

# HUMAN RIGHTS

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Grade 6th

## Main Idea

In spite of our differences, all human beings have the same dignity and the same Human Rights. No one can be discriminated against because of their nationality, race, religion, gender, political views, sexual preferences, economic status or social status.

**Assignments:** History, Literature.

**Time:** Six weeks.

**Materials:** Notebooks, drawing tools, books related to the topic, computers with Internet access.

## Objectives:

- Understand the meaning of the word “right.”
- Learn that all human beings have the same inalienable rights.
- Research about some situations where Human Rights have been and continue to be (here and now) infringed on throughout history.
- Realize how, in some instances, the mistakes made by humanity have left important lessons for the future.
- Study about the origins and the evolution of the idea of what is a “right” such as we understand it today.
- Research about the causes that gave origin to the creation of the Universal Declaration of the Human Rights and its content.
- Research about Children’s Rights.
- Know some of the international organizations whose mission is to promote Human Rights and to watch that these rights won’t be violated.
- Research about some major leaders in history who committed acts that defended or violated Human Rights.

## Support:

Even though the concept of Human Rights existed, it was not until 1948 that the Organization of the United Nations produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The struggle for these rights have been central in humanity’s history.

Since the sixteenth century, some renaissance philosophers like Picco Della Mirandola, began to discuss the importance of man’s dignity, and the defense of the natural rights of self. Centuries later, the Declaration of Independence defended equality, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as inviolable and inalienable rights of all men. In 1789, French citizens who led the French Revolution drew up the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen Statement. In these rights, they emphasized the importance of the individual guarantees of all human beings: liberty, life, security and property.

In reality, from the modern era, and above all from the eighteenth century, human beings have struggled to defend their right to equality, their freedom to worship and of ideas, the abolition of slavery, and to have a job and a decent place to live. Many of these struggles have taken place without full consciousness that these are inherent rights to the human condition, and therefore they should never be infringed. Unfortunately, lack of information and ignorance permits abuses and violations to be committed every day to human rights. Violations sometimes lead to violent acts, where intolerance, discrimination, torture, or even worse, death are in practice.

Because of all this, it is important to promote and to educate others about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This declaration establishes that all human beings have the same rights; it is also a document which, at the time of its publication, was signed and endorsed by governors from all over the world. The Declaration is also an instrument of protection for all people, and it is the only mechanism that has judicial faculties with executive power.

During 1979, members of the Human Rights Commission gave themselves the assignment to create special articles relating to Children's Rights; they thought that children required protection and care during infancy.

It is important to point out that each right implies a responsibility, and the rights of a person cannot violate or pass above the rights of another person.

#### **Students Abilities:**

- Accept responsibilities
- Form relevant questions about the topic
- Collect, organize and interpret data
- Write summaries
- Analyze
- Evaluate
- Know and respect different points of view
- Develop the four basic abilities of communication: read, write, listen and speak.

#### **Presentation of the Topic:**

##### **Start:**

The teacher will present to the students a series of images that illustrate violations to human rights. Each student will chose one topic which has impacted them the most; they will write a description about the topic and an explanation why the situation represented in the images is related with the topic.

Subsequently, the students will work in a group to create a definition of the word "right," which they will share with the class.

##### **Development:**

The teacher will divide the class into three groups; each group will work with one topic:

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Children's Rights
- Leaders whose actions led them to defend or to violate Human Rights.

Each group will create a poster-board about what they currently know, what they

would like to learn, and subsequently what they learned about the topic.

The unit of research will discuss these three central topics.

### **Activities:**

#### **Students:**

- They will answer the following questions: Do you think that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is important? Give three reasons to justify your answer.
- They will look in the newspaper for any news that illustrates situations where Human Rights have been preserved or violated.
- They will read the 1849 letter from A. Sterne to Charles S. Taylor, that mentions a joint Resolution demanding the President of the U.S. remove the Indians out of the Territory. Discuss how removing Native Americans to reservations violated their rights, and which Human Rights were violated by forcing them from areas settled by Anglos.  
<http://tides.sfasu.edu/NA18/A31B2F5a.php?culture=4&chrono=5&index=0>
- They will look at Mexico's decree abolishing slavery, published September 15, 1829. They will discuss what the reasons may have been that led to Mexico abolishing the institution of slavery nearly forty years before it was abolished in the United States, at the time of the Civil War.  
[http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVII\\_20.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0](http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVII_20.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0)
- They will read the book *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes*, and they will learn to make origami cranes like the ones the book's protagonist made.
- Research the atomic bombs that were dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki during WWII and their effects.
- They will read the book *Zlata's Diary* and they will watch the video about the life of this girl who survived the war horrors in Bosnia.
- They will pretend to be reporters, and they will create an interview of ten questions that they would ask Zlata.
- In groups they will chose any of the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They will design and do a poster to illustrate the chosen article.
- They will make a list of values that they consider necessary to avoid violations of Human Rights. They will explain why for each value.
- They will write biographies about leaders whose actions have been to defend or to violate Human Rights. Using this information they will write a presentation that they will later illustrate in the computer lab.
- They will analyze why a responsibility falls into each right.
- They will listen to the songs "Imagine" and "I Wish I Could Know How it Feels to Be Free." They will chose either of the two songs and analyze their content. They will write a paragraph to explain why this song is related with the topic.
- They will make a debate to defend or to condemn the death penalty.

### **Closure:**

The teacher will ask the students to do an investigation about different international organizations that are dedicated to promote Human Rights.

Finally the students will contact Amnesty International, to help them find real cases of people whose rights have been violated. The students will write and send letters supporting these cases.

**Evaluation Activity:**

The teacher will explain to the students how Texas and Mexico were territories which allowed the sale of slaves. In the nineteenth century, slavery was abolished in both, and they will write a comparison between the slavery history in Mexico and in Texas.

The teacher and the student will chose an activity along the topic that they consider most significant to evaluate the topic.

**Bibliography:**

Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes

Daniel's Story

Zlata's Diary

I Have Lived a Thousand Years

Journey to Jo'burg

Kids at Work

Leading Lives Adolf Hitler

Leading Lives Benito Mussolini

Leading Lives Mikhail Gorbachev

Leading Lives Mohandas Gandhi

Leading Lives Nelson Mandela

Leading Lives Yasser Arafat

**Internet Web Sites:**

<http://www.derechos.org/>

<http://www.udhr.org/history/default.htm>

<http://www.kidlink.org/kie/nls/english/rights>

**Texas Tides:**

**Collection** – Papers Pertaining to the Institution of Slavery 1809-1866:

[http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI\\_8.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0](http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI_8.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0)

[http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI\\_10.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0](http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI_10.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0)

[http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI\\_13.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0](http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI_13.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0)

[http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI\\_23.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0](http://tides.sfasu.edu/AA18/SHHVI_23.php?culture=1&chrono=5&index=0)