

CHANGE IN A BOX: LESSON PLAN

LESSON OVERVIEW

A 30-minute lesson to help students consider the rights afforded to citizens in the UK, some of the challenges faced by different diverse identities, and the contribution they can make in making positive change in this respect.

CURRICULUM LINKS

This lesson contributes to some of the national curriculum's learning aims for Key Stage 3 citizenship programmes in England:

- Develop an interest in volunteering and other forms of responsible activity
- Think critically and debate political questions
- Explore the rights of citizens in the UK
- Understand the ways in which citizens work together to improve their communities
- Consider diverse identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding

LESSON PLAN

Teachers will need to be familiar with the presentation slides and speaker notes. An audiovisual set-up with a project/screen and sound will be required. Students will need pen and paper. The rear pages of any exercise book is fine, though large flipchart paper and pens will work particularly well. Working in teams is encouraged.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST PROBLEMS FACING THE WORLD TODAY? (10-MINS)

INTRODUCTION (5-MINS)

Introduce the session and the learning aims. Acknowledge that life during the COVID-19 pandemic has been exceptionally difficult. There were lots of new challenges, but that it also gave greater exposure to existing challenges too.

Challenge students to spend 60-seconds jotting down responses to the following questions. They don't need to share these answers if they don't want to.

- What was particularly challenging for you during the last year?
- What challenges faced by others did you become more aware of?
- What bigger challenges facing society did you become more aware of?

Remind students that their answer to the first question is private. Ask if anybody would like to share their answers to the second two questions. Discuss some examples of wider societal challenges.

HOW DO YOU WANT THE WORLD TO BE DIFFERENT? (5-MINS)

Tell students that, during lockdown in March 2020, some people put up posters of the quote displayed on screen. Explain the changing things for the better means staying open and active: listening to others, watching the news, trying to understand the world.

Tell students they are about to play a competitive listing game. The challenge is to write down, as quickly as possible, answers in response to a prompt question. This game can be played in two ways: either, students write down as many answers as possible in a given amount of time; or, students write down just ten answers - and the first person/team to get ten wins.

Prompt question: What are the biggest problems facing the world today?

Review and compare some answers. Are there any common themes or unusual answers? Explain that, although it will take time and effort, many of these problems can be solved - but we face another big problem that affects all these issues: inaction.

WHAT IS SOCIAL ACTION? (15-MINS)

TYPES OF SOCIAL ACTION (5-MINS)

Explain that, when people take practical action to create positive change, we call this 'social action'. Ask for some examples of social action, and introduce the three different types of social action. Use the case study slides to give examples of each.

Types of social action: Contribute, Create, Campaign

PLANNING SOCIAL ACTION (5-MINS)

Ask students/teams to discuss some of the problems facing the world today, and select just one. This can be the issue they feel is most urgent, or just something they feel passionate about.

Return to the listing game, and ask students to brainstorm some social action ideas which might help the problem. Remind students that the aim of the game is speed, rather than high-quality answers. Share some ideas afterwards. Ask students what the next steps might be if they wanted to choose just one idea. What things would they need to consider? What would the criteria be for selecting the best idea?

WHAT IS MY PLATFORM? (5-MINS)

Explain that, sometimes, the best ideas are the ones which make use of the tools we already have available. Everybody lives different lives, has different skills, and different resources. When we use our resources, connections, and skills to help others this is called our 'platform'. Use the case studies to give examples of different platforms:

Types of platform: Influence, Abilities, Resources

Ask students to consider what platform they have, and to plot their social action ideas on a graph. One axis should measure how impactful their ideas could be; the other should measure how easily students could implement this idea (using the platforms available to them). Share and discuss some findings.

CONCLUSION (5-MINS)

Thank students for their work and ideas. Explain that having ideas is the easy part! We can all sometimes feel like we don't have the power to change things, but the case studies have demonstrated that everybody has a little bit of power. It is up to each individual to use their power to make change, bit by bit. Close-off the lesson by recapping the learning aims.

ADJUSTMENTS

LESS ABLE STUDENTS / SHORTENING THE LESSON

For less able students, the lesson can be simplified to focus on two things: identifying problems, and ideating solutions. The introductory questions, definitions, and 'types of social action' (contribute, create, campaign) could be skipped.

MORE ABLE STUDENTS / LENGTHENING THE LESSON

For more able students, or to lengthen the lesson, it might be useful to discuss how we decide what makes change 'positive', and the discrepancies between individual responsibility and corporate/governmental responsibility. You might also like students to consider what barriers prevent active citizenship (lack of information, feeling powerless, access to digital platforms or to attending in-person events). You could also end the lesson by asking students to write a 'citizenship pledge' - something they want to do, or explore further, moving forward.