

Art Competition



International Labour Organization

SCREAM

Stop Child Labour

Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media



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Aim: Take part in and/or organize an art competition on a child labour theme.



Gain: Stimulates artistic expression and enhances community education and awareness.

Time frame

3 single teaching sessions, with additional sessions or time in between for preparation of works of art

Motivation

The visual arts are a powerful means of making child labour more visible – to your immediate audience and to the wider community. If you have already implemented the Collage module (recommended), your group will have found that child labour is almost totally absent from most of the visual media and that as a result society is able to turn a blind eye to its existence. Part of the process of bringing it to public attention and making child labour impossible to ignore is to make people look it in the face.

The art competition will enable the group of young people to transfer the image they have built up of child labour to paper, clay or other medium and then put it on display for all to see. It is a way of letting the group express themselves through art and discover a powerful tool for conveying their message to the wider community.



This module deepens the personal development process and will help establish a closer-knit structure within the group. Implementing this activity will assist you in assessing the potential and the character of the young people you are working with. It will bring out such qualities as leadership, communication and sensitivity, especially as they will be called upon to organize an event from start to finish. It is also a lot of fun as artistic expression can lead to all sorts of interesting outputs.



Note for the user

This module can be implemented at any time following the Basic Information and Collage modules. The Art Competition module is not anchored to any other and you should use it whenever you think it most appropriate. However, it ties in well with media campaigning, so you may want to plan it around the same time as the Media: Press module.

Preparation



This module can be approached in two ways:

- The art competition could be organised only within the group concerned. This would be the best choice if the environment and circumstances make it too difficult to broaden the competition to a wider community, for example, in informal education in remote or rural areas.
- The competition could be opened to the wider community if circumstances allow, for example, in a school, institution or urban environment.

In addition, the following points need to be kept in mind in preparing for the implementation of this module:

- In respect of the art forms accepted for the competition, keep in mind that collage has already been used in an earlier module and therefore should not be used again if possible.

- Any competition needs a “theme” and an objective. What is the competition for? Will competitors simply be asked to draw a picture of child labour? How useful will this be? Would it not be better to introduce a theme of hope for the future? Could competitors be asked to develop a poster to promote your project? Give careful thought to these considerations, which are discussed in more detail later on.

Note for the user

In this module, either one or other of the proposed activities is meant to be implemented and not necessarily both. However, if you have organized an internal art competition within your group, as described in the first activity, and found it a success and the group would like to broaden the scope, you could consider organizing a second competition and invite entries from the wider community.



If you have access to an art department within a school or to individuals (for example, parents) in the community with artistic talents who would be willing to help, avail yourself fully of such support.

External support

Artistic expression may not come easily to some young people in your group. They may need encouragement and support. Young people are not particularly comfortable about baring their soul to all and they need to be reassured that their efforts will not be mocked or belittled.

It may be best to remain with the most straightforward forms of artistic expression, such as drawings, paintings, sketches, and so on. If you wanted to use other art forms, such as sculpture, textile printing, computer-assisted graphic art, and others, you may have to seek external support. The objective of these modules is not to overstretch the educator nor to focus too much attention on the art form itself. We are simply seeking to equip

**Sponsorship
and prizes**



young people with the tools to express themselves in different and creative ways.

As part of the community integration process, get the group to go to shops, businesses and organizations in the neighbourhood to ask if they will donate prizes for the competition. Given the nature of the competition, it is likely that local businesses would be pleased to play their part and offer their support.

It is important that you talk to the group before they disperse to find sponsors. Approaches should be planned by writing or phoning in advance to arrange a meeting. Meetings should be at a time suitable for the potential sponsor. Young people should be well briefed on their project's aims, objectives and activities and should be confident enough to put their case across to third parties in a polite and positive manner. They should not be demanding or rude in their requests for sponsorship and, if their approach is rejected for whatever reason, they should accept this and move on to their next meeting. If nothing else, this process will mean that other members of the community will become aware of child labour and what young people in their community are doing about it.

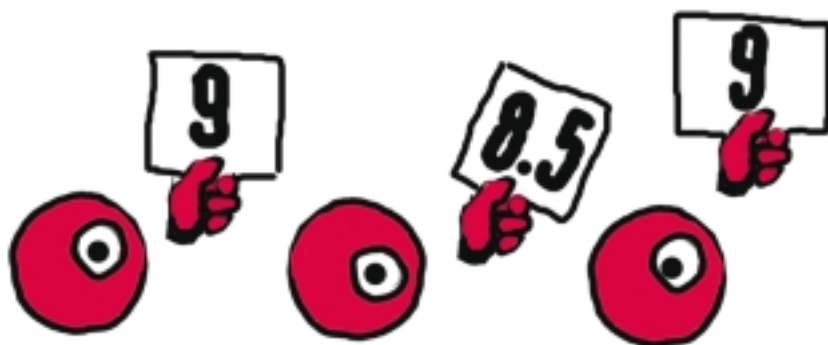
Potential sponsors should be encouraged by being told that their names will be promoted in the competition and that they will be invited to participate in the viewing of art works and in the prize-giving event. In addition, you should involve some of the skills that the young people will have developed from the Media: Press module, if you have already implemented it. Inform the local media about the competition and invite them to the prize-giving event. The possibility of a business promotion will encourage potential sponsors all the more. Try and obtain enough prizes for a first, second and third prize. The group might decide not to have an order of merit. They might just decide to give prizes to the best three works of art.

The important point is that the group is responsible for finding sponsors, organizing any media coverage and making arrangements for a prize-giving ceremony.

If you are going to organize an art competition, you will need to involve some third parties in the process of deciding on the winning entries. This is a good opportunity to involve other members of the immediate or wider community in the child labour project. If you have already enlisted the help of some external support for the education process, perhaps this person could be one of your judges. In addition, you might enlist the help of those who have provided sponsorship for the prizes. This would involve the local business community, which would encourage them to know more about the young people's work, child labour and what is happening in their community.

If you are opening up the competition to a wider audience, consider enlisting some of your own group members to be part of the judging panel, even if they might also be participants. After all, they must develop a sense of responsibility for their project and they will see any submissions from the perspective of their own age group, which is really the one that matters. In any case, they will probably select the best or most appropriate pieces of work as the winners. You could also consider asking other young people to act as judges. For example, if you are in a school environment, think about selecting a panel of judges from other classes.

Judging process



What you'll need



- ✓ Drawing paper of any size and colour.
- ✓ Pencils, coloured and graphite.
- ✓ Felt pens, colouring pencils, crayons and/or paints.
- ✓ Reference books on art and child labour or oppression – books that will help young people to form their own ideas and images.
- ✓ A room or area with plenty of surfaces (even the floor if that is all that is available).
- ✓ Some wall space where finished art works can be hung or stuck up.

Obviously, if you are opening up the art competition to a wider community, you are not expected to provide materials for all competitors. The materials listed above are for the work of your own group.

Getting started

There may be different reasons why you have decided to put these modules into practice, but the basic idea is to raise awareness among young people and encourage them to pass on that awareness to their communities and to take associated action. Therefore, the idea of making other people aware of child labour, what it is and that it should be stopped will be the general theme of the art competition.

However, you will need to provide a more specific theme and a short brief for potential competitors so they understand fully what they are supposed to reflect in their art work. One of the best ways to come up with ideas is to have a quick brainstorming session with your group. Ask them what they think the theme of the competition should be. Aim for a theme, title or slogan that will capture the spirit of the project.

Once you have come up with an acceptable theme, you will need to draft a brief for those taking part. Of course, such a brief will not be necessary if the competition is just within the group. For a wider audience, you will need to explain what is expected of them and give clear instructions. Ask for volunteers within the group to help draft a brief of between half and one side of an A4 piece of paper. It should describe some of the statistics of child labour, its worst forms, the impact it can have on children's growth, education and well-being, and so on. It should then describe the theme of the competition and the entry rules.

Naturally, the brief should also give details and closing dates for submission of entries. Deadlines should be kept relatively short to maintain interest in the competition. Long deadlines for submission of work can lead to interest petering out altogether and will be detrimental to the impact of the module. The brief should also list any prizes you have been able to collect.

A sample brief has been annexed to this module to give you an idea of the type and level of information that you might want to give to those taking part, as well as the key points of the art competition. Please note that this annex is purely for information purposes and you and your group should develop a brief that best suits your environment, context, tradition and culture.

The idea is to encourage the young people in the group to express themselves individually and not as a group. Unless there is absolutely no alternative, for example, because of lack of available materials, ensure that each person produces his or her own work of art. It is possible that two people will ask if they can work together on an idea they have come up with – in such circumstances, i.e., their initiative, it might be better to go with the flow and see what comes of it. However, keep a close eye on such joint efforts and make sure that the work is being taken seriously. If it becomes an excuse to opt out of the module, split them up again. Young people may try and find a way out if they can.



Group organization



Activity one: Group art competition

*1 teaching session to set the parameters and get the ball in motion
and 1 teaching session to view and judge the entries*



If it has been decided to limit the art competition to the group only, spend about 10 minutes at the beginning of the session going over the background of what has been learned so far about child labour. Then discuss a theme for the art works that everybody will work on. Talk about what art forms can be applied and what finished piece of work the competition would like to generate. For example, does the group want to produce a poster that would promote their project? Or is the objective simply to create honest and beautiful pieces of art that can be displayed either on a wall in a classroom or in a special exhibition to raise awareness in the community?

Once the art forms and objectives have been agreed, you should encourage the group to get started on their work and decide how long they would need to finish it. You can either leave them a couple of weeks to work on their entries in their own time or add further sessions in which the group continue to prepare their works of art under supervision.

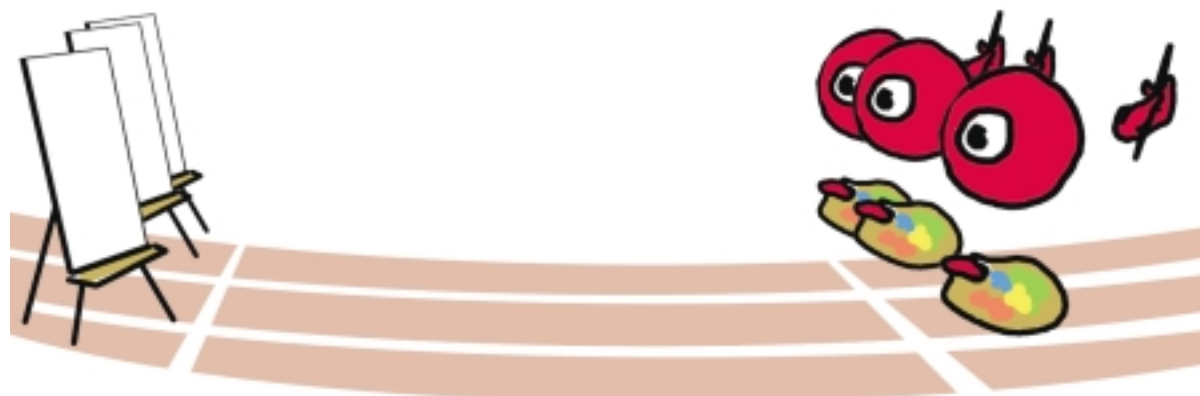
Once all the pieces of work are completed, hang them on a wall in the room where you are working and call in the panel of judges selected earlier. Encourage the group to take the time to examine closely and analyse each piece of work. Seek their comments and insights in order to stimulate a discussion. You may well find you have uncovered some real artistic talent.

Activity two: Community art competition

*1 teaching session to organize the competition and
1 teaching session or an organized public event to view
and judge the entries*

If it has been decided to open up the art competition to a wider, clearly defined community, a simple poster should be created and disseminated as widely as possible. The poster should briefly describe the competition and give details of prizes. It should then be copied and put up in prominent places throughout the community concerned, for example, the school or the youth club. Involve the group in designing, copying and distributing the poster. Let them know that they can enter the competition as well.

Once all submissions have been handed in, there should be a judging process with the various judges called in to view the works of art. Make a big deal out of the competition, so that once the winners have been chosen there will be a public ceremony for the prize-giving. This is the time to ensure that local media representatives are present to ensure that both the winners and the issue of child labour are recognized publicly. Remember to thank competition sponsors in any media contacts for this competition and you should work on this aspect with the group in the final discussion.



Do's and don'ts



- Don't make the competitive aspect the driving force behind the module. The idea is to allow young people the time, space and materials to express themselves honestly through art. If competition is the driving force, you might inhibit those who feel that whatever they produce might be inadequate.
- Do make sure that every individual takes part. Young people can be inhibited and you must use this exercise to begin to break these inhibitions down.
- Do make sure that any young person for whom you are responsible is properly prepared and briefed before he or she goes out in the community to seek sponsors for the competition.
- Do keep to deadlines and maintain momentum.
- Do invite sponsors and others to any judging and prize-giving ceremony.
- Do make sure that you keep all works of art submitted and find a way to exhibit as many of them as possible within the community.

Final discussion

1 teaching session

The art competition is a "fun" module. The young people in your group will probably have enjoyed producing their own works of art and will definitely have enjoyed seeing other people's work, especially in their role as judges if this is what was decided. However, when the dust has settled and you are back with your group, take a quiet time to sit with them and generally chat while they look again at the different pieces of work that have been hung up on the walls of their room.

It is likely that some of the submissions will be of a very high quality and everyone's attention will be drawn to these. However, it is important that each and every submission is examined and appreciated for its honest value. They are an insight into what people really think and how they "visualize" child labour. It is inevitable that some submissions will not be serious, but this is more an indicator of extreme self-consciousness on the part of the artist than a display of indifference. Some young people will simply not be able to cope with the harsh reality of child labour and will bury their true emotions behind a façade of indifference and insincerity.

Talk to the group about which of the pictures they like or those which attract their attention most. Why are they attracted to a particular picture? What story does it tell? Can images of hope be discovered in any of the works of art? Do the submissions reveal a lack of understanding of the issue of child labour? Why does the group think this is? Do they realize that their peers are unaware of the issues involved? If that is the case, do they not think that their peers should be aware of child labour? How can we do this? How do we make people know more about what child labour is and does to children?

What can we do? At the end of the session, this is what we come back to: what can each and every one of us do to make people more aware and to want to do something to help those in need? Remember, we want to enlist the help of these young people as agents for social mobilization and change. We must help them in this role by equipping them with the necessary tools to raise awareness and take action.



Evaluation and follow-up

In terms of measurable indicators for this module, there are indeed specific outcomes that are measurable in so far as they will either have occurred or not. Each young person in the group will have produced a work of art depicting his or her vision of child labour. What form this work may take will depend somewhat on the character of the person concerned, but also on how well the modules have been implemented and the relationship you have been able to establish with the group.



No matter which type of competition is organized, following the implementation of this module and in order to strengthen the confidence and cohesion of the group, get them to organize an exhibition of the works of art submitted for the competition. Such an exhibition would have most impact if it took place in the community in which it was organized, for example, in the school or youth club. Get the group to arrange a fund-raising coffee, tea or drinks reception around the exhibition. Perhaps the works could be auctioned and people attending the auction told that the funds raised will be used for child labour activities or donated to schools for rehabilitated child labourers.

An exhibition of these works of art and perhaps an auction could be the core of a further awareness-raising campaign within the local community and you should use them widely, perhaps with the local and national media as well. This is an indicator of considerable success and will significantly enhance the sustainable aspect of your module.

There will be occasions in the process of implementing these child labour modules when works of art will be extremely useful and effective for enhancing various environments. For example, if you do eventually implement the Drama module, you may want to decorate the hall or theatre with some of the works of art produced for this competition. It will help people to understand the issues involved and it will enable you to fill the drama space and create a true child labour theme for the event.

Therefore, make sure you keep all submissions safely and display them wherever and as often as you can.

This module is a simple but effective means of raising awareness of the problem of child labour among young people. It is also a powerful tool for young people to express themselves in a most profound way. People often express themselves more willingly and more honestly in art than verbally or in writing. They feel less threatened or exposed through artistic expression and yet images can often say as much if not more than words.

In working with young people, it is important to offer them forms of expression that will not threaten their position in their group or make them stand out in any particular way. Art enables them to do this. With this module, we will enable young people to begin to discover their new role as community educators and as agents for social mobilization. This is done in a most subtle way by involving them in the organization of a competition and in designing a brief for those who wish to take part. In addition, they will begin to move out into the wider community to find potential sponsors for the competition, explain what their project is about and why they are seeking support. It is the start of an important learning process.

Therefore, which module you take up next is really up to you and your group and will depend very much upon your own timetable and strategy. You could move from here to The Image or Creative Writing modules if you have not yet implemented these.



Annex 1

Art Competition: SCREAM Child Labour Project

(organized in Scariff Community College
in the Republic of Ireland in March 2001)

Details

The competition is open to all age groups within the College. It is open to students of the College only.

The deadline for submissions is 12:00 on Friday 29 March 2001. No submissions can be accepted after this date. Art submissions must be made either directly to Ms [Art Teacher] or the School Office. Artists are requested to clearly print their name, address and age on the back of submissions.

All works must be original, i.e. no tracing nor collage effects will be accepted. Submissions do not necessarily have to be painted, or even in colour. Works will be judged on their artistic content and their relevance to the theme of the competition.

Winning submissions will not be returned.

The panel of five judges will include the art teacher, the project co-ordinator and three students from 4th year to be named. Their decision on 1st, 2nd and 3rd places will be final.

Prizes are: 3 bars of chocolate for first position, 2 bars of chocolate for second and 1 bar of chocolate for third. The names of the winners will be posted in the school on Friday 5 April 2001. An official presentation will be made to the winners in the school on Monday 8 April 2001.

Entrants are asked to produce a poster on child labour incorporating the acronym "SCREAM". How this is done is entirely up to the individual. The individual is asked to present his or her concept of child labour and integrate, in whatever way appropriate, the word or idea of SCREAM. Posters can be submitted on any coloured paper of any size, but no smaller than A4.

Below is a more detailed description of child labour and SCREAM to help artists understand the concepts involved.

Judges will be looking for the integration of SCREAM into the overall poster and for creative and original ways of showing that young people can do something about child labour.

Competition theme

Child labour is a description of those children around the world who are obliged or forced to work in order to survive. There are around 245 million children worldwide who work in full-time or part-time jobs; 170 million of these work in "hazardous" conditions.

The work they do varies: domestic servants, child soldiers, child prostitutes, working in agriculture, mining, rag-picking, construction and quarry work, brick kilns, gem stone industry, and so on. The difference between a child in Ireland who works to earn pocket money and a child labourer is that basic human right – the freedom of choice. Child labourers have no choice. They work or they and their families starve. They have lost their childhoods and no longer benefit from an education. In a number of cases, they are taken away from their families at a very young age and sold into bonded labour.

They work long, hard hours. They are often physically, emotionally, mentally and sexually abused. They can become deformed or handicapped because of poor diet and little sleep coupled with very heavy work. They have no concept of childhood, society and education. They are destined for a very difficult future and their own children will inevitably suffer.

People, especially young people, need to know about the terrible effects of child labour, even if it does not exist in their country. They should be aware of its destructive and soul-destroying nature and they should become angry enough to want to do something about it. It is time for young people, adolescents, to stand up and be counted. They must express their outrage at these injustices and get their message across to other communities.

They must SCREAM their protest and take action to make a difference.

SCREAM stands for **S**upporting **C**hildren's **R**ights through **E**ducation, the **A**rts and the **M**edia. This is the essence of the child labour project that has been conducted with the 4th Year students, and SCREAM is the message that we want to get across to the wider national and international communities.

This is why we want to design a poster to support the work of the project.

The winning poster design will be sent to the United Nations agency for the world of work, the International Labour Organization (ILO).

We would urge all competitors to let their imaginations run riot and their creativity and innovation to emerge. Think of the word SCREAM and all that this means in every sense of the word. Then think of child labour – its desperation, sadness and pain – and find a way to bring these two images together in an eye-catching design.

Good luck!

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