

## **PS 39 Diversity and Inclusion Book of the Month: December**

### **Theme: International Human Rights**

**Book Title:** I Have the Right to Be a Child  
by Alain Serres

**Grade Level:** 2nd / 3rd

#### **Book Introduction:**

This beautifully illustrated picture book introduces the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It takes the key articles of the Convention and translates them into child-friendly language and engaging full-page artwork. It offers ways for teachers and families to open discussions about our rights. Topics include food and water, healthcare, housing, gender, the environment, race, education, poverty, disability, citizenship, family, war and freedom of speech.

#### **Discussion Questions:**

##### ***Before reading -***

- What are rights?
- What rights do you think all children should have? Are they similar or different from the rights that adults should have?
- Make some predictions about the rights that the UN came up with for children and read to see if they are in the book.

##### ***During Reading (pause at the rights that interest you or your child the most) -***

- Why is this right important?
- What does it look like and feel like when a child has that right?
- How would you feel if you didn't have that right?
- Focus on "I have the right to express myself freely". What does that look like? Have you ever been prevented from or prevented someone else from having that right? How did you feel? How did that person feel?

##### ***After reading -***

- Have your ideas about children's rights changed? How? Why?
- Are some rights more important than others? Why or why not?
- The United Nations first wrote a Declaration of Human Rights but then decided to write a special Convention for the Rights of a Child. Why do you think they did that? Do children have different needs? Are there other groups that have different needs?
- How would you feel if you didn't have one of the rights in the book?
- What would you do if you were missing that right? Who would you speak to? How could you make it better?
- Choose your favorite picture from the book. What do you like about it?
- Rights are based around meeting essential needs. How does your community meet your needs as a child? How does your family and your community protect your rights?

#### **Additional Information about the UNCR:**

In 1989, the United Nations drew up a legally binding convention setting out in details what every child needs to have a safe, happy and fulfilled childhood. It applies to every child regardless of their sex, religion, social origin and where or to whom they were born. It comprises

54 articles and is signed by 193 countries. The US has signed the UNCR, but has not ratified it. It is the only country in the UN that has not ratified it. The Convention gives children and young people over 40 substantive rights. The rights are similar to those in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but there are some key differences that relate to the specific needs of the child.