



Golden Valley School
Educating for Life

INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES · 8th GRADE



Study Guide

United Nations Human Rights Council



Culture, Belonging, and the Right to a Safe School Environment

Addressing bullying, cyberbullying, and youth violence

UNHRC Simulation · 29 October 2026

Delegates 8A1, 8A2, & 8B

You are delegates, not yourselves. Speak for your assigned country.

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How to use this guide

This packet prepares Grade 8 for a Human Rights Council simulation.

You will take a real global problem and try to pass a resolution the Council could actually live with. This work sits inside your History unit: Culture — Where We Are Is Who We Are.

8A1, 8A2, and 8B1 are three rooms of the same committee. Same topic. Same goals. Each class is its own Council session. This simulation stands alone.

- Read this guide before you research.
- Know your country and whether you sit in Group A or Group B.
- Arrive with one clear demand written as an operative clause, not as a slogan.

1. Introduction

This packet is your briefing, not a script. Learn the body, the topic, your country's starting line, and one clause you can put on the floor.

- Read the whole guide once.
- Then research only your country using Section 8 and Section 18.
- If you cannot name the source, do not use the fact.

2. Chair / Moderator

The teacher and student officers keep time, recognize speakers, and run the vote. They do not write your resolution.

Expect opening speeches, moderated debate, negotiation time, and a vote. Formal dress. Speak in English.

3. The body: UN Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council is a United Nations body created in 2006.

It meets in Geneva. It replaced the old Commission on Human Rights. The Council has 47 member states, elected by the General Assembly for three-year terms. In this classroom simulation, every pair represents a country and has a voice. That is standard Model UN practice.

The Council's job is to promote and protect human rights worldwide.

It can hold debates, pass resolutions, review countries through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), appoint independent experts, and ask the High Commissioner for Human Rights for reports.

That limit matters for this topic. A Council resolution can name rights, ask states to report, request tools from UN bodies, and set a political standard.

It cannot write Costa Rica's school code or hire a counselor in Osaka.

What the Council can do here:

- Affirm that safety, dignity, and belonging in school are human-rights issues, not only discipline issues
- Call on states to strengthen prevention, reporting, and support systems
- Ask for comparable data and follow-up reports
- Encourage sharing of school-climate and cultural-inclusion practices

What it cannot do:

- Pretend a resolution ends bullying worldwide
- Invent a budget with no source of funds
- Ignore that culture, resources, and school systems differ by country

A short, reviewable resolution is a win. A speech with no clause is not.

HRC overview: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/home>

How the Council works: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/about-council>

4. Topic

Theme

Culture, belonging, and the right to a safe school environment: addressing bullying, cyberbullying, and youth violence

Committee question

How can states protect young people's rights to dignity, safety, and belonging by strengthening school culture, shared norms, and support systems — rather than treating bullying only as isolated bad behavior?

Why this body

The Human Rights Council is where states debate how people should be treated. School culture is not decoration. Invisible norms decide who belongs, who is silent, and who gets left outside the group. That is a rights question.

5. History of the issue — and the History unit

There is no single world definition of bullying.

Researchers and laws usually point to three things: harm, repetition, and a power imbalance. After that, countries split. Some treat only physical attacks as “real.”

Others include rumor, exclusion, humiliation, and online harassment.

That disagreement is not a side note. If two countries do not mean the same thing by “bullying,” they will not write the same resolution.

The behavior itself is old. Groups form hierarchies. Some people get isolated. Status gets protected by making someone else smaller. Schools did not invent that. Phones changed the scale. Harm can now follow a student out of the building and stay visible to a whole class.

Use your unit. Do not force a fake comparison:

- **Culture shapes how people treat each other.** Every society and school develops norms. Those norms can make young people feel safe — or make exclusion look normal.
- **Identity and belonging are central.** Culture helps create shared identity. Bullying and cyberbullying often attack a person's sense of belonging. That is the opposite of a supportive community.

- **Invisible culture matters.** The strongest parts of culture are often unwritten: who may speak, who must stay quiet, what counts as a joke, and whether adults act. Those invisible rules decide whether a school protects students or hides harm to keep the group looking united.

Your job is not to retell the whole unit. Your job is to use that lesson: culture can protect or harm, and a rights-based resolution has to name both the visible rules and the invisible ones.

6. Current situation

Use these points. Do not invent national statistics.

- UNESCO's report Behind the numbers found that almost one in three students (32%) had been bullied at school at least once in the previous month. Cyberbullying affected as many as one in ten children.

Report page:

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/behind-numbers-ending-school-violence-and-bullying>

PDF: <https://www.unicef.org/media/66496/file/behind-the-numbers.pdf>

- In 2024 UNESCO again reported that about one in three students experienced bullying in the previous month, and that victims are much more likely to report loneliness, insomnia, and suicidal thoughts.

UN News: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/11/1156591>

- Harm shows up in attendance, grades, mental health, and whether a student feels safe enough to learn.
- Some countries already run national programs, teacher training, and student-well-being systems.
- Other countries face youth violence, weak counseling capacity, or uneven enforcement.

A resolution that only says “bullying is bad” will fail this committee. A resolution that names culture, adult duty, reporting, and review can pass.

7. Past actions

When you speak, separate three layers: international words, national law, and what a school can actually do on a Friday.

- UN General Assembly resolutions on protecting children from bullying, including A/RES/77/201 (2022). <https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/RES/77/201&l=en&t=pdf>
- UNESCO evidence and country case studies on school violence and bullying. <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/behind-numbers-ending-school-violence-and-bullying>
- Human Rights Council work on violence against children and, in 2024, a resolution on countering cyberbullying. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4063915>
- National examples belong only to the country that owns them. See Section 8.

Do not present another country's program as if it were yours.

8. Case studies — every country in the room

These are starting points, not your whole paper. Read the blurb, open the link, then find one extra fact from that country's own government if you can.

Sweden

Strong emphasis on early intervention, student well-being, and comprehensive anti-bullying programs. The Education Act requires schools to prevent and investigate abusive treatment. Harassment is also covered by discrimination law. The emphasis is early adult responsibility, not only student slogans.

Start: <https://www.government.se/>

Finland

National focus on equality, teacher training, and a safe school climate. The KiVa program, developed at the University of Turku with ministry support, is the best-known Finnish tool: lessons for the whole school plus a team that handles actual cases.

Start: <https://invest.utu.fi/kiva-antibullying-programme/>

Norway

The Education Act (Chapter 9A) gives every pupil a right to a safe psychosocial environment and sets zero tolerance for bullying, violence, discrimination, and harassment. Adults in the school must act. The Olweus program is the classic Norwegian whole-school model.

Start: <https://rkbu.norceresearch.no/en/program/hva-er-olweusprogrammet>

Canada

No single federal school law — provinces run schools — but many provinces have strong anti-bullying statutes. PREVNet is the national research network on healthy relationships and violence prevention. Mental health and inclusion language is common.

Start: <https://www.prevnet.ca/>

Japan

Bullying is widely discussed as ijime. A 2013 national law requires schools to detect and respond early, including “serious situations” such as students stopping school. Group harmony is a cultural strength and a risk if harm gets hidden to keep the group looking united.

Start: <https://www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/elsec/title02/detail02/1373868.html>

New Zealand

National well-being and inclusion language is strong, including attention to cultural belonging. Bullying-Free NZ is the government-supported school approach. Whole-school climate matters as much as one-off lessons.

Start: <https://www.bullyingfree.nz/>

United States

High public awareness and many programs, but policy is mostly state-by-state. School violence and uneven mental-health access remain hard problems. StopBullying.gov is the federal information hub.

Start: <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

Brazil

National Law 13.185 (2015) created a program against systematic intimidation (bullying). Youth violence outside the school gate still shapes what schools can do.

Start: https://planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2015-2018/2015/Lei/L13185.htm

Mexico

National attention through school coexistence programs and education-law duties to address school violence. Implementation varies widely by state and school.

Start: https://dggeyet.sep.gob.mx/convivencia_escolar/

Philippines

Republic Act 10627, the Anti-Bullying Act of 2013, requires elementary and secondary schools to adopt policies covering on-campus, off-campus, and cyberbullying. Community effort is strong; nationwide support capacity is thinner.

Start: <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/58226>

Costa Rica

Ley 9404 (2016) sets prevention plus corrective and formative measures against school bullying. Reformed in 2026 (Ley 10894) to strengthen victim protection and digital settings. MEP publishes protocols.

Start: <https://www.mep.go.cr/noticias/mep-renueva-politicas-lucha-contra-bullying>

Colombia

Ley 1620 (2013) created the National System of School Coexistence and a route for preventing and responding to school violence, including bullying and cyberbullying. Useful for community and post-harm systems. Do not treat Costa Rica as the same security context.

Start:

<https://www.mineduacion.gov.co/portal/ejes-tematicos/Normas-sobre-Educacion-Preescolar-Basic-a-y-Media/322721:Ley-1620-del-15-de-marzo-de-2013>

9. Possible operative ideas

Write clauses, not slogans.

- Call on states to treat school safety and belonging as part of the child’s right to dignity and education
- Encourage schools to name both visible rules and invisible norms that protect or exclude students
- Call on states to publish a confidential reporting route for bullying and cyberbullying
- Encourage teacher training in school climate, inclusion, and early intervention
- Request comparable data so the Council can see trends, not anecdotes
- Ask for a two-year review of whatever this resolution creates

Do not write: “The Human Rights Council shall eliminate bullying.” That is a wish, not a clause.

10. Two working groups — a starting map, not locked in

Group A and Group B exist so the first conversation has shape. You may ally with anyone in your room who shares a goal, a constraint, or a clause.

Possible same-interest alliances (examples, not orders):

- **Teacher training & school climate:** Finland, Norway, Sweden, Canada, Japan, New Zealand
- **Culture, belonging, and inclusion language:** New Zealand, Japan, Canada, Costa Rica
- **Digital harm / cyberbullying rules:** Japan, Philippines, United States, Costa Rica
- **Data and review before a giant mandate:** Canada, Costa Rica, parts of the United States
- **Resource honesty:** Philippines, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia — they can still demand prevention language from Group A
- **National law already exists; implementation is the fight:** Costa Rica, Philippines, Colombia, Brazil, Japan
- **Youth violence around the school, not only inside it:** Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, United States

Group A countries may disagree with each other. Japan's harmony model is not Sweden's welfare model. Group B countries may disagree too. Costa Rica's legal frame is not Brazil's violence context.

A good resolution usually takes prevention tools from countries that already built them and implementation language from countries that cannot copy those tools tomorrow.

11. Country briefs — what they are already doing

Write from that line. Then add one fact you actually opened.

Country	What to research first
Sweden	School/discrimination duties; early adult intervention
Finland	KiVa + national safe-environment duty and teacher capacity
Norway	Education Act Chapter 9A + Olweus whole-school model
Canada	Provincial safe-school laws + PREVNet / mental-health framing
Japan	2013 ijime law; school response teams; “serious situation” rules
New Zealand	Bullying-Free NZ; well-being and cultural inclusion in schools
United States	State laws + StopBullying.gov; school-violence and counseling gaps
Brazil	Law 13.185; school safety inside a high youth-violence context
Mexico	PNCE / convivencia escolar; uneven state implementation

Philippines	RA 10627; school policies required, resources limited
Costa Rica	Ley 9404 / 10894 + MEP protocols
Colombia	Ley 1620 coexistence system and attention route

12. Must-pass floor

Try to keep these three ideas even if the rest dies:

- States should treat dignity, safety, and belonging in school as rights issues, not only discipline issues.
- Prevention should include adults and school culture — visible rules and invisible norms — not only student slogans.
- Any new international request in this resolution gets a review within two years.

If you cannot agree on funding formulas, pass the floor and park the rest.

13. Guiding questions

- What visible rules and invisible norms shape safety in your country's schools?
- Does your culture protect students — or hide harm to keep the group looking united?
- If this clause passed, who would actually implement it next Monday?
- What can your country accept from another group so a text can pass?
- Are you defending a program you already have, or asking for help you do not have?

14. How to write one operative clause

Use this shape. Resolutions speak as the body, not as one pair of delegates.

The Human Rights Council,

1. Calls upon Member States to _____ within _____, and to report progress through _____;

Bring one clause. Then merge.

[See a finished example](#)

15. Class rosters

Pairs stay fixed. Speak as the country, not as a duo of friends.

8A1

Group	Country	Students
A	Finland	Dana, Sol
A	Norway	Manu, Nico
A	Canada	Mathias, Ale
A	Japan	Nash, Vale
B	Brazil	Ana, Vale M.
B	Mexico	Platero, Marcelo
B	Philippines	Mariana, Sofia
B	Colombia	Mariangel, Olivia

8A2

Group	Country	Students
A	Sweden	Pipe, Shum
A	Norway	Victoria, Irene
A	Canada	Nahomi, Cristina
A	New Zealand	Nico, Mariana
A	Japan	Adrian, Zheng
B	United States	Amanda, Matias
B	Brazil	Nacho, Christian
B	Mexico	Jimena, Luna
B	Costa Rica	Jessica, Montserrat

8B1

Roster to be added when confirmed. Use the same Group A / Group B map and the same topic.

Group	Country	Students
A	Brazil	Tomás, Alana
A	Mexico	Priya, Marcelo
A	United States	Sara C, Francisco
A	New Zealand	Tiffany, Ivana
A	Japan	Rodrigo, Sara R
A	Colombia	Lucía, Valentín
A	Philippines	Valentina, Lars
A	Norway	Lucas, Daniel, Andrés

16. Conclusion

Bullying, cyberbullying, and youth violence do not stop at a border. A rumor can travel on an app hosted in another country.

A method that works in Finland may fail in a school with no counselor. That is why this problem belongs in the Human Rights Council: not because the Council can run every classroom, but because dignity and belonging are rights questions, not private local embarrassments.

The goal of this simulation is international cooperation on an international problem. You will disagree. You should. Then you will look for a floor that more than one region can accept, with a review so the promise does not die on paper.

The Council cannot end bullying with one vote. It can name culture, set a minimum standard, and force countries to come back and show whether anything changed.

17. Important UNHRC terms

Use these words. A precise term is stronger than a long speech.

Term	Meaning in this committee
Delegate	you, speaking only for your assigned country

Human Rights Council	UN body in Geneva that debates and recommends on human rights
Member State	a country speaking in the Council
Placard	how you ask to speak
Opening speech	short statement of your country's stance
Position	what your country will and will not accept
Moderated caucus	timed speakers, one by one
Unmoderated caucus	free negotiation to build a text
Bloc	countries working together on the same draft
Working paper	early draft, not yet formal
Draft resolution	formal text submitted for debate
Preambulatory clause	background ("Recalling," "Alarmed by")
Operative clause	the action ("Calls upon," "Requests," "Encourages")
Amendment	a change to one clause
Yield	give leftover speaking time to another delegate or to questions
Point of order	rules are not being followed
Point of inquiry	you need a procedure question answered
Universal Periodic Review (UPR)	the Council's cycle for reviewing each country's human-rights record
Consensus	agreement without a fight on every line
Review clause	a promise to check later whether the resolution worked

18. Useful links

Start here before random websites.

United Nations / Human Rights Council

HRC home: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/home>

About the Council: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/about-council>

OHCHR: https://www.ohchr.org/en/ohchr_homepage

Evidence

UNESCO Behind the numbers:

<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/behind-numbers-ending-school-violence-and-bullying>

Same report PDF: <https://www.unicef.org/media/66496/file/behind-the-numbers.pdf>

UNGA example resolution A/RES/77/201:

<https://documents.un.org/api/symbol/access?s=A/RES/77/201&l=en&t=pdf>

Programs named in this guide

KiVa (Finland): <https://www.kivaprogram.net/>

Olweus (Norway): <https://rkbu.norceresearch.no/en/program/hva-er-olweusprogrammet>

StopBullying.gov (United States): <https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

PREVNet (Canada): <https://www.prevnet.ca/>

Bullying-Free NZ: <https://www.bullyingfree.nz/>

MEXT Japan bullying act (English):

<https://www.mext.go.jp/en/policy/education/elsec/title02/detail02/1373868.html>

National law starters

Brazil Lei 13.185: https://planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/_Ato2015-2018/2015/Lei/L13185.htm

Mexico PNCE / convivencia: https://dggeyet.sep.gob.mx/convivencia_escolar/

Philippines RA 10627: <https://elibrary.judiciary.gov.ph/thebookshelf/showdocs/2/58226>

Costa Rica Ley 9404:

https://pgrweb.go.cr/scij/Busqueda/Normativa/Normas/nrm_texto_completo.aspx?nValor1=1&nValor2=83200

Colombia Ley 1620:

<https://www.mineduacion.gov.co/portal/ejes-tematicos/Normas-sobre-Educacion-Preescolar-Basica-y-Media/322721:Ley-1620-del-15-de-marzo-de-2013>

If you cannot name the source, do not use the fact.

19. Bibliography

- United Nations Human Rights Council / OHCHR. About the Council.
 - UNESCO. Behind the numbers: ending school violence and bullying. 2019.
 - UN General Assembly. A/RES/77/201. Protecting children from bullying. 15 December 2022.
 - National sources listed in Sections 8 and 18 for your assigned country only.
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