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Lesson—World Studies, United States Foreign Relations Units  
Grade Level 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>

## **The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Non-Governmental Organizations—Avenues for Student Action**

### **Introduction—Rationale**

It has been my experience as a high school teacher instructing within a large multicultural and academically diverse “skills” environment, that students acclimate best to broad themes. Specifics are of course necessary to provide students an explanatory component and afford them the opportunity for further knowledge particularly to attain and justify their own points-of-view. Nonetheless, I find that teaching in a broader thematic fashion allows for greater opportunity to focus material on “student-centered” activities. After all, the goal of quality instruction is not just exclusively about teacher style, but most importantly, about if the students are actually learning.

It is through these “lenses” of theoretical assumption (a slight reference to Dr. Mark Pollack’s international organization theories) that I have created the following lesson with my students most in mind. As part and parcel of content and skills required within each course under Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction Standards, current events on the local, national, and international scene provide a motivational component for students usually as an introduction and concluding element in teaching course content. For example, in a “broadly comprehensive” Unit on The Post World War II World in World Studies II, students are often drawn to today’s events, i.e., the War in Iraq, the upcoming presidential elections, or the newly passed municipal laws banning cruising in various neighborhoods of the city—usually the very streets these individuals call “home” in Milwaukee. However the harsh realities of many national and in particular world events has “paralyzed” some classes as students feel powerless to act in any influential fashion—even at the local level of government. As citizens of a democracy, students need to understand that they can help, not just by knowing, but principally, by “doing.”

It is with “active learning” in mind that I propose the following lesson plan entitled,  
**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Non-Governmental Organizations—Avenues for Student Action**

NOTE: This plan could be included within any phase of the Social Studies curriculum as it includes both a short and long-term component.

**Wisconsin DPI Social Studies State Standards Addressed in Goals, Objective, and Procedure of this lesson:**

A.12.13

B.12.1, 12.2, 12.5, 12.6, 12.16, 12.17

C.12.1, 12.2, 12.8, 12.9, 12.10, 12.11, 12.12, 12.14, 12.16

D.12.4, 12.12

E.12.3, 12.4, 12.12, 12.14

**Goals of Lesson:**

1. Students will familiarize themselves with The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) both as a “living document” and as it compares to the rights Americans enjoy under The Constitution and Bill of Rights.
2. Students will analyze the comprehensive nature of the UDHR, categorize the “types of rights” and suggest areas (if any) the U.S. Constitution could expand upon.
3. Finally, as a longer-term, quarter project (9 weeks), 4-5 groups of students will carefully research and “adopt” a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) as an avenue for performing local service in support of a national or international human right included within the UDHR.

**Objectives of Lesson:**

1. Through an introductory discussion, short lecture, group and individual analysis on The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, students will categorize the 30 UDHR articles in terms of Professor Bruce Cronin’s “Types of Human Rights.”<sup>1</sup>
2. By completing a short journaling exercise, students will analyze elements of both documents they see as similar and different and include elements of the UDHR missing from the United States Constitution..
3. From their lists of Human Rights missing from the United States Constitution, groups of students, with the opportunity for future classroom library resource time, will “adopt” an NGO which works to address one or a number of these “missing” rights. (Examples, the Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies work to address Article 25.1 of the UDHR, Teachers without Borders, #26.1, etc.)
4. As a nine-week project, students will provide a form of “service learning” to support these agencies, including letter-writing, fund-raising, service to suggested local agencies directly affiliated with the chosen NGO, education campaigns, etc. Students will account for all activities and provide a full written and group presentation at the end of the term. (Teacher will monitor progress at least 2 times per week.)

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<sup>1</sup> Lecture, Workshop, International Cooperation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, UW-Madison, June 23, 2004.

### **Prerequisites of Lesson:**

This unit and lesson builds upon materials derived from a basic 8<sup>th</sup> grade United States History Survey and/or a 9<sup>th</sup> grade Civics class, especially with respect to The United States Constitution. In addition, aspects of this lesson are meant to complement material on the Post World War II global order. Therefore, some introduction to the creation of the United Nations, its institutions, and The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is also assumed.

### **Materials Needed:**

- brief lecture notes as derived from Dr. Cronin's lecture (see above)
- copies of UDHR and US Constitution (from textbooks) for every student
- category chart, "Types of Human Rights"
- worksheet, "Are These Human Rights Violations?"<sup>2</sup>
- library computer internet access
- paper, pencils, presentation boards, overhead transparencies, Power Point presentation cart, etc. (materials for student presentations)
- Evaluation rubrics for group NGO "service learning" project

### **Lesson Procedure: (80 minute Block, NGO Service Learning, 9-weeks)**

**5 minute—Journal and Free Write—Students prepare their own "definition" of "rights" and "human rights" and list examples of what they see as "rights"**

**5 minute—Discuss results, teacher lists student examples on board.**

**15 minutes—Lecture and discussion on human rights within the context of the subject matter—the Post War World and growth of the United Nations. Include "Types of Human Rights" as presented in Dr. Cronin's lecture.**

**10 minutes—Students volunteer in turn to "classify" each right previously listed on the board.**

**5 minutes—Students scan individual copies of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and comment or ask questions. Teacher notes the context during which this document was completed and explains that all UN Member Nations must "agree" to its 30 Articles. However, the document is not binding or "enforceable."**

**20 minutes—Students use their texts (turned to the page on The U.S. Constitution) and the UDHR to complete the category sheet "Types of Human Rights." On the back of the sheet, students list Human Rights found in the UDHR but NOT included in the United States Constitution.**

**10 minute—Whole class discusses theories for why the UDHR is more comprehensive than the U.S. Constitution.**

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<sup>2</sup> Worksheet created for an alternative lesson on Human Rights from "Social Education," April 1999.

**Wrap Up—Students continue their journals summarizing possible reasons the U.S. Constitution is less comprehensive than the UDHR. Finally, do they think some of these rights missing from the U.S. Constitution should be part of our Constitution, and therefore “guaranteed by the law?” Why or why not?**

**(See Below for additional assessment)**

**Assessment of Lesson:**

- Results of Student Journals
- Class participation in discussion
- accuracy of worksheet, “Types of Human Rights”
- Additional Homework, “Are These Human Rights Violations?” from “Social Education,” April 1999.

**Additional 9-Week Service-Learning Project:**

**(Pending District and Parental Approval)**

From their lists of Human Rights missing from the United States Constitution, 4-5 groups of students, with the opportunity for future classroom library resource time, will “adopt” an NGO which works to address one or a number of these “missing” rights. (Examples, the Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies work to address Article 25.1 of the UDHR, Teachers without Borders, #26.1, etc.)

They will provide a form of “service learning” to support these agencies, including letter-writing, fund-raising, service to suggested local agencies directly affiliated with the chosen NGO, education campaigns, etc. Students will account for all activities and provide a full 3-4 page written and 10-15 minute group presentation at the end of the term. (Teacher will monitor progress at least 2 times per week.)

(Suggested site to search for NGOs and their primary purposes, [www.gdrc.org/ngo/ngo-types.html](http://www.gdrc.org/ngo/ngo-types.html))

Teacher will provide additional sources as semester progresses, but primary responsibility for research of information and contact of NGO representatives lie with the students

See attachments for sample evaluative Rubric



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Block \_\_\_\_\_

### **Types of Human Rights in “The Universal Declaration of Human Rights”**

Directions: Use your copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as passed by member nations of the newly-created United Nations in 1948 to “check” each article of the document by “Type of Right” (Civil and Political, Social and Economic, Group Rights, and/or Wartime Protection)

NOTE: Some Articles may overlap categories according to your interpretation. If the Article is similar to any Amendments in the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, list the Amendment number next to the UDHR Article number in the “Article of UDHR” column

<b>Article of UDHR</b>	<b>Civil and Political Right</b>	<b>Social and Economic Right</b>	<b>Group Right</b>	<b>Wartime Protection</b>
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				
#5				
#6				
#7				
#8				
#9				
#10				
#11.1				

#11.2				
#12				
#13.1				
#13.2				
#14.1				
#14.2				
#15.1				
#15.2				
#16.1				
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#28				
#29.1				
#29.2				
#29.3				
#30				



Notes on Human Rights included as part of:

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and  
Non-Governmental Organizations—Avenues for  
Student Action<sup>1</sup>**

**Definition of Human Rights (*abstracted from Louis Henken*):**

- A. Rights can be of a “moral” or “political” nature**
- B. Rights should be guaranteed a the person’s society or government.**
- C. They are rights that are just “inherent,” in other words, people should have them just because they are members of the human race.**

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<sup>1</sup> Abstracted from lecture by Dr. Bruce Cronin, “Human Rights and International Law in Europe,” delivered June 23, 2004 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison workshop, “International Cooperation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”



## **Types of Human Rights**

### **1. Civil and Political Rights**

- a. Right to participate fully in government**
- b. Individual “liberties,” i.e. freedom of speech, the press, etc. (Like our Bill of Rights)**

### **2. Social and Economic Rights**

- a. “Basic Needs” rights—food, clothing, shelter, health care, education, employment, etc.**
- b. Not fully covered by U.S. Constitution**



### **3. Group Rights**

- a. Not just tailored to individuals, but to specific groups of individuals, i.e., women, children, minorities, etc)**
- b. These may also include “individual rights” within the group.**

### **4. Wartime Declaration Rights**

- a. Rights, which govern how societies and governments should deal with each other in a time of war.**
- b. Provides for protections of military as well as civilian personnel among warring countries.**
- c. Sometimes a “code of rule” to protect innocents, enemy prisoners, and foreign land during wartime.**



**Group Names:**  
**Service Project Completed:**  
**Article(s) of UDHR addressed:**

<b><u>Evaluative Standard</u></b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
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Hours Clocked for Service  
(Minimum—15 Hours)

Quality of Activity Performed  
(Evaluation from supervisor,  
teacher analysis of letter  
campaign, etc.)

Quality of Group Presentation  
(Did all present? Visuals  
included? Eye Contact,  
Use of note cards, etc)

Quality of 3-5 Page Summary  
Paper (Content, grammar,  
Analysis of project, material  
and lessons learned,  
**PEOPLE YOU AFFECTED!!!)**