

LET'S CELEBRATE!

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



STUDENT HANDBOOK

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Canadian Human Rights Foundation has published this educational kit with a grant from the Secretary of State of Canada.

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Front page Photo: the Second World War caused unprecedented human suffering. The photo depicts the rounding up of prisoners of war (Time/Life).

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IMPORTANT NOTE

The student book will be used by other classes.
Please do not write or draw on these pages.



CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS FOUNDATION

The Canadian Human Rights Foundation aims at promoting awareness of human rights in Canada.

It has done so for the past twenty years.

It reaches out to students in the elementary and secondary schools, among others, and encourages them to start talking about human rights.

The Foundation seeks to raise awareness and instill a basic understanding of human rights principles and values.

It is our belief that the young people of today hold the key to the society of the future.

Only an informed and educated public will be able to ensure tolerance and respect for human rights and the dignity of all.

INTRODUCTION

It's a very special occasion! On December 10th, 1948, forty years ago, representatives of forty-eight countries voted in the General Assembly of the United Nations to adopt the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Declaration is a statement by the U.N. member states to pursue the aims of justice and freedom. The document proclaims itself to be "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations". It is therefore a list of desired goals which, if achieved, will lead the peoples of the world toward peace and liberty.



The Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were utterly destroyed by the atomic bombs in 1945. (Pix Photo)

In the wake of two terrible world wars, the appalling evil of the Holocaust and the utter devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights represented new hope for justice and the rebuilding of peace.

LET'S CELEBRATE! commemorates the momentous anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. You will:

- learn what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has to say;
- be introduced to basic notions of human rights;
- find out, through examples, what might happen if human rights were not respected (by reading about the experience of Anne Frank);
- become aware of human rights violations and mechanisms of protection in Canada and elsewhere;

- gain knowledge about human rights advocates who have contributed to the progress of human rights;
- celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by getting involved in human rights activities, such as:
 - letter-writing to liberate prisoners of conscience;
 - research projects on biographies of human rights advocates;
 - poster presentations;
 - class party for the anniversary celebration.



Members of the International Youth for Peace and Justice Tour at a Peace March in Montreal, 1986.
(International Youth Tour)

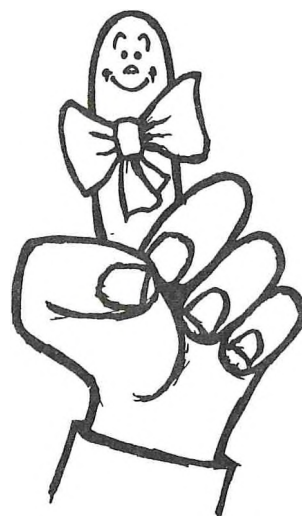
LESSON

1

LET'S CELEBRATE

To celebrate this important event, we'll learn about human rights and the Declaration. We'll be getting involved in lots of class discussion and projects. A class party to celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights will be held at the end of Lesson 4.

DON'T FORGET to set a date.



WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

Without human rights, we cannot live as human beings. Human rights are those requirements that allow us to develop fully and satisfy our basic needs. They are ideals based on humanity's increasing demand for dignity, respect, protection, and most of all, freedom. Human rights affect the daily lives of everyone - man, woman and child - and are to be enjoyed by all, without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

How would you explain what a right is?

What might happen if human rights were not respected? Read this next section silently.

In 1933, Adolph Hitler and the Nazi Party rose to power in Germany. Soon after, laws were passed which discriminated vigorously against Jews in that country. Hitler's plan to conquer Europe led to the Nazi invasions of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Holland and many other countries, igniting World War II (1939-1945).

It is estimated that at least 35,000,000 and perhaps as many as 60,000,000 people lost their lives during World War II.

Chart of Major Losses of Human Life by Country during World War II

| <u>Country</u> | <u>Number of lives lost</u> |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Soviet Union | 18,000,000 |
| Poland | 5,800,000 |
| (3,200,000 of whom were Jews) | |
| Germany | 4,200,000 |
| Japan | 2,000,000 |
| China | 1,300,000 |
| France | 563,000 |
| British Empire | 466,000 |
| Italy | 395,000 |
| United States | 298,000 |
| Canada | 42,042 |

An estimated 6,000,000 Jews were killed during the period of 1933 - 1945.

Petit Robert 2 — Dictionnaire universel des noms propres, Paris 1987.

The Canadian Encyclopedia, Volume IV, Hurtig Publishers, Edmonton, 1988.



Jewish women and children were deported at gunpoint to the concentration camp at Auschwitz. (YIVO)

Approximately six million Jews were exterminated, and millions of Russians, Gypsies and others were killed as well. They were forced into slave labour in work camps, sent to concentration camps where they were gassed to death, or simply shot on sight. Many, like Anne Frank, a young Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, Holland, were forced into hiding from the Gestapo, the secret police. In the "Secret Annex", Anne minutely recorded her thoughts and feelings, and the events which surrounded her, in her diary, which she addressed to "Kitty".



Anne Frank

The Diary of a Young Girl

Dear Kitty

Saturday, 20 June, 1942.

...After May 1940 good times rapidly fled: first the war, then the capitulation, followed by the arrival of the Germans, which is when the suffering of us Jews really began. Anti-Jewish decrees followed each other in quick succession. Jews must wear a yellow star¹, Jews must hand in their bicycles, Jews are banned from trains and are forbidden to drive. Jews are only allowed to do their shopping between three and five o'clock and then only in shops which bear the placard "Jewish shop"... Jews are forbidden to visit theatres, cinemas and other places of entertainment. Jews may not take part in public sports... Jews may not visit Christians...

Yours, *Anne*

¹To distinguish them from others, all Jews were forced by the Germans to wear, prominently displayed, a yellow six-pointed star.

Dear Kitty,

Friday, 9 October 1942.

I've only got dismal and depressing news for you today. Our many Jewish friends are being taken away by the dozen. These people were treated by the Gestapo without a shred of decency, being loaded into cattle trucks and sent to Westerbork, the big Jewish camp in Drente. Westerbork sounds terrible...

It is impossible to escape; most of the people in the camp are branded as inmates by their shaven heads... We assume that most of them are murdered... English radio speaks of their being gassed...

Yours, *Anne*

Dear Kitty,

Wednesday, 13 January, 1943.

...It is terrible outside. Day and night more of those poor miserable people are being dragged off. Families are torn apart, the men, women, and the children all being separated. Children coming home from school find that their parents have disappeared. Women return from shopping to find their homes shut up and their families gone...

Yours, *Anne*

Dear Kitty,

Tuesday, 11 April, 1944.

None of us has ever been in such danger as that night... just think of it - the police at our secret cupboard, the light on in front of it, and still we remained undiscovered...

We have been pointedly reminded that we are in hiding, that we are Jews in chains, chained to one spot, without any rights, but with a thousand duties... Sometime this terrible war will be over...

Yours, *Anne*

On August 4, 1944, the police raided the "Secret Annex" where Anne Frank, her family and friends were hiding. They were arrested and sent to German and Dutch concentration camps. Miep Gies, a Dutch woman who had courageously helped to hide the group despite great personal risk, found Anne's diary among a pile of old books which were left lying on the floor. In March 1945, two months before the liberation of Holland, Anne died in the concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. Her diary, published worldwide and translated into 75 languages including Japanese, Turkish and Persian, serves as a vivid testimony to this cruel chapter in history.

**Anne Frank could not benefit from the rights in the Declaration.
Examine the following articles:**

- 2:** Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms in the 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.
- 3:** Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of the person.
- 5:** No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
- 7:** All are equal before the law and are entitled without discrimination to equal protection of the law.
- 12:** No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour or reputation.
- 18:** Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
- 26:** Everyone has the right to education.

Did Anne Frank benefit from these rights?

Do you know whether anything like this happens today?

Do you know of any injustices that go on in Canada or in other countries?

SUGGESTIONS:

Act out an excerpt from Anne's Diary in class.

Suggested Reading:

Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl. (1958) Simon & Schuster, New York.

THE STRANGEST DREAM

This folk song recounts the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a wonderful dream. The tune is quite simple. Have fun with it.

The musical score is written on five staves in 3/4 time. The melody is simple, using quarter and eighth notes. Chords are indicated by letters above the staff: C, F, C, G7, C, Am, Dm, G7, C, F, C, G7, C, Am, G7, C. The lyrics are written below the staff, with some words underlined for emphasis.

Last night I had the strang-est dream, I'd nev-er
dreamed be-fore; — I dreamed the world had all a-
greed to put an end to war. — I dreamed I
saw a might-y room, the room was full of men, —
— and the pa-per they were sign-ing said, they'd nev-er fight a-gain.

And when the paper was all signed
And a million copies made
They all joined hands and bowed their heads
And grateful prayers were prayed.

And the people in the streets below
Were dancing round and round.
And guns and swords and uniforms
Were scattered on the ground.

Words and music by Canadian singer **Ed McCurdy**
Oak Publications, Embassy Music Corp., 33 West 60th St., New York 10023

LESSON

2

READING AND "RIGHTING"

Although the overriding message of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been one of peace and respect for the dignity of all people, it has not always been heeded by governments, nations and peoples of the world. In fact, full scale wars and armed conflicts have repeatedly disrupted attempts at global harmony. In the period from 1948 to 1988, merely forty years after the signing of the Declaration, more than 20,000,000 men, women and children have died as a result of active warfare (1,400 people a day over the past 40 years!).

Young people have a vital role to play in changing the situation. The International Youth Tour for Peace and Justice has travelled across the country to launch its urgent appeal for peace. The group comprises youngsters from around the world who have survived various forms of conflict in their homelands, and wish to share their experiences and their hopes for peace with Canadian youth. Read what they have to say:



The international Youth Tour for Peace and Justice comprises students from the four "corners" of the World.
(International Youth Tour)

Jose is my name and I come from El Salvador, where a war is going on. The government violates human rights every day. When you wake up in the morning to go to school or work, you may find people lying in the streets with their heads cut off, women raped and murdered by the armed forces.



In 1981, I was tortured, physically and mentally, by members of the armed forces of the government of El Salvador. They put a bag over my head to cut off my respiration. I was subjected to electric shocks. I suffered internal wounds and my face was disfigured. They made me listen to a tape of my mother crying.

We are innocent people who haven't done anything wrong.

Hello, my name is Evens. I'm twelve and a half years old. I come from Haiti. It's situated in the Caribbean, near Cuba, Jamaica and Puerto Rico. In my country we practice the Catholic, Protestant and Voodoo religions. The official language is French, but many people speak Creole. The biggest problem in my country is poverty.



The funds sent to the poorest villages are often confiscated by the government. There is no clean drinking water. There are no jobs and no social service programmes. The area that I lived in had no electricity because our dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier* hoarded the riches of my country and my village. In Haiti, the Tontons Macoutes serve as the dictator's plain clothes police force and threaten the people. Nevertheless, we must carry on, but with such poverty what can we do?

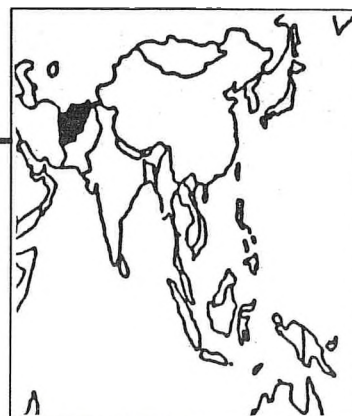
In the face of all these problems, I hope that we can establish order, peace and justice for a better Haiti where the sun will shine on everyone.

*François Duvalier was the Haitian dictator from 1957 to 1971. His son Jean-Claude took over his father's ruthless reign until he was overthrown in 1986.



Young people have a vital role to play in promoting Human Rights. (International Youth Tour)

I was fourteen years old when I had to leave Afghanistan. I didn't want to leave but I feared what might happen to us. We lived with war. Some of my cousins had disappeared. We had heard that some soldiers had entered the homes of people in the middle of the night to speak to their fathers and brothers, who later disappeared. My own father was sent to prison and we were never told why. We were afraid that we would be next.



Forced to flee the country, I set out from Kabul, the capital city, to Pakistan. Over 3,000,000 refugees live there. Half of them are children. They have no future. We call them the lost generation. I then made my way to India, where I lived for two years. I couldn't understand why I was left with no family, no country, and no security.

Some people in this country have a negative idea about what a refugee is. I hope to help people understand and be aware of the refugee's plight.

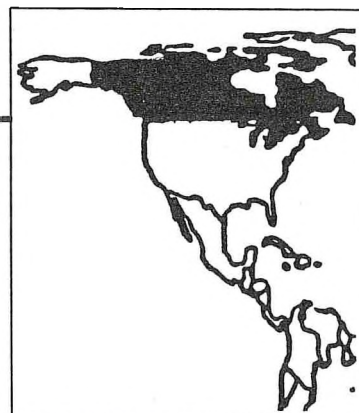
My name is Jackie. I'm from Labrador, which is in the northern part of Quebec. I'm a nineteen year old Montagnais Innu (Native person). My people, the Innu speak the Innu language. English is my second language.

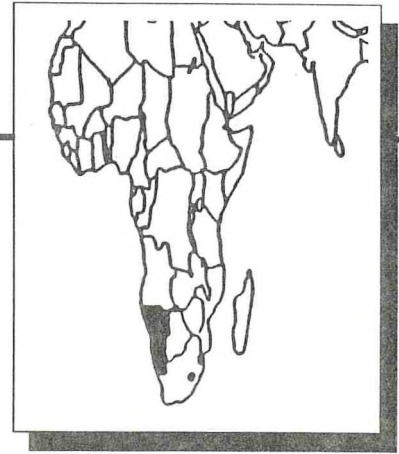
I wish to speak to you about military airplanes practising low-altitude flights over our land. The thunderous roar of the airplanes flying at high speed just above the trees, scares the animals and the birds, and the children and the elders... The caribou abandon their calving grounds. There are less offspring born to the wildlife, and our people have problems when hunting.

This is very bad for the land and for the people. The military airplanes which fly over our land at low altitude are German, British, Dutch and American. They are practising the "Deep Strike Tactic", for a potential war in Europe. This "Deep Strike Tactic" is very provoking. Therefore it increases the risk of nuclear war.

I want to speak to you, not only on behalf of my people, but also on behalf of all of us, because nuclear war will mean the extinction of all life on earth.

Low-altitude flights and the risk of nuclear war are not problems of the Innu alone, but of our entire country. I hope we, the youth of our world can do something about the problems of our countries now. Let's put our hearts and minds together ... We can work together and yes, we can make a difference.





I'm Albertus and I'm seventeen years old. I come from Namibia, situated in the southwestern part of Africa, with a population of about 1.5 million.

For hundreds of years, all black tribes lived in peace and harmony. Today we've sadness and suffering. Our country is militarily occupied by the South African army. This occupation is there to impose apartheid.

What is apartheid? It means that black people, the majority in the country, must live separate from white people. Blacks have no rights. We have been pushed into small areas, while the whites have taken the richest land and the most important mineral resources in Namibia. This goes on, not because we are criminals, but because of the colour of our skin. We've no right to vote or decide our own destiny.

Because my people cannot tolerate these inhuman conditions of poverty, discrimination and lack of rights, we raise our voices against these injustices and gather in the streets to protest. For this we are persecuted and jailed. Men, women and even children are killed every week. If I were to speak these very same words tomorrow in my home town, the South African army would consider it a crime. I would be beaten up, jailed or even killed.

I bring to you the cry of my people.

LET'S DISCUSS:

- What do you know about these situations?
- Have human rights been violated?
- If so, which ones? Refer to the articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- What could or should be done about these situations?

Don't forget:

Bring the weekly T.V. listing to school.
We'll be using it in Lesson 3.

LESSON

3

"MY FAVORITE HERO"

In groups of 5 or so, check the T.V. listings you have brought to school, and jot down as many programmes as you can find that feature war and/or violence on a frequent basis.

Put an X next to the ones that you like to watch. Compare your responses with the rest of the class.

Now choose one of the main characters or "heroes" of these programmes and write a brief description .

MY "HERO":

WHO IS THIS CHARACTER?

WHAT DOES HE OR SHE DO?

DESCRIBE HIS OR HER PERSONALITY.

DO YOU THINK THIS CHARACTER IS APPEALING? IF SO, WHY?



Here are some case scenarios. As you read them, try to imagine how this "hero" might react in each situation. Write down your responses after each example on a separate piece of paper.

Scenario #1:

***A bully pushes you around.
Your "hero" steps in to help you
out of a tough situation.***

Scenario #2:

There's a new student in the class who stutters. He raises his hand to speak and as he finishes his first two words, some disrespectful students burst into laughter. The new student feels so ashamed. Your "hero" appears and is quickly apprised of the situation.

Scenario #3:

A girl shows up for the community hockey club tryouts. The coach tells her that even though she shows ability and stamina, the club is for boys. Your "hero" hears this.

Scenario #4:

People from an unknown planet have discovered earth. They understand that there is a lot of oil here and want it badly. They set out on an expedition to earth and are met by your "hero".

Let's Discuss:

- What do you think of these reactions? Do they show respect for human rights?
- Which articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights do you feel are being respected or violated?
- Do you think that watching violence on television has any effect on the way we think or act?

LESSON

4

HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES

Human rights are not simply a set of fine words written on a piece of paper. They must be understood, applied and protected so that they can actually be of benefit. In the history of humanity, there have been numerous individuals and groups who have furthered the cause of human rights in such domains as:

- racial equality
- women's rights
- children's rights
- peace
- Native people's rights
- the rights of handicapped persons
- freedom from slavery
- etc.

HUMAN RIGHTS BIOGRAPHIES: HOMEWORK PROJECTS:

This is your chance to learn about some of those who worked for the achievement of human rights. Make a list of some human rights advocates that you know of and share it with the class. Use the resources of your school library. Consult your parents or members of your community. Call your provincial Human Rights Commission for information. They can be international, national or local. Please send us your list so that we can enrich this manual in the future with your good suggestions.

**Prepare a project on the biography of one of the
people or groups on your class list.
(see outline on page 24)**



I Had a Dream

Martin Luther King

... I have a dream this afternoon
That my four little children...
Will be judged on the basis
Of the content of their character
And not the colour of their skin...

I have a dream this afternoon
That the brotherhood of man will become a reality.
In this day, with this faith I will go out,
Carve a tunnel of hope through the mountain of despair.
With this faith, I will go out with you and transform
Dark yesterdays into bright tomorrows.
With this faith, we will be able to achieve this new day
When all God's children, black men and white men,
Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics
Will be able to join hands and sing with the Negroes
In the spirit of old,
Free At Last, Free At Last,
Thank God Almighty, We Are Free At Last.

Your project should follow this outline:

- background information on the life of the person (or group)
- his or her ideas and actions
- the achievements which resulted from his or her work
- the link between the work of the person or group and specific articles of the

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The projects should be written and might contain:

- a short class presentation
- a picture poster presentation

You will probably find all the information you need in your school and community libraries.

WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS?

People like us can help to further human rights. For example, certain individuals known as prisoners of conscience, that is, those jailed for speaking out in the name of human rights, have been liberated as a result of public pressure applied through letter-writing campaigns.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET INVOLVED?

It's time for a celebration!

Start to prepare for a class party to celebrate the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

PARTY LIST: (Things to do)

- Discuss an appropriate date and time for your class party.
- Prepare a cake for the class.
- Get some candles. (Each candle is lit in commemoration of a human rights advocate or a person whose contribution to the cause of human rights has made him or her a prisoner of conscience, past and present.)
- Write letters asking for the liberation of prisoners of conscience. Have them ready for a gift-giving ceremony. The class offers a gift of letters to liberate prisoners of conscience.

RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS:

- Post letters and posters in school halls. Have the letters sent to the proper authorities.
 - Invite local journalists to your school to take part in the celebration and make arrangements to be interviewed by them for publication.
 - Prepare short plays on human rights themes and present a "Skit Night" for parents and the public.
 - Have your class adopt a prisoner of conscience and publicize this gesture in the local newspapers, on radio and television.
-

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LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

Prepare a **HUMAN RIGHTS CALENDAR** with month by month dates of pertinent human rights events such as the birthdays of human rights leaders, the creation of human rights organizations, the signing of peace treaties, etc. Add your own drawings. Send them to:



**THE CANADIAN HUMAN
RIGHTS FOUNDATION**
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Suite 301
Montreal, Quebec
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Submissions will be incorporated into the Foundation's human rights educational materials. Send us your materials. We would like to enrich this handbook with your good work!