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- *3 Rs: A Children's Book on Respect, Rights, and Responsibilities*
- *All Kinds: Who cares about race and colour?*
- *Dear World/Cher monde*
- *Eagle Feather: An Honour*
- *For Every Child, A Better World*
- *The Patchwork Quilt*

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1) You need to choose one book from either the above list for this activity or the list at the end of this unit.
- 2) You need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 3) You need to listen to and talk about questions with partners. You can also decide to work by yourself. Sometimes you will need to work and play with partners.
- 4) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) After you read the book of your choice, answer the following questions. Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Write your ideas in your Learning Log.
- 2) We have talked about showing respecting for people. Some children say that respect is looking after each other and the world. Others say that respect is treating others like we want to be treated. What does showing RESPECT mean to you?
- 3) What are some ways this book talks about showing respect for children?
- 4) What are some ways we can show respect for all kinds of people?
- 5) What are some ways you can show respect for your friends and family?
- 6) Review: Pretend that you and your classmates have been asked to teach another classroom of students and their teacher about showing respect. What do you think the students and the teacher would want to learn about respect? How would this book help you teach grown ups about showing respect for children and other people? Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Please write your ideas in your Learning Log.

Module #1

Learning Activity #2

Wants, Needs, and Rights

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- *3 Rs: A Children's Book on Respect, Rights, and Responsibilities*
- *Every Kid's Guide to Understanding Human Rights*
- *For Every Child, A Better World*
- *For Every Child: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child*
- *If You Could Wear My Sneakers!*

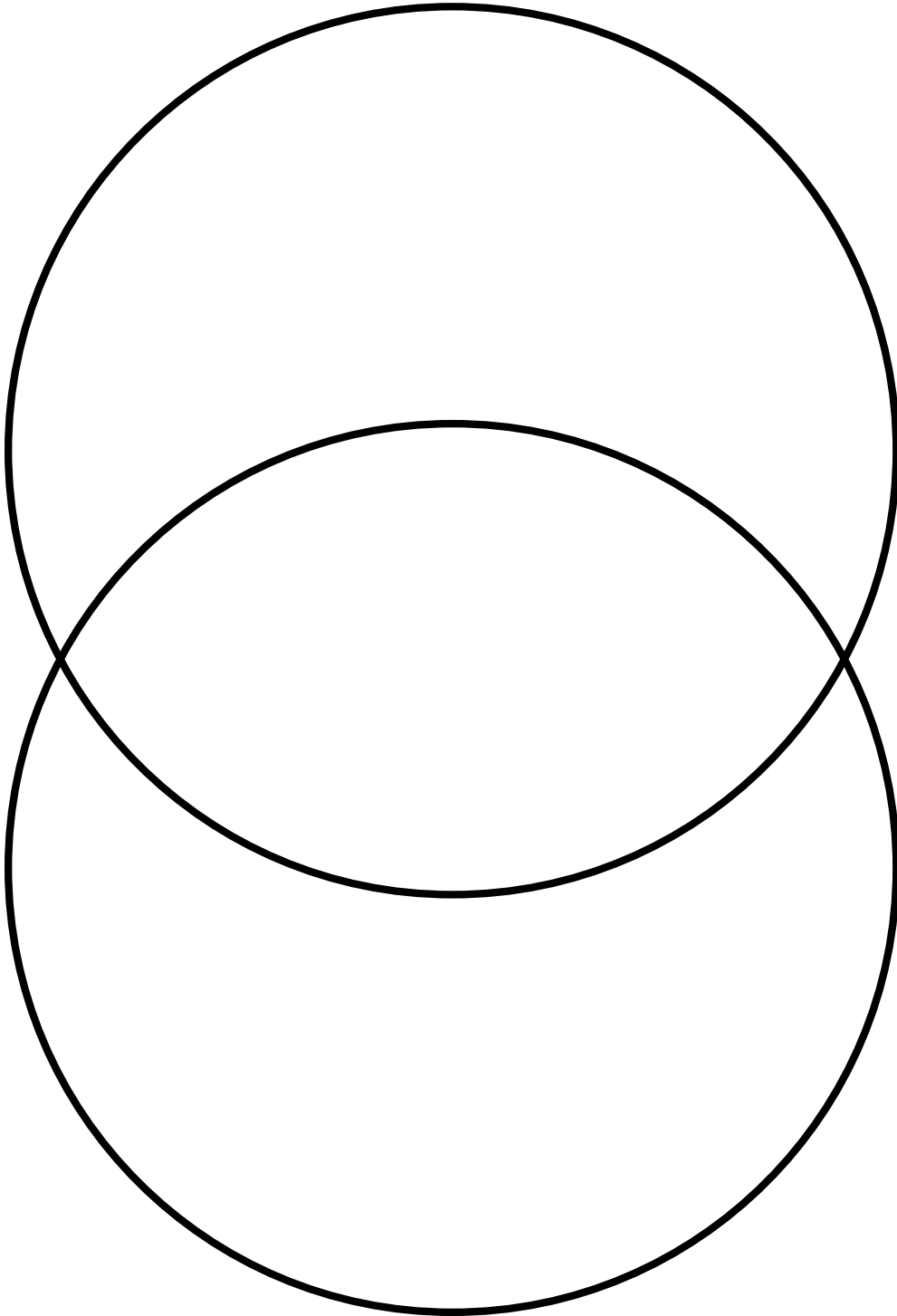
WHAT YOU NEED

- 1) You need to choose one book from either the above list for this activity or the list at the end of this unit.
- 2) You need to use one Circles Page. You also need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 3) You need to listen to and talk about questions with partners. You can also decide to work by yourself. Sometimes you will need to work and play with partners.
- 4) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) After you read the book of your choice, answer the following questions. Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Write your ideas in your Learning Log.
- 2) Some children say that RIGHTS are what we really need to be all right. What does this book say about all children having the same rights in the world around us?
- 3) Now use the Circles Page – Wants Needs and Rights
 - Print the word **Wants** in the TOP circle and then print or draw what you want in that circle.
 - Print the word **Needs** in the BOTTOM circle and then print or draw what you need in that circle.
 - Print the word **Rights** in the MIDDLE part where the 2 circles overlap. Think about what you really, really need to live and grow and print those ideas in that MIDDLE part.
- 4) List ways in which your wants are the same as your needs? List ways in which your needs are the same as your rights?
- 5) What are you learning about the rights of all people — children and grown-ups alike?
- 6) **Review:** Children have rights because we need people to care for us, keep us safe, and listen to us. What does this sentence mean to you? Talk and listen with one or two partners about this question, if you like. Please write your ideas in your Learning Log.

Circles Page — Wants, Needs, and Rights



Module #1

Learning Activity #3

Rights to Think, Feel, Do, and Say

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- 3 Rs: A Children's Book on Respect, Rights, and Responsibilities
- Every Kid's Guide to Understanding Human Rights
- For Every Child, A Better World
- For Every Child: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child
- If You Could Wear My Sneakers!

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1) You need to choose one book from either the above list for this activity or the list at the end of this unit.
- 2) You need to use one Ideas Map. You also need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 3) You need to listen to and talk about questions with partners. You can also decide to work by yourself. Sometimes you will need to work and play with partners.

- 4) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) After you read the book of your choice, answer the following questions. Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Write your ideas in your Learning Log.

- 2) We have talked about children's wants and needs and rights. Now finish these sentences in your Learning Log:

- I want to be... to have... to do...
- I need to be... to have... to do...
- I have a right to think... to feel... to do... to say...
- Children have rights to think... to feel... to do... to say...

- 3) Now use the Ideas Map — Children's Rights

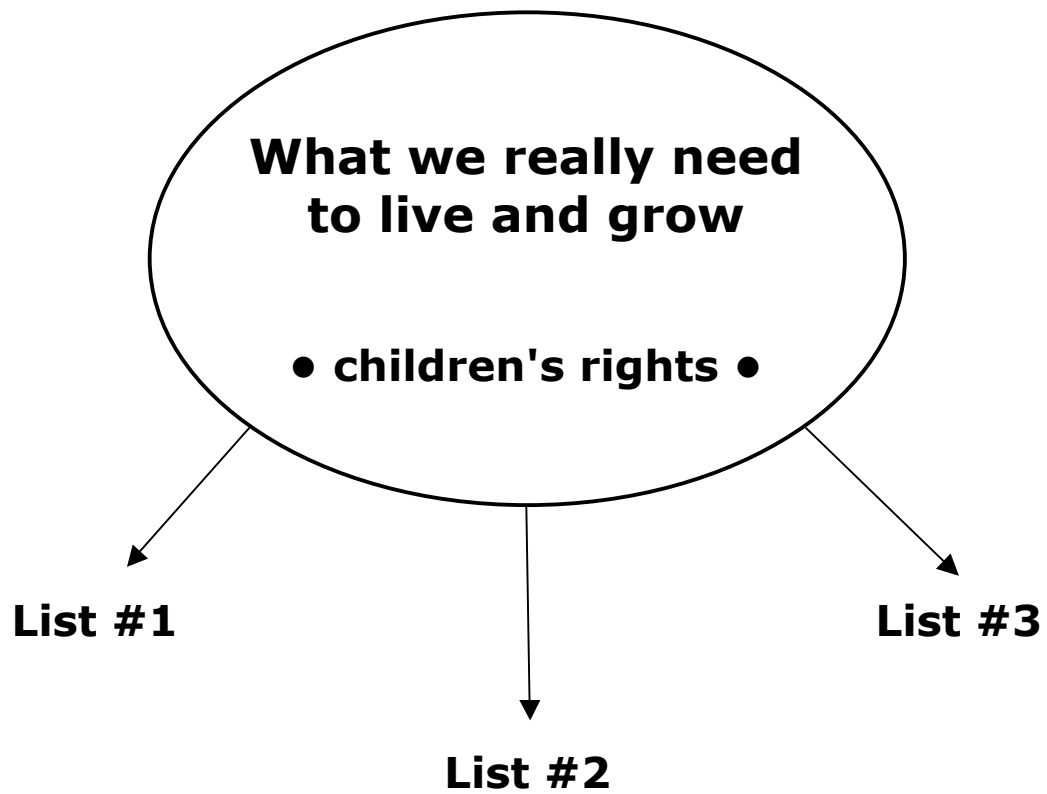
List: list what we really need to live and grow.

Circles: draw circles around the ideas almost the same.

Lines: draw lines to show groups almost the same.

- 4) **Review:** How might this Ideas Map help other children learn about children's rights? What other ideas could you make ideas Maps about? Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Please write your ideas in your Learning Log.

Ideas Map – Children's Rights



Module #1

Learning Activity #5

Making Decisions

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1) You need to use one Making Decisions activity sheet. You also need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 2) You need to work with one partner and each of you could have a puppet.
- 3) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) Children have the right to have choices and make decisions about things that matter to them. What do you need to think about in order to make fair decisions?
- 2) Sometimes you can make decisions on your own and sometimes you need help from other people. Then there are times when you need others to make decisions for you. What is a decision?
- 3) What are some BIG decisions you might make? What are some small decisions you might make? Write your ideas in the Learning Log.

- 4) Making decisions that help us fix a problem is called PROBLEM SOLVING. Find one partner. You will now have a chance to work together on making a decision and fixing a problem.
- 5) Now use the Making Decisions activity sheet. Begin by thinking about what one problem that needs to be solved. Choose a problem from this list or think of another one:
 - Problem #1: A new classmate doesn't yet know her way around the school.
 - Problem #2: You find a lost puppy but do not know who owns it.
- 6) Next work through Step #1, Step #2, and Step #3 on the Making Decisions page.
- 7) Review: Act out the Problem-Choices-Decisions with your partner. If you have puppets, you might want to use them to act out your decisions. Which decision seems to be the best one? Is your decision working? If it is not, then what can be done now? Talk and listen with a partner about these questions. Write your ideas in the Learning Log.

Making Decisions

Step #1: Problem

Describe the problem.

Step #2: Choices

Think about the choices. How does each choice help you? How does each choice help others? What might happen to you and to others if these choices are made? List what might happen beside each choice.

Choice:

What might happen:

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Step #3: Decisions

Decide which choice you want to make. Is it a fair decision? List your decision or decisions here.

Annotated Resource Lists

Respect, Rights, & Responsibilities

Print Resources

Berry, Joy. (1987). **Every Kid's Guide to Understanding Human Rights.** – Chicago, IL: Children's Press.

The themes of this book include human rights and the rights of children, in particular. It explains why children have certain rights, i.e., the right to be yourself, to be honest, to have basic needs met, to contribute to decisions that affect you, to grow and develop at your own pace. The final section in the book addresses some children's responsibilities.

Blades, Ann. (1971). **Mary of Mile 18.** – Montreal, PQ: Tundra Books.

The themes in this book include the needs of a wolf-pup, and the little girl's responsibility for taking care of its needs.

Canadian Children's Project. (1986). **Dear World/Cher monde.** – Agincourt, ON: Methuen Publications.

The themes of this book includes respect, peace, hope, war, hunger, pollution. It contains a collection of Canadian children's drawings, poems, and stories that explore the question *What would you do to put the world right?*

Child's Play. (1989). **All Kinds: Who cares about race and colour?** – New York, NY: Child's Play (International) Ltd.

The themes of this story include issues of race and colour and it examines some similarities and differences amongst people. The book emphasizes the notion that we need to care for each other regardless of our race or colour because we all belong together in one family.

Fitch, Sheree. (1997). **If You Could Wear My Sneakers!** – Toronto, ON: Doubleday.

The theme of this book is children's rights to provision, protection, and participation. A series of fifteen vivid illustrations and children's poems reflect articles of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

Flournoy, Valerie. (1985). ***The Patchwork Quilt***. – Concord, ON: Dial Books.

The themes of this story include African ancestry as well as respect, love, and trust shown within the extended family. This story tells of Tanya who loves to watch her grandmother make a patchwork quilt. When the grandmother turns ill, the mother and brothers help Tanya to finish the patches that represent parts of the family history.

Gikow, Louise and Ellen Weiss. (1993). ***For Every Child, A Better World***. – New York, NY: Muppet Press/ Golden Book.

The theme of this book is the important message that some children do not have the basic needs of life met. This book **provides vivid** illustrations and simple restated text of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* that tells of the rights of children.

Plain, Ferguson. (1989). ***Eagle Feather: An Honour***. Winnipeg, MB: Pemmican Publications.

The themes of this story include First Nations ancestry and death of a grandparent. It tells of a young Ojibwa boy and his relationship with Mishoomis, who teaches his grandson the values of respect for life through traditional activities and stories. The boy receives his grandfather's eagle feather, a great honour bestowed only on the worthy and respected. The story ends with the grandfather's death.

Poulin, Stéphane. (1987). ***Can You Catch Josephine?*** – Montreal, PQ: Tundra.

The themes of this story include a child's responsibility for looking after his pet cat, Josephine. It presents humorous antics of the cat as she follows Daniel through a school in Quebec.

This book is available in French under the title: *Peux-tu attraper Joséphine?*

Raffi. (1988). ***One Light, One Sun***. – Toronto, ON: Crown Publishers.

The themes of this story include the family and ethnic diversity. Based on Raffi's song by the same title, it shows how three families discover that they have much in common, despite physical challenges and diverse ethnic backgrounds.

UNICEF. (1989). ***For Every Child: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child***. – London, England: Hutchinson Children's Books. American edition: ***A Children's Chorus: Celebrating the 30th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Child***. New York, NY: E. P. Dutton.

The theme of this book is children's rights. It provides an explanation of the ten principles within the *Declaration* that are restated in simplified text. The works of international illustrators accompany the text.

Wallace, Ian. (1984). ***Chin Chiang and the Dragon's Dance***. – Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.

The themes of this book include Chinese ancestry, self-esteem, and mutual respect and friendship across the generations. Chin Chiang's dream of dancing in the Dragon Dance, in celebration of the Chinese New Year in Vancouver, BC, comes true as he builds his confidence and learns to overcome his fear of failure with the support of his extended family.

White, Jacqueline. (1991). ***Coyote Winter***. – Toronto, ON: Lester Publishing.

The themes in this story include Hutterite ancestry as well as values of compassion and freedom. It tells of a group of children who live on a Hutterite colony in Alberta. The children go on a spring walk with their teacher and find a coyote with its paw in a trap, which they set free. The preface and illustrations provide some insight into Hutterite traditions.

Non-Print Resources

Children First. (1996). UNICEF, Reader's Digest, and National Film Board. Video #: 96702 (English) and 96703 (French).

This series of animated film addresses the basic rights of all children to a family, food, shelter, peace, and dignity. The video was produced to honour the 50th anniversary of UNICEF. 55 minutes Gr. 3 and up

Degrassi Kids Rap on Rights. (1989). – UNICEF-Canada. (English and French).

This video features Ontario's special ambassadors to UNICEF who speak about the need to ensure the rights of all children throughout the world. Gr. 3 and up.

Every Child/Chaque enfant. (1979). – Hull, PQ: Canadian International Development Agency, National Film Board, and Société Radio-Canada. NFB #: 0079 014.

This animated film addresses every child's rights to a name and nationality. A nameless baby boy is bounced from house to house in search for someone to care for him. The film was produced to commemorate the international Year of the Child in 1979.

Kidzone III: Your Rights. (nd). – Vancouver, BC: Knowledge Network.

The four short video stories relates to children's rights and freedoms to which all children are entitled: *Billy and the Turban* concerns cultural diversity, *Nancy* addresses special needs and education, *Rap Song* presents a rap about children's rights, and *Writing on the Wall* looks at environmental pollution and the need to be heard. 20 minutes.

Kidzone IV: Child Rights. (nd). – Vancouver, BC: Knowledge Network.

The four short video stories relates to children's rights and freedoms to which all children are entitled: *Defend Your Rights* explores the right to privacy and the need to protect all rights, *My Brother* examines different families, *Spirit Song* looks at environmental protection, and *Spread the Word* addresses propaganda about different cultures. 20 minutes.

Raised Voices. (nd). UNICEF. (English).

This video portrays youth in four countries, South Africa, UK, Brazil, and USA, and how they are promoting children's rights. Video is most suitable for elementary grades and up. 25 minutes. Gr. 3 and up

Righting Our Future. (nd). UNICEF-Canada. (English and French).

(1) Video addresses the children's rights to have a name, identity, and self-expression. (2) Video addresses the children's rights to protection from exploitation. 12 minutes each. All ages

Rights From the Heart/Droits au coeur. Hull, PQ: Canadian International Development Agency, National Film Board, and Société RadioCanada. NFB #: 0092 093.

This video compilation presents a collection of short animated stories that are based on the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The seven wordless vignettes are: Coco-the right to learn with dignity; Papa-the right to be heard; TV Tango-the right to play; The Orange-the right to adequate food; Door to Door-the right to be respected; A Family for Maria-the right to a family; To See the World-and all children have the same rights. 33 minutes.

Rights On! (1991). UNICEF-Canada and YTV. (English).

This video contains three segments which address participation of children and youth in Canada and developing countries. Informal discussions explore youth opinions relating to the rights of the child. Video is most suitable for elementary grades and up. 20 minutes each segment. Gr. 3 and up

Ronno (Ron Hifier and Judy Millar with Children). (1989). ***Lunchbag Lizard.*** – Cambridge, ON: Western Publishing (Canada).

The themes of this collection of lively songs include co-operation, self-respect, respect for others and respect for our world, and diversity and similarity amongst people.

That's Right. (1989). UNICEF-Canada. (English).

This video portrays the daily lives of two children of Ghana and two children of Canada. They express their ideas on the rights of each of the world's children. 15 minutes. Gr. 3 and up

Module #2

Learning Activity #7

All Sorts of Families

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- *3 Rs: A Children's Book on Respect, Rights, and Responsibilities*
- *Flowers for Mom*
- *Gretchen's Grandma*
- *Joseph's Boat*
- *Mama, Do You Love Me?*
- *Millicent and the Wind*
- *Someone Just Like Me*

WHAT YOU NEED

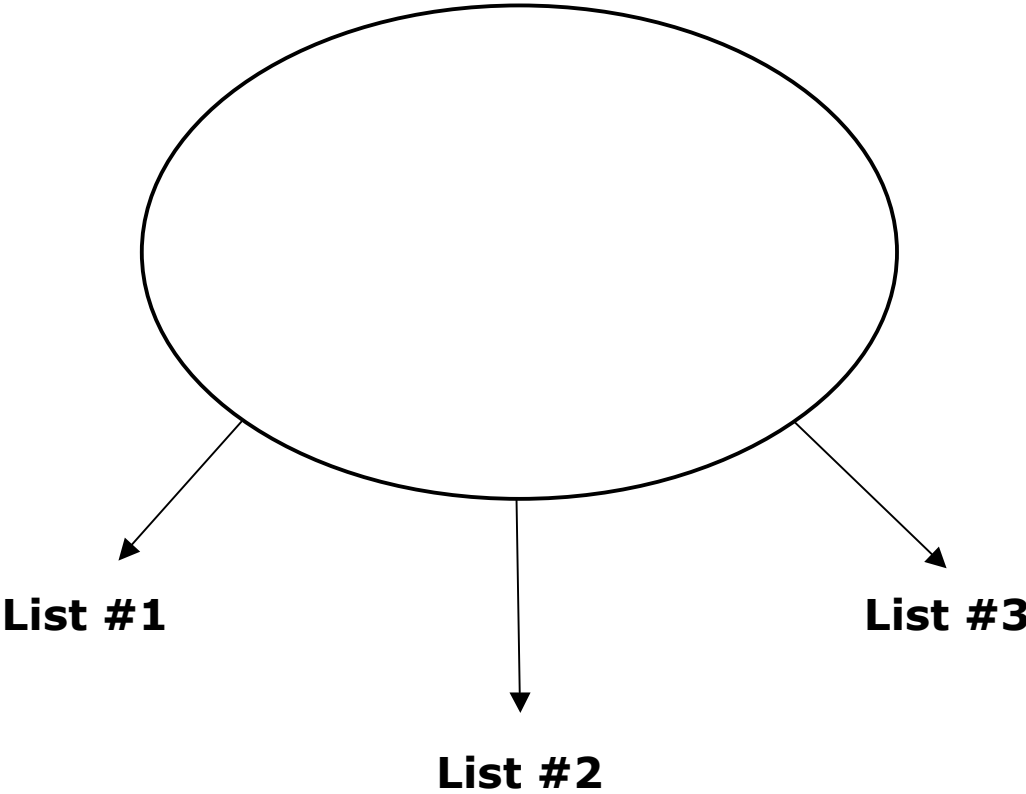
- 1) You need to choose one book from either the above list for this activity or the list at the end of this unit.
- 2) You need to use one Ideas Map You also need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 3) You need to listen to and talk about questions with partners. You can also decide to work by yourself. Sometimes you will need to work and play with partners.

- 4) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) After you read the book of your choice, answer the following questions. Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Write your ideas in your Learning Log.
- 2) We have talked about the right of all children to have someone to love them and a family to care for them. Now finish these sentences in your Learning Log:
 - Some families include people like...
 - Some families include pets like...
 - Some families are the same because...
 - Some families are different because...
 - Some families...
- 3) Now use the Ideas Map All Sorts of Families
 - List: list who a family can include.
 - Circles: draw circles around the ideas almost the same.
 - Lines: draw lines to show groups almost the same.
- 4) **Review:** Why do you think that we have families? What can families give to us that we need in order to live? Why are families especially important for children?

Ideas Map - All Sorts of Families



Module #3

Learning Activity #1

Think, Feel, Do, and Say

SUGGESTED BOOKS

- *Ears of Louis*
- *Every Kid's Guide to Being Special*
- *Harry and Willy and Carrothead*
- *I'll Do It Myself*
- *Important Book*
- *Is this You?*
- *Special People*
- *The Don't-Give-Up Kid and Learning Difficulties*
- *The Gift*

WHAT YOU NEED

- 1) You need to choose one book from either the above list for this activity or the list at the end of this unit.
- 2) You need to use your Learning Log and your imagination.
- 3) You need to listen to and talk about questions with partners. You can also decide to work by yourself. Sometimes you will need to work and play with partners.

- 4) You need to read ALL of the WHAT YOU DO sentences BEFORE you begin the activity. Have fun learning!

WHAT YOU DO

- 1) After you read the book of your choice, answer the following questions. Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. Write your ideas in your Learning Log.
- 2) We have talked about the right to think, feel, do, and say things which are important to us. Why should we try to respect the many different ways that people think, feel, do, and say things?
- 3) What might some children think about that is important to them? What do you think about that is important to you?
- 4) What might some children feel inside that is important to them? What do you feel inside that is important to you?
- 5) What might some children that is important to them? What do you that is important to you?
- 6) What might some children say or talk about that is important to them? What do you say or talk about that is important to you?
- 7) **Review:** What else would you like to say about something that is really important to you? To whom would you like to say it? Why is it important to you? Talk and listen with one or two partners about these questions, if you like. How are your answers to these questions the same as your partner's ideas? How are your ideas different?