

**University High School Laptop Initiative  
Contemporary Issues / International Relations  
Lesson Plan**

**Understanding Universal Human Rights: Authentic Activities  
and Outcome Based Assessments**

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**Introduction & Rationale**

Ever since the UN issues the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html> the world has struggled with interpretation and implementation of that document. Authored by a committee headed by Eleanor Roosevelt and staffed by diplomats and lawyers, the document has been the central piece for “human rights talk” and discourse. Creation of the document and the addendum conventions, treaties and regimes was motivated by the tragedy of the Holocaust. Depending on the year and the region or country, the mandates and ideas contained in the UDHR have been more or less implemented but rarely enforced. As the world gets closer and smaller and as states cooperate with markets and corporations, a need for understanding international human rights becomes compelling for our students.

An important part of this lesson is the authentic activity and the outcome based assessment. Both approaches have occupied a significant place in educational reform. While many authentic activities and assessments are based around a presentation format, it is hoped that this lesson will effectuate the twin goals of informing our students about the history, context and language of human rights and appreciating the real world job of human rights action.

**Objectives and Goals**

- Students will be able to ... understand a brief history of human rights
- ... understand some of the specified rights in the historic documents about HR
- ... explain and demonstrate some violations of HR
- ... produce an announcement / advertisement calling for HR reform and implementation

## Learning Activities

- Open with brainstorming some definitions about human rights. Connect the idea of human rights to students by referring to settings that they function in like family, school, and the workplace
- Review a brief history of human rights (HR)
- The Enlightenment
- Declaration of Independence
- US Bill of Rights
- Research/explain some Asian and Middle Eastern sources of HR
- American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man
- <http://www.cidh.org/Basicos/English/Basic2.American%20Declaration.htm>
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>
- Students research human rights violations – historic and contemporary

## Student Activities

- In a discussion, share research about human rights violations – historic and contemporary
- Choose teams – one person on each team must be proficient in Power Point, Photo Story or video production
- Teams brainstorm and choose a production format
- Begin production
  
- Explain that the teams of students are a graphics production company that specializes in public service announcements.
- The United Nations has contacted a number of competing firms to produce an announcement or ad about human rights.
- If your ad is selected, your company will receive an excellent bonus and international recognition. Along with possible extra credit.
  
- Review public service announcements and advertisements on the internet, TV, (YouTube?) magazines, etc. Try to pattern your ad based upon examples that you liked.
- See <http://accad.osu.edu/womenandtech/Storyboard%20Resource/> for an explanation about story boards.
- Print a blank sample story board here <http://www.pdfpad.com/storyboards/pdf/4-3.pdf>
  
- Begin to brainstorm themes, topics, ideas, etc.
- Begin to collect and put together text, images, narration, music, etc.
- Begin final production
- Present product for assessment

## Evaluation and Assessment

### Contemporary Issues: PowerPoint Photo Story Video Rubric

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Project \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY & Points	20	15	10	0-5
Issue Topic Focus/Purpose	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains a clear focus throughout.	Establishes a purpose early on and maintains focus for most of the presentation.	There are a few lapses in focus, but the purpose is fairly clear.	It is difficult to figure out the focus and purpose of the presentation.
Understanding & History of Human Rights (HR)	Demonstrates a solid understanding of the history and content of HR. Includes three references to ideas and documents	Demonstrates an average understanding of the history and content of HR. Includes two references to ideas and documents	Demonstrates a weak understanding of the history and content of HR. Includes one reference to ideas and documents	Demonstrates a very weak understanding of the history and content of HR. Includes no references to ideas and documents
Statement of Specific HR Violation, Goal, Objective. Eg, education, hunger, etc.	Specific HR goal is clearly presented in a compelling and understandable manner	Specific HR goal is clearly presented in an inspiring and understandable manner	Specific HR goal is clearly presented in a casual but understandable manner	Specific HR goal is not clear. The presentation lacked effort and was not understandable.
Ending shows a clear suggestion for a UN solution and a plea for help or involvement	Ending shows a definite suggestion for a solution and a plea for help or involvement	Ending shows an indefinite suggestion for a solution and no plea for help or involvement	Ending shows no suggestion for a solution and no plea for help or involvement	Ending shows no suggestion for a solution and seems out of place or disconnected
Announcement/ Advertising Production and Final Presentation / Product	More than five slides or scenes. Narration, audio, images and graphics chosen to fit the theme of the presentation.	Five slides or scenes. Narration, audio, images and graphics chosen to fit the theme of the presentation	Less than five slides or scenes. Narration, audio, images and graphics chosen to fit the theme of the presentation. Very little effort.	Less than five slides or scenes. Narration, audio, images and graphics rarely fit the theme of the presentation. Almost no effort.

## **Samples of Student Productions**

### **Laptop Implications**

Students were able to conduct research at their desk without having to move to a computer lab or the library. The production capability and technology for all of the presentation formats was on their laptops which allowed for production to occur in the class room.

### **Role of the Teacher**

After the initial presentations by the instructor on the history and various ideas contained in universal human rights, the teacher helped facilitate production by coaching the students about the use of story boards, reviewing student production concepts and content and clarifying the standards contained in the rubric. The instructor used the rubric during the various presentations while asking students questions about their product and content.

### **Student Resources**

This page contains names of human rights organizations, other organizations doing substantial amounts of human rights work, and resources (such as libraries and internet-based information) of use to human rights activists and researchers.

<http://www.hrweb.org/resource.html>

Global teaching and learning projects sponsored by the United Nations.

<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/>

Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Law sponsored by Washington College of Law.

<http://www.wcl.american.edu/humright/center/>

Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) Student activism web page

<http://physiciansforhumanrights.org/students/>

The Human Rights Video Project

<http://www.humanrightsproject.org/content.php?sec=about>

The Hub is a new multi-lingual online portal dedicated to human rights media and action. It provides the opportunity for individuals, organizations, networks and groups around the world to bring their human rights stories and campaigns to global attention and to mobilize action to protect and promote human rights.

<http://hub.witness.org>

Youth for Human Rights International (YHRI) is an independent non-profit corporation headquartered in Los Angeles, with the purpose to educate people in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so they become valuable advocates for tolerance and peace.

<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/watchads/>

## Teacher Resources

Alves, Jose Lindgren (2000). "The Declaration of Human Rights in Postmodernity." *Human Rights Quarterly* 22: 478-500.

Des Forges, Allison (2004). "Learning from Disaster: U.S. Human Rights Policy in Rwanda." In *Implementing U.S. Human Rights Policies and Practices*. Ed. Debra Liang-Fenton. Washington: United Institute of Peace: 29-50

Evans, Tony (2001). *The Politics of Human Rights: A Global Perspective*. Sterling, Va: Pluto Press.

Glendon, Mary Ann (2003). "The Forgotten Crucible: The Latin American Influence on the Universal Human Rights Idea." *Harvard Human Rights Journal* 16: 27-39.

Hoffman, Paul (2004). "Human Rights and Terrorism." *Human Rights Quarterly* 26: 932-955

Ignatieff, Michael (2001). "The Attack on Human Rights." *Foreign Affairs* 8, 6 (November/December) 102-116.

Stammer, Neil (1999). "Social Movements and the Social Construction of Human Rights." *Human Rights Quarterly* 21: 980-1008.

Drake, Frederick and Lawrence McBride (Feb., 1997). "Reinvigorating the Teaching of History through Alternative Assessment." *The History Teacher* 30, no.2:145-173.

Lonbardi, Marilyn (Jan 2008). "Making the Grade: The Role of Assessment in Authentic Learning". Educause Learning Initiative (ELI), <http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI3019.pdf>

Wiggins, Grant (1990). The Case for Authentic Assessment. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*. Retrieved October 15, 2008 from <http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=2&n=2> .  
<http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=2&n=2>

Authentic Assessment Resources from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation (2008)  
<http://people.ucsc.edu/~ktellez/authenres.htm>