



What are human rights?

Collaboration

Overview / Summary

Students will discuss the meaning of the term "human rights" and how the concept has evolved over time. They will also begin to apply the concept to case studies, and evaluate how human rights can be defended at the individual, national, and international level.

Standards

CT: Social Studies Frameworks (2015)

CT: HS: Modern World History

Dimension 2: History

Change, Continuity, and Context

- HIST 9–12.1 Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.

Perspectives

- HIST 9–12.4 Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- HIST 9–12.5 Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

Dimension 2: Civics

Processes, Rules, and Laws

- CIV 9–12.7 Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.

Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources & Using Evidence

Modern World History

- INQ 9–12.6 Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions & Taking Informed Action

Modern World History

- INQ 9–12.10 Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.
- INQ 9–12.13 Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.
- INQ 9–12.15 Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.
- INQ 9–12.16 Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning.

Academic Competencies, Civic and Social Competency

Academic Competencies

- The LSM graduate comprehends written, visual, and auditory texts and effectively communicates with clarity in a variety of modes.
- The LSM graduate effectively employs critical thinking in the problem solving process.
- The LSM graduate acquires and applies knowledge to develop multiple perspectives on events and issues.

Region 10 District Priority Standards

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School-wide

Priority Standards

Priority Standards

- I can cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of source material.
- I can produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- I can present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically.

Claims

Claims

Social Studies (C3 Framework): Dimensions of Inquiry

- Dimension 2: Applying disciplinary concepts and tools (this is where "content" is absolutely critical)
- Dimension 3: Evaluating sources and using evidence
- Dimension 4: Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

Essential Questions

[Sample Essential Questions](#)

- What are human rights?
- Is it possible for human rights to truly be universal?
- What are the origins of the modern concept of human rights?
- How can the concept of human rights be applied to problems in the contemporary world?
- What actions can students take to promote human rights in the contemporary world?

Learning Targets

Students will Know . . .

- the definition of the term "human rights."
- the historical roots of the concept of human rights.
- the components of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the impact of the Declaration on human rights around the world.

Students will be able to . . .

- identify those universal rights that all people are entitled to, and explain the challenges in identifying and protecting such rights.
- analyze the reasons for the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and evaluate the historical impact of this document.
- apply the concept of human rights to case studies.
- read for information.
- write arguments using evidence from source materials.

Assessment(s) / Evidence

[Depth of Knowledge \(DOK\) Levels](#)

(Be sure to identify which standards are being assessed [Learn How](#))

Debate: Origins of human rights

Formative: DOK 2 Basic Application: Oral: Debate

Students will argue that the modern concept of human rights originated in either 1. the ancient world, 2. the monotheistic religions, or 3. the Enlightenment.

Document analysis: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Formative: DOK 2 Basic Application: Oral: Discussion

Students will read and analyze the Universal Declaration and participate in a class discussion.

Case studies in human rights

Formative: DOK 3 Strategic Thinking: Written: Informative

Students will look at four case studies. In each case study, students will be asked to apply the concept of human rights to the problem at hand, and work to determine the appropriate action to take at either the national or the international level.

Unit Assessment: Applying the concept of human rights to Syria

Formative: DOK 4 Extended Thinking: Written: Essay

Students will read an article about the practices of the government of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, and apply what they have learned about human rights to the situation by writing an essay presenting the case against Assad to the International Criminal Court.

Key Academic Vocabulary (I, II, III)

Tiered Vocabulary Support

Human rights
Natural rights
Freedoms
Civil rights
Social rights

Suggested Student Learning Experiences

Brainstorming: What are human rights? In a small group, create a list of universal rights. Rotate, and compare your groups' list to another's. What rights did you share? What was unique on your list?

Primary source readings on the origins of human rights: Analyze primary source materials looking for evidence of human rights in the ancient world, in the world religions, and in the Enlightenment. Find evidence supporting for ONE of those three traditions being the source of modern human rights. Find evidence to disprove the claim for the other two traditions.

Debate: What tradition(s) is most responsible for the modern concept of human rights? (Three groups, each will argue for one of the traditions being most influential.)

Brief reading on history of the development of human rights, from the Choices program.

Close reading of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Discussion: How does this list compare with the lists we made on the first day. What rights does it include that we didn't? What rights did we identify that aren't in the Declaration? What do we think of this document-- is it valuable? Is it flawed? How can it be seen as a product of its time and place? How has it impacted the world since its adoption?

Case studies. Applying the concept of human rights through:

- National Action—Right to Health in Brazil
- International Agreements—Convention on the Rights of the Child
- International Justice—Pinochet
- Military Intervention-- Kosovo (all case studies come from the Choices program)

Introduction to the action project-- project is assigned, students begin brainstorming possible topics.

End-of-unit assessment: Apply what we have learned about human rights to a reading about Assad's Syria.

Instructional Strategies

Direct Instruction

- Explicit Teaching
- Didactic Questions
- Guided & Shared -reading, listening, viewing, thinking

Interactive Instruction

- Debates
- Brainstorming
- Peer Partner Learning
- Discussion
- Jigsaw
- Problem Solving

Indirect Instruction

- Problem Solving
- Case Studies
- Reading for Meaning

Independent Study

- Essays
- Homework
- Assigned Questions

 [Assignment Sheet 1.docx](#)

 [What are human rights?.docx](#)

 [Origins of human rights.docx](#)

 [Universal Declaration activity.docx](#)

 Universal Declaration of Human Rights.docx

 Choices-- Human Rights.pdf

 Action Project directions.docx

 Unit 1 essay.docx

Resources and Materials

Variety of historical sources from *The Human Rights Reader*, Micheline R. Ishay, ed. Routledge, New York, 2012.

- Hammurabi Code
- *Analects* of Confucius
- Kautilya: *The Arthashastra*
- Cicero: "The Laws"
- Exodus 20-21
- Matthew 5:1-48
- *The Quran*, Surahs 2 and 49
- John Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration."
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*
- Cesare Beccaria, *Treatise on Crimes and Punishments*

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen

Text of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Readings from *The Choices Program: Competing Visions of Human Rights*, published by the Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University
"The Assad Files," by Ben Taub, published in the April 18, 2016 edition of *The New Yorker*

Interdisciplinary Connections:

None

Examples of Student Work

None yet...