



ARTICLE OF THE WEEK


RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS


unicef
 UNITED KINGDOM

INSTRUCTIONS

This flexible resource is intended to provide you with some easy to use, appropriate rights-related learning to share with your children, their families and your colleagues.

Please **edit out non-relevant slides** or tasks before sharing with students. Please check the content works for your learners and feel free to add any content that would make the material more relevant to your setting.

This pack also provides links to learning resources from third parties and from the UK Committee for UNICEF (UNICEF UK) that you can access for free.

- **Slide 3: Introducing Article 3**
- **Slide 4 & 5: Exploring Article 3 - Question and Answers**
- **Slide 6, 7 & 8: Primary activities**
- **Slide 9, 10 & 11: Secondary activities**
- **Slide 12: Reflection**



ARTICLE 3

Helen Trivers, RRSA Senior Professional Adviser, introduces Article 3



Click [here](#) to watch on YouTube

Article 3 – Best Interests of the Child

The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children





EXPLORING ARTICLE 3

Who makes decisions that affect the lives of **children and young people**?

Have a think and write down some answers.



EXPLORING ARTICLE 3

Did you think of these?

- Parents or carers
- Other family members
- Teachers
- Healthcare workers
- Social workers
- Sports coaches
- Youth workers
- Police officers
- Members of the government
- Local councils
- Children's Commissioners
- Court officials – judges, lawyers

Did you have any others on your list?



PRIMARY ACTIVITIES

You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.

With the youngest children begin an exploration about what's best for them and who decides. Perhaps use a story such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* to explore that not all choices are necessarily wise. How do adults help to decide what's best for children?

Listen to or read the book [**You Choose**](#) by [**Nick Sharratt and Pippa Goodhart**](#). After reading ask children how they felt about making all of those decisions. Explain to them that adults make lots of decisions about children's lives and that when they make these decisions, they have to think about what is best for children. Discuss a few examples of these decisions.

In your school, there are many adults who look out for your best interests. Draw round your hand and on each finger write the name of a trusted adult you can go to if you feel worried. This will be called your "Trusted 5". Maybe these could be displayed in your class.



Show the children this icon and discuss how it represents the message of Article 3. Invite the class to create their own image for this article.

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES 2



You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.

What do adults, as duty bearers, do to ensure your best interests in school and wider community?

Make a thank you card for a duty bearer who always thinks of the best of interests of children when they make decisions.

Watch this very short video from the Children's Commissioner's team in Scotland. Discuss in class all the decisions that adults make that affect your life. See how many different things you can come up with.



Article 3 says that children should be protected and cared for to ensure their wellbeing – how does your school ensure you are protected and safe and that your wellbeing is supported? As a group or class, write a list of all the different things you can think of.

Treating children with dignity includes ensuring that children's best interests are met. What does dignity look like or mean to you in school, home and community? Create an acrostic poem with the word DIGNITY to help explain what it means to you.

PRIMARY ACTIVITIES 3

You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.



Think about your day at school and who makes decisions in your best interest. What sorts of things do you get a say in? What sorts of things do adults make decisions on? Is this fair? Discuss in small groups your views on this and prepare to share with the rest of your class in a creative way that suits your skills.

Your parents or carers make many decisions that affect you. What sorts of decisions would you like to be more involved in? Think of why it is in your best interest to be more involved. Discuss in groups. How could you explain this at home?

Find out who the Children's Commissioner is in your country. What role do they play and how do they make sure that children's best interests are met? Write a letter to your commissioner to find out what children's rights they are focusing on in your area – and anything else that interests you. Maybe they could help you with a particular campaign you have in mind.

Article 3 is about children's best interests and Article 12 says you have a right to be involved in decisions that affect you – however, in some situations, duty bearers may make decisions in your best interest, that you may not agree with. Can you think of an example? Is it always fair? Write about a real or imagined situation where a decision is made that a child doesn't agree with. This could be a fair or unfair situation.

SECONDARY ACTIVITIES



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You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.

Think about your life at school and in your local community. Who makes decisions in your best interest? What sorts of things do you get a say in? What sorts of things do adults make decisions on? Is this fair? Discuss in small groups your view on this and prepare to share with the rest of your class in a creative way that suits your skills.

Who are the duty bearers in your life and what is their role? How could your school show appreciation to the duty bearers who are always thinking of the best of interests of children and young people when they make decisions? Choose the best idea and work on it in a small group (for example thank you cards, notice in your bulletin/newsletter, duty bearer of the month, certificates, display boards).

Where does your school let everyone know that they prioritise your best interests? For example, is it in your school's handbook? Any policies? Displays? Your school's website? Perhaps you could suggest a way for it to be more clear for everyone to see and understand.

Imagine the adults in your school have suggested a change to something big like the school day or uniform. What kinds of things would they need to consider for the best interests of all young people? For example, gender identity, disabilities etc. Discuss in small groups or with partners what these considerations would be to prepare for a class discussion.

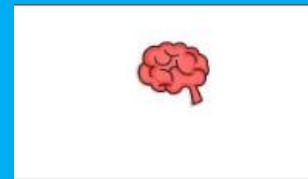
SECONDARY ACTIVITIES 2

You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.

Are there decisions being made by your local council or government that affect you, that you feel strongly about? Write a letter to one of your local politicians to explain why – make sure you mention your best interest and the other relevant rights that are being impacted and a suggested action to make a change.

Your parents or carers make many decisions that affect you all the time. What sorts of decisions would you like to be more involved in? Think of why it is in your best interest to be more involved. Discuss in your class or in groups and share your ideas about how you could you start the conversation in a positive way at home?

Watch this [video](#) by the Children's Commissioners of the four UK nations about young people's experiences, including during the Covid 19 pandemic. Part of their role is to ensure your best interests are met. Find out who your commissioner is for your country and write to them to express your views and share ideas on how improvements could be made for you personally, for your area or for children and young people globally.



Treating children with dignity includes ensuring that children's best interests are met. What does dignity look like or mean to you in school, home and community? Could your school do more to promote everyone's dignity ?

SECONDARY ACTIVITIES 3



You do not need to complete every activity but if you have time, you can try to complete more than one.

Your school is part of a diverse society. People have different backgrounds, different interests, different beliefs, and values – do you think you have different ‘best interests’ from others among your peers? Should everyone be treated equally? What is the difference between equality and equity? Have a debate or discussion about the issues these questions raise, linking your points to Article 3 and the whole CRC.

Find out more about the ‘full text’ of Article 3 [here](#) - in particular 3.2 which references wellbeing. How does ‘best interests’ link to your wellbeing?

List all the ways in which your school supports your wellbeing.

Article 3 is about children’s best interests and Article 12 says you have a right to be involved in decisions that affect you – however, in some situations, adults (duty bearers) may make decisions in your best interest that you may not agree with. Can you think of an example? It may not always feel fair! Make up a hypothetical situation and hold a class debate.

Look at a recent news story involving children or young people. Discuss whether their best interests were a priority? Investigate if different countries place an equal emphasis on the best interests of their children. Feedback what you find out to your class.



REFLECTION

Find some time and space to be quiet and reflective. Make yourself comfortable and think about these questions....

- What does 'best interest' mean to you?
- How do you get your voice heard when decisions are made that affect you?
- If this is a struggle sometimes, who could you go to for help?



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MORE INFO



RRSA WEBSITE

For more information or to download previous Article of the Week packs please visit the RRSA website by clicking on the link below.

[**CLICK HERE**](#)

