

LEARNING ABOUT
OUR HUMAN RIGHTS

WRITE
FOR
RIGHTS

AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL



LESSON PLAN

RIGHT TO PROTEST

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?”***



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

RIGHT TO PROTEST

KEY CONCEPTS

- Human rights defenders
- Right to liberty
- Right to a fair trial
- Arbitrary arrest
- Freedom from discrimination
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly

ABOUT THIS LESSON:

Students use the case of two human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories to familiarize themselves with rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students know about some of the rights violations facing Palestinians in the Occupied Territories (West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and Gaza Strip)
- Students identify rights in the UDHR relating to specific violations
- 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:

Cut out the rights cards and the narrative cards on pages 5 and 10. You will need one set of cards for each group of 4 – 5 students

TIME NEEDED:

45 minutes

AGE: 14+

INTRODUCING THE UDHR

⌚ 10 MINUTES

1. If students are unfamiliar with human rights, give them some brief information from page 4, and introduce the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- ▶ You could show the video at youtube.com/watch?v=Pby1KngOhBY or ask them to look through the abbreviated version of the UDHR on page 5
- ▶ Ask what they understand by the term “human rights defender”. Can they name one – either in the past or now?

ACTIVITY: MATCHING HUMAN RIGHTS

⌚ 20 MINUTES

2. Explain that the lesson will look at two human rights defenders from Hebron and Bethlehem, two cities in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Introduce Farid al-Atrash and Issa Amro, using some of the information from page 10.
3. Divide students into groups of about 4-5 people, and give each group a set of narrative cards from page 11. Do not hand out the rights cards yet.
4. Tell them to read through the story in their groups and make sure they understand what has happened.
5. After about 5 minutes, explain the task with the rights cards.
 - ▶ Each group will receive 7 cards representing different human rights from the UDHR.
 - ▶ Each of these cards should be matched to one of the cards you already have, describing what has happened to Farid and Issa.
 - ▶ BUT... you may find that some of your cards could be matched to more than one right. You need to choose one, so that you use up all your rights cards and all your narrative cards.
6. Hand out the sets of rights cards and ask students to begin the matching task.

DEBRIEFING THE ACTIVITY

⌚ 10 MINUTES

7. Check groups' responses to the task and make sure they have matched the rights correctly.
8. Use some of the following questions to check their understanding as a result of the lesson:
 - ▶ How easy was it to match the rights to the cards? What, if anything, was difficult?
 - ▶ Are there any rights which you do not fully understand?
 - ▶ Which of the narrative cards could have been matched to more than one right? Which rights?
 - ▶ What is your general impression about Farid's and Issa's stories? Did anything surprise or shock you?

Optional:
You could show students the brief video of Issa and Farid at amnesty.org/WriteForRights

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND WRITE FOR RIGHTS

⌚ 5 MINUTES

9. Use the information on page 2 to give students some information about Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign. Tell them that they can support Issa and Farid in two ways:

- ▶ They can write directly to Issa and Farid, expressing their support and admiration for the work they do. This will reassure the two defenders that people around the globe are looking out for their rights.
- ▶ They can write to the Prime Minister of Israel, calling on him to drop all charges against Issa and Farid immediately.

Optional:

You could use the short video available at academy.amnesty.org to introduce the Write for Rights campaign.

You can find more information on addresses and recommended content below.

WRITE FOR RIGHTS INSTRUCTIONS

WRITE A LETTER – SAVE A LIFE

Note: Students in countries that have no diplomatic relations with Israel should not send appeals to members of the Israeli government. We would, however, encourage students to send solidarity messages to Farid al-Atrash and Issa Amro electronically, as post between countries that have no diplomatic relations may not arrive. Please ensure that any solidarity messages for Farid and Issa are in Arabic or English only, not Hebrew.

1. **Encourage students to write to Issa and Farid expressing their solidarity, admiration or anything else they feel towards these human rights defenders. Ask students to think about what they might want to hear at this difficult time. You can write to them at:**

*Amnesty International
PO BOX 42 626
Jerusalem, Israel*

For online solidarity messages: Use the hashtag #FaridandIssa when posting your messages on Twitter or Facebook. The hashtag will allow them to find all the messages. When posting on Facebook be sure to make it “public”.

2. **Encourage them to write to the Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, at the following address:**

*Office of the Prime Minister,
3 Kaplan St, PO Box 187 Kiryat Ben-Gurion,
Jerusalem 91950, Israel*

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

MAKE YOUR LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER PERSONAL:

- ▶ Tell him something about yourself
- ▶ Tell him what shocks you about the cases of Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash
- ▶ Urge him to immediately drop all charges against Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash, and call on him to put an immediate end to the harassment of Issa Amro, Farid al-Atrash and other human rights defenders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- ▶ Urge him to immediately investigate Issa Amro's and Farid's al-Atrash's claims of ill-treatment by the Israeli army and police, and prosecute those suspected of responsibility.



CASE CARD

FARID AL-ATRASH AND ISSA AMRO



Issa Amro runs a youth centre in Hebron, Youth Against Settlements, that focuses on non-violent activism against Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. Issa Amro and his centre document human rights violations, organize peaceful protests and campaigns, and distribute information about Israel's settlements and the military occupation to visitors, journalists and diplomats.

Farid al-Atrash is a Palestinian lawyer and activist in Bethlehem. His work as a lawyer in the State of Palestine's national human rights institution is to scrutinize the Palestinian authorities. He is also active in a number of Palestinian civil society organizations that work to peacefully oppose Israel's occupation and the human rights violations that stem from it.

Issa Amro and Farid al-Atrash are both peaceful human rights defenders who actively oppose the human rights violations that stem from Israel's occupation of Palestinian land. Among the human rights violations are the hundreds of Israeli settlements (colonies) that blight Palestinian cities across the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, where hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers live and work on stolen Palestinian land. These Israeli settlements are a war crime.



ACTIVITY

CARDS FOR THE ACTIVITY

On 5 June 1967, an armed conflict began between Israel and its Arab neighbours, Egypt, Jordan and Syria, that lasted for six days. By the end of the conflict, Israel had captured the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. Israel returned Sinai to Egypt in 1982 as part of a peace agreement. However, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan Heights remain occupied by Israel until today,

50 years on. Since then, Israel has constructed hundreds of illegal settlements (colonies), where hundreds of thousands of Israeli settlers live and work, on occupied Palestinian land in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and until 2005 in Gaza. Settlements are one of the main driving forces behind the mass human rights violations resulting from Israel's 50-year-long occupation.

Narrative cards

- 1 In 1994, the Israeli army closed down a Palestinian street in the West Bank city of Hebron called al-Shuhada Street after an Israeli settler killed 29 Palestinian worshippers in a mosque. The army also prohibited Palestinians who do not live there from walking down the street. Israeli settlers, who are illegally residing in Hebron, do not suffer the same restrictions.
- 2 On 26 February 2016, Palestinian activists organized a peaceful protest march in Hebron calling for al-Shuhada Street to be opened, an end to the restrictions on movement for Palestinians, and for the removal from the Occupied Palestinian Territories of Israeli settlers, who are illegally residing on Palestinian land. Israeli forces threw sound bombs and fired tear gas at the protesters.
- 3 Issa Amro organized the protest, in which both he and Farid al-Atrash took part. Video footage shows Farid peacefully holding a placard that said "Open Shuhada Street" in front of Israeli soldiers, and then being pushed and dragged and violently arrested by a number of soldiers.
- 4 On 27 February 2016, Farid al-Atrash was charged in front of an Israeli military court, even though he is not a member of the military. The five charges against him include participating in an illegal demonstration (under Military Order 101) and attacking soldiers. He was released on bail on 1 March 2016.
- 5 Issa Amro faces constant harassment and intimidation as a result of his peaceful activities against the Israeli occupation, including settlements, in Hebron. He has been arrested, handcuffed, blindfolded and detained, sometimes without being registered as arrested.
- 6 Issa Amro was arrested on 29 February 2016 from the centre he runs in Hebron for his role in the protest on 26 February. He was released on bail on 1 March 2016. He faces a total of 18 charges, some of which date back to 2010. Some of the charges, such as "participating in a march without a permit" (under Military Order 101), are not criminal offences under international standards.
- 7 Farid al-Atrash and Issa Amro deny the charges against them. Issa Amro told Amnesty International that on one occasion in July 2013, for which he is facing a charge, he was beaten so hard in the back by an Israeli police officer that he was still taking medication three years later. Farid al-Atrash says that he was held for five days after his arrest in inhumane conditions, including in a cupboard the size of his body with little air to breathe, while being transported in an Israeli army vehicle.
- 8 They are both on trial in an Israeli military court, where 95-99% of cases of Palestinians end in conviction. By contrast, Israeli settlers are tried in civilian courts, where the rights to a fair trial are more likely to be safeguarded.

Rights cards

Article 2: Right to non-discrimination	Art. 20: Freedom of assembly	Art. 19: Freedom of expression	Article 10: Right to a fair trial	Article 3: Right to life, liberty and security of person	Article 9: Freedom from arbitrary arrest	Article 5: Right to be free from inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 10: Right to a fair trial

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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