



The Right of Children to Education

In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child was opened for signing by the United Nations. This document declares, among other important principles, that all children around the world have a fundamental right to education. In the case of Kojo, from the One Hen story, however, he cannot go to school until he has money for books and a uniform.

Ask your students to use the library or the Internet to research the laws and practices governing education in your community. The questions listed here can be used as a research guide:

- Are children required by law to attend school (or to receive home schooling) between certain ages?
- Are children required to attend school for a number of days or hours each year?
- Is the community required to make free schooling available for all children? If so, is this schooling available only to citizens of your country, or are refugees and other immigrants also given access to that schooling?
- Are any special provisions made for children with disabilities (for example, are assistants available to help children with disabilities in the classroom)?
- Is the community required to provide transportation for children who live too far away to walk to school?
- Are there any other rules in place that make it easier for children to attend school?
- Are there any rules in place in your community or your particular school, for example a dress code, that might make it harder for some children to attend school than others?

Using their research as a starting point, ask your students, individually or in groups, to create their own Charter on the Rights of a Child to Education. Students might want to include measures (such as a breakfast or lunch program) that will allow every child to benefit more fully from their time spent in school, or they might want to recommend that every child has the right to a certain amount of free time (recess or play breaks) during the school day.

To broaden the study, ask your students to research children's educational rights in other countries. They might evaluate the degree to which these rights are granted in other schools in North America and in one or more other countries.