

Amnesty International Human Rights Kit

A Classroom Resource



YOUTH+STUDENT PROGRAM
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Amnesty International Human Rights Activities

Amnesty International Canada invites you to use this Teacher's Kit to start exploring the themes of human rights, diversity, and activism within your classroom. Included in the kit are a number of key human rights documents, Amnesty International materials, and workshops to use within the classroom. The following are projects that you can initiate in your classroom either for a short period (as few as ten minutes) to a longer period (hour and a half, an throughout the year). The workshops listed as part of longer versions of the activities are included in this Kit. Feel free to come up with your own ideas for teaching human rights in the classroom. For more information, or other resources, contact youth@amnesty.ca or check out www.amnesty.ca/youth

1. Human Rights Code (10 Minutes)

Write a "Human Rights Code" for your classroom. Ask students to come up with the human rights they think are the most important for the class, and post them by the door of the room. Make copies available for each student.

Long Version: try the workshop: "Camping Out" (hour and a half)

2. Comparing the Declaration, the Convention and the Charter

(15-20 Minutes)

Distribute copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (shortened versions included in this package) to your class and go through the rights included in each (compare and contrast them if desired).

Long Version: try the workshop "The Imaginary Country" (30-45 minutes) or for more on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, try "Human Rights Charades" (45 minutes- one hour)

Another option is to go through the "Human Rights Quiz" with students, as introductions to the importance of human rights.

3. Human Rights in the News (15 Minutes)

Go through community or school newsletters and highlight any human rights achievements or contributions to diversity and acceptance in the school and community.

Long Version: try the workshop "Rights in the News" (one hour)

4. Amnesty International Presentation (Half Hour)

Contact Amnesty International Canada, and ask to have a speaker attend your class and give a presentation on Amnesty International and human rights. Focus the presentation on an issue the class is currently working on, and find out about the Amnesty International perspective.

Long Version: after the presentation, have students write letters based on appeals at www.amnesty.ca and use the letter-writing tips included in this package. (half hour-45 minutes)

5. Post Amnesty International Appeals (Fifteen minutes, once a week)

Display Amnesty International appeals once a week (available at www.amnesty.ca/takeaction) on a bulletin board, and provide information for students to write letters. Post background information to the appeal (either country or regional information, or information about the issue, ie. Women's rights, glbt issues, children's rights, indigenous rights etc).

Long Version: set up an Amnesty International Youth group by contacting youth@amnesty.ca and create a space for weekly meetings for students to write letters and plan human rights events. Meetings can be once a month, once a week, or whenever works for the group. More information is available at www.amnesty.ca/youth.

6. Human Rights Film Viewing (One and a half hours, once a month)

Show a human rights related film in class, either a film from Amnesty International or the United Nations, or a popular film that has human rights themes in it.

Long Version: generate a group discussion on the themes raised in the film, or assign a group or individual project on discussing how the rights violated or affirmed are important, or how they are represented in a film or novel of the student's choice. Use the Universal Declaration of Human Rights included in this package to guide the students.

7. Artwork and Uncovering Racism (Half Hour)

Ask students to submit artwork (collage, drawing, painting, computer-animation) with a message about racism. Have them discuss their themes in small groups and choose a winner of the group. Then have the class choose the best piece, and provide a small prize for the student with the best artwork/message.

Long Version: try, "What Can We Do About Racism?" (60-90 Minutes).

8. Diversity and Culture (Half Hour)

Ask students in groups to discuss their cultural background, indicating specific aspects that are important to them. Ask the groups to write down four or five things that they learned about the other cultures and report back to the group.

Long Version: try the workshop “Cultures Game” (30-45 minutes)

9. Deconstructing Discrimination (15 Minutes)

Have students discuss situations in which certain members of Canadian society have been discriminated against. Ask students why this discrimination is a problem, what effects it might have on the particular group and on Canadian society itself. Finally, discuss what might be done about discrimination in Canada.

Long Version: try the workshops “Social Justice and Diversity” (45 minutes), “You and Me” (One Hour), or “Let’s Challenge Discrimination” (1 hour and 30 minutes)

10. Defending Human Rights (15 Minutes)

Using the sheet, “Canadian Human Rights Defenders” and “International Human Rights Defenders” go over some of the people listed as defending human rights. Ask students to list other human rights defenders in Canada, or around the world, people prominent in politics, or even organizations responsible for protecting human rights.

Long Version: continue the discussion focusing on what makes a human rights defender? How can we be human rights defenders? What are some of the challenges facing those who defend human rights. For more information on this, and other examples of human rights defenders, check out www.amnesty.ca/defend. You might even consider having students write letters on behalf of human rights defenders in another country.

These are just some examples of activities that will work well in the classroom. Each of the workshops has been adapted from other sources, which list other activities not included in this Kit. Sources include:

The United Nations Association in Canada
Amnesty International
Amnesty International- USA
Amnesty International- Ireland

www.unac.org
www.amnesty.org
www.aiusa.org
www.amnesty.ie

Amnesty International

Questions and Answers: a Resource for Teachers

WHAT

What is Amnesty International?

Amnesty International (AI) is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognized human rights. AI's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

In pursuit of this vision, AI's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

AI is independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion. It does not support or oppose any government or political system, nor does it support or oppose the views of the victims whose rights it seeks to protect. It is concerned solely with the impartial protection of human rights.

What is the difference between Civics, Moral education, Citizenship education, Intercultural education, Peace, Intercultural and Global education? Where does Human Rights Education fit in?

These are all slightly different, and usually the study of civics and citizenship in particular are often closely aligned to the rights and responsibilities of a citizen in a particular country and often associated with the legal framework of that country. However, all these overlapping themes equip pupils with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to articulate their rights and communicate this knowledge to others.

What does the “Right to Education” mean and how does this relate to human rights education?

The “Right to Education” encompasses many of the principles outlined in the UDHR and Convention on the Rights of the Child, and as a starting point argues for free compulsory education at primary and secondary level on a global basis. Human Rights Education embraces this right and advocates for a human rights approach in all learning, so that human rights values and principles can be applied in our everyday lives.

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and what does it say about human rights education?

It is the most widely accepted statement of human rights principles in the world and although in itself it is not legally binding, it accepted as a general statement of human rights standards, with its core message inherent in the value of every human being. The Declaration was unanimously adopted on the 10th December 1948 by the United Nations (although 8 nations did abstain). It sets out a list of basic rights for everyone in the world whatever their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. It states that governments have promised to uphold certain rights, not only for their own citizens, but also for people in other countries.

Specifically on education it says -

Preamble:

"...The General Assembly proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights... 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..."

Article 26 says of the UDHR also says:

"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 among all the nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace."

What is the Convention on the rights of the Child and what does it say about human rights education?

The [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) was adopted in 1989, to protect the rights of children. The Convention is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history, with 192 State parties to date, and sets forth a wide range of provisions that encompass civil rights and freedoms, family environment, basic health and welfare, education, leisure and cultural activities and special protection measures for children and to date has been ratified by 192 countries.

Articles 28 and 29 recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.

What other international treaties promote and advocate human rights education?

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) under Article 13

Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979): Article 10

International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (1969) : Article 7

Council of Europe : Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms : (1954) Article 2

American Convention on Human Rights (1978) : Article 12 (4)

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999), Article 12

Do we need a special international treaty on Human Rights Education?

Many of the international treaties already contain measures for providing and improving education, and at this present time, there are no plans for an international treaty on Human Rights Education. It is hoped that the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education will ensure that progress is made on the promotion of Human Rights Education and that it will become a recognised subject within the curriculum of all countries.

What does a UN resolution mean, and how binding is this on states?

A UN resolution is a formal statement of a decision or expression of opinion on a particular situation or event put forward at a UN meeting that requires government action. The UN Resolution on the World Programme, E/CN.4/RES/2004/71 recommended that a World Programme for Human Rights Education be adopted and launched by January 2005. General Assembly resolutions unlike those of the Security Council are usually non-binding on states, and are essentially on suggestions on states.

What is a UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education?

A UN Special Rapporteur is someone appointed by the UN Commission on Human Rights on a voluntary basis to investigate a specific situation and make recommendations verbally and in writing at UN fora. The present UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Vernor Muñoz Villalobos will examine, monitor and publicly report on the situation regarding access to, and the quality of education internationally, and report back to the UN Commission on Human Rights.

What is the UN Commission on Human Rights and how often does it meet?

The UN Commission meets annually during March/April for six weeks in Geneva, and discusses and debates human rights situations around the world. It is comprised of state representatives of which there are 53, and will adopt recommendations and decisions which are then reported to the bigger UN Economic and Social Council, which in turn will reports to the UN General Assembly.

What is the UN General Assembly and how often does it meet?

The General Assembly is the main deliberative organ of the United Nations. It is composed of representatives of all Member States, each of which has one vote. It has six main committees, the third of which is devoted to social, humanitarian and cultural issues. It meets in New York all through the year, with its regular session beginning each September.

HOW

How can I best use the action posters and postcards of this action?

Please contact materials@amnesty.ca for posters and display them in schools, colleges, universities, churches, community groups, and any other venue you think appropriate.

Please help your pupils send the postcards to your local Parliamentarian and/or Minister of education.

How can I start an Amnesty school group in support of the lobbying action?

Please contact youth@amnesty.ca for further information.

Human Rights: Questions and Answers

From the United Nations Association in Canada

There are many questions surrounding human rights issues, and the answers are often difficult to find. In order to clarify the different issues and build upon your knowledge of human rights, we have compiled a list of questions and answers. We define human rights; we examine why the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights documents are valuable; and we investigate what can be done to end human rights violations.

What are human rights?

Human rights are those rights that are necessary in order for us to live as human beings. Human rights give us dignity and equality. Human rights ensure that we all have adequate access to basic needs such as food and shelter. Human rights protect us from violence and abuse and work against ignorance and hatred. Human rights are inherent in all human beings and they should never be denied.

Human rights are universal. They transcend borders, cultures, political ideologies, and religious beliefs. No matter where you live in the world, who your parents are, or what kind of government you have, human rights are your rights.

Human rights allow us to fully develop our human abilities. They protect our right to participate in society, to work and provide for ourselves, to practice our culture and speak our language, to live in peace, and to be free from harm.

Most importantly, human rights are about respecting one another. They are about fulfilling our responsibility to ensure that no one's human rights are violated. For example, it is your right to be free from discrimination and it is your duty to not discriminate against others. When any person is denied human rights we are all affected.

Recognizing that human rights are only as strong as our willingness to treat one another as equals is the first step in achieving "freedom, justice and peace in the world".

Why is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights important?

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a symbol of freedom, equality, and justice in the world. It was the first international agreement aimed solely at protecting and promoting human rights. Nations with diverse political, religious and cultural backgrounds joined together to make a statement against injustice and inequality. They created a standard of achievement that all nations thereafter would be morally obligated to respect.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a ground-breaking document that paved the way for the future of international justice and human rights. Many international human rights agreements have emerged since 1948. Thousands of non-

governmental human rights organizations have been established in the past 50 years. These organizations have often used the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a way to measure their governments' human rights performance. It is an instrument used to prompt democratic reform and to demand adherence to international human rights laws.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is also important to you. It is the foundation of your freedom, your rights, and your responsibilities. Student and teacher demonstrations, non-governmental organizations, community groups and individuals have struggled to ensure that our rights as human beings are protected. We all have an obligation to do the same. Just as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be used to measure a government's performance, it can also be used to measure our own performance in respecting and promoting human rights. How do you measure up? Do you treat others equally? Do you respect diversity? Are you working against human rights violations? These are important questions you must ask yourself. If the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is to continue to be a strong influence in our lives, we must act on it!

Is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights upheld universally?

Every human being should be able to read a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and say, "Yes, my human rights are respected". Similarly, everyone should be able to say, "Yes, I respect the rights of others". Unfortunately, fifty years after the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this is still not the case.

In order for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to meet its full purpose, every person must fulfill his/her responsibility to respect human rights. At an international level, many countries have taken steps to ensure that human rights are a priority in their states. By signing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a country commits itself to protecting the rights of its citizens and respecting the rights of all human beings. Even countries that have not signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are morally obligated to abide by its principles. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has become so entrenched in international law that to disregard the importance of human rights is considered unacceptable by international standards.

Many individuals and many governments, however, still fail to uphold human rights. Despite diplomatic pressure, multilateral agreements, and national laws, human rights continue to be violated, and not just in wars or by corrupt governments in far away places. Human rights violations are occurring in homes, in schools, and in communities across Canada. In order for these violations to end and human rights to be protected, it is up to us to take action. Eleanor Roosevelt, Chair of the first United Nations Human Rights Commission, once said that human rights begin "in small places, close to home". What is your role in protecting human rights in your school? How can you help others in your community? What more can Canada do about human rights violations here and abroad? These are difficult questions but they must be addressed. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights can become a universally respected document if we work together.

What is the International Bill of Human Rights?

There are three key documents that make up the International Bill of Human Rights: the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** (1948), the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (1966), and the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights** (1966). Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a statement of principles, the two covenants are legally binding agreements. This means that if countries have signed and ratified the covenants, they agree to uphold the rights and freedoms defined by the covenants in their own states.

Although the covenants reflect principles similar to those of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, they also include additional rights. The focus of each covenant is different. They were both written at the height of the Cold War when communist and liberal-democratic countries disagreed about which rights were more important to their citizens.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights emphasizes the rights of the worker to "just and favourable conditions" and to an "adequate standard of living". The right to food, shelter, health care, and education are included as major components.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights addresses those rights we usually associate with democracy, such as freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of association, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and the right to vote.

The first article of both covenants is the right to self-determination. This right was not included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The right to self-determination gives nations the freedom to establish their own governments, to create their own laws, and to practice their own culture without interference. This right forms the foundation for all other rights in each covenant. In the same way, the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights", is the foundation of all other rights in the declaration. Together, these three documents form the basis of human rights as we have come to know them today.

What is the United Nations doing about human rights violations?

Every day in the news we hear reports of human rights violations. It seems that as soon as one crisis subsides, another emerges. People around the world live with violence, poverty, discrimination, and injustice. So what is being done to change this?

At the international level, the United Nations is the most important actor coordinating efforts to end human rights violations. The United Nations was created after the devastation of World War II, during which millions of innocent people needlessly suffered and died. This tragedy prompted the countries of the world to take dramatic steps to prevent such horrible events from recurring.

The first action that the United Nations took in its efforts to end human rights violations was the creation of the International Bill of Human Rights. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights comprise a list of international human rights standards that states are obligated to uphold. If a

state is not respecting all of the rights in the International Bill of Human Rights, it is committing human rights violations. Human rights agreements drafted by the UN are important tools for determining when states are not adhering to international principles of human rights.

The UN has also established a body to coordinate human rights related activities. The UN Centre for Human Rights monitors human rights in all regions of the world, investigates reports of serious human rights violations, organizes international conferences on human rights (e.g. the Vienna Conference on Human Rights in 1993), and encourages governments to take action on human rights.

The spirit of the United Nations, as stated in the United Nations Charter, is strongly rooted in human rights principles. The UN works for peace, for justice, and for the equal rights of all human beings. Whether conducting peacekeeping operations, establishing local development projects, promoting environmental sustainability, or providing humanitarian aid, human rights are always a fundamental part of the United Nations' mission. With strong support from individuals like you, the United Nations can expand its role in human rights and continue to bring human rights issues to the forefront of the international agenda.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adapted from "Siniko: Towards a Human Rights Culture in Africa" Amnesty International, AI Index: AFR 01/003/1999 1 June 1999

Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly Resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948.

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the full text of which appears below. Following this historic act, the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

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 all 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 people 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 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.

Article 1. 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 2. 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.

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7. 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 incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8. 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 9. 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 of 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 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 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 of 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 22. Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation 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 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 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.

Canadian Human Rights Defenders

From the United Nations Association in Canada

Rosemary Brown, the first Black woman to be elected to political office in Canada and the former Chief Commissioner of the Ontario Human Rights Commission.

Jules Deschênes, a renowned expert in international law, who chaired the Canadian Commission of Inquiry on War Criminals, and served as a judge on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

Mary Two-Axe Earley, member of the Mohawk nation, who dedicated her life to ending discrimination in federal law that deprived aboriginal women of their Indian status if they married non-aboriginal men; the gender discrimination in the Indian Act was finally removed with Bill C-31 in 1985.

The Famous Five: Nellie McClung, Emily Murphy, Louise McKinney, Irene Parlby and Henrietta Muir Edwards, who joined together in 1927 and challenged the Supreme Court of Canada to amend the British North America Act to include women as "persons" under the law, thus recognizing the equal rights of women.

John Peters Humphrey, a professor of law from McGill University and the author of the first draft of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Wilson Head, a civil rights activist who founded the Urban Alliance on Race Relations dedicated to fighting for equality of all ethno-racial groups.

Lester B. Pearson, former Prime Minister of Canada and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for introducing peacekeeping as a part of the United Nations activities; Mr. Pearson was actively involved in procuring several peace agreements during his career with the United Nations.

International Human Rights Defenders

Consider a few of the human rights activists from around the world who have struggled to defend human rights in their own countries and within the international arena.

Mahatma Gandhi, who led a nonviolent resistance to British rule that eventually won independence for India, and whose peaceful philosophy has been an inspiration to many human rights movements around the world.

Martin Luther King Jr., civil rights activist in the United States, whose non-violent approach to social change continues to inspire anti-racism movements around the world.

Nelson Mandela, president of South Africa, who was held in prison for 26 years for his participation in anti-apartheid movements.

Aung San Suu Kyi, a political activist from Myanmar (Burma), who was placed under house arrest after her political party, the National League for Democracy in Myanmar, won an election against the military government; she was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991 for her efforts to bring democracy to her country.

Mother Teresa, who embodied love and compassion for humanity through her missionary work in the poorest areas of Calcutta, India.

Rigoberta Menchu Tum, a Mayan-Quiche indigenous rights activist, who initiated the first two Summits of Indigenous Leaders and helped to prompt the UN to declare 1994-2004 the International Decade of the Indigenous Peoples of the World.

Jody Williams, President of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the 1997 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

Ken Saro-Wiwa, a writer from Nigeria, who was executed by the government of Nigeria for trying to defend the rights of the indigenous Ogoni people.

The Imaginary Country

Adapted from 'First Steps' a manual for human rights education - Amnesty International, The Rights News, Autumn 2000

Purpose:

This activity introduces participants to the idea of rights based on needs.

Time: 30-45 minutes

Age Group: 12-18

Group Size: 15 or more

Materials Needed:

-flipchart paper and markers (enough for each group)

-Copies of the Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human rights to hand out to each group.

Background:

Participants will discuss the importance of human rights, and learn about the UDHR.

Activity:

- Form the class into groups of five or six. Read out the following scenario:

"Imagine that you have discovered a new country, where no one has lived before, and where there are no laws and no rules. You and the other members of your group will be the settlers in this new land. You do not know what social position you will have in the new country."

- Each participant lists 3 rights, which they think should be guaranteed to everyone in this new country.
- Discuss lists within the group, and agree on 10 rights.
- Now ask each group to give their country a name and to write their 10 chosen rights on a large piece of paper.
- Compare the lists to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What are the similarities/differences?

Discussion:

- Did your ideas about which rights were most important change during this activity?
- How would life be if we excluded some of these rights?
- Are there any rights which you now want to add?

Further Suggestions:

If you have a smaller group, consider doing the activity as one group. This will take less time, but still provide a good introduction to human rights.

Human Rights Charades

Adapted from "The Rights Stuff: An Education Resource on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child"

Purpose:

To help participants understand the different types of rights contained in the Children's Convention

Time: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Age: 12 and upwards

Group Size: 10 or more

Materials Needed:

- Rights cards - these cards sum up the different rights in the [Children's Convention](#).
- Four posters written as follows: What we need to survive (Survival Rights); What we need to grow and develop (Development Rights); What we need protection from (Protection Rights); What we need to take part or participate in society (Participation Rights)
- Flipchart with markers

Background:

The UN Convention on The Rights of the Child was ratified in 1989. The rights in the Convention can be divided up into Survival Rights, Development Rights, Protection Rights, and Participation Rights. Participants will learn the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and understand that rights may fit into a number of categories.

Activity:

- Explain the four different types of rights covered in the Children's Convention. These are Survival Rights, Development Rights, Protection Rights, and Participation Rights.
- Place a poster in each corner of the room. Explain that you are going to play a game of charades. Each person will take a turn to pick a card and mime out the right shown on that card. If the group is large get people to work in pairs or make more cards from the Children's Convention.
- The group then have to decide what is being acted out and what type of right it is, e.g. food is a survival right, safety from violence is a protection right, etc. When the groups have reached a decision they send the actor to the relevant corner of the room.

- When all participants are standing under one of the four posters, ask each of the four corner groups to sit down and make a list of the types of rights in their group. Explain that the four types of rights together make up the sort of rights contained in the Children's Convention.
- Use a flipchart to bring all of the four lists together into one 'Convention' or Charter.
- Distribute the Children's Convention and go through the rights contained in it.

Discussion:

- What are the main differences between the four sections?
- Which rights are the most important?
- Are you receiving most/all of your rights? Why/why not?

Other Considerations:

Some disagreement may arise when people are trying to decide which of the rights the different categories fit into. Don't worry as this can be turned into discussion of the close links that exist between different types of rights. If agreement cannot be reached use a vote to decide. Remember that people in a corner still have the right to take part and to vote.

Rights in the News

Adapted from "Siniko: Towards a Human Rights Culture in Africa" Amnesty International, AI Index: AFR 01/003/1999 1 June 1999

Purpose:

To introduce rights to youth who already have some mental picture of what human rights are.

Time: One hour

Age Group: 14 and up

Group Size: 15 or more

Materials Needed:

- Old newspapers and magazines of all kinds, enough for small groups to have at least one each.
- Blackboard or large piece of paper, pens and sticky tape.
- A simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Background:

Participants will develop a recognition of rights and an understanding the human rights relate to everyday situations.

Activity:

- Read the following text to the group:

“In our modern world more and more people have access to a large quantity of information than ever before. For most of us, this information comes through the media and especially via the news. Everyday, TV screens, radios and newspapers are filled with situations and stories which are hopeful, tragic, happy, sad, simple or complex. Usually, we look at the terrible news stories and feel powerless. However, by looking again, using the ideas of human rights, we can see patterns of success, where rights are protected and acted upon, and patterns of problems, where rights are denied.”

- Ask participants to form small groups of four or five
- Distribute the newspapers and magazines randomly.
- Using the whole of the blackboard/large paper draw a large circle. On the circumference of the circle write the following three phrases in such a way

that they are as far away from each other as possible. (This allows lots of room for newspaper cuttings to be stuck up later.)

Three phrases: Rights Denied, Rights Protected, Rights in Action

- Ask the groups to look through their newspapers and magazines to find things which illustrate each of the three phrases. Encourage the class to use all parts of the magazines and newspapers, including advertisements, classified ads and other items.
- If necessary, encourage the group with the following examples:

Rights Denied:

This could be an article complaining that a local health clinic has been closed without consulting the local community. This would illustrate the denial of the right to health or even life!

Rights Protected:

This could be a story about children who have been rescued from people who were mistreating them.

Rights in Action:

This could be a picture of a soccer player scoring a goal, illustrating the rights to leisure, health, freedom of association, or even travel (if it is an international match).

- When the group has completed the task (usually after about 10 or 15 minutes) ask them to look at the simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to find the article or articles which relate to the stories or pictures. Allow another 10 minutes for this part of the activity.
- Now ask each group in turn to stick up the findings on the blackboard/large paper. As they do this, they should explain why they chose that examples and which specific article(s) from the UDHR it illustrates.
- Some of the selected examples will involve situations where the same right or rights are denied, protected, and in action all at the same time! Use the questions below to help the class to analyze these situations.

Discussion and Further Suggestions:

1. Was it easy to find examples to illustrate rights denied, rights protected and rights in action? Was one phrase particularly difficult to illustrate? Why?

2. Were there any newspaper articles or other examples where all three phrases could be relevant? Which? Why?
- As a project participants could examine international efforts to protect the rights of civilians in conflict situations, or alternatively examine the defense of the rights of a vulnerable group in your local area.
 - Consider having students respond to a human rights issue in the news by writing an editorial and submitting it to a local paper.

Camping Out

Adapted from "Siniko: Towards a Human Rights Culture in Africa" Amnesty International, AI Index: AFR 01/003/1999 1 June 1999

Purpose:

This game helps young people understand how communities develop rules and laws to protect people's rights.

Time: About an hour and a half

Age Group: 15 and up

Group Size: 10 or more

Materials Needed:

-A copy of the "situations" presented at the end of this activity.

Background:

Participants will discuss how rules of conduct prevent conflict and protect rights. They will learn to make these rules by consensus or democratically, and discover some of the difficulties in forming and enforcing rules of conduct for everyone.

Activity:

- Form participants into small groups of four or five.
- Read them the following:

"Imagine that you are going on a camping trip with a group of friends. Someone has told you about a wonderful location for a camp, a clearing in the forest near a lake. You have been planning the trip together with others for several weeks, and finally the weekend arrives. After a long journey, you arrive at the clearing. You have brought everything you need, including one large tent for all of you to sleep in. There is a river nearby with good water, and you have permission to cut wood and make fires. There are no other facilities, no rules, and no adults or person in charge of the camp. You set up the tent, swim, and prepare for a week of fun!

However, by the end of the first day at the campsite, there have already been some disagreements about how the camp should be run. You all realize that it would be better if you could agree on ways to make your stay easier. You hold a meeting."

- Ask participants in their groups to see if they can think of four or five problems that a group like this might face. Ask them to decide how each problem could be solved.
- Ask them to consider the following questions:
 - How did they make their decisions?
 - Did anyone disagree?
 - Did everyone have an equal say?

- Now read the following text to the participants:

“After the meeting, all goes well and things are much better. However, after a couple of days, more problems arise, which together you have to sort out to prevent them happening again.”

- Hand out 2 or 3 of the “situations” to each group. In their groups, participants should place all the “situations” face down on the table and take them up one at a time. They should try to reach a decision about what to do in each “situation.” If possible they should try to agree.
- When all the groups have finished playing the game, go through the “situations” asking the whole class what decisions they made. Don’t ask every group to comment on every “situation”- that would take too long.
- Follow the activity with a discussion using the questions below.

Discussion:

- In this activity you used rules to protect the rights of everyone in the camp. What would have happened if you were unable to agree on rules or if everyone ignored the rules?
- What makes a good/bad rule?
- What about laws? Should you always obey laws, even if they are bad? What can be done to change a bad law?
- Some rules are unwritten. For example, “moral” or religious laws. Why do groups of people obey these rules/laws, even though they don’t have to?
- Rules and laws are usually enforced by imposing a punishment or sanction. Maybe you have decided to use sanctions against people who broke the rules in the camp. What is the aim of the sanctions? What sort of sanctions are most effective? Can sanctions be counter-productive? What happens if sanctions violate human rights? Should this be allowed?

Further Suggestions:

- This activity could be the starting-point for making a set of rules for the group which are agreed to by all group members and the facilitator in a participatory way.

Other Considerations:

In many countries, execution is the punishment for all sorts of “crimes,” from murder to offences such as smuggling. This activity can be a starting-point for a discussion about whether or not execution is a real deterrent for crime. Amnesty International can provide you with more information on this debate if you are interested.

Situation One

Someone has to sleep near the door of the tent, which doesn't close properly. By the morning, this person's belongings have usually spilled out of the opening onto the wet grass. He or she complains that their belongings will be damaged. What do you do?

Situation Two

You all agreed at the meeting how the camp should be run. But, one of you takes no notice of what was decided. How can you enforce the rules?

Situation Three

Someone left the kettle boiling on the fire and went away to swim. The kettle fell into the fire and sparks set fire to a corner of your tent. You all realize that you have a safety problem. There may be others. What do you do?

Situation Four

Getting water from the river is a very boring job. Everyone would prefer to go swimming rather than fetch water. However, one of you strains your arm while swimming and can't carry water anymore. This means that the rest of you will each have to spend more time carrying water. What do you do?

Situation Five

Two of you are smokers, the others are not. The non-smokers strongly object to the smell of smoke in the tent but the smokers feel they should be allowed to smoke while they are relaxing. What do you do.

Situation Six

One of you has brought a cd player and plays loud music early in the morning. This makes everyone angry. What do you do?

Situation Seven

You all share one tent, but cannot agree about keeping it tidy. Some like the tent to be tidy all the time, the others don't. The arguments are affecting the atmosphere in the camp. What do you do?

Situation Eight

Someone damages an expensive guitar belonging to someone else. She or he refuses to pay for the repairs. What do you do?

Situation Nine

A friend of yours joins you for a couple of days. She or he has brought their own tent, but ignores the rules to which everyone else has agreed. What do you do?

Situation Ten

Two of you feel that the camp should have a rule about alcohol and drinking. They ask for a meeting to discuss the matter. Most of you are against a complete ban. What do you do?

Cultures Game

*Adapted from "The Kit: A Manual By Youth to Combat Racism Through Education,"
The United Nations Association in Canada, March 2002.*

Purpose:

To explore cultural differences through intercultural communication.

Time: 30-45 minutes.

Age Group: All ages

Group Size: 10 or more, good for large groups.

Materials Needed:

- 6 differently coloured sheets of cardboard (or coloured name tags) and tape or pins to identify the different culture each person belongs to.
- at least one copy of the relevant instructions for each cultural group (below).

Background:

Through this activity, participants explore their reactions when faced with behaviours and characteristics different from their own. This activity can serve as a great icebreaker too.

Activity:

- Divide the group into 6 smaller groups and hand out the coloured cardboard/name-tags and the photocopies with instructions for each culture. Give each group time to go over their cultural instructions. Warn participants that the groups are not allowed to tell others about their cultural characteristics!
- Once everyone is ready, ask all participants to walk around the room and communicate with the members of the other cultures according to the instructions they have been given.
- After 10 minutes, or whatever time feels appropriate, ask everyone to stop.

Discussion and Further Suggestions:

Initiate a discussion with the whole group using lead-in questions:

- What did you think about the game?
- How did you feel towards the members of the other cultures?
- Were you frustrated at any time? Why?

- Was there one culture in particular which was easy to communicate with? Was there one that was difficult to communicate with?
- What methods could you have used to allow you to better understand the members of the other cultures?

To wrap it up, you may want to say something like the following- in your own words:
“When faced with something we don’t know, we often tend to feel afraid or frustrated because we feel misunderstood within that specific situation. With this game for example, we were easily frustrated by the behaviour of others. We often experience similar situations at school or in our surroundings when we interact with people of different backgrounds than ours. Our challenge as youth is to find ways of communicating with each other instead of reacting negatively to each other and nourishing stereotypes and divisions.”

Other Considerations:

If the interaction/mixing exercise goes on too long, participants may get bored. If you see that the group gets the idea and are slowing down, ask them to stop and initiate the discussion right away. Also, if rubbing noses is too intimate for the group, or certain members of the group, choose another salutation for the Yellow culture.

Blue Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: Never use your left arm or hand.

Salutation: Cross the arms.

Attitude towards the Yellow Culture: You feel sorry for them and try to defend them. Make sure you let the other cultures know how you feel!

Yellow Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: Never communicate without touching.

Salutation: Rub noses.

Attitude towards the Green Culture: You feel inferior to the Greens.

Green Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: Never use your left arm or hand.

Salutation: Gently touch the other person on the shoulder.

Attitude towards the Red Culture: You feel superior to them.

Red Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: Never touch others.

Salutation: Double wink.

Attitude towards the Orange Culture: You think they are funny and strange.

Orange Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: You can't look someone in the eyes.

Salutation: Shake hands with the right hand only.

Attitude towards the Purple Culture: You think they are interesting and idolize them.

Purple Culture

This card tells you which culture you belong to. During the game, you must act according to your culture.

Taboo: No negativity! You are very appreciative and everything is beautiful to you.

Salutation: Shake hands with the left hand only.

Attitude towards the Blue Culture: You subtly try to avoid them.

What Can We Do About Racism?

*Adapted from "The Kit: A Manual By Youth to Combat Racism Through Education,"
The United Nations Association in Canada, March 2002.*

Purpose:

To encourage recognition of racism and discrimination and learn about proactive anti-racism.

Time: 60-90 minutes

Age Group: 10 years and up

Group Size: up to 20 participants

Materials Needed:

- flip chart paper and markers
- posters or quotes pertaining to racism hung up around the room (optional).

Background:

The goal of this workshop is to get participants talking and thinking about racism and to recognize that racism still exists in our communities- and even, sometimes, in ourselves. If we talk about it and think about it, then we can't ignore it and we will start to change ourselves...and hopefully, in turn, the world. In this workshop, participants are presented with scenarios and are asked to think of ways they should respond if ever in this situation. These scenarios allow the group to problem-solve collectively and to prepare themselves for similar situations.

Activity:

- Participants, including the facilitator, should be seated in a circle so that everyone can see each other.
- The facilitator should introduce her/himself and explain briefly the purpose of the workshop.
- It is important to establish the concept of "safe space" at the beginning of the workshop, for example: "This is to be a safe space. Racism is a sensitive topic and so respecting what other people have to say, as well as being careful with the words you choose, are important parts of maintaining a safe space. We are not judging people, but discussing ideas- we are here to learn."
- Initiate a general discussion on racism with the whole group using the following questions:

- What is racism and who is affected by it?
- Where does it come from?
- What forms does it take? How does it feel? (if not already addressed above)
- Do adults, or society in general, think you can make a difference right now?
- What do you think?
- What can we do about racism?

- Divide participants into smaller groups of 3-4. Provide each group with flip chart paper and a marker. Visit each group and tell them one of the following scenarios (or make up your own). Ask each group to discuss what they should do if they were faced with this situation. Ask them to record their solutions on the flip chart paper.
 - a) A new student arrives at your school in clothing that is traditional to her/his heritage or country. People start teasing, making mean comments, and excluding the new student. How does this make you as a bystander feel? What do you do?
 - b) Your class has a supply teacher. This teacher has an accent, and people start snickering and making rude comments. How does this make you feel? What do you do?
 - c) You are picking up a chocolate bar at the corner-shop and you hear a negative (derogatory) comment about a particular group of people (for example, a religious group, and ethnic group, etc). How does this make you feel? What do you do?
 - d) Your friends use language that perpetuates racism and discrimination- for example, they keep talking about stereotypical images, even when referring to themselves (“I’m having such a ‘blonde’ day today”). How does this make you feel? What do you do?
- Bring everyone back to the original circle. Ask each small group to present their solutions to the larger group.

Discussion and Further Suggestions:

Before wrapping up the workshop, ask participants if there are any other scenarios that they would like to address- maybe something that they have faced, or a friend of theirs has faced, in the past. Ask the group for possible solutions. Finish the activity

by asking the group, in discussion format, what they thought about the solutions and if they would be comfortable using them. It is important to end by emphasizing action, reminding each participant to strive to be agents of a racism-free future!

Other Considerations:

At the beginning of the workshop, the facilitator may want to avoid participants an “out”- a reason to leave (briefly) should they start to feel uncomfortable. For example, you could say, “If you feel uncomfortable or want to use the washroom or get a drink at any time, feel free to do so.” This way, the participant doesn’t need to explain her/himself if they want to step outside of the discussion for a moment.

Social Justice and Diversity

*Adapted from "The Kit: A Manual By Youth to Combat Racism Through Education,"
The United Nations Association in Canada, March 2002.*

Purpose:

To build an understanding of marginalization and oppression, and to formulate ideas about change, resistance, and overcoming discrimination.

Key Themes: diversity; unity; division; oppression; being "marginalized"; being a minority; exploitation; intolerance; power; resistance

Time: 45 minutes

Age Group: 16 years and up

Materials Needed:

-copy of the poem for each participant (see below)
-definitions of some of the terms in the "Key Themes" (above) posted around the room so that everyone can see them

Background:

Sub-Comandante Marcos is a Zapatista leader in southern Mexico. A few years ago, the Mexican government tried to discredit him by putting forward the idea that he was homosexual in a region where there are strong ideas about heterosexual "masculinity." He responded with the poem. For more information on Sub-Comandante Marcos and the Zapatista movement please consult the following websites:

<http://www.eco.utexas.edu/faculty/Cleaver/zapsincyber.html>

<http://www.zmag.org/chiapas1/>

http://www.mexconnect.com/mex_/zapat1.html

<http://www.cc.utah.edu/~sm1968/zapatista.html>

Activity:

- Ensure the group understands the terms under "Key Themes"
- The facilitator should explain the background of the poem to the gathered group. Be sure the group understands the meaning of "Zapatista" and clarify and other questions they may have about the background.
- Hand out a copy of the poem to each participant.

- Ask each person to read a line out loud, taking turns until the poem is complete.
- Let the group think silently for a minute or two before having the following discussion.

Discussion and Further Suggestions:

- Why would Sub-Comandante Marcos choose to respond in this way?
- How is his cause affected when he identifies himself with other marginalized groups?
- Is there anything that links all the groups Marcos names together? What is it?
- What does it mean to be a “minority”? To be “oppressed”? “Marginalized”? “Exploited”?
- How do you think we can change these things or bring an end to them?
- What do you think would happen if all the marginalized groups Marcos names were to come together?

Other Considerations:

Be aware that this poem and the discussion may be quite emotional for some participants (especially those who fall into the “marginalized” categories) or quite uncomfortable for others (especially those who fall into the “dominant” categories). Be prepared to defuse tension- using yourself as an example usually works better than pointing to others in the group. Some participants may resist identifying with or understanding the poem; talking in a little bit of detail about being the minority can make it seem more real and more accessible. Read the poem a few times before the workshop so you are comfortable and confident with it.

*“Yes, Marcos is gay.
Marcos is gay in San Francisco,
Black in South Africa,
And Asian in Europe,
A Chicano in San Ysidro,
an Anarchist in Spain,
a Palestinian in Israel,
a Mayan Indian in the streets of San Cristobal,
a Jew in Germany,
a Gypsy in Poland,
a Mohawk in Quebec,
a pacifist in Bosnia,
a single woman on the Metro at 10pm,
a peasant without land,
a gang member in the slums,
an unemployed worker,
an unhappy student,
and, of course,
a Zapatista in the mountains.*

Marcos is all the exploited, marginalized, oppressed minorities resisting and saying “Enough.” He is every untolerated group searching for a way to speak. Everything that makes power and the good consciences of those in power uncomfortable- this is Marcos.”

Sub-Comandante Insurgente Marcos

You and Me

Adapted from Amnesty International USA Human Rights Education Resource Notebook on Religion, Race and Ethnicity (1997).

Purpose:

This activity explores issues of diversity, equality and discrimination and at the same time encourages cooperation and participation.

Time: 1 hour

Age Group: 12 and upwards

Group Size: 10-15

Materials Needed:

- Pens and paper for each participant
- Large paper and markers, or chalkboard and chalk

Background:

Participants will think about their own identity and how others identify. This will encourage recognition of the equality of differences, and what some of the causes of discrimination are. Participants will discuss how to challenge discrimination in society, and in their own behaviour.

Activity:

- Working individually, ask participants to draw a circle and write their name inside. They should pretend that this is the centre of a flower and draw petals around this centre. In each petal they should write the name of a group with which they identify. Examples might include their nationality, religion or gender.
- Working in pairs, participants must find out how many petals they have in common and place each others initials in the petals they share. Then combine with another pair and discuss the common features everyone has listed.
- Together as a large group, construct a web that starts with a circle that says us in the centre and includes all of the groups named. Place those groups to which many people belong towards the outer edge of the circle. Place those to which few belong close to the centre. What are the major areas everyone has in common? What are the major differences?
- Ask participants to look back at the petals they drew for themselves. Ask them to put an x across any of their groups that they think could cause someone to discriminate against them.

- Again working in pairs, ask participants to make a list of all the ways they could discriminate against someone or treat someone as inferior. Ask each pair to briefly report back to the larger group.

Discussion:

- What factors enable you to discriminate against others?
- To what extent are these factors embedded in society? To what extent are these within your control?
- What would you have to do to change society and/or yourself in order to change discriminatory behaviour?

Other Considerations:

Make sure to focus on challenging discrimination at the end of this workshop. It is important for participants to finish the workshop feeling as though there are many ways to end discrimination, and that they have the capacity to start doing so, particularly through their own behaviour.

Let's Challenge Discrimination!

Adapted from The Rights Stuff 1998 - a joint publication of DEFY (Development Education for Youth, Dublin), Amnesty International Ireland, Trocaire

Purpose:

To encourage young people to think of ways of confronting and challenging discrimination.

Age: 14 and upwards

Time Needed: Approx 1 hour 30 minutes

Group Size: 10 or more participants.

Materials Needed:

Simplified version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for each participant.
-flipchart paper and markers (one for each group of 3-4 participants)

Background:

Participants will discuss forms of discrimination, and how they might be institutionalized in society. They will then discuss how to break the patterns of discrimination through their own behaviour.

Activity:

- Ask participants to name two or three groups who are discriminated against in society, for example, gays and lesbians, ethnic minorities, refugees, women, disabled people, or a religious minority.
- Divide participants into small groups of 3 to 4 people. Each group chooses to represent a different institution in society. The facilitator could make some suggestions: for example Family, Education, Media, Politicians, Police, Church, Unions, Youth Clubs.
- Ask each institution to list ways in which they could discriminate against the groups named, thus violating their rights and write them on the flipchart paper.
- Ask each group to identify and note the rights that are being violated with reference to the UDHR.
- Have each group briefly report back.
- In the same small groups or in pairs, ask participants to take each example of discrimination and suggest a way of resolving that type of discrimination.
- Have the groups/pairs report back briefly.

Discussion:

- Say the following to the group (or in your own words) “We are often unaware of our own prejudices and how we can sometimes make people feel excluded without realizing.”
- Ask the group to think of and discuss ways where their own practices/actions might exclude others from full participation.

Further Suggestions:

- Invite a member of a group which is discriminated against to speak to the participants about their own experience, and how things could be changed.
- Invite a speaker from an anti-discrimination, anti-racism or human rights group to discuss how they work to combat intolerance.

Human Rights Factsheet

- **Violence against women and girls is the most pervasive violation of human rights in the world today.**
Source: The Progress of Nations 1997, UNICEF
- **Discrimination against women and girls is an important basic cause of malnutrition. The very high rates of child malnutrition and low birthweight throughout much of South Asia are linked to such factors as women's poor access to education and their low levels of participation in paid employment, compared with other regions.**
Source: The State of the World's Children 1998, UNICEF
- **More than 1 million children, mostly girls, are forced into prostitution every year.**
Source: The Progress of Nations 1997, UNICEF
- **Disabled persons constitute ten percent of the world's population.**
Source: World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons.
- **79 percent of the indigenous people in Peru are poor, and more than half live in extreme poverty.**
Source: Indigenous people: Challenges facing the international community.
- **Some 250 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 are currently working, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO). Of this total, some 120 million children are working full-time. Some 61% of child workers (153 million) are found in Asia, 32% in Africa, and 7% in Latin America.**
Source: Dossier on Child Labour, UNESCO Education International quarterly magazine, September 1997.
- **2 million girls each year are at risk of genital mutilation-approximately 6,000 per day.**
Source: The Progress of Nations 1997, UNICEF
- **Some 160 million children are moderately or severely malnourished. Some 110 million are out of school.**
Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1997

- **At least 500,000 children a year are left motherless by death in childbirth.**

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1997.

- **Over 1.3 billion people in developing countries make ends meet with less than 1 dollar per day.**

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1997.

- **Women comprise 70% of the world's poor.**

Source: Information Kit, Decade for the Eradication of Poverty 1997- 2006, UNDP.

Human Rights Quiz

This activity can be used to initiate a discussion on various issues of justice around the world and how they relate to human rights.

Read the statements and decide if they are true or false.

Statements:

1. 70% of the world's poor are male.
2. 130 million children in the world do not go to primary school.
3. 20,000 children throughout the world die everyday due to reasons of poverty.
4. The majority of those killed by landmines are men.
5. On a worldwide scale, girls are at a higher risk of dying before the age of 5.
6. European countries have nothing to do with landmines.
7. In Australia, there are over 50,000 young people without a home.
8. The Third World benefits greatly from the huge amounts of money in aid every year from the rich 'North'.
9. The cost of one Trident submarine is the same as the cost of one year's schooling for 16 million children in developing countries.
10. The world's governments cannot afford to wipe out poverty - it would cost too much money.
11. Most refugees come to Europe for a better life.

Were you right?

1. **70% of the world's poor are male.**
FALSE: 70% of the world's poor are female
2. **130 million children in the world do not go to primary school.**
TRUE
3. **20,000 children throughout the world die everyday due to reasons of poverty.**
FALSE: Over 35,000 children die every day because they are poor.
4. **The majority of those killed by landmines are men.**
FALSE: Every month over 2000 people are killed or maimed by landmines and the majority of these are woman and children in everyday living, e.g. collecting water and firewood.
5. **On a worldwide scale, girls are at a higher risk of dying before the age of 5.**
TRUE
6. **European countries have nothing to do with landmines.**
FALSE: EU countries such as France, Germany and the UK produce and sell landmines for export.
7. **In Australia, there are over 50,000 young people without a home.**
TRUE
8. **The Third World benefits greatly from the huge amounts of money in aid every year from the rich 'North'.**
FALSE: The Third World owes the 'First World' £155 billion and each year Third World countries pay out more money on debt repayments than they receive in aid.
9. **The cost of one Trident submarine is the same as the cost of one year's schooling for 16 million children in developing countries.**
TRUE
10. **The world's governments cannot afford to wipe out poverty - it would cost too much money.**
FALSE: The world's governments spend 800 billion dollars every year on arms - it would only cost 5 billion dollars a year to provide basic education for all children.
11. **Most refugees come to Europe for a better life.**
FALSE: Most refugees are in fact located in the Third World with neighbouring countries bearing the burden of receiving those fleeing from war, persecution or hunger.

Simplified Version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Adapted from “Siniko: Towards a Human Rights Culture in Africa” Amnesty International, AI Index: AFR 01/003/1999 1 June 1999

Summary of Preamble

The General Assembly recognizes that the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world, human rights should be protected by the rule of law, friendly relations between nations must be fostered, the peoples of the UN have affirmed their faith in human rights, the dignity and the worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women and are determined to promote social progress, better standards of life and larger freedom and have promised to promote human rights and a common understanding of these rights.

Summary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

1. Everyone is free and we should all be treated in the same way.
2. Everyone is equal despite differences in skin colour, sex, religion, language, political or other opinion, national origin or other status.
3. Everyone has the right to life and to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one has the right to treat you as a slave nor should you make anyone your slave.
5. No one has the right to hurt you or to torture you.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated equally by the law.
7. The law is the same for everyone, it should be applied in the same way to all.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their rights are not respected.
9. No one has the right to imprison you unjustly or expel you from your own country.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone should be considered innocent until guilt is proved.

12. Everyone has the right to ask for help if someone tries to harm you, but no one can enter your home, open your letters or bother you or your family without a good reason.
13. Everyone has the right to travel as they wish.
14. Everyone has the right to go to another country and ask for protection if they are being persecuted or are in danger of being persecuted.
15. Everyone has the right to belong to a country. No one has the right to prevent you from belonging to another country if you wish.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and possessions.
18. Everyone has the right to practice and observe all aspects of their own religion and change their religion if they want.
19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to give and receive information.
20. Everyone has the right to take part in meetings and to join associations in a peaceful way.
21. Everyone has the right to help choose and take part in the government of their country.
22. Everyone has the right to social security and to opportunities to develop their skills.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure.
25. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living and medical help if they are ill.
26. Everyone has the right to go to school.
27. Everyone has the right to share in their community's cultural life.
28. Everyone must respect the 'social order' that is necessary for all these rights to be available.
29. Everyone must respect the rights of others, the community and public property.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

All Children, from birth to 18 years, have:

The right to life;

The right to a name and nationality;

The right to be with their parents or with those who will care for them best;

The right to have ideas and say what they think;

The right to practice their religion;

The right to meet with other children;

The right to get information they need;

The right to special care, education, and training, if needed;

The right to health care;

The right to enough food and clean water;

The right to free education;

The right to play;

The right to speak their own language;

The right to learn about and enjoy their own culture;

The right not to be used as a cheap worker;

The right not to be hurt or neglected;

The right not to be used as a soldier in wars;

The right to be protected from danger;

The right to know about their rights and responsibilities.

Amnesty's Letter Writing Campaign: Getting Started

Writing letters is easy. Amnesty gives you the names, details, addresses and instructions you need. The hard work of search and discovery of the facts is done for you.

Your letters will be read. Even if you never get an answer. When thousands of people write on behalf of a prisoner of conscience, the pressure becomes too great to answer any of them, but also we hope, too great to resist.

It does not matter how old you are. The following letter was written by a ten year old to President Brezhnev in Russia.

Ten important points for getting started

These rules give you all you need to know about Amnesty's ideals and attitudes. When you write your letters, check through this list carefully yourself or ask a friend to help you do so. The third and fourth points are most important.

1. **Be brief.** You do not have to write a long letter. Sometimes one line is enough.
2. **Be simple.** You should not write about complicated political questions or try to prove anything. Remember that Amnesty does not belong to any political party. It never criticises any political system. It only criticises the effects of any political system which takes away people's most fundamental rights and freedoms as guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That means, for Amnesty, any system which results in unfair imprisonment and the cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of human beings.
3. **Write politely!** It is important to recognise and keep reminding yourself that an angry or rude approach in a letter results in an angry reaction, which would not help at all. It could make things even more dangerous and unpleasant for those people who try to help. Governments do not respond to abusive or accusing letters (however well deserved). Tact and politeness are especially important at international levels, so take special care not to express yourself in a way which could seem aggressive or offensive. Read through your finished letters as if you were receiving them.

4. **Be factual and accurate.** Give the full name of the prisoner and the date of arrest, place of detention and whatever facts are known. Never use the word 'torture' or, in your indignation, let your imagination run away with you.

5. **Write in your own words.** It is much more effective if you write in your own words so that each letter is individual and special. Do not just copy each time you write, from the examples which are given here to start you off.

6. **Keep writing.** Keep writing just as if it were a job that needed doing regularly like feeding the cat at home or checking the notice board at school. Writing a short letter only takes a few minutes. It is the continuous and growing pressure of perseverance (and more people joining in) which achieves a change of heart. But only write on behalf of prisoners for whom you have up to date information. Situations can change suddenly. It is not useful to be writing on behalf of a prisoner months after he or she has been released! Move onto the next list or prisoners in Amnesty as soon as it reaches you.

7. **Get others to write too.** It is far easier and more fun to get down to letter writing with a friend or two. It is also interesting to see what a variety of good letters you can produce between you. You can also write as a group - with lots of signatures at the bottom - or as a member of a club or official organisation. That can be very effective. Organisations can just write "*asking for information*" without feeling embarrassed. That is enough to draw the authorities attention to the plight of the prisoner. One letter arriving on a desk is easy to forget about. Ten letters this week, fifty letters next week, three thousand letters next month can make anybody think carefully and have a change of mind. (Even prime Ministers are human).

8. **Say who you are.** Do not try to make your signature illegible or avoid telling officials about yourself. Include your own address. This shows that the letter is genuine and also shows that people from various walks of life know about events in the country concerned and care enough to write openly about them.

9. **Write also when you hear good news.** When members Amnesty hear of the release of prisoners of conscience, it is equally important to write about that too and to show the government how much such an action is appreciated. We must show that what we feel is real care and concern for human rights in the world and that we are not just faultfinding in one particular country or another.

10. Write in English unless you can speak the relevant language or know someone who could translate your letter. English is the most used language in the world and there will always be someone who can translate your appeal once it reaches its destination.

11. Finally, please send copies of any interesting replies you receive to the Amnesty Office, so that Amnesty can monitor the situation and send more useful instructions to all its members.

12. Examples of letters you might write:

a) "As a member of Amnesty International I want to write to you about..... who has been in..... prison since..... I would respectfully ask you to release him as his imprisonment goes against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights"

b) "I have heard that..... is suffering from..... and is in prison although she has been charged with no crime. Please would you kindly send me information as to her whereabouts and the state of her health? I would ask you most sincerely to look into her case."

c) "We have been studying the culture of your fine country at school and have enjoyed it and hope one day to be able to visit..... However, we are concerned to read the arrest of..... last..... and his continued imprisonment without trial for no better reason than his political opinions. He has never used or encouraged violence nor committed any crime against the laws of your country. His imprisonment seems to us to be very unjust and we would be grateful if you could explain to us why he is still in prison, as we have the friendliest feelings for your country."

AI Letter Writing Tips

There are a few simple rules.

1. **Always be polite.** This rule is essential and invariable. Your aim is to help stop human rights abuses, not to relieve your own feelings. Governments don't respond to abusive or condemnatory letters (however well deserved).
2. Always go on the basis that the government concerned is open to reason and discussion.
3. It is important where possible to stress a country's reputation for moderation and justice, to show respect for its constitution and judicial procedures, and an understanding of current difficulties. This will give more scope to point out ways in which the human rights situation can be improved.
4. Follow strictly the instructions given by Amnesty International in the case in question. For instance if you are asked to appeal for medical treatment for a prisoner, make sure that you request this, and not a speedy trial or release which might be appropriate in another case.
5. Never use political jargon. Don't give the impression that you are writing because you are ideologically or politically opposed to the government in question. It is far more effective to stress the fact that your concern for human rights is not politically based in any way, but in keeping with basic principles of international law.
6. It is preferable to give an indication of who and what you are. This indicates that the letter is genuine, and also shows that people from varying walks of life are following events in the country concerned.
7. If you have any special interest or link with the country, it is a good idea to mention this in your letter. For instance, you may have visited it, studied its history, or been a member of a local association for friendship with it.
8. **Be brief.** A simple, one line letter is adequate and is certainly better than no letter at all. A good rule is not to write more than one page (ie one side). Long letters are less likely to be read. Only in exceptional cases are long letters effective.

AI Human Rights Materials



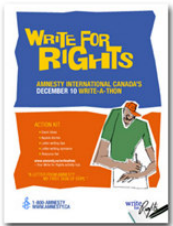
1. **Defending Human Rights Pamphlet-** Introductory pamphlet to Amnesty International Canada and human rights work. Includes a sign-up coupon for individuals. Available online at www.amnesty.ca/onlineshop.

2. **Youth and Student Program Pamphlet-** Introductory pamphlet to Amnesty International Canada's Youth and Student Program. Includes information on youth groups across Canada and youth human rights activism. To order, contact materials@amnesty.ca.



3. **Stop Violence Against Women Pamphlet-** Provides information on Amnesty International's Stop Violence Against Women campaign. How to join the campaign and take action on this issue. Available online at www.amnesty.ca/onlineshop.

4. **Making a World of Difference CD-** Includes three slideshows and two videos to introduce people of all ages to Amnesty's human rights work. Can be used in the classroom or at public events. Available online at www.amnesty.ca/onlineshop.



5. **Write for Rights-** Guide to organizing a write-a-thon (public letter-writing event). Global write-a-thon to take place on Dec. 10, Human Rights Day. Kits available online at www.amnesty.ca/writeathon.

6. **Amnesty International Youth E-newsletter-** To sign up for our youth e-newsletter, fill out the online form at www.amnesty.ca/youth and receive regular updates on our work and appeals for your class to take action on.



7. **Amnesty International Appeals-** To find appeals related to specific countries, issues, or events, see www.amnesty.ca/take_action.

8. **Start an Amnesty Youth Group-** To start an Amnesty International Canada Youth group, check out our website at www.amnesty.ca/youth, or contact youth@amnesty.ca. Registration allows you to receive regular updates about our program, Amnesty Canada campaigns, and appeals directed to youth. For help with starting a group, check out our **Youth Action Toolkit** available on our website.