

# Drawing the Line on Rights

This modelling the tools is incorporated into critical challenges at grade 11, however, it can be adapted for use at all grade levels.

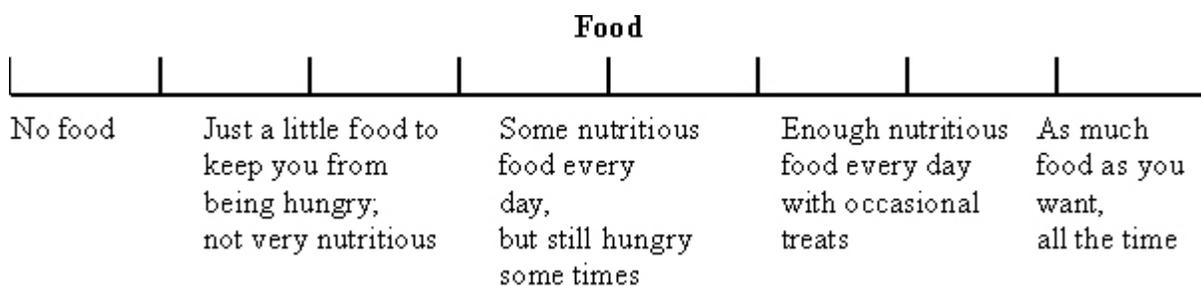
## Overview

These activities help students make the link between the factors that substantially affect quality of life and people's entitlements to basic human rights. Using food as a demonstration example, students indicate on a continuum the extent to which the food needs of young people are met in previously read stories. After exploring the direct and indirect consequences of the absence of adequate food, students identify the minimum level of food to which all persons are entitled. Students justify their drawing of the line for this basic human right in light of the impact on a person's quality of life. Following a similar procedure, students identify the point at which people are deemed to have rights to other factors affecting the quality of their lives. Students create and justify rights statements describing the level of basic entitlement for assigned quality of life factors. These statements are compiled as a student-developed Charter of Young People's Rights.

## Session One

Introduce continuum descriptors.

- Display an overhead transparency of [Food](#) continuum or construct your own continuum by drawing on the chalkboard a line with nine points. At one end, write "No food" and at the other, "As much food as you want, all the time." Label three intermediate points spread evenly between the two polar descriptors. Explain that this continuum shows degrees to which a person's food needs might be met. Draw attention to the spaces between the five descriptors. Invite students to suggest descriptors that might be written in the four spaces midway between the existing descriptors.



Locate youths on scale.

- See [Judging Quality of Life](#) (Modelling the Tools) for stories about Emma and José, two young people with different lifestyles. If your students have not yet used [Judging Quality of Life](#) (Modelling the Tools), you may want to introduce them first to those tools.

- Point out that in the previously read story, José had some food to meet his needs. Ask students to identify the nature of the food that the family enjoyed. Invite students to indicate where they would place José on the Food continuum. Record José's name at the appropriate place. Invite students to comment on the placement of the markers.

Identify consequences.

- Referring to the continuum, ask students to consider the implications of the levels where they and José were situated. How would a person's location on the continuum affect his or her life? For example, what would be the consequences of having very little food? (e.g., be hungry, might die, feel weak, lack basic nutrients) Record suggestions on the board.

Distinguish direct and indirect consequences.

- Point out to students that being hungry is a direct consequence of not having enough food. Direct consequences are the immediate results of a situation. For example, bleeding is a direct result of cutting a finger; feeling cold is a direct result of going outside in the winter. Invite students to suggest consequences of being hungry; e.g., might not be able to concentrate, might be cranky. Explain that these effects are indirect consequences of not having enough food—they stem from a condition, i.e., feeling hungry, that arises from the initial situation; i.e., not having enough food. Indirect consequences emerge as a result of some other consequence. For example, staining one's shirt with blood is an indirect consequence of cutting a finger; getting sick is an indirect consequence of going outside in the winter. These are indirect consequences: if cutting a finger didn't have the direct consequence of lots of blood, the shirt would not have become stained; similarly, if going outside in the winter hadn't resulted in the person feeling cold, then the person would not have become sick.
- Refer students to the previously developed list of consequences of inadequate food and discuss which of these consequences are direct and which are indirect. Record the direct consequences and the indirect consequences that flow from them. Encourage students to see that indirect consequences can themselves give rise to yet further consequences. No doubt students will legitimately dispute whether particular consequences are direct or indirect. The important point is not to label every consequence correctly but to appreciate how a particular initial condition can have ripple effects throughout a person's life.

## Consequences of Inadequate Food

Direct Consequences	Indirect Consequences	Further Indirect Consequences
<b>Feel hungry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• might be forced to do illegal or dangerous acts or actions</li> <li>• have no energy</li> <li>• won't be able to concentrate</li> <li>• might be angry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• might get in trouble with the law</li> <li>• won't be able to play or do work</li> <li>• do poorly at school</li> <li>• may be mean to others, which may cause family stress</li> </ul>
<b>Lack basic nutrients</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• get sick</li> <li>• won't develop properly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be a strain on family members</li> <li>• won't be able to play or do work</li> <li>• may not survive</li> <li>• won't be able to play or do work</li> <li>• will have long-term limitations</li> </ul>

Optional: Make a web of effects for direct and indirect consequences.

- To solidify students' understanding of direct and indirect consequences and to help them visualize the ripple effect of these consequences, you may want to distribute a copy of [Web of Effects](#) to each pair of students. Invite students to web the direct and indirect consequences of inadequate food by using the list and other consequences they might identify. Alternatively, use the structure outlined on the activity sheet as the basis for creating a class-developed web of effects on the board.

## Session Two

Introduce criteria for drawing the line on rights.

- Refer students to the Food continuum on which they situated one of the profiled young people and themselves. Ask students to suggest how the person's quality of life would change if she/he had more food; i.e., were situated more positively along the continuum. Invite students to suggest how their own quality of life might change if they had less food; i.e., were situated less positively along the continuum. Ask students if there is a point below which no human being should be expected to function. Suggest three criteria for deciding where that point might be:
  - necessary for a young person's physical, emotional or mental well-being
  - others have a responsibility to try to ensure its presence because it is central to a person's basic quality of life
  - it is feasible for others to try to secure this level of need.

Write the criteria on a chart for future reference. Explain that if a need meets these criteria, we say that people have a human right to it. You may want to distinguish a human right, which is something that all people are owed or entitled to have, from a privilege, which may be offered to a person because we want to be nice to the individual but it is not something that the person can insist upon.

Introduce drawing the line on rights.

- Refer to the transparency or to the continuum drawn on the board. Ask students to work with a partner to agree on the point below which a person's right to adequate food would not be met. Remind students that they should apply the criteria; i.e., necessary for basic well-being, others have a responsibility to try to ensure its presence, is a feasible level to expect others to try to secure. Invite students to identify where they would draw the line and record each point on the continuum displayed on the board or on the transparency.

Prepare rights statement.

- Explain that the decision that a person is entitled to a minimum level of food can now be stated as a right. Provide this stem: "Every person has a right to ..." and invite students to suggest how the statement should be finished. A statement might be: "Every person has a right to regular access to all the nutrients needed to stay healthy and should not go hungry on any regular basis." Ask students to draft a rights statement reflecting their identified point along the Food continuum.

Justify drawing the line on rights.

- After recording the different rights statements on the board, invite students to consider how they might justify not drawing their line higher or lower. Remind students that thinking about direct and indirect consequences may provide reasons for an appropriate place to draw the line. Explain to students that, in thinking of reasons, they should

consider the problems that might arise directly or indirectly if young people fell below the mark they have drawn. Also, they should consider direct and indirect consequences of requiring that others provide a higher level than indicated. Instruct students to work with a partner to generate reasons for not setting their level any higher or lower. When students have completed the assignment, invite them to share their ideas with the rest of the class. Try to reach class consensus on the statement describing people's right to food.

### **Session Three**

Assign quality of life factors.

- After students understand the procedure for identifying and justifying the point along a continuum at which a right to food occurs, invite them to turn their attention to other factors affecting quality of life. Divide students into as many groups as there are factors to consider and assign a factor to each group. Supply each group with a copy of the relevant continuum by creating your own or by using those listed below:

[Shelter](#)

[Clean Water](#)

[Medical Care](#)

[Education](#)

[Free Time](#)

[Safety](#)

[Caring Adults.](#)

To create additional continua for factors, you or your students may use copies of [Draw the Line](#) as a template. To write the descriptors, begin by describing the two polar positions and then describe the point equidistant from these poles. Finally, describe the two positions that are midway between the centre point and each of the poles.

Pose the critical question.

- Explain to students the critical question:

Justify the point at which people deserve the right to the identified quality of life factor.

Direct each group of students to follow the procedure modelled with the Food continuum when completing the activity sheets for their assigned factor. You might want students to use [Web of Effects](#) to web the range of direct and indirect consequences arising from the absence of their factor. Before students begin, it may help to review the rubric for assessing this activity found in [Assessing the Continuum](#).

## Session Four

Determine rights.

- Invite each group to present the completed continuum for discussion. As the continua are presented, the rest of the class should consider whether or not they agree with the recommendation and supporting reasons. After each presentation, discuss the conclusions. In light of the class discussion, invite each group to modify its position if warranted and frame a rights statement using the stem, "Every person has a right to ..."

Compile a Charter of Young People's Rights.

- After all presentations are completed, provide each group with a strip of chart paper. Ask each group to copy its rights statement onto the strip of chart paper for posting on the Charter of Young People's Rights.

## Assessment

Assess identification of consequences.

- Assess students' identification of direct and indirect consequences as recorded on [Web of Effects](#) using the rubric found in [Assessing Consequences](#). According to this rubric, the assignment is assessed on two criteria:
  - identifies significant direct consequences
  - identifies significant indirect consequences.

Assess drawing of line on rights.

- Assess students' reasons for assigning a right as recorded on the relevant continua using the rubric found in [Assessing the Continuum](#). According to this rubric, the assignment is assessed on four criteria:
  - clearly states the right
  - justifies why level should not be higher
  - justifies why level should not be lower
  - identifies significant indirect consequences.

## Documents

The following documents are referenced in the above modelling the tools. They can be adapted for your needs and re-saved.

Graphic Organizers

- [Web of Effects](#) 
- [Draw the Line](#) 
- [Caring Adults](#) 

- [Safety](#) 
- [Free Time](#) 
- [Education](#) 
- [Medical Care](#) 
- [Clean Water](#) 
- [Shelter](#) 
- [Food](#) 

#### Assessment

- [Assessing the Continuum](#) 
- [Assessing Consequences](#) 