

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – The impact of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Grade – 11th

Length of class period – 84 minutes one class period

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? What was this documents original purpose and what effect has this document had?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

- Students will be able to describe the causes that surrounded the establishment of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Students will be able to evaluate the impact that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has had on the world.
- Students will be able to analyze the role Eleanor Roosevelt played in the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Students will be able to synthesize information from a variety of secondary and primary sources.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?) – (please attach)

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
http://www.un.org/events/humanrights/2007/hrphotos/declaration%20_eng.pdf
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights : A Living Document
- Teacher created question sheet

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

The teacher will lead a whole class brainstorming discussion on what human rights are. The teacher will prompt students to define such terms as rights, responsibilities, and legal, moral. The teacher will discuss the Essential Questions by explaining the history of the UDHR, Eleanor Roosevelt's role and causes surrounding the development of the document. Students will then be broken up into small groups (no more than 3) where they will create their own definition of human rights and create a judgment statement that reflects the groups top three human rights. The teacher will lead a whole group discussion focusing on the definitions and human rights. Students will then get back into their groups of three and be given a copy of the UDHR and the reading UDHR: A living

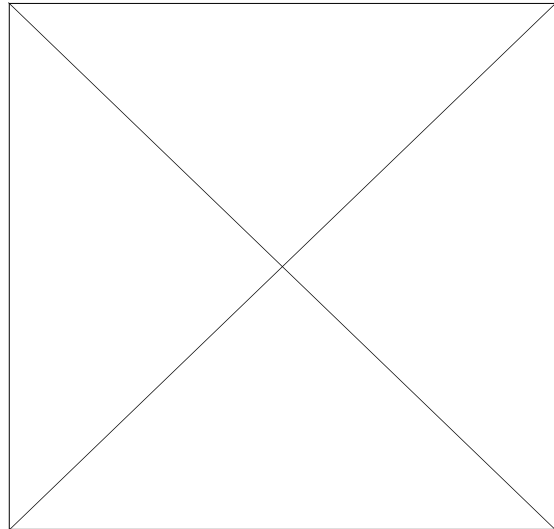
document. Students will then complete the teacher created question sheet. This question sheet can be graded as a group assignment. Students will be instructed to read the documents creating a one sentence summary or caption for each article of the UDHR. In groups students must then create a top 3 list of articles from the UDHR explaining why they have chosen these articles. Students will then compare and contrast their original list of the top 3 human rights (that the group created prior to reading the UDHR) to the list they created after reading the UDHR. This question sheet can be graded as a group assignment. The teacher will then lead a discussion that focuses on the similarities and differences found in each list, between groups etc. As a closing activity students will be asked to answer the following question: Is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights being followed around the world? Use examples from the past and present when the human rights of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have or have not been protected. They will answer these questions on exit cards that can be graded.

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson? Students will be assessed through the teacher created question sheet and/or the exit card.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

- Explain examples of conflict and cooperation in world affairs (e.g., Crusades, World Wars, United Nations, Common Market/European Union, World Bank).
- Evaluate the role and impact of the individual on historical events (e.g., Queen Elizabeth I, Karl Marx, Gandhi, Adolf Hitler, Mao Zedong, and Nelson Mandela).
- Evaluate the impact of major belief systems on societies and nations (e.g., religions, philosophies, political theories).

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS: A LIVING DOCUMENT



President and Chair of the Commission on Human Rights, Eleanor Roosevelt, looking at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Spanish. Credit: UN Photo.

Many things can be said about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It is the foundation of international human rights law, the first universal statement on the basic principles of inalienable human rights, and a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations. As the UDHR approaches its 60th birthday, it is timely to emphasize the living document's enduring relevance, its universality, and that it has everything to do with all of us. Today, the UDHR is more relevant than ever.

It was the UDHR, almost 60 years ago, that first recognized what have become nowadays universal values: human rights are inherent to all and the concern of the whole of the international community. Drafted by representatives of all regions and legal traditions, the UDHR has stood the test of time and resisted attacks based on "relativism". The Declaration and its core values, including non-discrimination, equality, fairness and universality, apply to everyone, everywhere and always. The UDHR belongs to all of us.

More than ever, in a world threatened by racial, economic and religious divides, we must defend and proclaim the universal principles --first enshrined in the UDHR-- of justice, fairness and equality that people across all boundaries hold so deeply.

Enduring Relevance

Human rights are not only a common inheritance of universal values that transcend cultures and traditions, but are quintessentially local values and nationally-owned commitments grounded in international treaties and national constitutions and laws.

The Declaration represents a contract between governments and their peoples, who have a right to demand that this document be respected. Not all governments have become parties to all human rights treaties. All countries, however, have accepted the UDHR. The Declaration continues to affirm the inherent human dignity and worth of every person in the world, without distinction of any kind.

Ongoing struggle

The UDHR protects all of us, and it also enshrines the gamut of human rights. The drafters of the UDHR saw a future of freedom from fear, but also of freedom from want. They put all human rights on an equal footing and confirmed human rights are essential to a life of dignity.

The UDHR drafters' vision has inspired many human rights defenders who have struggled over the last six decades to make that vision a reality. The contemporary international human rights edifice that originates in the UDHR is to be celebrated. But it has yet to benefit all of humanity equally.

The struggle is far from over. As the Declaration's custodians and beneficiaries, all of us must reclaim the UDHR, make it our own. While we are entitled to our human rights, we should also respect the human rights of others and help make universal human rights a reality for all of us. In our efforts lies the power of the UDHR: it is a living document that will continue to inspire generations to come.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Reading questions

1. Read the UDHR and create a one sentence summary or caption for each article. (You may use a separate pieces of paper for this)
2. Create a top 3 list of articles from the UDHR explaining why your group has chosen these articles.
3. Compare and contrast your original list of the top 3 human rights (that the group created prior to reading the UHDR) to the list your group created after reading the UDHR.
4. Argue the enduring relevance of the UDHR by analyzing two examples that help to define your argument.
5. What was the original purpose of the UDHR and what effect has this document had on American society as well as the world?