SCHOOL SUPERHERO COMIC CONTEST

Total time
65 minutes

Age range
8-18 years

Storytelling For Action
#ENDViolence In and Around Schools

Subject

Creative Writing, Art and Drawing, Citizenship, Social Studies, Geography, Language.

Learning Outcomes

• Understand how the issue of violence against children is manifested in and around the school and what impact this has.
• Build empathy for those affected.
• Bring knowledge and empathy together in storytelling to engage others in this important issue.

Materials and Preparation

• Print and have students complete parental consent form (see Appendix 1)
• Print copies of the activity worksheet for students to do by hand (see Appendix 2).
• Option to use the online application if students have computer access, instead of the printed version (available 1 Sep - 21 Oct 2018).
• Set up PowerPoint (see Appendix 3). Visit here to download and adapt it.
• Drawing and writing materials
• To learn more about the contest, visit the website here (live on 5 October 2018)

About

This lesson plan provides a sensitive overview of the issue of violence in schools, gives space to reflect on solutions for safe learning environments and walks the class through a creative superhero story-telling activity.

Students are invited to submit their superhero to a contest searching for a superhero that keeps schools safe and peaceful. The winner will work with a professional artist and storyteller to bring their ideas to life in a published comic book!

Key Dates

• **October 21 2018:** Final day to submit superheroes online!
• **November 16-November 25, 2018:** Digital Global Vote.
• **December 2018:** Winner announced
• **July 2019:** Final comic book launch online and at UN global forum where Education and Peace Goals (4 &16) are under review.

Note: If you miss the deadline, or if you don't want to take part in the Comic Contest, this activity can still be done on its own.

Background for Teachers

- This activity has been created as part of the UNICEF's #ENDviolence campaign. It specifically focuses on ending violence in and around schools so that all children have a safe environment to learn in.
- If you are using UNICEF's full Safe To Learn activity pack this activity makes up Activity 4: "What can I do in my World so that all of us are safe to learn?" In this case please skip to Step 6 below.
- The concept of "ending violence against children" should be approached in the classroom through the positive lens of "creating safe environments for all children to learn". See Appendix 4 for detailed guidance on teaching this sensitive topic.
- Violence and safety mean different things in different places, to different people. We must let children define as much as possible how these issues affect them and identify the areas they want to address.

Lesson Structure:

Steps 1-4: First, build understanding on the issue of violence in and around schools as a class. Then, reflect on the solutions for a safe school environment. You as a teacher can lead the discussion and guide this learning.

Steps 5-8: In these sections the class will explore how to write an effective story followed by the creative super-hero and storyline activity. The students work in pairs and individually.

Please adapt the lesson's content as needed depending on age group or context. The Powerpoint (Appendix 3) is meant to help teach students about the issue of school violence, facilitate a discussion, and outline the creative superhero building activity. The slides can be used as is or adapted. Some content may need to be further explained to younger students.

Lesson Plan

Step 1: Set the Scene: Slide 2

5 mins

Begin the slideshow (Appendix 3) to support your class discussion and activity.

Share with students the objectives and steps of this lesson to explain the activity, using Slide 2 for a summary.

- **We are learning about an issue that faces many children and young people across the world everyday.**
- **We will develop a superhero and comic story as a way of sharing what we've learnt about this issue with others so that they learn about it too.**
- **If we want to we can submit our superheroes to the School Superhero Comic Contest to help raise awareness about and inspire action on the issue.**
- **The winner will have the opportunity to create a real comic book that will be published online and presented at the United Nations.**

Step 2: Introduce the Issue: Slide 3 & 4

5 mins

Referencing Slide 3, explain that first the class will dive into an issue. Use Slide 4 to facilitate discussion:

- *How do you think these people are feeling? How can you tell? Who is making this person feel this way?*
  Ask students to first think of the answers themselves and then turn to a partner to discuss different ideas before coming back together as a class to share ideas.

Step 3: Explore the Issue: Slides 5-10

The following section and corresponding slides help explain what school violence means, looks like and leads to. This section should be introduced to the class with care and can be adapted.

Link the discussion that you have in Step 2 to the idea that in real–life many of these actions could be considered "violent" and might lead to the children shown feeling unsafe.

Lead a discussion to help the class define forms of violence in and around schools:

• *What are some examples of school violence?*
> Ask students to consider a list of different actions that they would view to be violence in or around a school. Use Slide 5 in the powerpoint for prompts.

• *Who commits and experiences school violence? Where does school violence happen most?*
> Ask students to think about where this violence takes place and who is the perpetrator. Use Slides 6 and 7 in the powerpoint for prompts or a summary.

Show them the infographic on Slide 8 that provides some data on the prevalence of different forms of violence against children.

• *Does any of this data surprise you or stand out?*
> Emphasize here that school violence happens in every country in the world although certain regions may face different types of school violence than other regions.

Ask students in pairs to reflect on the infographic and think about the effects these experiences have on individuals and society.

• *How would experiencing violence at school affect someone?*
> Ask students to discuss what the effect of this violence might have on the child.
>
> Ask students to keep a note of their ideas, or jot down ideas on a "Working Wall" or large paper as students might like to refer to this during their creative writing.

Come together as a class and ask 2-3 groups to share their thoughts. Use Slide 9 to summarise the potential impact of violence against children.

Go to Slide 10 and ask students to think about the level of awareness on these issues.

• *Do people in our school talk about these issues?*
• *Are certain issues we discussed more relevant than others?*
• *Does the public talk about these problems?*

Encourage them to make a mental note on the level of awareness in their community for how their story could help inform and inspire people to take action on ending violence.

Step 4: Reflect on the Solutions: Slide 11

While previous steps of this plan establish a base understanding of the issue and encourage students to empathise with the situation, Step 4 is solution-oriented, to foster critical thinking and discussion among the class about what makes a school safe and how they can individually and collectively contribute to a safe and inclusive

learning environment. Select a few answers from the class:

- *What makes a school safe?*
- *What does a safe school have?*

Use Slide 11 for prompts and a summary of factors that support a safe school environment: positive culture of inclusion and respect, school training and resources, a protected setting, etc.

If relevant, bring this discussion into the context of their own school.

- *What makes our school safe and what could we change to make it safer?*
- *What do you as students commit to doing to make one another safe to learn, and what do you need from others (teachers, school personnel, policymakers, etc.) to be safe to learn*

Step 4b Link to the SDGs *(Optional)*: Slide 12

5 mins

As a follow up to the solutions that make a school safe, introduce the global goals that outline a plan to eradicate poverty, promote peace and protect our planet. Explain that ensuring all children have access to a safe education is included in this plan of action.

Present the Sustainable Development Goals by showing students the poster on Slide 12. Explain that:

- *World leaders agreed to achieve 17 Global Goals by the year 2030, including goals to ensure every child has access to education and is safe from violence. These goals recognize that being safe to learn is a right and necessary to achieve other goals.*
- *Creating a school superhero will creatively remind the world that every child should be safe to learn.*
    - » These superheroes will show that young people have a role in achieving school safety and accomplishing the goals.
    - » The winning comic book will be presented to world leaders and the public at the United Nations during government presentations on the two goals: quality education and peace and justice.

If students are unfamiliar with or curious about the Global Goals, option to show the video introduced by Malala Yousafzai (https://vimeo.com/138852758) that sets the scene and introduces the Global Goals in a child friendly way.

Step 5: Begin the Activity – Why and How to Tell A Story: Slide 13-16

10 mins

Reiterate to students now that they have thought more about violence in and around schools, one way we can all help this issue is by raising awareness of it and letting people know we think it is really important that all students have safe schools to go to. Explain that this is why they are going to be writing a story.

To begin the activity, ask your students about their experience with stories, referencing Slide 13.

- *What are some of your favourite stories?*
- *What makes them good stories?*
- *What effect do these stories have on you?*

Explain why stories are such a powerful tool, using Slide 14.

- *Why tell a story?*

    Explain that reading, watching or listening to stories activate additional areas in our brain that help us experience emotion. Comparing these activations to what our brain does when simply told a fact, it's clear that stories help us understand, relate to and remember certain information more than simply being told the facts.

Explain how to develop a storyline, <u>Slide 15</u>.

- **First, you need knowledge on a topic, which now we have.**
- **Most stories present a conflict and resolution. What are problems and solutions related to your topic?**
- **Think about your characters and then outline the beginning, middle and end.**
- **Finally, think about the emotions related to the story and how you hope to make the reader feel. How does your favorite story make you feel? Inspired? Relieved? Awed?**
- **In summary, we have explored an issue in the first part of this activity. Now we are going to create an inspiring story about it and a superhero character to help us tell it.**

Step 6: Get Creative: Character and Story Development: Slides 16-22 · **10** mins

This section, introduced on <u>Slide 16</u>, helps students to come up with a School Superhero.

Connect the dots for your students and explain why they'll be writing a story on this topic of ending violence in schools. Introduce the Global School Superhero Comic Contest that they have the option of contributing to (<u>Slide 17</u>).

- **We are trying to end violence so everyone is safe to learn.**
- **The first step to taking action against violence around schools is to raise awareness.**
- **Writing a story will help inspire the world to learn about and take action against violence in and around schools.**
- **We'll submit our superheroes to the School Superhero Comic Contest for a chance to be featured on a global voting platform and, if selected, win the opportunity to create a real comic book featuring your superhero.**

Summarize the discussion from the previous sections and remind students of the topic of their story (<u>Slide 18</u>).

- **Your story should inform and inspire the reader to help End Violence and make sure no one is threatened or harmed on the way to and from school, in and around school, or during school related events. We are raising awareness about the fact that every child has the right to be safe to learn.**

Pass out the activity worksheet (Appendix 2) and pair or group students to work together on Page 1. Please note that the activity worksheet is meant to prompt them, but students are not restricted to the problems or superpowers listed.

1. Choose a problem to solve (<u>Slide 19</u>)

- **Ask students to individually choose the problem they would most like their superhero to solve.**
- **Ask them to map out the problems and solutions as a class or in groups.**
- **They should address what factors contribute to the problem, how the problem affects students, and how the problem can be solved.**

When this is complete ask students to turn to Page 2 of the worksheet and now work individually.

2. Superpower Selection (<u>Slide 20</u>)

- **Ask your students to think about the superpower that would be useful in solving the problem that they identified in their group.**

3. Character Development

- **Ask your students to start to build a character based on their superpower. Create a name, origin, nemesis and other characteristics for the character. This will help inspire details for the next story-line activity.**

Turn to Page 3 of the worksheet.

4. Story Arch (Slide 21)

- **Ask your students to develop an outline for the "adventure" of their superhero.**
- **Remind them that at the end of the "adventure" the problem that students identified is meant to be solved.**
- **Remind students that all great stories have a beginning, middle and end.**
- **Remind students to think back to how they felt when they were discussing the impact of violence on children. Can this help make their story more emotive?**

  Beginning: students should explain where and why the problem takes place.

  Middle: students should introduce their superhero and explain how their hero can solve the problem.

  End: students should finally portray how the superhero overcomes the problem and how the world now looks.

Step 7: Draw the Superhero: Slide 22

10 mins

For the final activity, turn to Page 4 of the worksheet and pass out drawing materials. Please note that the drawing is a mandatory element of the contest in order to be considered.

5. The Drawing (Slide 22)

- **Encourage students to bring their character to life in art form.**
- **If in art class, this is an opportunity to put artistic abilities and techniques to work. But for the contest, the quality of drawings are not the deciding factor. Stick figures and simple drawings are fine.**

Step 8: Concluding and submitting

5 mins

Explain to the students that their creations will be submitted to the Global School Superhero Comic Contest. See below for instructions and key deadlines.

Extension Activities

- **Discuss ideas to bring the superheros to life in your school. How can we all be everyday superheros, keeping everyone safe to learn? (Slides 23-24)**
- **Get your students inspired to tell a comic story by visiting** www.comicsunitingnations.org **for free, downloadable comic books about the Sustainable Development Goals. See the** teacher's guide for using comics in the classroom here.
- **Spend more time sharing students' superhero stories as a class, including – where appropriate - through role play, "freeze frame" drama techniques, asking questions and exploring alternative endings (paying particular attention to the safeguarding guidance in the Teacher Guide).**
- **Or deepen understanding of the issue by using the full UNICEF End Violence against children activity pack** here**.**

Key Instructions and Deadlines for Submitting Student Work

In order to make your students' voices heard, submit their superheroes to the contest by 21 October 2018.

» Scan and email your students' work to engage@unicef.org.

» Alternatively, if your students participated in the workshop online via the digital application (live 1 September), the form automatically submitted their work.

Scanned submissions must be accompanied by the Parental Consent Form in Appendix O.

Students submitting through the digital application will need parental consent to participate and will be asked to provide a guardian contact information.

The top submissions will be selected, voted on globally on the comic contest website and the winner will work with a professional team to develop and publish a comic book online and at the United Nations.

Timeline for the Comic Contest

- **21 October 2018:** Final day to submit superheroes!
- **16-25 November 2018:** Digital Global Vote!
- **December 2018:** Winner announced!
- **July 2019:** Final comic book launch online and at UN global forum where Education and Peace Goals (4 &16) are under review!

Please note: If you miss the deadline, or if you don't want to take part in the Comic Contest, this activity can still be done on its own.

Follow the campaign

Share

Post photos or videos of participants working on their superheroes and images of their final products.

Vote

Engage your students in the online vote taking place 16-25 November. The campaign website will be live on 5 October here.

Through the following hashtags you can connect on social media:

#ComicContest

#ENDViolence

#WorldsLargestLesson

Tag UNICEF, the World´s Largest Lesson and Comics Uniting Nations:

Facebook: @UNICEF   @TheWorldsLargestLesson @ComicsUnitingNations

Twitter: @UNICEF   @TheWorldsLesson @ComicsUniting

Instagram: @UNICEF   @theworldslesson @comicsunitingnations

School Superhero Comic Contest! Parental Consent Form

From 1 September-21 October 2018 UNICEF will host a School Superhero Comic Contest inviting children and young people worldwide to submit a concept for a superhero who is helping every child to be safe to learn. A panel of judges from UNICEF will select a collection of the top submissions and from 16-25 November 2018, these will be shared online for a global vote. The winner of the vote will work with a professional team to create their own comic which will be launched online and at the UN High Level Political Forum (July 2019). Throughout the contest UNICEF will share their favourite superhero concepts on social media. To learn more about the contest and to read the full Terms and Conditions please visit the contest website.

If you have any additional questions please email: engage@unicef.org.

By signing this form I, _____, hereby give permission for my

child,_____, to participate in UNICEF's School Superhero Comic Contest

and I am aware that his/her drawings may be shared on social media.

Signed:_____ (parent/caregiver)   Date:_____

Signed:_____ (participant)   Date:_____

CHOOSE A PROBLEM TO SOLVE

The problem is that not all students are safe...

GROUP *Activity*

...Getting to and from school

» Some children face violence or harassment on their way to or from school, especially girls.

» Some children do not have access to safe roads or transport on their way to school.

» Some children have to walk to and from school in the dark which makes them more vulnerable to violence.

...In school

» More than 1 in 3 students between ages 13 and 15 experience bullying in school.

» 30% of those who had been bullied did not tell anyone.

» Some students can't go to the bathroom without fear of being bullied or hurt.

» Some students are excluded or targeted by teachers or their peers because of their gender or sexual identity, race, ethnicity, language, disability, social or economic status, or where they live.

» Some schools are threatened or attacked, particularly where there is war.

» Some schools are targeted by gun violence.

» Half of all school aged children live in countries where students can be physically punished in school.

...Around school

» 15% of children (in the United States) aged 13-18 were bullied electronically through emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites or texting in 2012.

» Girls are more than twice as likely to be victims of cyberbullying than boys.

» Some students can't play (during breaks or in the playground) due to bullying.

» Some students are excluded from extra-curricular activities around or outside of school (sports teams, clubs, dances, etc).

PROBLEMS

» With a partner, list the problem you selected. What contributes to the problem? How does the problem affect us?

_____

_____

_____

_____

SOLUTIONS

» How can we solve the problem?

_____

_____

_____

_____

SUPERHERO

INDIVIDUAL
Activity

Superpower categories

» · Mind reading

» · Time travel

» · Telepathy

» · Flight

» · Invisibility

» · Light generation

» · Emotion projection

» · Thermal resistance

» · Superhuman strength

» · Collecting energy

» · Hyper-listening ability

» · Mega-mediation skills

» · Healing

» · Controling minds

» · Camouflage

» · Flexibility

» · Freezing

» · Create your own!

On your own, pick a SUPERPOWER and tell us how this ability can help solve the problem you listed.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What is your superhero's name?

_____

Where is your superhero from?

_____

Who or what is their nemesis? (enemy, opponent, villain)

_____

_____

What are your superhero's characteristics and physical qualities? Are they funny? Serious? Smart? Short?

_____

_____

_____

STORYLINE

What's your superhero's adventure? Write your hero's storyline, and take a moment of your time to structure it. Below you'll find a diagram that will help you develop the beginning, middle and the end of your hero's adventure. Just fill in the blanks!

INDIVIDUAL
Activity

Talk about the problem you chose. Where is it happening? Who is it affecting? ⟶ **Once upon a time there was...**

_____

_____

_____

_____

Introduce your super-hero here! Why do they want to solve the problem? Who or what tries to stop them and why? ⟶ **Until one day...**

_____

_____

_____

_____

How does your super-hero solve the problem? How does your hero make school a safe place? ⟶ **Until finally...**

_____

_____

_____

_____

SUPERHERO

INDIVIDUAL
Activity

What is your name?

_____

How old are you?

_____

What is your gender?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ I do not identify as female or male

Other: _____

What country are you from?

_____

Tell us a little about yourself!

_____

_____

_____

_____

Superhero name

_____

Superpower

_____

_____

_____

Please create your own drawing of your superhero. Remember, we will not focus on your artistic ability. We want to see interesting, unique and diverse superheroes!

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

LEARN ABOUT AN ISSUE

Think about the issue.
Reflect on the problems.
Consider the solutions.

CREATE A CHARACTER

Who is going to tell your story?
How will you describe your character?
Will the reader relate to or admire your character?

WRITE A STORYLINE

What is your message? What do you want your reader to think and feel after reading your story?

THE ISSUE

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE?

Isolating

Cyberbullying

Making up lies

Fighting
(e.g., punching, slapping, kicking)

Spreading rumours

Gang violence

Name calling

Rejecting

Ignoring

Using weapons

Humiliating

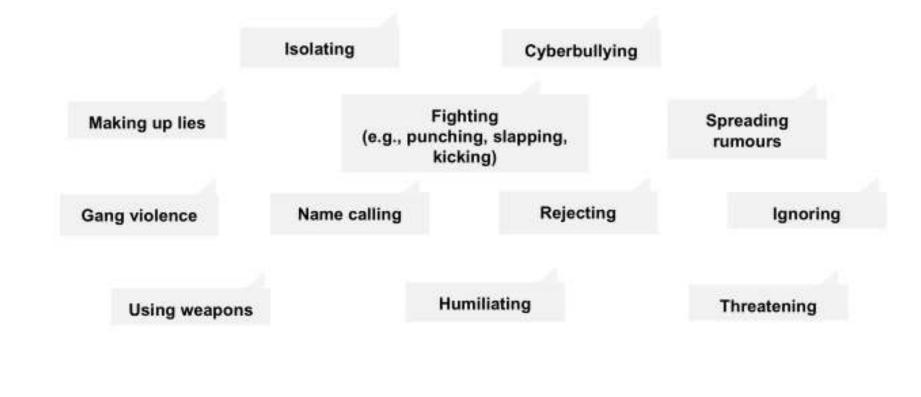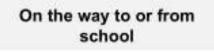Threatening

WHERE DOES SCHOOL VIOLENCE HAPPEN MOST?

School violence most often occurs in places where there is less supervision:

On the way to or from school

Poorly lit roads

In and around school

Playgrounds/ Recreation

Changing rooms/ Toilets

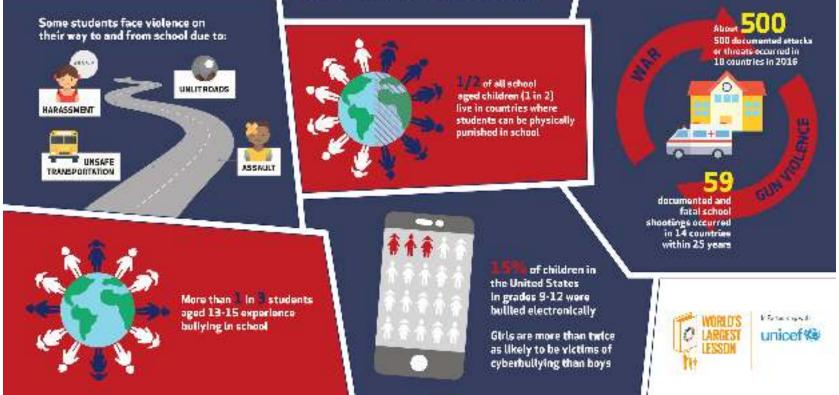**School related events and places**

Celebrations/ Sports Games

Online

SCHOOL VIOLENCE OCCURS IN ALL COUNTRIES AND AFFECTS MILLIONS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Some students face violence on their way to and from school due to:

HARASSMENT

UNLIT ROADS

UNSAFE TRANSPORTATION

ASSAULT

1/2 of all school aged children (1 in 2) live in countries where students can be physically punished in school

More than 1 in 3 students aged 13-15 experience bullying in school

15% of children in the United States in grades 9-12 were bullied electronically

Girls are more than twice as likely to be victims of cyberbullying than boys

WAR

About 500
500 documented attacks or threats occurred in 18 countries in 2016

59 documented and fatal school shootings occurred in 14 countries within 25 years

GUN VIOLENCE

WORLD'S LARGEST LESSON

unicef

HOW CAN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE AFFECT SOMEONE?

Poor self-esteem

Lower grades

Reduced attendance

Dropping out of school

Physical harm

Depression leading into adulthood

WHAT MAKES A SCHOOL SAFE?

SCHOOL SUPERHERO
COMIC CONTEST

Positive Culture

School Resources

Setting

The opportunity for everyone to **express** their opinions about their school environment

Including and **supporting** each other, including those who are different from you.

Transport

Functioning bathrooms

Counselors

Electricity

Security systems that prioritize the safety and learning of each and every student

Policies to protect schools from emergencies or conflict
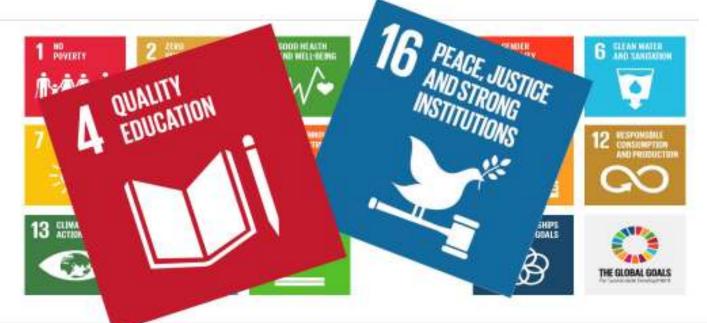
The ability to **ask** for help or **report** a situation of violence

WORLD LEADERS AGREED TO 17 GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

WHY IS SCHOOL SAFETY IN THE SDGS?

Through this framework, governments reaffirmed their commitments to ensure every child has access to education and is safe from violence. These goals recognize that being safe to learn is **a right** and necessary to **achieve other goals**.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Creating a school superhero will **creatively remind the world** that every child should be safe to learn. These superheroes will show that **young people have a role** in achieving school safety and accomplishing the Goals.

WHY TELL A STORY?

If someone tells us **a fact**, it activates a part of our brain that processes language and information.

When we are being told **a story,** additional areas in our brain are activated.

These activated areas go beyond processing a fact and help us **experience emotion** related to the information.

Stories help us not only **learn** information, but **feel** something about it!

This leads to increased memory and understanding.

We have explored an issue in the first part of this activity. **Now we are going to create stories about it.**

HOW TO START A STORY

1. You need some **knowledge** on a topic.
2. Most stories present a **conflict** and **resolution**.
3. You need **characters** to tell your story.
4. A good story has a **beginning, middle and end.**
5. You need to then consider the **emotions** of your story -- put yourself in your character's shoes! What will your readers **feel**?

STUDENT VOICES FOR SCHOOLS

SCHOOL SUPERHERO

We are trying to **#EndViolence** so everyone is safe to learn.

The first step to taking action against violence around schools is to **raise awareness**.

Writing a story will help inspire the world to learn about and take action against violence...

COMIC CONTEST

The superheroes and storylines we develop today will be **submitted** to UNICEF and Comics Uniting Nations' School Superhero Comic Contest.

The world will then **vote** on the top submissions.

The **winner** will work with a professional team to bring their superhero's story to life in a **comic-book** that will be shared online and at the UN!

The final comic book will be **launched at the UN** where world leaders are gathering to discuss what the world is doing to achieve education and peace for every child by 2030.

BAM!

A STORY TO #ENDVIOLENCE

Create a story to **inform and inspire** the reader in making sure no one is threatened or harmed:

- on the way to and from school,
- in school,
- around school and during school related events.

Everyone has the right to be **safe to learn!**

CHOOSE A PROBLEM TO SOLVE

THE PROBLEM IS THAT NOT ALL STUDENTS ARE SAFE…

…GETTING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Some children face violence or harassment on their way to school, especially girls

Some children do not have access to safe roads or transport on their way to school

Some children have to walk to and from school in the dark which makes them more vulnerable to violence

…IN SCHOOL

More than 1 in 3 students between ages 13 and 15 experience bullying in school.

30% of those who had been bullied did not tell anyone.

Some students can't go to the bathroom without fear of being bullied or hurt.

Some students are excluded or targeted by teachers or their peers because of their gender or sexual identity, race, ethnicity, language, disability or socioeconomic status, or where they live.

Some schools are targeted by gun violence.

Some schools are threatened or attacked, particularly where there is war.

Half of all school aged children live in countries where students can be physically punished in school.

…AROUND SCHOOL

15% of children (in the United States) aged 13-18 were bullied electronically through emails, chat rooms, instant messaging, websites or texting in 2012.

Girls are more than twice as likely to be victims of cyberbullying than boys, at 21% and 9% respectively.

Some students can't play (during breaks or in the playground) due to bullying.

Some students are excluded from extracurricular activities around or outside of school (sports teams, clubs, dances, etc)

SCHOOL SUPERHERO COMIC CONTEST

1

SUPERPOWERS TO THE RESCUE
CHOOSE YOUR HERO'S SUPERPOWER

SUPERPOWER IDEAS
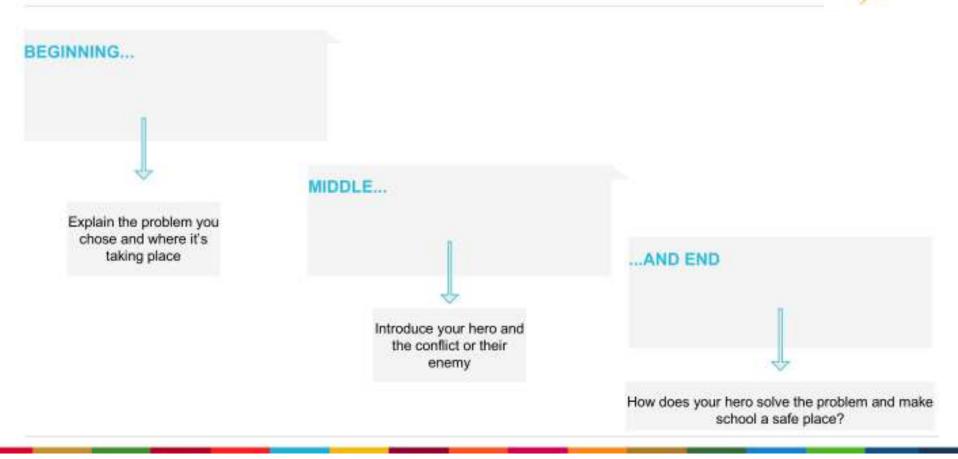
· Mind Reading

· Time Travel

· Telepathy

· Flight

· Invisibility

· Light Generation

· Emotion Projection

· Thermal Resistance

· Superhuman Strength

· Collecting Energy

· Hyper-Listening Abilities

· Mega-Mediation Skills

· Healing

· Controling minds

· Camouflage

· Flexibility

· Freezing

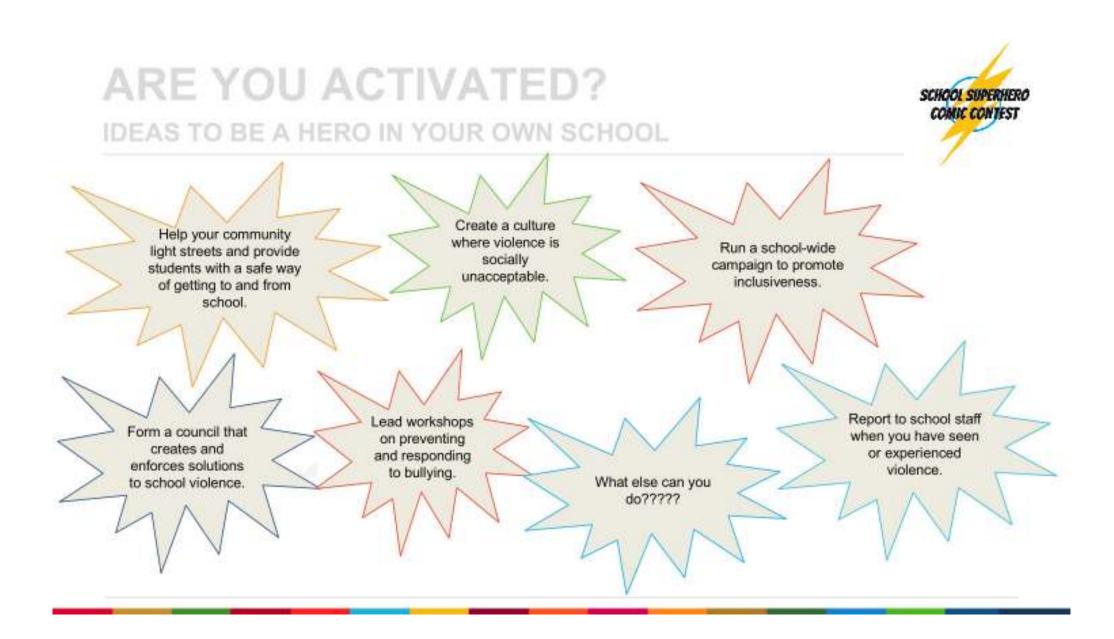· Create Your Own!

DEVELOP YOUR CHARACTER...

THE ADVENTURE

BEGINNING...

Explain the problem you
chose and where it's
taking place

MIDDLE...

Introduce your hero and
the conflict or their
enemy

...AND END

How does your hero solve the problem and make
school a safe place?

THE DRAWING

ARE YOU ACTIVATED?

IDEAS TO BE A HERO IN YOUR OWN SCHOOL

SCHOOL SUPERHERO COMIC CONTEST

Help your community light streets and provide students with a safe way of getting to and from school.

Create a culture where violence is socially unacceptable.

Run a school-wide campaign to promote inclusiveness.

Form a council that creates and enforces solutions to school violence.

Lead workshops on preventing and responding to bullying.

What else can you do?????

Report to school staff when you have seen or experienced violence.

1: Safe To Learn: The Issues

What's the problem?

All children have the right to be safe, to go to school and to learn. However, not all children are able to go to school, are safe to get to school, are safe at school, or are included at school. These problems are caused by various issues: too often a child's gender, disability or their minority status affects their ability to attend school; in some cases, geographic location, road safety, community violence or conflict impedes a child's journey to school; in other cases, children face discrimination, bullying or physical punishment in or around school. These violations of children's rights can cause lasting physical or mental harm to children that can last into adulthood. Not giving children a safe place to learn also has a social and economic cost, impacting families and societies as a whole. An unsafe school environment is often a result of social and gender norms and stereotypes, and is enforced by unequal power dynamics. A safe learning environment is therefore needed to ensure every child is protected from bullying, corporal punishment, verbal or sexual harassment and abuse, non-consensual touching, sexual coercion, assault and rape, among others. It is important to note that violence can take place in person or online.

• Worldwide, **close to 130 million (slightly more than 1 in 3) students** between the ages of 13 and 15 experience bullying. Students who experience bullying score lower in math and reading than those who do not (*A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents*, UNICEF, 2017).

• Violence occurs not only on school premises but also on the way to school. In 2016 alone, **close to 500 attacks or threats of attacks on schools** were documented or verified in 18 conflict-affected countries or areas (UNICEF 2017).

How is this campaign on ending violence in and around schools linked to other frameworks?

The Global Goals: In 2015, all 193 UN Member States adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Global Goals 4 and 16 specifically reaffirm global commitment to every child's right to learn and be safe.

Global Goal 4 (Quality Education) calls for safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

Global Goal 16 (Peace and Justice) calls for ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: Being safe to learn is not an act of charity towards children: it is their right. All States except one have agreed to implement the Convention. Many articles are relevant, especially:

Article 19 (freedom from all forms of violence)

Article 28 (right to education)

Article 12 (children have the right to speak out and be taken seriously regarding issues affecting them)

Why should you help?

Day-to-day violence against children continues to remain hidden and unacknowledged. Universal improvements must be made across borders and cultures. Violence in and around schools is likely to be exacerbated during situations of crisis and conflict. It is imperative to make this often invisible crisis visible. Ending violence in and around schools, including in humanitarian contexts, is essential for children's rights and critical for sustainable development. Doing so requires individual, community, school and national level actions to proactively implement the necessary measures so that every child is safe to learn. This Activity Pack aims to contribute to these local, national and global efforts. Even doing just one of the activities will help to raise awareness and get children thinking of ways to create change. Taking part in school action (Activity 1), local and national advocacy (Activities 2 and 3), and in the global survey (Part 1) and Comic Contest (Activity 4t) will allow students to contribute even more solutions to these problems. Through these activities, each student should better understand their own contribution to a safe school environment and their right to a safe learning environment.

If you are interested in having a stronger impact, think about:

• **Both short-term and long-term change:** What are you are your students trying to achieve? How long will this change last?

• **Monitoring and evaluation:** How will you show that you have made a difference? What is your starting point (or 'baseline') against which you can measure change and impact - before and after your actions?

• **Communicating results:** How can you share this impact with the global campaign? When uploading photos and resources to the digital map, think through - with your students - how best to show not just what you're doing, but what difference it's making.

Where can I find additional resources?

• UNICEF #ENDviolence campaign, with a specific focus on ending violence in and around schools - live from July 2018

• See here for the School Superhero Comic Contest website - live from 5 October 2018

• World Children's Day Lesson and actions - live from September 2018: A fun day of action for children, by children! On World Children's Day, 20 November - the anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the world will come together to reach 1 billion children and young people, to play their part so that every child is in school, safe from harm and can fulfil their potential. World Children's Day is a day to listen to children and fight for their rights. Schools are encouraged to take action. Full details will be available in September 2018.

• UNICEF Youth Talks on ending violence in and around schools - live from July 2018

• UNICEF cartoons regarding online safety of children where children play an active role

• No Bully

• Great Kindness Challenge

• Middle School Kindness Challenge (USA only)

Follow the Campaign

Share

With students' informed consent, and ensuring that no harm will come to students as a result (i.e. do not include information that would identify children or put them at risk), post photos or videos of students working on their activities and images of their final products.

Through the following hashtags you can connect on social media:
#ENDviolence
#WorldsLargestLesson
#ComicContest

Tag UNICEF and the World's Largest Lesson
Facebook: @UNICEF   @TheWorldsLargestLesson
Twitter: @UNICEF   @TheWorldsLesson
Instagram: @UNICEF   @theworldslesson

Vote for the Comic Contest winners
Engage your students in the online vote taking place 16-25 November 2018: website live from 5 October 2018.

Please note: The discussions you have with your students in these activities need to be handled sensitively and with consideration given to students' backgrounds and experiences. You want to make the classroom a safe place for your students to share their ideas and even experiences. Some students may want to be excused from certain discussions and this should be respected. For some children it could be the first time they have thought about the idea that violence against children may not be acceptable or the common experience of all children.

You may find the suggestions here a useful reminder, even if you are already experienced in handling sensitive topics.

Before the session:

• Do you already know a particular student or students who is/are personally affected by issues of violence? If so, you could let them know in advance that you will be discussing how to end violence in and around schools and check if they are happy to participate. You can give them the options of not taking part, leaving the room if necessary, and discussing the matter further with you or an appropriate colleague (such as a school counsellor or someone more experienced).

At the start of the session:

• If you already have standard "ground rules" in place for managing inclusive and respectful discussions in the classroom, refer to them at the beginning of the session as you explain that you will be discussing important but sensitive issues.

• If you do not already have such ground rules, can you develop them with your students? This will help them to exercise their critical thinking and empathy skills and they will have more ownership and commitment to respecting the rules. The rules can be illustrated and displayed in the classroom for regular use. Prompt questions:

» *What rules do you think we should we have to make sure that everyone feels safe to express their opinions?* [Regarding confidentiality, people outside of the group won't need to know who said what (unless one of the students says something that makes the teacher feel they aren't safe or need some help or support outside of the activity)]

» *How can we give everyone a chance to express themselves, not just the students who feel confident?* [Only one person talks at a time; no interrupting; listen carefully and respectfully to what others say; use a "talking stick" if necessary (only the person holding the stick can talk); a student can write their idea if they don't want to say it out loud; if someone hasn't said anything, we can ask if they'd like to (without forcing them) etc.]

» *What should we do if someone doesn't want to express their opinion?* [Respect this and don't force them to speak or embarrass them (expressing an opinion is a right, not an obligation); understand that some people feel more confident than others to speak out in a group, but that everyone has valuable opinions that they can express in lots of different ways to suit them]

» *What should happen if we disagree with each other? How can we disagree in a respectful way, not in a hurtful or rude way?* [Politely ask the person to give reasons for their opinion so that we can understand it better; challenge the idea, not the person; thank the person for sharing their idea, and explain that you have a different idea and why; use language like "I think…", not "You are…"; don't use offensive comments, insults or bad language; take a deep breath to calm down before speaking if you are angry or very excited; understand that there is no such thing as total freedom of expression (for adults or children): we can't say absolutely anything we want if it hurts the rights or reputation of another person, or if it encourages people to hurt other people; before you say something, think "Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind?"; say "thanks for taking the time to explain. We can agree to disagree on this issue" etc.]

» *What should we do if someone gets upset?* [Let a friend comfort them; give them the chance to continue or to leave the discussion; don't draw attention to them or force them to say what's wrong, but respect their privacy; have a quiet corner of the room where they can go if they need to; the teacher can offer to talk to them separately; welcome them back into the activity if/when they're ready etc.]

- Lead into the topic gently. If you are short of time, don't be tempted to skip the "setting the scene" discussions or activities. It can be helpful to imagine that you are carefully opening the lid of a jar of sweets/marbles/beans (which represent potentially sensitive emotions). You don't want all of the contents suddenly flying out, uncontrolled across the floor. Instead, open the jar slowly and tip out the contents carefully and delicately.
- As much as possible, focus on solutions rather than problems.
- If you think it's necessary based on the local context (cultural considerations, particular personalities and dynamics in the group etc.), you could divide the class into smaller groups based on age, gender or experience to create a more relaxed atmosphere to encourage students to participate.

Throughout the session:

- Keep an eye on students' body language and how they are interacting with each other. Is anyone getting upset? Is anyone uncomfortable or very withdrawn? Intervene gently and appropriately. Give them the opportunity to stop participating in the activity as necessary. (See also the advice in ground rules regarding if a student gets upset).
- Change the atmosphere by interspersing either some "energizing" or some "calming" activities if necessary.
- [See Section 3 below on actions to take if a child discloses violence].

At the end of the session:

- Make sure to close the session properly. You need to gently gather all of the "sweets/marbles/beans" back into the "jar" and close the lid. You can do this by: having the opportunity for students to feed back from their group work and to ask any questions; offering them the chance to speak to you separately after the lesson if they're worried about anything; thanking the students for their thoughtful/creative/ interesting contributions and for listening to each other in a kind and respectful way; expressing that you are proud of them for contributing their valuable thoughts on this difficult topic; moving the discussion towards a positive note (looking to the future); ending on a positive, preferably fun note (age-appropriate song, dance, joke etc.).

After the session:

- Be prepared for students to approach you to discuss anything that might be bothering them.
- Follow up on anything you promised to do, for example finding out more information about something.
- If possible, feed back to the class throughout the year on how the WLL/UNICEF campaign is going (e.g. by keeping up to date with relevant social media or email posts).

Further reading:

You may find the following sources of advice on how to approach controversial topics in the classroom useful.

Oxfam UK's guide to Teaching Controversial Issues

The Historical Association's guide to Teaching Emotive and Controversial History

3: Actions to Take if a Child Discloses Violence

Please note: It is essential that activities are carried out with the safety and well-being of children involved as the paramount consideration. The activities in this pack deliberately address the issue of violence from a positive, solutions-based perspective as much as possible. However, discussions with children on *any* subject could potentially reveal that a child may be at risk of harm. This is particularly true when the discussions deliberately focus on safety and the right to protection from violence

The following guidance will help you know how to respond if a child discloses any information about themselves or another child that suggests they may be at risk of harm. Of course it is just as possible that this will not happen! The guidance here is not aimed to scare you but to prepare you and reinforce your confidence. It can act as a refresher for those who are already experienced.

Before the activity, think through in detail what you would do in different scenarios. The more you do this, the more confident you will feel. If you are not sure about something, speak with other colleagues. What you will do depends largely on the local context. Some countries have very clearly defined policies and procedures to follow whereas others do not.

Preparing in advance:

- *Is there legislation in place that makes it compulsory for you to report concerns to an external authority?*

- *Does your school or organization have specific policies and procedures?* [If so, make sure you are familiar with them and that you comply with them.]

- *Is there a designated focal person in your school or organization who handles child protection or safeguarding issues?* [If so, let them know in advance that you will be teaching about the topic of safety/violence and make sure you know how to contact them. Ask them for advice on what to do if a child discloses violence to you.]

- *Is there a local or national advice/hotline number that you or a child could call for help?* [In some countries there are also online advice services for children.]

Child protection / safeguarding focal point:_____

Hotline number(s): _____

Online advice: _____

- *Have you received training on child safeguarding?* [If so, it may be helpful to review your notes from this training.]

- *If none of these things are in place (i.e. no policies or procedures, no focal point, no hotlines, no training)*: ask colleagues if the issue has come up previously, and if so, what happened, as well as what should happen in an ideal situation; read through the guidance here, and think through the ramifications of different courses of action, bearing in mind relevant legislation and the best interests of the individual child, as well as the best interests of any other children who may be at risk of harm from the same perpetrator(s) or situation.

Listening to a child's disclosure of violence:

- • [If relevant] Help the child get emergency medical treatment such as first aid.
- • Allow the child to say what they want to say and do not react or pick up on it during the session.

- **If there are policies, procedures and/or a safeguarding focal point in your school or organization:**

  - » Follow the procedures.
  - » As soon as possible make a written note of what the child has said, including the name of the child.
  - » Report the information to the safeguarding focal point in the school/organization immediately after the session. It is your duty to report the issue, even if you're not sure about the details. It is their role to take the matter further.
  - » Although some children may describe what we might consider to be "low level violence", it's important not to make a judgement at this stage about how serious it could be. All incidents should be reported to the safeguarding focal point who will then follow the correct procedure for escalating any concerns if necessary, as directed in the school's/organization's safeguarding policy.

- **If there are no policies, procedures or a safeguarding focal point in your school or organization:**

  - » Speak to the child after the session. Explain that you want to help them, but do not promise secrecy: you may have to tell someone else in order to help them properly. At this point, the child might choose not to disclose anything further, in which case, respect their decision and do not force them, but make it clear that they can talk to you at any time if they change their mind.
  - » You could also give them details of any hotlines that exist.
  - » If the child chooses to tell you more, detailed advice on how to react, what to say and what not to say can be found in the ChildHope *Child Protection Policies and Procedures Toolkit: How to Create a Child-Safe Organization* [available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic] – *Appendix 11 (Allegations from a child - listening to a child's disclosure of abuse)*. *Appendix 1 (Recognizing signs of abuse)* might also be useful.
  - » At the end, let the child know what you are going to do next and that you will let them know what happens.
  - » Take appropriate action based on your preparatory discussions with colleagues, the legal framework in which you're working, and consideration of the best interest of the child and of any other children who may be affected. This may or may not involve reporting the case to external authorities such as the police or social services. If external authorities are involved, it is their responsibility to investigate the incident, not yours.
  - » Seek help for yourself if you feel you need support.

Remember! It might never happen, but it's good to be prepared just in case it does!
Openly and sensitively discussing ways to end violence against children is a hugely positive step to empower children and adults to take action, breaking through cultures of silence and helping every child to realise their rights to protection and to education.
Thank you for helping to make this a reality!