

10 December - Human Rights Day



SECONDARY SCHOOL ACTIVITY

Preparation: Read the factsheet that accompanies this activity.

Resources: Large pieces of paper and markers/paint and brushes/pastels. UDHR articles, videos, sticky notes, students note books or scrap paper.

Aims:

- To understand that the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were created in response to the destruction of World War 2 and the horrors of the Holocaust
- To become familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)
- To identify different types social rights and responsibilities national, international and global issues

Outcomes:

- To take positive action in helping secure HR for others
- To create an image that helps to define human rights and the conditions necessary to sustain those rights.

Activity: Display key words for reference: human, universal, declaration, treaties, rights, responsibilities, entitlement, needs, global, international, freedom.

Starter (suggested time: 15 minutes)

Video: We are all born free YouTube 4 minutes 18secs (Amnesty USA) – available from:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x9_lvXFEyJo

Watch once. Demonstrate how to make notes as bullet points/mind map. Ask students to choose own their preferred note format. Watch the video a second time with students making notes.

Discuss 'what are rights?' and ask students to write down on their sticky notes their definition of human rights, using their own words. Ask for volunteers to share their definitions. All students then post them on the wall/board.

Main (suggested time: 10 minutes)

Explain (referring to factsheet): human rights are based on the values of fairness, justice, dignity, equality and respect, values that can be understood by everyone and that have existed for hundreds of years in different societies. But the concept of human rights as universal values, that apply to everyone regardless of race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality or any other distinction, was only recognised official in 1948, when countries from around the world adopted the UDHR.

Explain: the UDHR was drafted by a committee of eight people representing Australia, Chile, China, France, Lebanon, the former Soviet Union, the UK and the US. Eleanor Roosevelt, widow of US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, chaired the committee. The document was then put to a vote and agreed by all the countries that made up the United Nations.

Display: *'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.'* Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



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Use the slide presentations, child-friendly version of the UDHR and other resources below to explain the origins of the UN and the UDHR, both of which were created in the aftermath of World War 2. Explain further the importance of the declaration being internationally recognised – this is the first global expression of human rights and the first time the concept of universal human rights was embodied in a document.

Group Activity (suggested time: 25 minutes).

Provide large pieces of paper and markers/paint and brushes/pastels. In small groups students draw a tree with branches and roots clearly visible. Demonstrate as necessary. On the tree's branches, ask students to record the rights that people need to develop to their fullest potential (food, shelter, education, health etc). On the tree's roots ask students to record the conditions necessary for these rights to be fulfilled (fair government, employment, schools, teachers, financial support etc). Ask students to present their tree to the class giving reasons for the rights included.

Display UDHR. *Can students match the rights they have chosen to the relevant UDHR article?*

Consolidation (suggested time: 10 minutes).

Highlight to students that rights are not based on 'wants' but on 'needs/entitlements'. Discuss the difference between the two.

Can students suggest examples of rights violations in the UK and internationally? (E.g. domestic violence, child labour). What can be done to prevent/remedy these violations? Refer to action the UN is taking and actions that governments are supposed to take, using factsheet and resources listed below.

Can students suggest how the UN might monitor governments ensuring they comply to treaties?

Are there any actions that individuals or groups can take to help prevent human rights abuses? Do they know of any organisations? (E.g. Amnesty, Anti-Slavery International, UNICEF)

Extension

- **Discussion points/essay questions:** Which right is most important to: 1) you, 2) your school, 3) your local community and 4) the UK? Are certain rights more important in different situations?
- **Debate:** For and Against: the right to... vote, be healthy, equality, work, leisure, be protected, have freedom of speech, of religion, of movement, of thought, from unlawful imprisonment...

Resources:

UDHR in rhyming couplets: Article 1 (27 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNewdPPkBgk>

UDHR in rhyming couplets: Introduction (37 seconds)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N2QgkOAV4FI&feature=channel>

'**Learn about human rights**' – teaching resource produced by UN Association of the UK and UK National Commission for UNESCO, which includes child-friendly copies of the UDHR, as well as PowerPoint presentations and student handouts: www.una.org.uk/learnabouthumanrights

'**The UN Matters**' – another free online resource produced by the UN Association of the UK and the UK National Commission for UNESCO that includes case studies on child rights and child labour: www.unesco.org.uk/un_matters



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