

UNIT III: HUMAN RIGHTS FROM CONCEPT TO DECLARATION

LESSON 10: EXPLORING THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PART 2

OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage thinking about what rights are needed by society.
- To become familiar with the history and contents of the UDHR.

TIME: 50 minutes.

MATERIALS: Copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I. ACTIVITY: A NEW PLANET, PART 2 (30 minutes)

Step 1:

Give students copies of the UDHR (full and abbreviated texts can be found in Appendix D, “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, pp. 118-125), and ask them to return to their original small groups.

Step 2:

Ask each group to try to match the rights listed on the “master list” with articles of the UDHR. Some rights on the list may include several UDHR articles. Others may not be in the UDHR at all.

Alternative Method: To save time, assign each group specific rights from the “master list” to investigate.

Step 3:

Ask students to identify a particular UDHR article, and then to read the simplified version of the article aloud. Resolve any contradictions that may occur.

Step 4:

Discuss:

- Were some of the rights on the “master list” not included in the UDHR? How can you explain this omission?

Step 5:

Ask participants to identify the UDHR article that refers most closely to religion or belief. Ask someone to read this article aloud:

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

*Article 18
Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Step 6:

Discuss:

- Did your small group include a right like UDHR Article 18 that protects freedom of religion or belief? Why or why not?
- Would Article 18 be experienced differently in a country with or without a state religion or belief? Explain.
- What are some obstacles to freedom of religion or belief in a country with a state religion or belief?

II. PRESENTATION: THE HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK (20 minutes)

Step 1:

Make a brief presentation on the human rights framework, emphasizing the UDHR as its foundation stone (See Appendix A, Part 1, “History and Development of Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, pp. 93-97 for a summary). Include these topics:

- **The International Bill of Human Rights**
- **The Covenants**
- Other major human rights treaties: the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, the **Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**.

Step 2:

Show how the 1981 Declaration (DROB) fits into this framework.

Going Further:Personal Preferences

Ask students to mark on the “master list” the three rights that mean the most to them personally. The facilitator can then tally up the marks to see how many each right received. When the group continues, remind participants about the **interdependency** and **indivisibility** of rights. Discuss:

- Why do you think certain rights received so many marks from this group?
- Are there special circumstances in this community or country that make some rights more important than others?

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LESSON 8: GIVING HUMAN RIGHTS A HUMAN FACE*

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore articles of the UDHR that relate to freedom of religion or belief.
- To become familiar with the contents of the UDHR.
- To explore how the enjoyment or denial of freedom of religion or belief can be expressed.

TIME: 50 minutes - variable, depending on whether assignments are done in class or as homework.

MATERIALS: Copies of the UDHR and art supplies.

I. PRESENTATION: INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS (10 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that thus far *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief* has addressed big concepts like human dignity, social responsibility, and religion or belief. This lesson begins Unit III, “Human Rights from Concept to Declaration,” which will explore the legal and practical bases of human rights.

Step 2:

Remind students how in Lesson 2, “Introducing Human Rights”, pp. 5-13, they looked at the difference between “needs” and “wants” and discussed how **human needs**, the things all people need to live in dignity, are directly related to **human rights**. If possible, reintroduce the chart developed in the activity “Human Beings/Human Rights”, pp. 7-8, to remind students of these concepts.

Step 3:

Reintroduce the quotations from the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** used in Lessons 2 and 3:

. . . [R]ecognition 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 . . .

Preamble

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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 [and sisterhood].

Article 1

* Adapted from *Human Rights Here and Now*, ed. Nancy Flowers (University of Minnesota Human Rights Resource Center, 1998) Activity 11, 67-68.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his [or her] personality is possible

Article 29 (1)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Step 4:

Explain that this unit will return to look more closely at this original and most fundamental human rights document.

II. ACTIVITY: GIVING HUMAN RIGHTS A HUMAN FACE (40+ minutes, depending on the setting and the medium used)

Step 1:

Ask participants, working individually or in pairs or small groups to read the UDHR Article 18 and illustrate this right enjoyed, denied, defended, or all three.

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

Article 18

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

They might create –

- a skit or mime.
- a graphic illustration or mural.
- a song, dance, proverb, or game (these might include adaptations of traditional culture).
- a poem or story.
- a commercial advertisement.
- a flag or banner.

To the Teacher: You may wish to assign other UDHR articles as well, asking students to consider their relevance to freedom of religion or belief (e.g., Article 2, Freedom from Discrimination; Article 7, Equality before the Law; Article 12, Right to Privacy; Article 20, Freedom of Assembly; Article 26, Right to Education; Article 27, Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of the Community).

Step 2:

When the projects are complete, ask each team or individual to show their creation. The rest of the participants evaluate what the presentation is about and

how it is illustrated. After each presentation, have the creator(s) explain why he/she/they chose a specific medium.

Step 3:

Discuss the following questions:

- Which of these presentations about freedom of religion or belief are most appropriate for different groups in the community (e.g., children, elders, members of the principal religion or belief, members of other groups)?
- Do people in their community know about their right to religion or belief?
- Do people in their community enjoy this basic freedom?

Going Further:

1. **Modify:** This activity can be modified to make the resulting creations into a guessing game, a community presentation, or a celebration for December 10, Human Rights Day, or some other appropriate day.
2. **Display:** Post graphic illustrations in a library, children's museum, or community building or use them to create a calendar or mural.
3. **Present:** The skits, mimes, songs, dances, or writings can be presented as a performance for classmates, parents, or other groups in the community.
4. **Celebrate:** One can celebrate Human Rights Day or another appropriate holiday by planning a festival around these materials. Invite your local newspaper, TV stations, and public officials. Some examples of activities that can be carried out to celebrate Human Rights Day include:
 - Sponsoring an award to be given on Human Rights Day to an individual in your community who has undertaken outstanding service in the field of human rights.
 - Forming a Human Rights Day parade.
 - Putting together an annual Human Rights Day event with speakers and/or panelists who will discuss issues of human rights.
 - Creating a collage, quilt, or mural that depicts the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to display in your community.

For additional ideas on celebrating Human Rights Day, check out "More than 50 ideas for commemorating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" at the following United Nations website: <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/50th/ideas.com>.

UNIT III: HUMAN RIGHTS FROM CONCEPT TO DECLARATION

LESSON 9: EXPLORING THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PART 1

OBJECTIVES:

- To encourage thinking about what rights are needed by society.
- To become familiar with the history and contents of the UDHR.

TIME: 50 minutes.

MATERIALS: Blackboard and chalk, chart paper, and marking pens for each group; copies of the UDHR, copies of the 1981 UN Declaration, complete or abbreviated version.

I. ACTIVITY: A NEW PLANET, PART I* (30 minutes)

Step 1:

Read the following scenario:

A small new planet has been discovered that has everything needed to sustain human life. No one has ever lived there. There are no laws, no rules, and no history. You will all be settlers here and in preparation your group has been appointed to draw up the bill of rights for this all-new planet. You do not know what position you will have in this country.

Step 2:

Divide participants, working in four groups. Assign two of the groups a planet that has a state religion or belief and two of the groups a planet that does not have a state religion or belief). Instruct all groups to do the following:

- Give this new planet a name.
- Decide on ten rights that the whole group can agree upon and list them on the blackboard or chart paper.
- Choose someone to explain their list.

Step 3:

Ask each group to present its list to the class. As they do so, make a “master list” that includes all the rights the groups mention, combining similar rights.

When all the groups have reported their lists, examine and discuss the master list, making suggested changes.

- Do some of the rights overlap? Can they be combined?

* Adapted from *Human Rights Here and Now*, ed. Nancy Flowers (University of Minnesota, 1998) Activity 5, 49-51.

- Is any right listed on only one list? Should it be included or eliminated from the “master list”?

Step 4:

Discuss the activity so far:

- Did your ideas about which human rights were most important change during this activity?
- How would life be on this planet if some of these rights were excluded?
- Are there any rights you would still like to add to the final list?
- Why is making a list like this useful?
- Were there any differences in lists of the groups with a state religion or belief and those without?

II. PRESENTATION: EVOLUTION OF THE UDHR (20 minutes)

Make a brief presentation on the history and development of human rights and the UDHR. (See Appendix A, Part 1, “History and Development of Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, pp. 93-97, for a summary).