

Grades 7/8 Hong Kong Academy UN Human Rights Logo Design—Screenprinting

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Brief: Design and print a logo that promotes an article from the UN Declaration of Human Rights

Each year, some of our Grade 6, 7 and 8 students attend the Model United Nations event in China. This event takes place all over the world for Middle and High School students.

To introduce this unit of work, I used music as a stimulus, playing songs about some people's lack of basic rights and then inviting the students to reflect on the lyrics and decide what message they were giving. The songs included "Streets of London" by Ralph McTell, which deals with homelessness, and "Something Inside So Strong" by Labi Siffre, relating to the apartheid regime in South Africa.

During this unit, students were asked to consider the following questions:

What are our rights as citizens of the world?

Can the arts be used to influence people?

How can I use art to look after myself and others?

During the first art class we discussed what we felt were our basic rights; rights, which we often take for granted. The students, in pairs, then read the articles of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and, having chosen two that they were interested in, brainstormed what they thought the articles meant. The students made sketches of what the abuse of these rights may look like.

As the students chose their own articles to research, it ensured maximum interest and commitment. They were to design and screen-print a logo on t-shirts, which represented their issue of concern. The t-shirts would be worn by the Model United Nations delegates attending the event in China.

Through their work, the students explored the following 'Areas of Interaction' (IBMYP) or contexts:

Community and Service: Recognize how art can be used to help a community and individuals. How does art communicate across cultures?

Health and Social: Understand how art may be used to positively change circumstances for people. What does art have to say about life, joy and suffering?

The students also aspired to demonstrate the following Learner Profiles (IBMYP) attributes through their work:

Communicator: Use Art as a language to communicate ideas and information about individuals, groups and communities

Open-minded: Respect that everyone is an individual. Each has a right to a voice, a right to be respected and a right to be treated fairly

Caring: Show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and plights of others, globally.

Principled: Through their work, develop a sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities.

As part of their research, each student conducted email interviews with Kino Design, a company in London, on what makes a successful logo. Sharing and using all the information gained from Kino the students completed the design process and created some very strong logos, which were then screen-printed onto t-shirts.

They are very eager that their logos are seen by a wider audience and have been looking at ways in which this can happen.

“I would like my artwork to be seen by the media because I think the main thing impeding the complete extinction of slavery is the lack of public support, because of the fact that many people don’t even know it is still happening. Art and news is a great way to spread information to a large number of people in an effective and persuasive way.” Grade 8 student.