

# Celebrating Rights and Responsibilities

The inherent rights and responsibilities of its citizens are key to a democratic government. Before students can learn about the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, they should be able to discuss what a “right” and a “freedom” are and the responsibilities that are inherent in both. When they apply the idea that every right carries an inherent responsibility, students begin to think on a deeper level about the rights they have identified in their co-operative groups.

A right is “an abstract idea of that which is due to a person or governmental body by law or tradition or nature.”<sup>1</sup> An example of a right we all have is the right to an education. With every right comes a responsibility. A responsibility is “the social force that binds you to your obligations and the courses of action demanded by that force.”<sup>2</sup> If we have the right to an education, then the responsibility we have is to work hard and respect others’ right to learn.

**Notes**

1. [cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/bwn?stage=1&word=right](http://cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/bwn?stage=1&word=right)
2. [cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn?stage=1&word=responsibility](http://cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/webwn?stage=1&word=responsibility)

**PURPOSE**

Students work in co-operative groups while investigating the concepts of *rights* and *responsibilities*.

**CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS**

**Social Studies (Grade 5)**

- demonstrate an understanding that for every right (e.g., the right of democratic governance) there is a responsibility (e.g., the responsibility to vote)

**Language: Oral and Visual Communications (Grade 5)**

- express and respond to ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately
- contribute and work constructively in groups.

**MATERIALS**

- chart paper
- markers
- LM1.1.1 – Rights and Responsibilities Chart
- LM1.1.2 – Summary Assessment Sheet – Rights and Responsibilities

RIGHT	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE	RESPONSIBILITY
You have the right to choose your own friends at school.	It is important to have good friends you can trust.	Sometimes friends can pressure you to do things you would not otherwise do.	You must stay true to yourself and make decisions based on your own comfort and not someone else’s.
You have the right to speak in class.	It is important to be able to state and defend your opinion.	You must be respectful of others and be reflective about the opinions you hold in order to determine if the opinions you hold can be hurtful to others.	You must take into consideration the appropriateness or truthfulness of the opinions you hold when sharing these opinions with others.
You have the right to a safe classroom.	In a safe classroom, you can take risks and push yourself to be the best you can be when you are in a safe environment. You will not be bullied, made fun of, or threatened by others.	Sometimes, taking risks can be intimidating and you may be criticized.	You must be willing to speak up for others and stop bullying in the classroom by reporting it to an adult or simply standing up to the bully yourself.

## Lesson Outline

1. In a whole group brainstorming session, ask the students if they know what a “right” is. Examples may be the right to speak in class, the right to choose our own friends, the right to practise any religion, and the right to a safe classroom.
2. Record all responses so that students can see their responses (This can be done on a chart, overhead, digital projection system, etc).
3. Ask the students to reflect on the responsibilities that go with each of these rights. For example, the right to speak in class is associated with the responsibility to listen to others and be respectful and considerate when expressing an opinion. The right to choose our own friends is associated with the responsibility to make good decisions when associated with a particular group of friends. The right to a safe classroom is associated with the responsibility not to bully others and not to stand by while others are being bullied.
4. Divide class into three groups. Assign one of the following to each of the three groups: home rights, peer rights, and school rights. Each group will brainstorm and record the rights they feel they should have either at home, within their peer group, or at school.
5. Present groups’ ideas to the whole class once groups have completed their lists.
6. Using the lists of rights, students will work in pairs to complete LM1.1.1 Rights and Responsibilities Chart, indicating the right, a positive and negative aspect of that right, and the responsibility that goes along with the right.

## Assessment Strategies

Students may be assessed on their ability to work within a group, their understanding of rights and responsibilities, as well as their ability to communicate these understandings clearly and concisely.

## Modifications And Adaptations

When forming cooperative groups, it is essential to determine a variety of strengths and learning styles present in each group. Students may complete the charts according to their ability.

## Extensions

**Technology:** This lesson can be extended into the use of computer databases to record, store, and access the information.

**Language:** Novel studies or book talks from the suggested resources can inform the students of particular issues related to rights and the implications when these rights are taken away. The chart created can be extended to include the rights and responsibilities in each of the texts.

**Current Events:** Create a bulletin board which depicts each of the rights in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and/or the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Students can review the daily newspaper (or news websites) to find stories about rights denied to Canadian citizens and people around the world. These stories can be posted on a bulletin board.



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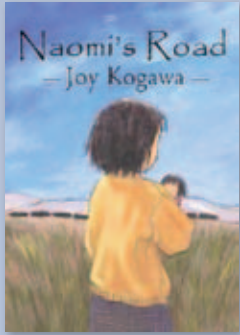
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## Resources

### Naomi's Road

Joy Kogawa. Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited, 2003, ISBN 0773757694.

Naomi's Japanese Canadian family is uprooted from Vancouver during the Second World War. Naomi and her brother are sent to internment camps and lose contact with their parents. An aunt and uncle must keep the family memories and customs.

### Sadako

Eleanor Coerr. PaperStar Book, 1993, ISBN 0698115880.

Sadako Sasaki develops leukemia resulting from the bombing of Hiroshima. While in hospital, her closest friend reminds her of the Japanese legend that if she folds a thousand paper cranes the gods might grant her wish to be well again.

### Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes: A Webquest for Grades 3-5

[www.studyplans.com/webquest.htm](http://www.studyplans.com/webquest.htm)

Find out why Sadako is a heroine to the children of Japan.



### Bineshiinh Dibaajmowin/Bird Talk

Lenore Keeshig-Tobias. Toronto: Sister Vision: Black Women and Women of Colour Press, 1991, ISBN 0920813895.

This is the story of a First Nations girl who is teased at school about her identity and heritage. She is strengthened by her mother's support through the telling of First Nations stories and explanations around the truth of Christopher Columbus.

### The Diary of a Young Girl

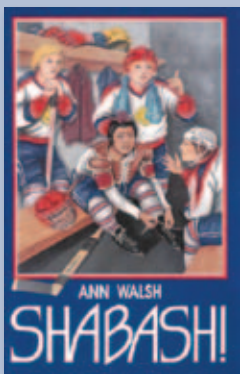
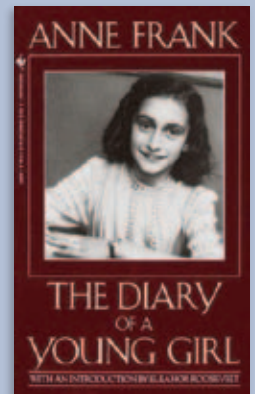
Anne Frank. Bantam, 1993, ISBN 0553296981.

This diary, originally published in 1947, documents the struggles of an adolescent girl in hiding during the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam in the Second World War.

### The World Around Anne Frank Webquest

<http://cte.jhu.edu/techacademy/web/2000/jordon/final.html>

This Web Quest takes the user on a journey through many issues related to the Holocaust, its victims, and its survivors to better understand the world of Anne Frank.



### Shabash!

Ann Walsh. Beach Holme Publishing, 1994, ISBN 0888783558.

This is the story of a young Sikh boy who wants to play hockey in a small mill town in British Columbia. His determination changes his life and those around him.

## Home Connections

Students can discuss with parents and/or siblings the rights they feel are most important at home and negotiate the responsibilities associated with these rights. Some examples might be:

## Teacher Resources

### The Rights Revolution

Michael Ignatieff. Anansi, 2000, ISBN 0887846564. Beginning with the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* created in 1948, this text reviews the "Rights Revolution" including the issues related to Aboriginal rights and the linguistic rights of French Canadians. The dichotomy of individual versus group rights is also reviewed.

Right	Responsibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The right to a clean and organized home.</li> <li>• The right to three proper meals.</li> <li>• The right to a safe home.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility to clean organize his or her room.</li> <li>• Responsibility to eat properly and healthfully.</li> <li>• Responsibility to be kind to all members of the family.</li> </ul>

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES CHART			
Name: .....			
Right	Positive	Negative	Responsibility

SUMMARY ASSESSMENT SHEET - RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES					
Student Name/ Expectation or Activity	Student demonstrates an understanding that for every right there is a responsibility.	Student expresses and responds to ideas and opinions concisely, clearly, and appropriately.	Student contributes and works constructively in groups.	Student participates in classroom discussion.	Student completes the chart reflecting understanding and insight around the rights and responsibilities either at home, school, or with peers.
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					