

LEARNING ABOUT
OUR HUMAN RIGHTS

WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



LESSON PLAN

POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

ABOUT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who take injustice personally. We are campaigning for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

We investigate and expose the facts, whenever and wherever abuses happen. We lobby governments as well as other powerful groups such as companies, making sure they keep their promises and respect international law. By telling the powerful stories of the people we work with, we mobilize millions of supporters around the world to campaign for change and to stand in the defence of activists on the frontline. We support people to claim their rights through education and training.

Our work protects and empowers people – from abolishing the death penalty to advancing sexual and reproductive rights, and from combating discrimination to defending refugees' and migrants' rights. We help to bring torturers to justice. Change oppressive laws... And free people who have been jailed just for voicing their opinion. We speak out for anyone and everyone whose freedom or dignity are under threat.



Demonstration outside the Turkish Embassy in London, UK. 12 July 2017.



WRITE FOR RIGHTS

Amnesty International's "Write for Rights" campaign takes place annually around 10 December, which is Human Rights Day (commemorating the day when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted in 1948). Write for Rights aims to bring about change to the lives of people or communities that have suffered or are at risk of human rights violations. Among the many actions that take place as part of Write for Rights, Amnesty raises individual cases with decision-makers who can change the situation, gives visibility to those cases by organizing protests and public actions, and brings international attention through media and internet exposure.

A major part of the Write for Rights campaign consists of a letter-writing marathon and involves millions of people around the globe. As a result of the international call to action, public officials are bombarded with letters. Victims of torture, prisoners of conscience, and people facing the death penalty

or other human rights violations receive messages of solidarity from thousands of people in far-off corners of the globe. Those suffering the violations know that their cases are being brought to public attention. They know that they are not forgotten.

The results of similar campaigns in previous years have been striking. Individuals affected by the violations report the difference that these letters make, they express their gratitude to those who have written, and they often describe the strength they derive from knowing that so many people are concerned about their case.

Often there is a noticeable change by officials towards these individuals: charges are dropped, treatment becomes less harsh, and laws or regulations addressing the problem are introduced.

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

SUCCESS STORIES FROM THE 2016 CAMPAIGN

FREED IN UZBEKISTAN

Muhammad Bekzhanov [right], one of the longest-imprisoned journalists in the world, was freed in February 2017 after spending 17 years behind bars. Hundreds of thousands of people worldwide wrote to demand his freedom.

“Receiving your letters really comforted me when I was in prison. Thank you!”



RELEASED IN THE USA

Whistleblower Chelsea Manning [left] walked free in May 2017, after her 35-year prison sentence was cut short by outgoing US President Barack Obama. More than a quarter of a million people wrote for her release.

“I wish I had the time and ability to thank each one of you for giving me a little bit of joy with each letter and card.”

CHARGES DROPPED IN PERU

Criminal charges against Máxima Acuña [right], a peasant farmer who is defying one of the world's biggest gold mining companies, were dropped in May 2017. More than 150,000 people had sent her solidarity messages.

“Keep on supporting, helping, and not just me, ok?”



You can see more success stories at [amnesty.org/WriteForRights](https://www.amnesty.org/WriteForRights)

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights are the basic freedoms and protections that belong to every single one of us. They are based on principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect – regardless of age, nationality, gender, race, beliefs and personal orientations.

Your rights are about being treated fairly and treating others fairly, and having the ability to make choices about your own life. These basic human rights are universal – they belong to all of us; everybody in the world. They are inalienable – they cannot be taken away from us. And they are indivisible and interdependent – they are all of equal importance and are interrelated.

Since the atrocities committed during World War II, international human rights instruments, beginning with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, have provided a solid framework for national, regional and international legislation designed to improve lives around the world. Human rights can be seen as laws for governments. They create obligations for governments or state officials to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of those within their jurisdiction and also abroad.

Human rights are not luxuries that can be met only when practicalities allow.



THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR)

The UDHR was drawn up by the newly formed United Nations in the years immediately following World War II. Since 1948, it has formed the backbone of the international human rights system. Every country in the world has agreed that they are bound by the general principles expressed within the 30 articles of this document.

The UDHR itself is, as its name suggests, a declaration. It is a declaration of intent by every government around the world that they will abide by certain standards in the treatment of individual human beings. Human rights have become part of international law: since the adoption of the UDHR, numerous other binding laws and agreements have been drawn up on the basis of its principles. It is these laws and agreements which provide the basis for organizations like Amnesty International to call on governments to refrain from the type of behaviour or treatment that the people highlighted in our Write for Rights cases have experienced.

DECLARATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

Fifty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN acknowledged that people who stood up for human rights were in need of support both from institutions and from individuals. In December 1998, the UN General Assembly adopted “The UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms” – commonly known as the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders. It defines a human rights defender and sets out the responsibilities of governments, civil society and individuals to support and defend them.

The Declaration is an international instrument for the protection of the right to defend human rights. It does not create new rights, but reaffirms existing rights that are instrumental to the defence of human rights. These include the rights to freedom of association, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to access information relating to human rights, as well as the right to provide legal assistance and the freedom to develop and discuss new ideas in the area of human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS



CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES

Right to life, freedom from torture and slavery, right to non-discrimination.

Article 1 Freedom and equality in dignity and rights

Article 2 Non-discrimination

Article 3 Right to life, liberty and security of person

Article 4 Freedom from slavery

Article 5 Freedom from torture



LEGAL RIGHTS

Right to be presumed innocent, right to a fair trial, right to be free from arbitrary arrest or detention.

Article 6 All are protected by the law

Article 7 All are equal before the law

Article 8 A remedy when rights have been violated

Article 9 No unjust detention, imprisonment or exile

Article 10 Right to a fair trial

Article 11 Innocent until proven guilty

Article 14 Right to go to another country and ask for protection



SOCIAL RIGHTS

Right to education, to found and maintain a family, to recreation, to health care.

Article 12 Privacy and the right to home and family life

Article 13 Freedom to live and travel freely within state borders

Article 16 Right to marry and start a family

Article 24 Right to rest and leisure

Article 26 Right to education, including free primary education



ECONOMIC RIGHTS

Right to property, to work, to housing, to a pension, to an adequate standard of living.

Article 15 Right to a nationality

Article 17 Right to own property and possessions

Article 22 Right to social security

Article 23 Right to work for a fair wage and to join a trade union

Article 25 Right to a standard of living adequate for your health and well-being



POLITICAL RIGHTS

Right to participate in the government of the country, right to vote, right to peaceful assembly, freedoms of expression, belief and religion

Article 18 Freedom of belief (including religious belief)

Article 19 Freedom of expression and the right to spread information

Article 20 Freedom to join associations and meet with others in a peaceful way

Article 21 Right to take part in the government of your country



CULTURAL RIGHTS, SOLIDARITY RIGHTS

Right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

Article 27 Right to share in your community's cultural life

Article 28 Right to an international order where all these rights can be fully realized

Article 29 Responsibility to respect the rights of others

Article 30 No taking away any of these rights!

LESSON PLAN

POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY

KEY CONCEPTS

- Human rights defenders
- Policing
- Killings by police
- Impunity
- Right to life
- Right to a fair trial

ABOUT THIS LESSON

Students use the case of a killing by the police in Jamaica to examine the human rights involved and the role of the police. They are encouraged to write a letter to support the fight for justice by the victim's sister.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students have understood the role of the police in protecting human rights
- Students are able to relate examples of mistreatment to specific rights in the UDHR
- Students know about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign, and are prepared to write a letter in support of one of the people the campaign is focusing on.

PREPARATION AND RESOURCES

Optional: copy Shackelia Jackson's story for students (page 11)

TIME NEEDED:

45 minutes

AGE: 14+

INTRODUCTION:

THE ROLE OF THE POLICE

 10 MINUTES

1. Ask the class to think about the role that the police should play in society.

Why do we have a police force, and what is it supposed to do?

2. Draw out some responses. If not mentioned by students, remind them that in most countries, the police have the following key roles:

- Making sure people obey the law (enforcing the law)
- Protecting people and property and keeping public order
- Investigating crimes and making arrests

If time allows, refer to some of the information on 'The use of force and human rights' (page 9)

INTRODUCING NAKIEA AND SHACKELIA JACKSON

⌚ 15 MINUTES

3. Read out the short passage below. Tell students that the events described really happened:

At about midday on 20 January, several men arrived at Nakiea Jackson's cookshop in Kingston, Jamaica. The men asked Nakiea to open the door, and one of them came into the shop with a gun in his hand. Two shots followed, and Nakiea was dragged out of the shop and thrown into a vehicle. He had been shot dead.

4. Ask students for their reaction.

- What do you think happened? Why did it happen?
- What should the police do to make sure that the person (or people) responsible for the death of Nakiea is brought to justice?

5. Tell students what really happened: that the men who entered Nakiea's shop and shot him were police officers. Read out Shackelia's story on page 11, then ask again for students' reactions:

- What can you say about the behaviour of the police?
- What should the police have done, and what should they not have done? (You could make a list with participants.)
- What can you say about Shackelia? Which adjectives would you use to describe her?

Optional:

You could also use the short video available at [amnesty.org/WriteForRights](https://www.amnesty.org/WriteForRights) to introduce Shackelia to the students.

INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS

⌚ 20 MINUTES

6. Use the information on page 2 to introduce Amnesty International briefly, and explain the Write for Rights campaign. Tell students that Shackelia is one of the human rights defenders who feature in this campaign.

7. If students are not familiar with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, use the background information on page 4. Then read out the list of human rights on the left-hand side of the table on page 5, and ask students to identify which of them are relevant to Nakiea's case and Shackelia's struggle.

You could ask students to stand up if the right is relevant, and remain seated if not. Ask one of those standing to explain briefly why they think each right is relevant. Alternatively, if time allows, pair students up and ask them to mark those rights which could be relevant.

8. Conclude by telling students that Amnesty is calling on people around the world to write letters to help Shackelia and her family:

- A letter of solidarity to Shackelia, so that she knows that people around the world support her in her struggle for justice
- A letter of protest to the Minister of Justice.
You can find more information on addresses and recommended content below.

9. Allocate time in a future lesson for these letters to be written by students.

Optional:

You could use the short video available at [academy.amnesty.org](https://www.academy.amnesty.org) to introduce the Write for Rights campaign.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS INSTRUCTIONS

WRITE A LETTER – SAVE A LIFE

1. Encourage students to write to Shackelia expressing their solidarity, admiration or anything else they feel towards her. Ask them to think about what she might want to hear at this difficult time.

*Shackelia Jackson
184 Orange Street
BLK J apt 10
Kingston, Jamaica*

*Email:
brokenbutnotdestroyedinfo@gmail.com*

2. Encourage them to write to the Minister of Justice at the following address:

*Ministry of Justice
Commerce Gate
61 Constant Spring Road
Kingston 10, Jamaica*

You can give students the following guidelines to help them write their letters:

MAKE YOUR LETTER TO THE MINISTER PERSONAL:

- ▶ Tell him something about yourself
- ▶ Tell him what shocks you about the case
- ▶ Demand that he ensures that Nakiea's case is dealt with quickly, by an independent judicial process, and that those held responsible for his killing are brought to justice.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE USE OF FORCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Police officers in every country are allowed to do things that other citizens cannot – for example, using force to arrest someone, holding someone in a prison cell or carrying guns (in some countries). The police are given these additional powers in order that they can carry out their responsibility to protect people and keep public order.

However, with power comes responsibility: the police are permitted to use force against others, but they must always do so with proper justification, and in accordance with the law and with human rights. The use of any force by police should be strictly limited to those situations where it is absolutely necessary for the achievement of a legitimate law enforcement aim. Firearms may only be used as a last resort (that is, only when less extreme means are insufficient) and when strictly necessary to protect themselves or others against the imminent threat of death or serious injury. The intentional lethal use of firearms is only permissible if strictly unavoidable in order to protect life.

**SOME OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS PRINCIPLES GOVERNING
THE USE OF FORCE BY POLICE INCLUDE:**

- The use of force must be necessary; that means it must be the lowest level of force needed to achieve the legitimate objective
- The force must be proportionate to the risk or the danger (for example, it would be disproportionate to shoot someone for stealing a bag of crisps)
- Where use of force by the police has resulted in injury or death, a prompt, thorough, independent and impartial investigation into the incident must be conducted
- Police officers must be held accountable if they misuse their powers and use excessive force. The police must be held accountable through the courts, if necessary.

The international standards relating to police use of force should be included in the law of each country and in police regulations.

EXERCISE

RELEVANT RIGHTS

NAME OF HUMAN RIGHT	IS IT RELEVANT TO NAKIEA / SHACKELIA'S CASE?
1 Right to life	Relevant: Nakiea's right to life was violated when he was killed.
2 Right to education	Not relevant.
3 Right to fair trial	Relevant: one witness didn't feel safe attending court.
4 Right to security	Relevant for Nakiea. Also relevant for members of his family, who have felt harassed and intimidated.
5 Right to liberty	Not relevant: no-one has been detained or arrested.
6 Right to freedom of expression	Relevant: Shackelia and her family have been intimidated for trying to speak up for justice.
7 Right to work	Not relevant.
8 Right to be assumed innocent until proven guilty	Possibly relevant: if the police really suspected Nakiea of committing a crime, he should have been brought to trial.
9 Right to be free from slavery	Not relevant.
10 Right to health	Not relevant.
11 Right to private life	Probably relevant: Shackelia and the rest of the family have experienced extreme difficulties in their private lives as a result of the police's actions.
12 Right to be free from discrimination	Possibly relevant: the police claim that a robbery had occurred in the area and they were pursuing a "Rastafarian-looking" man. Nakiea had dreadlocks. Relevant: regarding gender discrimination, Amnesty's research found out that female relatives of people killed by the police in Jamaica are more likely to become victims of intimidation and threats when they try to obtain justice for their killed loved one. Relevant: regarding socio-economic discrimination, as the vast majority of people killed by the police in Jamaica come from marginalized communities.

CASE CARD

SHACKELIA JACKSON



On 20 January 2014, several police officers arrived at a street in Kingston, Jamaica, looking for a man with dreadlocks. They went to the cookshop where Nakiea Jackson worked, and asked him to open the door. Moments later, two shots were heard and Nakiea was dragged out of the shop, lifeless, and thrown into a police vehicle.

Since Nakiea's death, his sister, Shackelia, has led the struggle to find out the truth and bring those responsible to justice.

It hasn't been easy. One police officer was charged with the crime against Nakiea, but the police then led a campaign of intimidation against Shackelia, her family and others involved in the case. There were police raids in their community, the family felt intimidated and harassed in the courtroom, and the preliminary inquiry into the case had to be dismissed because one of the witnesses was afraid to attend.

The dismissal of this initial inquiry means that Shackelia and her family are likely to face significant delays – perhaps many years – before the investigation into Nakiea's death is concluded.

Shackelia is determined to get justice for her brother. She has become a voice speaking out, not just against Nakiea's murder, but also for the many victims – and their families – of police abuses taking place in Jamaica.

“We are scared of the police, of their very presence. This violence is affecting a lot of children in the communities. If justice does not prevail, we all become targets, we are all in danger. If justice is not done, how can we convince our children not to hate the police?”



Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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