

4.9 HUMAN RIGHTS

Essential Question(s): What are human rights? What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

Overview

In 1946, in the immediate aftermath of World War II, with hopes of preventing future atrocities, an international committee with varied legal and cultural backgrounds began to draft the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The UDHR was proclaimed by the new United Nations General Assembly in 1948. This document contains 30 Articles that set a standard for core human rights to be protected in all nations and apply to all people around the world. This Declaration was the first of its kind and has been translated into 500 different languages.

Snapshot

What Students Will Learn:

In this lesson, students will discover what Universal Human Rights are and make connections to their own communities and experiences.

Standard(s):

D2.Civ.12.9-12

Time: 50 minutes



Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Objectives

- Explain what human rights are.
- Analyze the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Differentiation

Depending on the level of the student, consider assigning certain Articles to specific students.

What's Needed

- ☐ Writing utensil and paper or 1:1 technology
- ☐ Computer, screen or projector
- ☐ Markers/colored pencils
- ☐ Make enough copies of “[What Rights are Most Important to Me?](#)” (Echoes & Reflections) and “[The Universal Declaration of Human Rights One-Pager Directions](#),” one of each for each student.
- ☐ Make enough copies of the “[The Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#),” one for each student. Additionally, conduct the following tasks:
 - Prepare the Preamble to be projected for whole class viewing.
 - Choose to assign a different Article to each student; allow students to select an Article; or, cut each of the 30 Articles into individual strips and put them into a brown bag, hat or box for each student to draw one. (See step #11.)

Classroom Setup

Students will work individually; desks should be set up to best support individual work time.

Direct Teaching

- Welcome students to class. Start by facilitating a short discussion around the following prompt:
What rights do you think all humans should have?
Allow them to reflect for a few moments and then share out, popcorn style—taking turns sharing aloud.
- Share with students that ‘human rights’ are freedoms that all human beings should have regardless of nationality, race, religion, sexuality, gender identity, etc.
- Explain to students that they are going to explore various human rights and what the implications are in their communities.

Key Vocabulary

declaration
human rights
United Nations
universal



4. Distribute “[What Rights are Most Important to Me?](#)” to each student. Explain to students they will have the opportunity to consider what matters most to them in terms of rights and freedoms. Have students individually take a few minutes to rank the choices in order of importance from 1 (most important) to 9 (least important).
5. Divide the class into small groups of 3–4 students each. Have them each share in their groups brief explanations about why they ranked **two** of their rights. These should be short, focused explanations.
6. Explain to students that they will now have five minutes to collaborate and reach consensus within their groups on how all of the rights should be ranked. (If time is limited, tell students to rank the top five rights for their group.) Each student will have to weigh how important their rankings are and consider whether or not they are willing to compromise on certain rights or if they refuse to compromise and why.

If group members cannot come to consensus, have those groups take a few minutes to analyze why consensus is not possible. Which rights and freedoms are being ranked differently? What insights might this give you about the process of the United Nations determining human rights universally?
7. Project the [Preamble](#) for “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights” and have students popcorn read it. Ask students, “What are two things we notice about the Preamble?”
8. Distribute the Articles of “[The Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)” to each student and explain that they are now going to read various rights on the UDHR.
9. Explain to students that they are going to create a one-page overview about one of the Articles from the Declaration of Human Rights that conveys the significance of it to their school community.
10. Distribute “[The Universal Declaration of Human Rights One-Pager Directions](#).” Talk through the directions with students and answer any questions they may have about the assignment.
11. Either assign one UDHR Article per student, have them select their own or draw one. If there are more than 30 students, you could either have students work in pairs, or have some of the Articles represented more than once.
12. Provide work time for students to start their one-pager based on their Article. If needed, students can complete their one-pagers for homework.
13. Share with the class that technically speaking, the UDHR is not legally binding, but it is aspirational. Many countries have incorporated aspects of it in their own constitutions. Ask students to share their reflections on what it means for these rights to be a moral guide, but not very enforceable.

Closing

Have students share one thing they have learned from their Article.

Extension Activity

Have students share their one-pager overview of their UDHR Article with the class. Consider a gallery walk or individual presentations. Once they have shared, ask students to reflect on what they notice about the rights, and about their peers’ presentations.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ONE-PAGER DIRECTIONS

On Back of Your Paper:

- ☐ Write your name and the class period.

On Front of Your Paper:

- ☐ Write the title of the Article you are reading.
- ☐ Identify and define important vocabulary words. Write the word and its definition; make sure to include where you found the definition.
- ☐ How would you explain your UDHR Article in your own words? Why is this important?
- ☐ How do you see this Article in your own life or community? Is it a right that is honored and upheld? Do you see challenges to this right in your life or community?
- ☐ Write 2–3 open-ended questions you have about your Article.
- ☐ Draw two or three visuals that represent your reading. These visuals can be separated from the text or incorporated onto the page. Add color; be purposeful with the colors that you choose.

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) sets out fundamental human rights to be universally protected.

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,
The General Assembly

proclaims

this Universal Declaration of Human Rights

as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Reproduced and adapted from the [United Nations illustrated version of the UDHR](#). Illustrations by Yacine Ait Kaci (YAK).

Article 01

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.



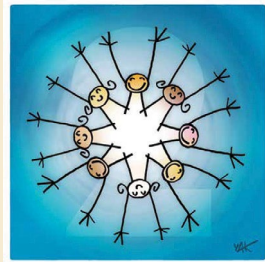
Article 05

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.



Article 02

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.



Article 06

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.



Article 07

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.



Article 03

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.



Article 08

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.



Article 04

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.



Article 09

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.



Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.



Article 11

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.



Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.



Article 13

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.



Article 14

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.



Article 15

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.



Article 16

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.



Article 17

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.



Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.



Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.



Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.



Article 20

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.



Article 23

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.



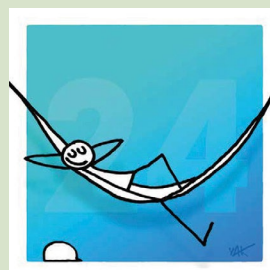
Article 21

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.



Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.



Article 25

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.



Article 26

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.

Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.



Article 27

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.



Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.



Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.



Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

