

# KS3+ Assembly

## Notes for teachers:

- This assembly can be used with a single class or a larger group, as an introduction to Freedom to breathe. There is a lesson which follows the assembly and builds on the students' learning.
- You can either deliver this **assembly** independently or use the **pre-recorded version** which can be found at <https://youtu.be/GfOTfhNd5Ck>
- The Freedom to breathe teaching resources have been developed by educational professionals and will achieve three key learning outcomes. Students will:
  1. Understand the state of air quality in their city, and how it compares to other cities.
  2. Understand the health impacts of air quality on their physical health, mental health and their ability to learn.
  3. Understand how they can claim their right to clean air by understanding what the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is. It is focused on their rights to the best possible health, clean water and a clean environment (article 24), but does not include the explicit 'right to clean air.'


**Curriculum links:** this primarily links to the KS3 Science & Geography NC, as well as links to Literacy, PSHE and Art & DT.

**Freedom to breathe** aims to gather the support of 20,000 children from four target cities (starting with Beijing, Delhi, London, Los Angeles) - in support of a call to the UN to acknowledge Children's Right to Clean Air. Students will have the opportunity to join a virtual event in November to hear the response from the UN.





# Freedom to breathe



What are  
the things  
we need to  
live a happy  
and healthy  
life?

 Freedom to breathe

Teacher to write down ideas on whiteboard if possible, but also explain that we will show ours

**Food**

**Clean  
Water**

**Sleep**

What are  
the things  
we need to  
live a happy  
and healthy  
life?

**Warmth**

**Shelter**

**Fun!**

**Exercise**

 Freedom to breathe

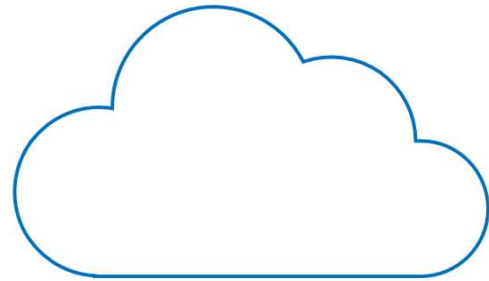
**PAUSE POINT**

# How about clean air?



You may have got lots of ideas, but how about clean air? We need to breathe to stay alive! We're constantly breathing, even in our sleep. Clean air is critical to life and essential for our health and development. Unfortunately the air we breathe can be polluted.

What is air  
pollution?



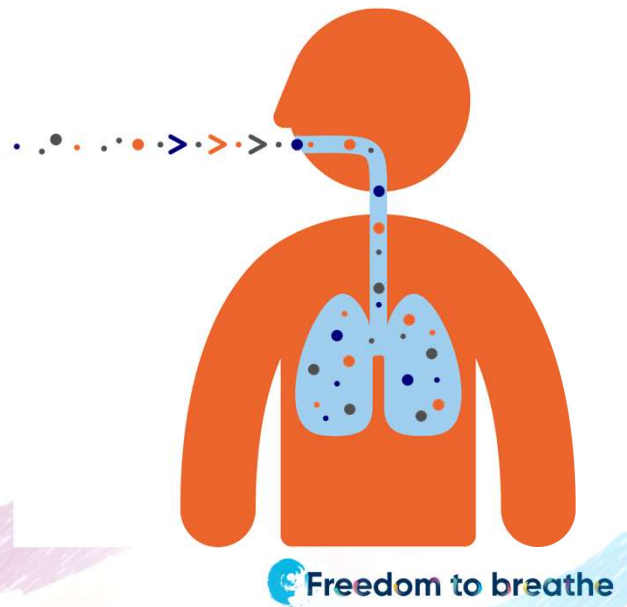
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But what is air pollution? What things might make it polluted?

Air pollution is in the air that we breathe in.

The particles and gases enter our bodies and can damage our health.

Any amount of air pollution can be damaging to our health and physical and mental development, but the more that you are exposed to, the bigger the risk and the larger the impact it can have.



Clean air is important as we need to breathe in order to survive! Even in our sleep we are breathing. Sadly sometimes we may breathe in polluted air.  
Read slide

## Can you guess where air pollution comes from?

Try to finish the sentences:

- **Indoor** air pollution is caused by things like....
- **Outdoor** air pollution is caused by things like....



# Indoor air pollution is caused by things like...

Cooking - gases and particles are released when food is cooked.



Chemicals in cleaning products or craft materials, that are released into the air. These harmful gases are called volatile organic compounds (VOC).



Personal care products like shower gels and body sprays.



Dust, mould and bacteria.



 Freedom to breathe

Indoor air is often more polluted than outdoor air. Indoor air pollution can be on average 2-5 times more polluted than outdoor air, due to the wide range of indoor pollutants and limited air flow.

For more information on indoor air pollution see the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health resource/report “The inside story: Health effects of indoor air quality on children and young people”

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/inside-story-health-effects-indoor-air-quality-children-young-people>

For more information on where air pollution comes from in the UK – please visit: <https://www.cleanairhub.org.uk/where-does-air-pollution-come-from>

# Outdoor air pollution is caused by things like...

**Vehicles** such as cars, vans, trains, ships and planes release gases and tiny particles (in soot) into the air.



**Factories** that make things such as food, clothes and toys and **power stations** that generate energy by burning fossil fuels.



**Farming** often has a lot of animal waste and uses fertilisers and pesticides (chemicals) to help food grow, all of which can cause pollution.

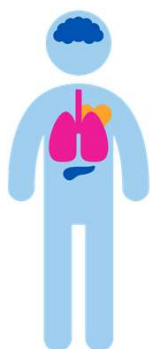


**Burning fuel** such as wood and coal to heat homes.

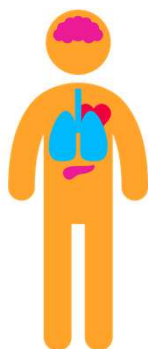


For more information on where air pollution comes from in the UK – please visit:  
<https://www.cleanairhub.org.uk/where-does-air-pollution-come-from>

## How does air pollution affect us?



Air pollution can damage your **lungs** and impact your breathing.



Exposure to air pollution can affect your **brain** and therefore your ability to learn and your mental health.



Breathing in air pollution can impact your **heart** and cause future heart problems.

**PAUSE POINT**

 **Freedom to breathe**

How does it affect us? What ideas do you have?

Additional information:

Polluted air is the number one environmental risk to humans. It affects all bodily functions / organs and therefore health and physical & mental development. Children's bodies are more susceptible to this as they are still growing. Breathing in clean air is vital to help children live long healthy lives and realise their full potential.

## In London...

- The amount of PM 2.5 in the air is high. This type of air pollution can seriously damage our health and development – especially our brains, hearts and lungs!
- Children are exposed to 5 times more air pollution on their way to school.
- 240,000 children are diagnosed with asthma.
- In December 2020, it was declared that the death of Ella Kissi-Debrah, a 9 year old, was caused by air pollution.



 Freedom to breathe

Additional links / information for teachers:

News article about Ella Kissi-Debrah: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-55330945>

In 2019, it was recorded that there PM2.5 levels were at  $11.4\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  (micrograms per one cubic meter of air) in **London**. The World Health Organisation's target is  $10\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

Other cities (Beijing, Delhi, LA) also have high levels of air pollution:

**In Los Angeles, USA,  $12.7\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$**   
1/10 children are diagnosed with  
asthma.

In **Beijing**, China,  $42.1\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

A 2009 study found that 6.3% of urban children were diagnosed with asthma and 7.2% wheezing symptoms.

Schools have also been ordered to keep children indoors to avoid high levels of air pollution.

In **Delhi**, India,  $98.6\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

A report showed that about half of the 4.4 million children who reside in the city have damaged lungs.

**We can all help to make sure the air around us is cleaner.**

**What could you do?**

Hint: think about things you've done over the last week (e.g. at home/school, your journeys, your activities):

- Could you have done anything differently?
- Are you already doing something to help?



**PAUSE POINT**

We can all play a role to make sure we have cleaner air!

Think back to what you have done in the past week. What could you have done differently to make the air around you cleaner? Is there something you are already doing that you could share with the class to help other children too?

Maybe you could have walked, or cycled, or even used a scooter instead of taking a car?

Maybe take public transport instead of a car?

Maybe stop idling?

Open windows when cooking to let fresh air in, and close windows when there are lots of cars outside?

## At home...



- Open windows to let the fresh air in – especially when
  - cooking
  - or cleaning



- Use fragrance-free milder cleaning and personal care products.

## When travelling to places...



- Walk, cycle, scoot or take public transport whenever you can instead of using your car.



- Don't idle – ask your parents/adults to turn off their engines when the car isn't moving.



Here are a few examples – remember that the air we breathe is all around us – indoors and outdoors

You'll learn about other things we can do in the follow up activities.

**Everybody can play a part to make sure  
we have cleaner air!**

There's something else we can do too...



Individually, with our friends and families, at home, at school, when travelling, talking about it in school and with others etc.

There's another thing we can do, but before I tell you about that, I want to return to our earlier discussion about what do we need to live a happy and healthy life and talk to you about something called a right



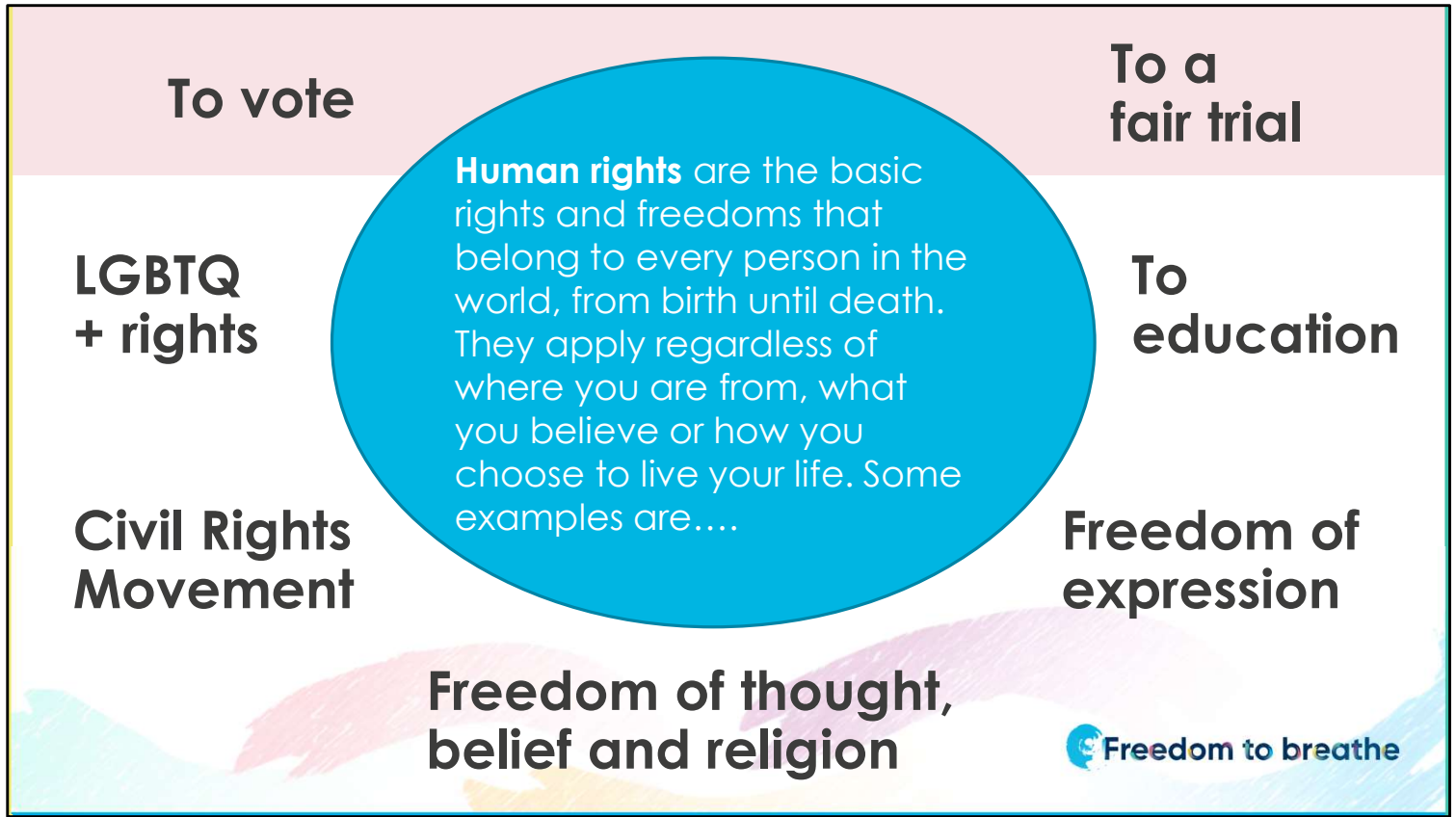
# What is a right?

Can you think of examples?



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Teacher to write down ideas on whiteboard if possible



You may have got a huge list of different rights. Maybe some of these came up in your discussion?

# Human Rights Act

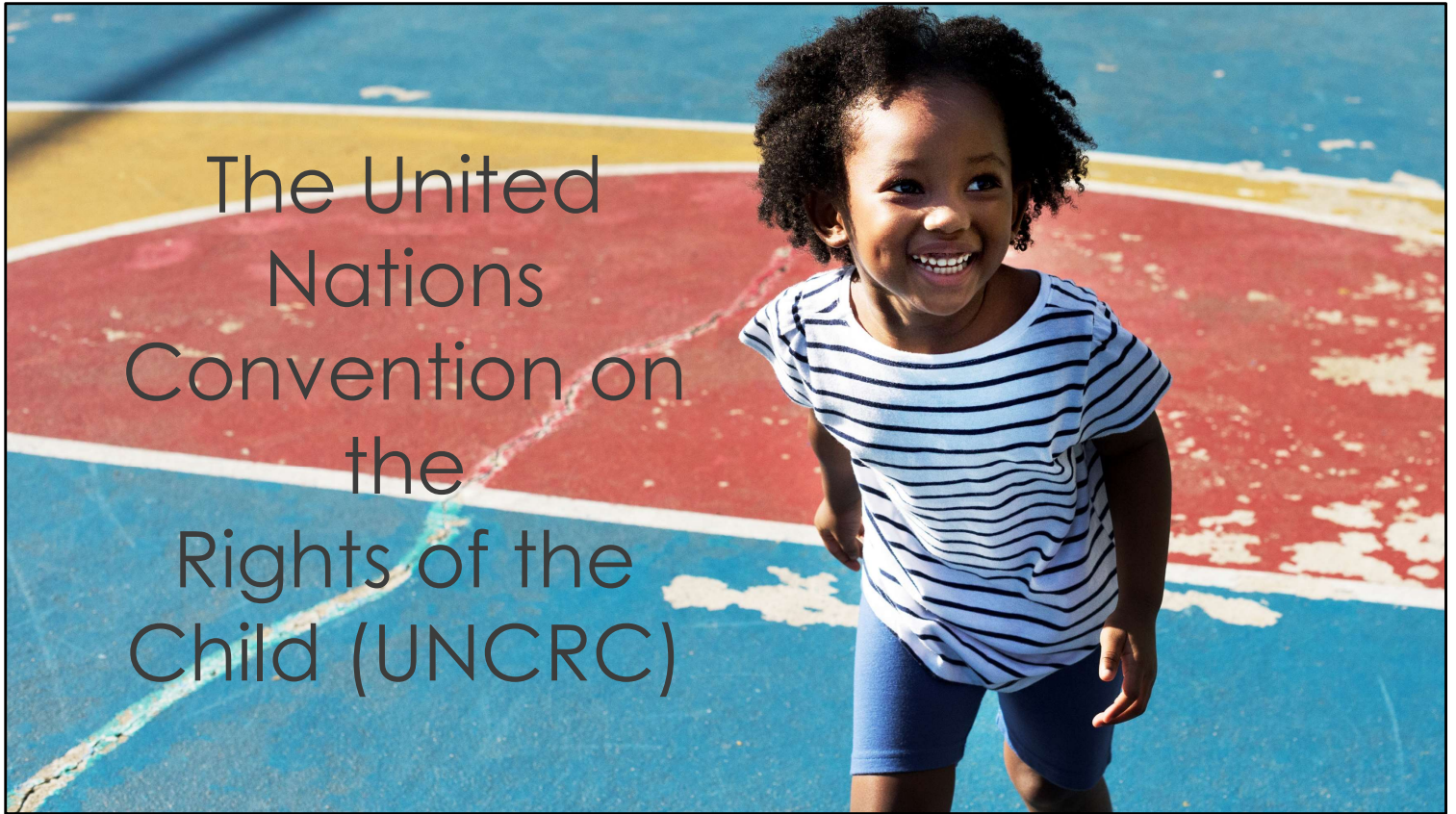
- In 1948 the United Nations released The Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- In the UK we also have The Human Rights Act which came into law in October 2000.



Additional information about the UN and Human Rights can be found at <https://www.un.org/en/global-issues/human-rights>

## **What Are Human Rights?**

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.



# The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

The UNCRC is part of the UN human rights and focuses specifically on the rights of a child.

It is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified international human rights treaty in history.

There are 54 articles that cover a child's life. It explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights.

#### Article 24

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such **health care services**.
2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:
  - (a) To diminish infant and child mortality;
  - (b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;
  - (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through *inter alia*, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate **nutritious foods** and **clean drinking-water**, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of **environmental pollution**;
  - (d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;
  - (e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to **education** and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, **hygiene and environmental sanitation** and the prevention of accidents;
  - (f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.
3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.
4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

This is article 24 of the UNCRC, which highlights some of children's rights. As you can see there are some very important things e.g. access to hospitals, clean water, healthy food, a good and clean environment and education. BUT something that is not explicitly stated is the right to Clean Air



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2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

The UNCRC does not explicitly state Clean Air should be a child's right.

Do you think it should? Raise a hand if you agree.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

Clean air is not explicitly listed as a children's right – do you think it should be?

we are raising awareness with children about how important clean air is to them. We want to empower 20,000 children to call on the UN to acknowledge children's right to clean air (making sure it is explicitly included in article 24)

We are going to do some more activities to find out more about this and your teacher can then help you be a part of this call.

What can you do to make sure we have cleaner air?

What can we do to make sure we have cleaner air?

What can everybody do to make sure we have cleaner air?



Remember, everyone can play a role in making sure we have cleaner air around us.

Have a think about what you can do, what we can do and what everybody can do – and bring your ideas to our lesson on this!



**Freedom to breathe**