



## EduTrend Contents

P4C · RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES · PRIMARY

# Wants, Needs or Rights?

Sorting cards to work out what makes something a right

Ages 8–11

Level: Developing

45 minutes

Whole class circle · up  
to 30

Activity 02

Inside: activity at a glance · step-by-step session plan · facilitator notes · 3 pupil worksheets · assessment checklist

## ACTIVITY 02 · AT A GLANCE

# Wants, Needs or Rights?

In small groups pupils sort cards into three piles: wants, needs and rights. Cards include a new bike, clean water, a holiday, going to school, a mobile phone, being safe, having a name and having your say. Groups compare piles and explain disagreements. The class then creates questions and enquires into what makes something a right rather than just something we would like.

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the session pupils can:

- distinguish wants, needs and rights;
- justify a classification;
- explain disagreement;
- connect rights to fairness.

**KEY WORDS**

want · need · right · entitled ·  
protect · everyone

**CURRICULUM LINKS**

Citizenship: children's rights.  
PSHE: needs and wellbeing.  
Geography: living conditions.

**1****STIMULUS**

Share something to  
think about

**2****THINK**

Quiet thinking time

**3****QUESTION**

Create and choose  
a question

**4****ENQUIRE**

Reason together

**5****BUILD**

Agree, disagree,  
add

**6****REFLECT**

Last words

## Materials (per class)

- Wants, needs and rights cards
- Question and thinking-move cards
- Worksheets 1, 2 and 3

## Before the session

- Read the stimulus and note possible concepts.
- Prepare question and thinking-move cards.
- Set out a circle so everyone can see each other.
- Print the worksheets.

**SAFETY**

Everyone may pass. Discuss ideas, not people, and use the story or invented examples rather than personal situations.

## ACTIVITY 02 · SESSION PLAN

# Step by step

Stay neutral: ask for reasons, examples and counter-examples rather than giving your own view.

| Time                    | What happens                                                      | Say or ask                                                 |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 0–8 min<br>Stimulus     | Give each group the wants, needs and rights cards.                | <i>"What did you notice?"</i>                              |
| 8–18 min<br>Questions   | Pupils create questions in pairs and vote on one.                 | <i>"Which question is most interesting to talk about?"</i> |
| 18–40 min<br>Enquiry    | Enquire into the chosen question, building on each other's ideas. | <i>"What makes something a right, not just a want?"</i>    |
| 40–45 min<br>Last words | Each person says one last thought or passes.                      | <i>"Has your thinking changed?"</i>                        |

## CHALLENGE CARD (print or copy onto the board)

Choose one card that is hardest to sort and explain where you would put it and why.

## ACTIVITY 02 · FACILITATOR NOTES

# The philosophy in brief

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) sets out rights that apply to every child.

Sorting tasks show that people disagree about borderline cases, which gives the enquiry something to explore.

## Common ideas to listen for

- “A right is anything I want.” Rights protect important needs.
- “Rights are only for adults.” Children have rights too.
- “Rights never clash.” Sometimes they do.

## Adapting the activity

### Support

Use only six cards.

### Stretch

Ask: can a right be taken away?

WORKSHEET 1

# Card sort

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Record your piles.

## Card sort

| Want | Need | Right |
|------|------|-------|
|      |      |       |
|      |      |       |
|      |      |       |
|      |      |       |
|      |      |       |

## WORKSHEET 2

# Thinking moves

Use these in the enquiry.

## Thinking moves

| Thinking move                 | My example |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| I agree with... because...    |            |
| I disagree with... because... |            |
| An example is...              |            |
| A counter-example is...       |            |
| Building on what... said...   |            |

## WORKSHEET 3

# Last words

Before and after.

**Should children have the same rights as adults? Before the enquiry I thought... Now I think... because...**

---

---

---

---

---

## FOR THE TEACHER

# Assessment checklist

Use during the session. One sheet covers up to eight pupils; copy as needed.

| Pupil | Asks a philosophical question | Gives reasons and examples | Listens and builds on others |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |
|       |                               |                            |                              |

Suggested codes: W = working towards · E = expected · G = greater depth

## ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Wants, Needs or Rights? is a sample activity from the EduTrend Contents P4C Rights and Responsibilities programme (primary, level: developing). Every activity in the programme follows the same format: a practical challenge, a clear session plan, facilitator notes and ready-to-print worksheets, so that teachers, club leaders and parents can run it without extra preparation.

Full 15-, 20- and 32-week programmes are available from EduStore at [edutrend.org](https://edutrend.org).

© 2026 EduTrend Contents. This activity may be printed and copied for use with pupils in your own school, club or home. It may not be resold or published elsewhere. Photos: Emmanuel Ikwuegbu / Unsplash.