

RIGHTS IN PRACTICE

LESSON 3: EXPLORING HUMAN RIGHTS

Lesson aim:

- To understand human rights and responsibilities.

Learning objectives:

At the end of this lesson students will be able to:

- outline what is contained in the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- list what individuals and governments can do to respect Human Rights; and
- identify rights and corresponding responsibilities.

Lesson outline:

In-class activity: UN Declaration on Human Rights

Provide students with the handout on the UN Declaration on Human Rights contained at the end of the lesson plan section. Read through the handout in class to ensure all rights are fully understood.

Student activity: Essay on human rights

For homework, ask students to read through the handout and to write an essay on the importance of one of the rights. The essay should outline their experience of this right, the effect of not having that right and how it should be enforced.

Optional in-class activity: Human rights in the media

NOTE: This lesson is included to encourage students to think about when human rights are violated and the excuses given to justify those violations. This lesson attempts to address the illegality of such arguments. It should be highlighted and emphasised to students

regularly throughout this lesson that **IT IS NEVER ACCEPTABLE TO VIOLATE OR DENY ANYONE'S HUMAN RIGHTS REGARDLESS OF THE SITUATION.**

Using a selection of newspapers ask students (in groups) to look for reports on human rights violations. Students should also be encouraged to access via the internet human rights organisations, such as Amnesty www.amnesty.org, Human Rights Watch www.hrw.org and the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights www.ohchr.org

When students have gathered a sufficient amount of articles ask them to find out and discuss the following within their group:

- Outline the facts of the article.
- What is your immediate reaction?
- What do you think of the argument given for this behaviour? Explain.
- Do you think this type of behaviour is common a) around the world b) in Ireland? Please provide evidence and reasons for your answers.

Debating activity: Human rights debate

The class should be encouraged to organise a series of class and school debates on a general or specific topic about rights. Remember that a debate needs to examine both sides of the argument. The following are some suggestions for topics dealing with human rights:

- "The invasion of an individual's privacy is acceptable to prevent a crime."
- "The suspension of human rights is never an option."
- "All religious practices should be accepted in the name of tolerance."