



YOUR RIGHTS!

If you shut your eyes and count to sixty – slowly – a minute will have gone by. In that minute approximately two hundred and fifty babies will have been born. This means that somewhere in the world, approximately two hundred and forty-nine babies were born at the very same minute as you! These babies are your brothers and sisters in childhood. You may never meet any of them, but they all have the same right as you – the right to a safe and happy childhood.

You may be reading this in a lovely school or comfortable home, but not all children have such a good start. Some are born in a country at war; others to parents too poor to care for them; others are discriminated against

because of disability, religion or race.

To make sure all children, whoever they are and wherever they live, have the support and protection they deserve, a lady called Eglantyne Jebb wrote the first rights for children in 1923. These rights grew into the 54 articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. World leaders agreed on these in 1989 and now 196 countries follow them. They give you the right to live in safety, to be listened to and to enjoy your childhood.

The amazing and true stories in this book are about the children who have stood up for these rights – they are activists. They fight for their rights, your rights and every child's rights!

Are all the rights in this book?

Yes, but not every right has its own page!

Some of these activists must be adults by now.

But they were kids when they took up the fight!

They are awesome!

I can't wait to turn the page...



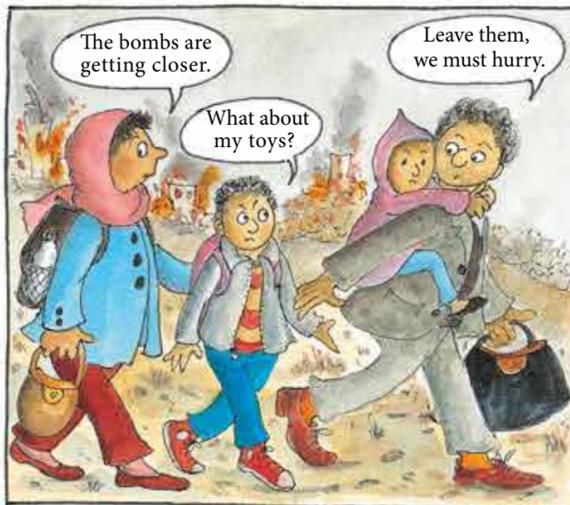
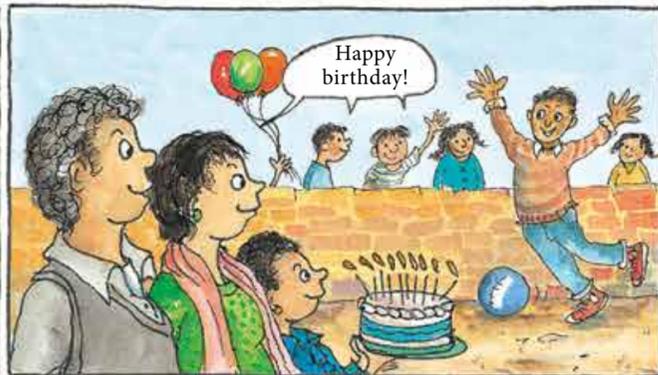
EVERY
Has Rights!
CHILD:

MOHAMAD AL JOUNDE

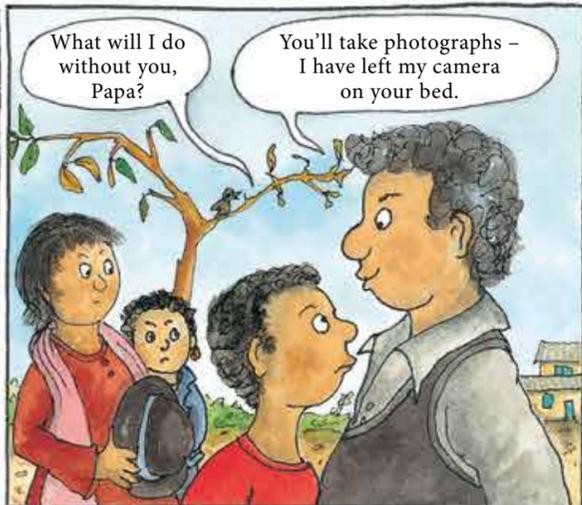
(BORN 2001, SYRIA)

It doesn't matter where you live or who you are: if you are under eighteen, the Rights of the Child were written for you! But they need to be protected. When Mohamad Al Jounde fled war in his country and became a refugee, he suddenly lost some of the rights he had once enjoyed. He is not the only one to have been denied his rights – many children don't know about their rights or don't have the power to fight for them. When Mohamad realized this, he decided to stand up for every child's rights.

MOHAMAD was born in Syria, where he lived with his family for ten happy years. He had a loving home, friends and a good school, and enjoyed sport and music. Then in 2011 the Syrian Revolution started and Mohamad's life changed.



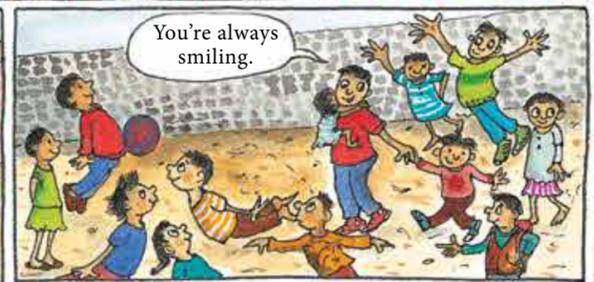
Life in Syria became increasingly dangerous. Eventually Mohamad's family were forced to leave everything and flee to Lebanon.



In Lebanon life was hard, and Mohamad's father left to seek work in Sweden. As a refugee, Mohamad was unable to go to school.



Instead, Mohamad learnt photography and made friends with children in the refugee camp.



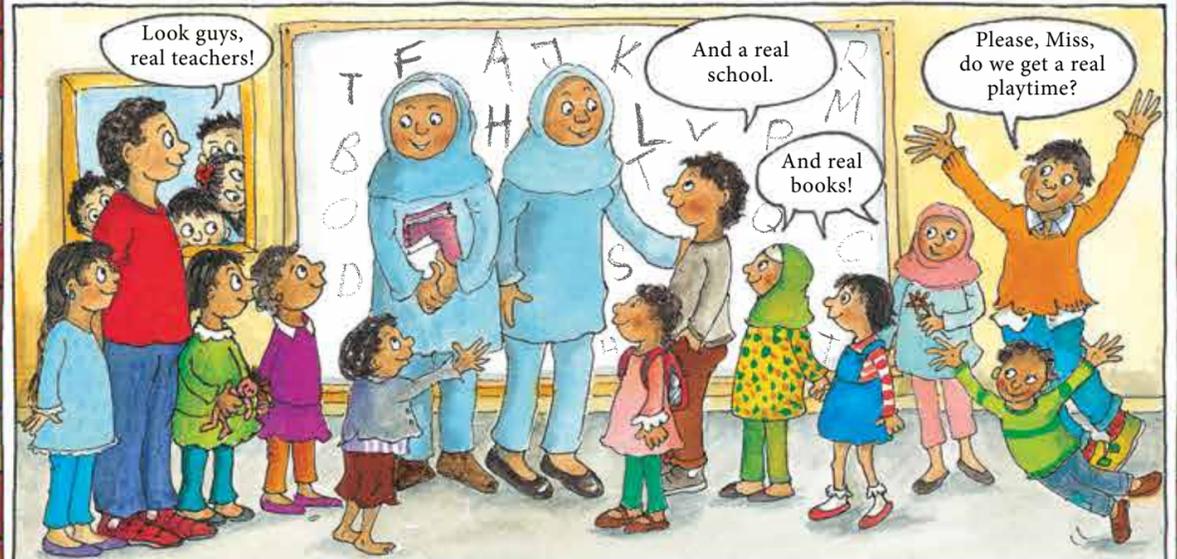
Mohamad was amazed at how positive the refugee children were. He was inspired to help them.



The children had no school, so Mohamad began teaching them Maths and English. He used his photography to help them create happy memories.



Mohamad was just twelve when he persuaded his family and other volunteers to create a tent school in the camp.



Eventually, they managed to open a permanent school and over 200 children joined! It was a place to learn, to tell their stories, make friends and develop hope. Mohamad saw the children as his family and Syria's future. He was determined to see that they did not become a lost generation, but had a fair chance at life. In 2017 Mohamad won the International Children's Peace Prize for his amazing efforts in making sure that every child has their rights respected and upheld, no matter where they are.

"I'll try to be your voice and your hope so that you can dream big and enjoy life."



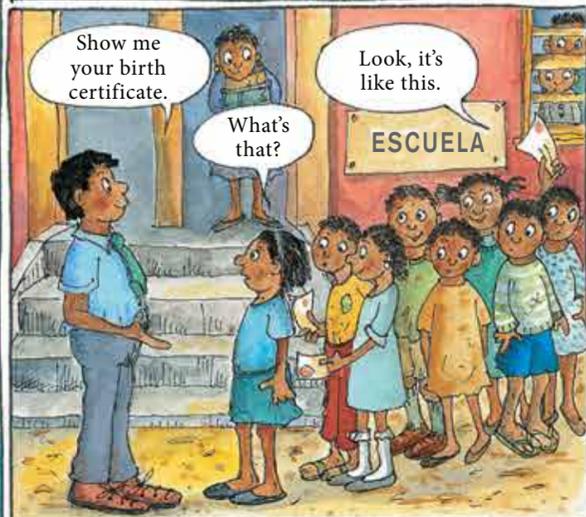
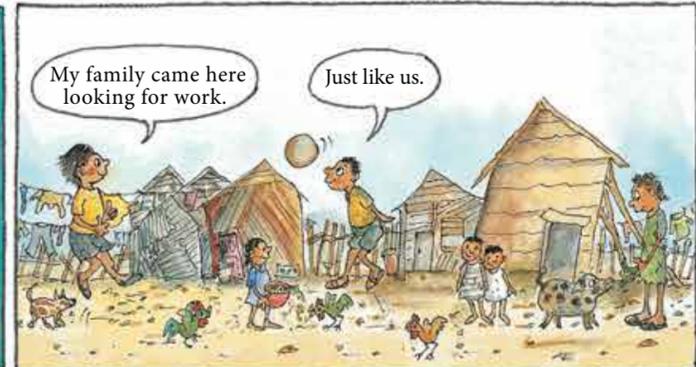
EVERY CHILD
HAS THE RIGHT TO:
A Name

FRANCIA SIMON

(BORN 1994, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC)

You may not realize just how important your name is. When it's registered with your country's government, it gives you the right to education, healthcare and more. Francia Simon discovered this when she was stopped from going to school because her parents, who were refugees, hadn't registered her for a birth certificate. Other children end up in a similar situation because their parents don't have the right documents themselves, or don't understand their importance. So Francia dedicated herself to helping children gain their right to a name and identity.

FRANCIA grew up in a very poor community in the Dominican Republic. Her family, and most of her neighbours, were refugees from Haiti. Many had arrived without official papers.



Francia worked hard at primary school, but then she found she didn't have the right registration documents to go on to secondary school.



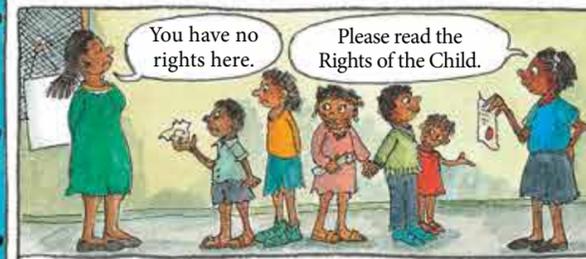
Francia's family had arrived from Haiti without official papers. But Francia wanted an education, so she applied for a birth certificate.



It was not easy and Francia struggled. But she would not give up, because a birth certificate was her passport to secondary school!



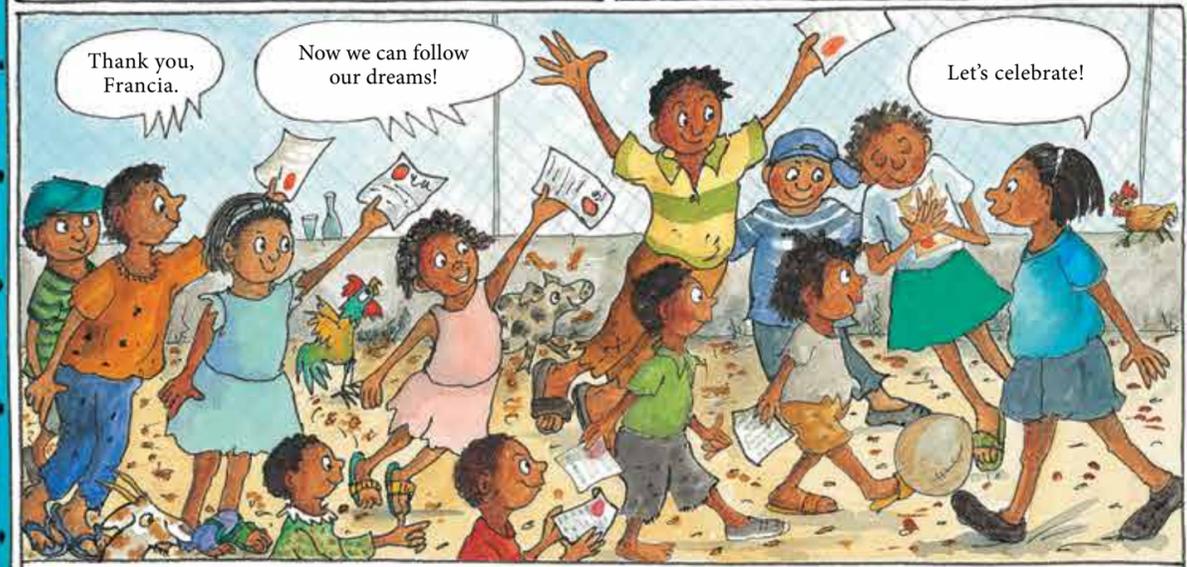
Finally, Francia succeeded! Now she had her papers, but many other children did not – so she decided to help them.



The authorities often turned the young people away, but Francia always insisted that every child had the right to registration papers.



Whenever a judge issued a birth certificate Francia would check it. If there were any mistakes she would return it to be corrected!



As well as helping children apply for their papers, Francia organized sports, games and special events for those who had fled Haiti as refugees. But her main passion was helping children to gain their documents. In 2010, Francia won the International Children's Peace Prize for her campaign to give children their right to a name, a country and the chance of a more hopeful future.

"My message to the world is to give more attention to this matter."

