



Learning Circles Children's Rights - June 2017

Selection of 16 remarkable letters to the jury of GTP and UNICEF

Individual assignment in peerScholar:

The jury of the Global Teenager Project has launched a 'writing contest' that allows you as LC-participant to speak out and raise your voice.

We ask you to write a paper titled: **"My plan to improve Children's Rights"**

Length about 500 words, addressed to the jury of GTP.

Include in your letter:

- A brief personal introduction, so the jury understands who you are and where you're from.
- Your lessons learned and eye-openers during the Learning Circle process.
- Design a plan to improve at least one Children's Right. How can your plan improve the conditions in the lives of children?

1.

Dear members of the jury of the Global Teenager project,

My name is Anne Zwijnenberg and I am 14 years old. The name of my school is Carmel College Salland and I like the school very much. I live in Heino, that is in the east of the Netherlands. I think generally the children's in the Netherlands have a good life, they can go to school, they have clean water, they have the right to medical health care and the most of the children's in the Netherlands are able to play and sport and do this in a safe environment. We have already done 2 challenges, but first we have made an introduction film and wrote down which children's rights are important for us. For the first challenge, all the children of our class have made a strip or cartoon. When we all finished our cartoons we started with the second challenge. I have been researching with a few of my classmates which shops in the Netherlands sell clothes which are made by children. This was a real eye opener because I didn't know that there are so much shops that sell clothes which are made by children and I think that people must think twice before they buy very cheap clothes. The most cheap clothes are made by children.

The children's right that I want to improve is the right for migration. I think this right is very important because a lot of children's fled because there is war or there are other problems in their country of origin. Refugee children are also seen as a group of children who are more vulnerable to what they have experienced in their country of origin and during their flight, so they have right to special protecting. It is very difficult for children's to start over in a country where you have never been before and where you don't know people, except of your family. The most refugee children who fled have to go to a special school to learn the language of the country and this is sometimes really hard. I don't think this right is very hard to improve. My idea is that people can bring their old stuff (what they don't use anymore) to a local storage where people who don't have much things can find something they need or like. I think this is a good solution because you don't throw away your stuff and other people who need the stuff are also very happy because they have something what they need and can cheer them up and they also have the feeling that they are not alone. I also think it makes you feel better if you helped a person in a bad situation.

2.

Dear members of the jury,

First of all, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Bor Bennink, and I am thirteen years old. I was born and raised in the Netherlands, in a small village called Lemelerveld, near Zwolle. I go to school at Carmel College Salland in Raalte, about ten kilometres from my home. My hobbies are reading, gaming and watching television. I am interested in geography, history and politics. I wanted to write this letter for several reasons. Of course, I am obligated to write this letter for school, but I am also very interested in this problem. If I could, I would like to help solve this problem, or at least think about the solution.

Secondly, I would like to tell you the things that I have learnt in my lessons the last couple of weeks. Many people and organisations have been working on the solution to solve child suffering all over the world to this day, and defend the rights of those who need it the most: the children. It is great that so many people and organisations like UNICEF try to help these children, because they can't do it themselves. However, despite all this efforts child suffering is a problem that likely will never be solved, because of the inequality, wars and governments that simply do not have enough money to help children in need. There will always be people who own everything, and people who own nothing. The only thing we can do is to make this difference smaller, and make sure that everybody who needs it gets enough money to live.

Lastly, I designed a plan to improve children rights, or at least decrease the number of children suffering. It is estimated that about 22 million children are in need of help. This implies that these 22 million children are hungry, sick, displaced, thirsty, in a war or conflict or out of school. My plan is that there will come a tax on child suffering. Every country in the UN will have to participate, or else they will get economic sanctions. Every country will have to pay a tax of \$325.00 for every child in need. The countries that have more children in need will pay more, and the countries that have less children in need will pay less. If every country will pay the tax, the United Nations would make \$7,150,000,000.00 (over 7 billion dollar). With this money, UNICEF could feed 10.000.000 children for a year, send 5.000.000 children to school and give 7.000.000 children fresh water for a year. Of course, this is all if every country will pay the tax. Chances are small that every country will pay the tax, or be honest about the number of children in need. However, if only one country will contribute to this goal, it could help children in need a lot. But if every country will contribute to a solution, we could help every single child who needs help.

Yours sincerely,

Bor Bennink.

3.

Dear, The Jury of GTP

Did you know 40 million children below the age of 15 suffer from child abuse? Every city with a population greater than 250,000 reports gang activity? Approximately 27 million people are being transported across the world for child labour? Hi my name is Hamza from Tweedsmuir public school, I am 14 years old and I like to be active and explore new things because I always felt like there is more to the world than to be inside or across the street. I was born in Canada, Toronto but I moved to London this year. I know the world is a very big place and my dream is to someday travel the world.

Throughout the months of being in the GTP I have learned that people around the world aren't as fortunate as some other people like Hamad who lived in Malta. Hamad was a Syrian refugee and left Libya for Europe but some of the people going with him were shot by the Militia and around 100 people were killed but 200 people were saved by the Navy including Hamad and his family they now live happily in Germany. Zalissa is another child who suffered from lack of children's rights, she suffered from poverty not being able to finish school as a child because her dad wanted her to get married so she convinced her dad with the help of friends and the School Board and they succeeded to persuade her dad that child marriage may have been acceptable before but now it should not continue in this world.

How do you end child labour? One way to end this democracy and that is to first end the reason it existed in the first place. The reason some children work is because their parents do not have the money to support their kids, so you could set them up for adoption until you get a promotion or a new job good enough to support your kids. You might not ever want to leave your kids so adoption is off the table there is always to get the kid a better job such as a paperboy it's easy you won't die and you get paid a lot better.

Since child labour is illegal you could sue the person doing it, get a lot of money of that lawsuit and go back to school to get a better job. I understand that if you need child labour to survive you obviously can't afford a lawyer but here in Canada you get government help with some legal problems, but if you are not in Canada, or other countries that will provide government help, then you need to start looking into legal aid, or before all of this even happened you should just try your best in school, and studied hard so the rest of your family does not have to go through the torment.

Thank you GTP for helping me learn the importance of children's rights.

Sincerely, Hamza Shah

4.

Jack Darbishire's Composition

May 19th 2017

He's 6 foot tall, he has one cat, two parents, and a red sweater. He can sing the song 'Allstar' by SmashMouth off by heart, and he makes a mean bowl of cereal. Please welcome my guest for tonight... Me, Jack Darbishire of London Ontario Canada! So Jack, what are you going to be talking about today? "What I learned from the Global Teenager Project, how I would plan to improve one children's right, and how my plan would improve the lives of children" That sounds like a great Idea!

So Jack, what HAVE you learned during your time doing the Global Teenager Project? "Well, I've learned a whole bunch of things, like I learned about the rights of a child, and how not everybody in another country gets these rights." What else have you learned? "I learned about how some people have to escape their country because of a war or something else, and they have to move to another country. They are called refugees, and I interviewed two refugees, Majd and Rowan about their move to Canada and how they were forced to come here, and how they made lots of friends at their new school, Eagle Heights. This taught me about how not everybody is as lucky as me, because I never have to worry about being moved to another country, because Canada is a very safe place and I never have unsafe here.

What children's right would you improve? "I would improve the right to a safe home, because not everybody has one." how would you improve it? "I can't change the world by myself, but people of the world could start an organization that builds safe homes for people in dangerous countries that don't have access to a safe home. Homes include clean water, a soft bed, and stocked with food donated by people, for them to have a big supply of food when they don't have any." But, how would you get the money to do this? "We could run ads on television and on the street telling people about our organization, and how we need money donations for this world changing business to succeed. We would let them know where their money is being spent, and how we will do it." Wow, that sounds like a great plan! "Thank you"

How will this improve lives of children around the world? "A lot of children around the world don't have access to a safe home, so this plan will give these kids a safe place to live, which will decrease the likelihood of them dying or getting seriously injured in their war torn country." How long do you estimate that it will take to build a single home? "We estimate that it will take seven months to build a home," But what will happen to the people who are having houses built for them? "Kids will be taken to a shared building, with other kids. It will be just like a school We have specially trained teachers who are willing to leave their job at their old country and come work at these school in between house building." What a great plan!

Thank you for coming on my show Jack, "No problem, Jack." Everyone make sure to check out Jack's organization To help out children all over the world.

5.

Dear members of the jury of the Global Teenager Project,

My name is Senna Beumer, I'm 14 years old and I live in the Netherlands.

When we started with the Learning Circles I was impressed about the fact that we were going to do this in association with other countries. Even though I wondered how Gambia was going to do this, because it's generally known that their school facilities are not that good. Right now I sit in my room, behind my desk, typing on my laptop. In Gambia, they don't have a laptop. I complain when it's raining, or when I have to eat something that I do not like. But when I think about it, I don't have anything to complain or worry about. Conclusion: my children's rights are how they're supposed to be.

Children's rights: What exactly does that mean? Before we started with this project, I was familiar with what that means. But I didn't know enough, so I gathered some information and found a list of the most important children's rights. When I read through the list, there was one right that remained in my mind. Protecting against child labor. Especially in Asia and Africa, child labor is kind of accepted in their society, mostly in factories and weaving mills. It's common known that a lot of clothes are made by children, they have to work way too long, and earns like 5 cents in one hour, which is exploitation. There are people who know about clothes being made by children but they still buy the clothes. The problem seems far away, so people do not worry about it. Nevertheless, I think there can be such more improvement.

Firstly, I think there needs to be a law, which says that every store or brand needs to publish a (black) list from all their suppliers. Because of this, it's possible to check the factories. Which factories satisfy to the requirements, and which don't? When it's clear that some factories do use young children without giving them enough money, they need to change that immediately. After some time, they need to show what they've changed. Furthermore, it's important to set up some controls, combined with conversations with the employees. Beside that, we need to ask ourselves: Why does children labor exist? That's because their parents don't get enough money to live a normal life, so also their children need to work. For that reason, adults need to get more salary all around these place where child labor still exists. Finally, there need to be more education about child labor, especially in the factories themselves. Furthermore, I think more people need to be trained to detect and prevent child labor. I believe that there are enough volunteers from foreign countries who would love to help young children by giving them education (think about activitycamps).

I enjoyed writing this, and I hope you enjoyed reading it.

Kind regards,

Senna Beumer

6.

Dear members of the jury of the Global Teenager Project,

First, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Danieke Holsappel, I am thirteen years old and I live in the Netherlands. I grew up in a small village, which is called Lemelerveld, on the country side. I have a brother, his name is Marijn and he is ten years old. My parents are Wim and Linette, they have been married for about sixteen years. I am raised as a Christian. I am going to pre university level in Raalte. My school is called Carmel College Salland. Each day I go to school by bike, it is 10 km. I cycle together with some friends who live in the same village. In this letter I would like to tell you what I've learned about this project, and my solution for a children's right.

At my school we joined the project Learning Circles. During the Learning Circles, we spoke about children's rights. Such as a safe house, education for all children, clean water to drink and a peaceful environment. When we talked about these subjects, I realised that I am lucky to live in a country like the Netherlands. Because it is not common for everybody to go to school, have clean drinking water or have a good nursery system.

The longer we worked at this project, the more I respect people who have to live in developing country. They have so much perseverance. Despite all the hard things they go through, they stay positive and keep dreaming of a better future. That was an eye-opener for me.

However, I think the right to education for all children is really important. People who are educated have more chances to find a job with a proper salary and therefore a better future. Mostly children in developing countries would like to go to school but they don't have the opportunity. Sometimes there is no money, or there is no school nearby. I think it's sad, that children cannot realise their dreams.

I have heard several times about young adults collecting money and offering a few weeks of their holidays to help people in developing countries. A Dutch organisation called World Servants, organises trips to developing countries. The young adults bring their money to buy building materials and help these poor people by building hospitals, schools or orphanages. So the inhabitants can create something beautiful for their future.

After finishing pre university level, I would like to join one of these projects as a volunteer. Besides helping other people, you gain a lot of life experience and you learn about another culture. That seems interesting to me.

When everybody takes a little responsibility, the world will be better in the future. I hope to have made my point clear and to have inspired you with this letter.

Kind regards,

Danieke Holsappel

7.

My name is Jessie Hau and I am a grade 9 student from Pierre Elliot Trudeau High School located in Markham, Canada. This is my third year living in Markham and it was the first year for me in high school. I come from Hong Kong I like to listen to music during my own time and I think reading can improve my temperament and self-cultivation. My favorite type of music is K-pop and I like to read romance novels. At school, I like geography class and English class. I live with my grandmother, my mom and my sister in Canada. My favorite place in the world is Canada and I hope I can visit Europe sometime during my life. In the future, I want to be a doctor and stay in Canada, my goal is to go to the University of Toronto. During my geography class, we read an article from the United Nations and started to get an idea of what children's rights are. Our teacher first assigned a country to each of us and we did research about that specific country independently. After that, we did a presentation to share our idea and learned how different children's rights are being violated in different countries. Then, we discovered about child labour all around the world, especially the cocoa farms located in the Ivory Coast, where they kidnap children and force them to leave their homes and work on the farm. We also learned about fair trade, it is how people make sure there are no children working in the factory, they paid the workers fairly and protect the workers. I think this unit makes me develop a deep understanding of global issue happened around the world. Overall, I feel satisfied after learning about this unit.

As a human, it is part of our job to help those children who need help. I believe that if each one of us starts helping by doing little things, it can make a big different. First, if all the citizens refuse to buy the products from companies has child labour, the companies will start to realize that they must change their way of doing business or they will lose their business. Also, citizens need to choose their clothes very carefully because some uncertified companies may use child labour. We need to stop buying clothes from those companies and let the companies understand that they can not ignore the problem. Companies need to communicate with the cloth factories to make sure there is no child labour and they need send people to the farm more often, so they can protect the child together. Instead of using child labour, companies need to hire adult workers only, but they need to pay the workers living wage and make sure all of them are safe. What they will do depends on how we react to this problem. If everyone starts to agree to pay more money to buy things from certified companies, other companies will start to make changes also. The government must also do something to solve this problem. They can build some school that does not need to pay student fee so that the poor family can send the children to school. Each student must attend school until they are 16 years old. It is part of the job for governments to make sure kids in their countries are attending to school. The government will also need to make a law to make sure all the adult are working in a safe environment and they get pay a living wage, so they can support the whole family. We have to be aware of the issue that bothers the whole world right now because we are the one who can solve it.

8.

Hi, my name is Bosen Zhang, I am a grade 9 student in Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School in Markham, Ontario, Canada. My favourite subject is math, and right now I am still an ESL student. I am the type of person who'd like to follow only my own mind. People may sometime call this selfless, but the difference is. Selfless people don't give out their help, but I do. Like other grade 9 students, I don't enjoy reading or studying. I like to bike outside slowly, or lie on the floor and play on my phone. The first activity relaxes me physically, the second activity relaxes me psychologically. As a teenager, I always have different ideas from many adults. I think that's the reason why some adults don't like me. But maybe is just they are wrong!

In my geography class, my teacher taught me about children's rights. We've done many activities: reading articles about children's rights, colouring many maps about different types of children's rights and we did some presentations. Each student in our class had to do a presentation about children's rights in different countries. Then we need to colour in a map, to show which places had problems about which children's rights. In this presentation, I realized rich country's children usually have more rights, but none of the countries can give children all their rights. Also, I learned in the same country, children who live in different regions more or fewer rights. Like in Canada, some aboriginal students don't have the rights that almost every other canadian kid has. After I learned more and more about children's rights, I realized that the main reason of why some children don't have all their right is because of poverty. Most of those rights somehow deal with money. If a place is poor, neither their adult nor their children will have the rights they should have. All they can do is work for other rich people, and be oppressed by them. Which is not fair.

Poverty is the main reason of why some children don't have all their rights. And as we know, to earn more money, people first need to know how to read and write. So all children need to go to school before they join work. To solve this problem the government from each country could also send teachers who want to help to teach those students to those places where needs help. Also, individually, we could buy the fair trade products. Which means if people still using child labour, they'll have lesser customers. When the kids aren't doing labour anymore, more kid will choose to go to school. I think this plan could make a undeveloped country into a developing country. And whenever the country is developed, this country won't need any economic support. Which solved the poverty problem. And the number of the people who can help is much more than the number of people who needs help. Which means this plan is realistic.

9.

My name is Janice, I am a grade nine student at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School. I came to Canada from Hong Kong in the Summer of 2016. I have met a lot of friends here. I like Canada, because school is easier, which makes me relaxed and happy. In my free time, I like to play piano and guitar, also, I like to watch television. There are 5 people including me in my family, my mom, my dad, my brother, and my little dog. My lovely dog's name is Coco she is a little poodle we brought from Hong Kong. She has beautiful brown fur and a pair of shiny black eyes, she is very cute! My favourite place in Canada is Niagara Falls, I love the night view of Niagara Falls, because it is very dramatic and beautiful. My dream job is to be a veterinarian, because I like animals and I want to save them. I have a dream to be a veterinarian, but do all children have the right to dream their future job?

Children right is one of the topics we learned in class. Children right is the right that all of us have, the definition of children is when you born until 18. Children around the world all have this right. The first problem of the violation is child labour, there are a lot of children in the poor country got kidnapped to different kinds of factories to doing free work for the owner. One example is in the chocolate factory, children who got kidnapped from other country will travel countries to come to the chocolate factory to help the farmer with no paying for harvesting the cocoa, or other jobs to do in the factory. The second violation is safe home, according to unicef Canada's article 27 "You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do." I have a warm and lovely home, you have a home that are full of love, but still, there are a lot of children lived in an unsafe home that are full of violence. Fair trade is one of the plan to protect children from doing child labour, fair trade is suggested by the union to protect the workers from unfair treatment. The three rules of fair trade is fair price is paid for the work done, child labour is not used, and workers health and safety are protected. If the company making chocolate can follow the rules, then they will get a sticker from the FLO.

We all can help to save children from doing child labour. Governments can build more Child Free Zones in the poor countries such as Ivory Coast and Ghana. Child Free Zones can educate the children and let them have a chance to get a better job in the future. Also, the government can check factories at any time and not inform the owner so they will not have time to hide the children before the government checks. Moreover, if the government sees any child labour, they can take the children away from the farm and charge them. Furthermore, the government need to make sure that children need to be in school. Since education is the only way to have a better future, the government must make some policy for free education until the age of 16. For us, we can buy items with fair trade stickers and search for the companies selling ethical clothing. Here is a website that shows which companies sell ethical clothing and fair trade goods <http://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/fair-trade-clothing> . Ethical clothing has better quality than other kinds of clothes and the materials are organic and recyclable or made from recycled materials. But the most important thing is the child labour is not used by these companies. An example of one ethical clothing is H&M, they show videos inside their factories and they shared their sustainability report to the public. Everyone can help with the problem, we need to do it together.

10.

Dear GTP,

I start by thanking you for the initiative to create this wonderful virtual circle of young people, through which we can all learn from each other. You certainly want to know who is addressing this letter, so I will start by presenting myself.

My name is Ionascu Bianca Daniela, I am 15 years old and I am a simple student at B.P. Hasdeu in Buzau County, who also loves justice and wants the rights of the child to be taken more seriously and even improved. So, in my view, the right that should be better exploited in Romania would be the one that talks about child protection against all forms of exploitation, against violence, abuse and other harmful treatments. Because, in many countries this right is the most infringing, as children are often used as aids in begging or even exploited by parents through work (most often being forced to beg from a young age) or being raised with violence unacceptable physics. In addition, many children are abandoned in many orphanages, thus being engaged in a life free of parental affection and a particular education. My idea of making the world more reflection on this right would be to pay a very high fee for any abandoned child or if the family has nothing to support the state with an amount of Monthly money better than those that are now in Romania. Also, I would reimburse a small amount of money for every citizen who is claiming abuse in the family, and the guilty person receives two months of community work or receives a pretty damning fine.

In addition, I would like the children's allowances in Romania to pay a baby's birth fee. I would also like the GTP to help with putting together the ideas presented in numerous letters, such as making some money or making virtual protests to influence the Romanian state.

On the other hand, we should give those who have a family history abusive one-month courses with compulsory attendance in which they teach us how to behave with our own children and how to respect their existence. If they are not Present would then receive a fairly large fine.

I say that children suffering from many injustice will get a better fortune with GTP and UNICEF, because each one deserves a decent and happy life from all points of view.

Thank you to GTP for helping to form a better society and to address the irregularities in this world, although it is very difficult and I also thank you for extending the mentality of many who will be the next power in the world and that will probably change many.

At the end of the letter I would like to add that the children are gifts from God and that by abusing or not respecting their rights we play a holy, divine gift and that it brings the greatest sin and also think that we have Were children and how it would have been if we were treated by our parents as we treat our children.

11.

My plan to improve children's rights

I am a fourteen year old African girl, who comes from an unknown township in South Africa. Many know me as that girl that comes from the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy but many disregard where I come from and how my life was before I came to the academy. My kind of background didn't really allow me to dream big or even think much of myself or where I would end up in life. My dreams were ignored and seemed to be impossible to achieve. I personally feel like in many parts of the world children are suppressed and not given all the necessary equipment to develop as both individuals and global citizens. When I started with Learning circle, I had the mentality that I knew all about children's rights but it never hit me that I could actually be taking the rights that I am privileged to have for granted. I never thought much of children's rights and how they are and aren't implemented in some parts of the world. With all the discussions, research and activities, I have learnt that many things fall into being the building blocks of a child's development and future. I have also learnt that children's rights are some of the important factors that affect how the child develops, grows and that children's rights are not the same in all countries. I also learnt that some exploitation of children's rights is lead to by the situation in that child's life, and an example of that is poverty.

A part of me has doubts on what a fourteen year old girl like me could possibly do to improve children's rights and another part of me believes that as young as I am, I can make a difference not only in my life but also in the lives of others.

My plan does not include me publishing a book or advertising the importance of children's rights but it is simply a plan where I stand up and speak out. I firstly plan on acknowledging and being grateful for the rights that I have. I will see the importance of rights and how many others are deprived of even their basic rights. The next step of my plan is to educate myself and those around me about children's rights and how important they are. I want to be like Malala and voice out how I feel about the exploitation of children's rights. I want to speak up about children's rights. With me speaking out, I hope that the least that can happen is for someone to hear my plead. All I would possibly want is to be heard by others who want to make a difference.

My plan also includes me either forming or being a part of an organisation that evaluates and re-edits children's rights in my country. With that being done, hopefully the suggestions and plans made by the organisation will be further passed on to the government officials and a way forward can be paved from that. I think that that my plan does not focus on just one children's right because I feel like all children's rights should be put in the spot light and treated equally. I say this because children's rights are like a puzzle and if one piece is missing that means that the puzzle has an empty space and is incomplete.

Speaking about this will raise awareness to people around me and having an organisation that deals with children's rights will lead to the government and other citizens being more cautious about children's rights and try to improve existing rights and implement new ones. At this point, all I could ever want is to make an impact in another child's life. I don't really know how my plan will change the lives of other children but I know that it will touch someones life, inspire someone and make a difference in someone's life in one way or the other.

My plan only focuses on my country, and that is because I believe that everything has to start small. My plan is to be implemented in my country and spread across it and because such things are contagious, I believe that some aspects of it will be considered and developed in other countries.

I will not lie and claim that I have formulated an award-winning plan to change the lives of millions but what I do know for sure is that this plan, if initiated can make a difference in my life and the lives of those around me. I believe that I can make a difference and all I need to do is to actually stand up and do something.

Felicity Nosipho Makalima

12.

I am a proud South African by the name Nabeelah Fredericks. I am of a mixed race family and I am a Muslim. I live with my mom and two brothers. I am fourteen years old. I enjoy swimming, reading, creative writing and writing poetry. One word that would best describe me is adventurous. I live in Manenberg, a suburb of Cape Town. Manenberg is notorious for its gang violence. I usually don't play outside because I do not feel safe in my neighbourhood.

I feel that every child should have the right to be safe and free. In my community many rights such as the right to education, the right to play and freedom of speech are taken away from children. Many children drop out of school due to gangsterism. Some are forced and bullied to join gangs while others are pulled into a life of drugs and crime by members of gangs. Children have to be very careful of what they say because saying the wrong thing can get you killed. Every child should be safe in their own community. I recall walking to school one day when a gangster shot a man in front of me. I saw his lifeless body crumble to the ground. I was only nine years old when it happened and I feel that no one at that age should experience something so traumatizing.

The learning circle opened up my eyes. I thought that only my circumstances were bad but then realised that children in countries at war and in refugee camps that have it much more worse than I thought. It was shocking to find out that the clothes I wear and things I buy are actually from child labouring companies. Due to this assignment I did some research and found out that Disney is a child labouring company. It was said that Disney uses children as young as fourteen to work in the factories that create the Disney toys that I have in my room. These kids get paid thirty-three cents per hour. After finding out this shocking information I told my mom to burn all my Disney dolls. In order to stop child labour we should stop buying these products and the government should shut down all these child labouring companies. My plan is to use my knowledge and take it back to my community.

13.

Dear Jury Members,

Hello. My name is Sarah, and I am a grade eight student attending Lawrence Heights Middle School in Toronto, Ontario Canada. Being involved with this tremendous experience has been an eyeopener. I learned so much about how IMPORTANT children are, and why my class needed to reflect on the lives of others our age. I would like to thank you for setting this learning experience in such a clever and insightful way.

I'd like to talk about how Global Classroom really inspired and motivated me. Firstly, I got to open up and get to know the world around me. It was quite surprising to find out that there were laws in some countries that I never even knew or imagined. Secondly, I collaborated so much with my classmates throughout this journey. It was very fun and nice to be in groups with people I don't usually work with. Lastly, my leadership skills skyrocketed because I was one of the group leaders for each challenge. This helped me get out of my comfort zone and to be organized.

I think the most important right of all is Article 19 - "The right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind." I think this right SHOULD be followed everywhere because many children experience sexual abuse, violent abuse, verbal abuse, kidnapping, bullying e.t.c. Did you know that 40 million children are subjected to abuse each year worldwide? Children who are married off at a young age get sexually abused by their much older husbands. Children who are subjected to leave their homes for war wouldn't even make it alive. Although children get physically harmed, they can still be left with trauma which affects their mental health and how they cope as well.

Sadly, this continues to occur every second of every day. Children are seen as nothing but puppets and punching bags. They are taken advantage of and can be easily brainwashed and threatened.

In my opinion, we can put a stop to this by giving the children the chance to talk about harassment and take away the stigma attached to discussing family matters. A therapist or a psychologist who the children can trust should become part of this society. Children need to be trusted with a safe adult who can care and nurture them in a safer home and school. The important thing for a child is to be safe and stay protected is for the government to check up on each parent(s) and see if they are eligible to keep their children. I think the most difficult thing about being a child is that an adult has more chances of getting away with things. Organizations and groups who have a passion to save children around the world can help. We must see if they fit for the job or not. Not every child can speak up, and it's time we change that.

Sincerely,

Sarah G.

14.

I am a child. A fourteen year girl who is from South Africa, which is a country on the southernmost tip of Africa. Being an open-minded person has always been a trait that I value in the development of my cognitive skills. I am a very emotional creature who loves Art and Science. I am Christian and I speak SeSotho (one of South Africa's 11 official languages) at home and English at school. I love happy and positive people. I am just basic me.

I can say that as much as I am open to thinking out of the box, I cannot predict or even think about what someone else is thinking. This has been reflected in my realisation of diverse mindsets during this process. I have learnt that people's minds and views can be influenced by the people around them, the things that they have been through and the environment that they live in. I have also realised that this journey has made me get in contact with people who are different from me, but who also have the potential to change the world. One of the things that I have also learnt during this process is that, as children, we take for granted what we have, when we do not know that there are starving, homeless children out there. As an OWLAG girl, I am being groomed to be a future leader that will be making world decisions. I appreciate the support that I have from my community to stay in school and I am also very passionate about my academic future and pursuits. However, some children around the world do not have the same support system that I have to stay in school and actually learn to better their future. This makes me feel as if children's rights are only implemented on certain children because of their environments and what happens in their lives. Apart from feeling sympathy towards children who are not able to go to school because of circumstances, I also feel sympathy for those who take their education for granted.

My plan to improve one of the children's rights is based on education as I have stated that I have a passion for the education of children. I believe that if more schools are built in areas where children are not able to go to school, then those children can access free schools that support them in order for them to support their families and stay away from crime and drugs. These schools should not be built for the school fees but be built for the difference that will be made in the children's lives and the world around them. We could raise funds and get donations from organisations and the South African government to be able to build the schools. The schools do not have to be fancy or luxurious. All they need is the knowledge that will be transferred into the minds of young curious children. If the world were to think of children as the future rather than as resources, then I believe that our world will be better and more exposed as there will be more innovative minds and ideas coming from young educated children. This will not only better our economies, but also the sustainability of our species. The children will be more educated and will have jobs that will help support their families and this means that there will be less unemployment, less hunger and less crime. We are children and we need the support of the world around us to stay in school and work towards brightening our futures. I have hope for the children of yesterday, today and tomorrow. Without us, there is no future.

My letter stands a chance at being chosen because it is unique and it comes from the heart. I was motivated by the young drive inside me that told me that I am a child and a child is me. I tried to understand some situations from the perspective of those experiencing it and I believe in my plan to help children go to school.

15.

Dear Jury,

Hello, our names are Noor and Ayah, and we are from Cleardale Public School. We are in grade 8, and we have been working on the global teenager project. We were split into groups and made videos, presentations, and drawings. We believe that all children should have equal opportunities as everyone else. Countries that have a lot of money, could give other countries that are poor some money. If children don't have a mom or dad, We should find all of them homes and families. We could have people go over there and build homes for all the homeless people. Also, because we have a lot of teachers here, we could get some that could volunteer to go to places that don't have enough teachers. We have the ability to do a lot of great things for other people in other countries. We should help people in other countries because we can. We have the money. We have the time. All we have to do is go over there and start working. We have a lot of teachers here that need jobs so we could send them over to countries that need help to teach over there. We have enough food to keep everyone from starving but we don't use the food very wisely. We should use all of this food to feed everyone and make sure that no child or person is starving. We need to make sure that children don't feel left out or excluded. Children all over the world have spent time feeling left out or excluded from friends or family. I think that we should have people spread awareness about this. We could have motivational speakers go to schools and talk to students about accepting others and including them. Maybe then, more and more children would start being more accepting and inviting. Something that I learned while doing the global teenager project was to think about how many people there are that need our help. We learned about schools and students all around the world and how they are not that different from us. We should not base what children are going to grow up to be by the color of their skin or what their culture or religion is. Children need to grow up in a safe community so that they learn what is right and what is wrong. Children need to grow up in a safe community so that they feel safe doing simple things like going to school or playing outside with their friends. The Global Teenager Project was eye opening and I hope more people get to do this so that we can make a difference in the world.

Sincerely,

Noor Saad and Ayah Ghozlan

16.

Dear UNICEF,

I have had an awesome time working through tasks and challenges about children's rights and getting to know other people's perspectives from not just where I learn, but from all over the globe. I am a 14 year old girl, in eighth grade and I attend Tweedsmuir Public School in London Ontario Canada. I enjoy learning new things in school such as math, and love playing sports such as soccer, baseball and basketball. My favorite things to learn about on my own time are ghosts and space because they are topics that can never have all questions answered.

During the learning circle process I have learned about different lifestyles that children have and what kids in other schools think should be children's rights. Not only have I learned about children's rights but during tasks I have learned how to use different methods to describe my feelings and knowledge toward a topic such as models and Videos. One of my personal favorites was being able to video chat with to refugees and being taught how there way of life was back in there home country. Not only did I get to know them, but during the beginning of this circle people from other schools introduced themselves in various ways and told us a bit about themselves such as their hobbies and their names. A large eye opener for me during this circle was that not everyone/child has the lives like I do. What I mean by that is some children don't even have the right to clean water or to education where as in my life I can sometimes take things for granted like not eating supper.

A plan that I have come up with to improve the right of having the right to free health care is to create a website that people can donate to from all over the world. The money will be used to open up hospitals and give the money to the people that work at the hospital(s) such as surgeons, doctors, nurses and many more employees. Some of the money would also go toward education of the people who want to become employees so that they are certified and have standards to work there. This way the people doing their jobs still get paid but there is a safe place for children to have/get health care. Not only does this solution help the children that are sick and desperately need free health care, but it also provides hundreds or even thousands of people with jobs. My plan can improve the conditions in the lives of children because they won't be sick anymore and not as many children will die from illnesses that can be cured.

I am so happy that I have had the opportunity to be apart of this circle and work with eye opening tasks to better understand children's situations from around the world. I wish all children had children's rights and basic needs but I feel that this circle has had such an inspiring impact on my self and others that if we work together this issue can be fixed.

Sincerely ,
Reign