

The human rights balloon

Length		40-50 min or (20-30 min, short version)
Difficulty		Medium - Participants should have been through the Declaration previously
Group size		Small to medium
Aim		To promote reflection around the relative value of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and make participants truly familiar with the contents of the Declaration.
Description		An imaginative discussion game in which participants have to rank how important different human rights are to them.
Materials		A copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for each participant
Source		Education for peace

Outline and instructions

Divide the students into groups of 4 or 5.

Ask them to imagine that they are flying in a balloon high up in the air, but the balloon is sinking fast! In the balloon they are carrying Human Rights and each article in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a heavy brick. They need to throw bricks out to stop the balloon from falling.

Ask the participants to discuss how important different rights are to them and arrange the rights in the Declaration in the order they would throw them out.

Go through the groups answers in plenum, and compare and discuss them.

SHORT VERSION

For a simpler, quicker version of the exercise divide the human rights into groups before giving the list to students. For example: Basic rights (articles 1-5), legal

rights (articles 6-11), privacy (article 12), nationality (articles 13-15), family life (article 16), property (article 17), freedom of thought, belief, expression (articles 18-20), democratic rights (article 21), social security (articles 22-25), education (article 26), culture and ethnicity (article 27), framework for rights (articles 28-30)

Participants should treat each 'group' of human rights as a brick to be thrown out of the basket, giving them a choice of 12 as opposed to 30 bricks to put in order. This takes about 20-30 minutes, depending on how much time you allow for discussion.