

## Campaign comics session: leaders notes

This session explores comic-drawing as a way to campaign on any issue. Students need to be familiar with the particular issue. If your young people wish to use comic-drawing to advocate on climate change, please use our resources at [cafod.org.uk/secondary/climate](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary/climate) to explore this issue.

**Learning objectives:** By the end of this session young people will:

- understand how and why Grassroots comics are used for campaigning around the world.
- have had the opportunity to make a comic to campaign on an issue that is important to them

**Target age:** 11-16

**Time:** 60+ minutes

**Curriculum links:** Poverty; Stewardship of creation; Global justice.

**You will need:** PowerPoint and projector or appropriate PowerPoint pages printed out and copied; pencils; black ink pens; scrap paper; A3 paper on which to draw the final comics.



### Background

Grassroots comics can be made by anyone – you do not have to be a professional cartoonist. They each address one social issue and are distributed in a local area to encourage debate. They are inexpensive and easy to make.

The Grassroots Comics Movement was started by cartoonists, development journalists and activists looking to use their skills to help improve society.

This method is now used all over the world.

For more information, visit [worldcomicsindia.com](http://worldcomicsindia.com)

### Icebreaker: *What's on your face?* (10 mins)

*This icebreaker introduces young people to drawing faces for comics.*

Show PowerPoint slide two, or demonstrate drawing a face with a circle and T shape.

Divide the group into pairs or small groups.

Give one person in each group a piece of scrap paper and pencil. Tell the others to close their eyes. Quickly show the people with the paper and pencil the word 'happy', then take the word down. The person then draws a happy face using the circle and T shape. The rest of the group guesses what emotion they are drawing. Give a point to the team that guesses the correct emotion first.

Young people take turns to be the person drawing. Other emotions to draw could be 'worried', 'confused', 'angry', 'relaxed', etc. Congratulate the winning team.

## Input: World Comics (10+ mins)

*This input explains how comic drawing can be used to campaign and why it works.*

Explain that campaigning means getting your voice heard on important issues and calling for positive change. Comic drawing has been used by CAFOD partners in Sri Lanka.

Display the five example comics (PowerPoint slides five to nine) around the room. Ask the young people to work out the messages. Discuss. Share answers if the young people have not identified the correct message themselves.

Ask: What are the benefits of getting a message across through a comic? What are the drawbacks? Do this through group or pair discussion. Alternatively, give each person two post-it notes, ask them to write a benefit on one and a drawback on the other, then stick them up at the front and read what others have written.

Benefits may include: easy to do; inexpensive; anyone can do it – don't need to be powerful or be able to read and write; inexpensive to produce; fun to look at; make people think.

Drawbacks may include: not everyone is happy drawing; other mediums may be more useful in getting a point across in some places.

Explain the benefits of using comics in Sri Lanka. For example: they are a good way to reach people who cannot read and write; a way for people to get their priorities heard by local government; children and young people enjoyed making them on issues important to them; there have been exhibitions of comics at important meetings.

## Individual or pair work What's the story? (15+ mins)

In this section young people will decide on the story they will tell through their comic. For example, they may want to tell a story about how climate change affects them, or others around the world, in order to influence politicians to take action. If the focus of your session is to tell a story on the theme of climate change or sustainable energy, then pick a particular aspect of this theme. For example: The effect of climate change on a particular community.

The benefits of sustainable energy for a particular community.

How living more simply and sustainably makes a difference to looking after our world.

The importance of global agreement on climate change.

Then ask the young people to make their topic into a short story. It should have four parts: introduction; development; twist; conclusion.

The story should be between four and nine sentences long.

For example: My story is on the theme of climate change. It will show the benefits of sustainable energy for a community overseas in order to persuade politicians that sustainable energy is useful and we should use more of it. It is based on (source story), for example, Veronica's story:

1. Veronica lives on a farm in a beautiful area of rural Kenya with lots of sunshine.
2. She wants to be successful when she grows up so she studies hard at school.
3. But there is no electricity in her area, so she cannot see her books to do her homework in the evening.
4. Because she is hardworking, she won a solar lantern at school, which means she can now study in the evening. She is pleased as she has some big exams coming up, so she will be fully prepared.

## Individual or pair work: Make a comic (30+ minutes)

In this section, young people create their own comic.

Share PowerPoint slides 14-16 on how to create a comic. Provide copies of the comic template on PowerPoint slide 13 copied onto A3 paper for each person/pair. Then give the following instructions:

- Plan what your characters look like on scrap paper.
- Draw your cartoon in pencil. The paper should be used in the portrait direction.
- Add in speech bubbles or captions.
- Check you are happy with your story, go over the pencil lines in ink and rub out the pencil when the ink is dry.
- Add a catchy title.

Allow time for the group to share their comics with each other.

## Follow up: Share your comics

Help the group to work out how they will display their comics with maximum impact. They could:

- hold an exhibition in your school or parish.
- email a copy to local MPs. For example, if climate change is your chosen theme, let them know why you want them to work on climate change.
- take photos of the comics and share them through social media, tagging @cafod
- send photos of them to CAFOD to share on our website via [schools@cafod.org.uk](mailto:schools@cafod.org.uk), making sure you have the correct permissions.

Afterwards, help the group to evaluate what difference sharing their comics could make.

## What can we do next?

If your chosen theme was climate change, encourage young people to send an online message to party leaders calling for action to stop climate change pushing people deeper into poverty.

Encourage young people to live more simply and sustainably.

If you are working with a sixth form group, you could invite them to become regular MP correspondents and sign up to contact their MP three times a year. A briefing pack and sign up form are available at [cafod.org.uk/mpc](http://cafod.org.uk/mpc)

Download free resources to engage young people in the climate campaign at [cafod.org.uk/secondary/climate](http://cafod.org.uk/secondary/climate)

*We thank World Comics India for allowing us to share and adapt their Grassroots comics advocacy method for this session. Find out more about World Comics India and download a detailed comic-making guide at [worldcomicsindia.com](http://worldcomicsindia.com)*