

Human Rights Educators USA-NJ Curriculum Integration Project

LESSON TITLE: Pressing Human Rights Issues in Africa

“Using the Research Process to Create Student Understanding of How to Achieve Human Rights Goals”

RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL(S) FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

9th Grade World History

INSTRUCTIONAL TIME OR CLASS SESSIONS REQUIRED:

5 Sessions (40 minutes each class session)

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AUTHOR AFFILIATION (SCHOOL OR OTHER INSTITUTION):

Ridge High School (Bernards Township NJ Public Schools)

BRIEF DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF LESSON:

Students will be introduced to several pressing human rights issues that are occurring in countries in Africa. They will then work with groups to research and create a report on a possible ways to improve the human rights situation, and present their plan of action to their peers. This lesson is intended to be a follow-up after an introductory lesson has already taken place (i.e. students are familiar with basics like what a human right is and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

NJ SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN LESSON

6.3.12.A.2 Compare current cases involving slavery, child labor, and other unfair labor practices in the United States with those of other nations, and evaluate the extent to which these problems are universal

6.2.12.D.3.d Analyze the extent to which racism was both a cause and consequence of imperialism, and evaluate the impact of imperialism from multiple perspectives.

6.2.12.A.4.d Assess government responses to incidents of ethnic cleansing and genocide.

6.2.12.A.5.e Assess the progress of human and civil rights around the world since the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights.

Theme: Demonstrate understanding of the need for fairness and take appropriate action against unfairness

COMMON CORE CURRICULUM STANDARDS REFERENCED IN LESSON:

1. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7

Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

LITERACY DEVELOPMENT CONNECTIONS IN LESSON:

A. Students will develop research and analysis skills as they are looking for possible solutions to their human rights challenges.

B. Students will practice communication skills through presenting to their peers.

C. Students will develop writing skills through preparing the information they will present to their peers.

LESSON GOALS/OBJECTIVES—Students will be able to:

1. Define contemporary challenges facing developing nations as human rights abuses and explain how they conflict with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

2. Complete research and analysis of primary and secondary sources relating to human rights abuses.

3. Formulate a plan of action that will improve conditions for those suffering human rights abuses.

LESSON METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES:

Day One: Introduction of Research Topics

1. The first part of this lesson entails an overview of several contemporary human rights issues. For the purpose of this lesson, students will be studying Africa, but this lesson can also be applied to other regions of the world as well. The issues being examined can also be varied. For the purpose of this lesson, the following topics will be introduced to students via a PowerPoint presentation that contains statistics, images, and quotations:

- Use of Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of Congo
- The Epidemic of Aids and Access to Healthcare (Uganda vs. Swaziland)
- Genocide in Darfur and Rwanda
- Women's Rights Abuses in Africa (North Africa vs. Sub-Saharan Africa)
- Lack of Access to Food, Water, Shelter (Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo)

2. Students will be assigned to heterogeneous groups decided by the instructor. These groups will be determined before the lesson, and given to the students through a handout along with the assignment sheet. Groups will list the topics they will research in order of preference, and as a full class we will decide which topic each group will pursue.

3. The rest of Day One will focus on a breakdown of the expectations of the research assignment. Students will be given an assignment sheet that will break down the expectations for each group. Each group will be responsible for drafting a three-page paper that will include an overview of the human rights abuse occurring in Africa, as well as a list of possible solutions to these challenges. This paper will also be presented to the full class in a ten to fifteen minute group presentation.

Day Two: Research

4. Students will be given a full class period to complete research on their topic in the library. The instructor will provide a list of resources that students may want to use in their paper and presentation (included in this lesson plan under learning resources). Students will be encouraged to divide up the work: some group members should gather information on the human rights abuse itself including historical background (what progress has been made since independence?), while others research possible methods for remedying the situation.

In Between Lessons: Group Work

5. Students will be tasked with completing their paper and presentation outside of class time. The instructor will encourage students to ask questions throughout the process via e-mail or after class time. The length of time given to complete the assignment can be adjusted by the instructor based upon the needs of the course.

Students will turn in a draft of their research, which the instructor will review in order to make sure they have found valid sources. This will count as a homework grade. Students will turn in a rough draft of their paper (including at least the introduction and first page)

to be reviewed. This will also count as a homework grade. The goal of these two assessments is to check progress to ensure that students are working towards a final draft that will include the UDHR content as well as valid information about the human rights issue.

Days Three, Four, Five: Presentations

6. Students will present their findings to their classmates. Each group will distribute fact sheets and outlines to the class so that each class member has a list of resources they can refer to in the future. Assuming a standard forty-minute period, and 6 groups per class, each group will have 15 minutes to present their findings, and 5 minutes to field questions.

7. Class members who are not presenting will be encouraged to write down and ask any questions that arise. Each group will have 5 minutes to respond to questions from the class.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE:

A. Formative Assessment: Students will be assessed during the research class period. The instructor will migrate between groups, ensuring that they are staying on task and guiding them through their research.

B. Summative Assessment: Written Proposal. A large part of the assessment for this lesson will be the written proposal that students will create to explain and provide a variety of possible solutions for their group's human rights challenge. A high quality response will include a detailed, well-researched explanation of the issue, and a logical solution that demonstrates knowledge of how human rights are violated and what can be done to protect them.

C. Summative Assessment: Group Oral Presentation. Students will be assessed on how effectively they are able to communicate their proposal to their peers.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

1. Human Rights Watch on Africa: <http://www.hrw.org/africa>

2. Amnesty International USA's Web Page on Human Rights abuses in Africa:
<http://www.amnestyusa.org/our-work/countries/africa>

3. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights Abridged Version:

http://f.edgesuite.net/data/www.youthforhumanrights.org/files/YHRI_declaration-human-rights-abridged.pdf

4. New York Times Collection of Articles on Human Rights Abuses:

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/f/freedom_and_human_rights/index.html

5. U.S. Department of State Country Reports on Human Rights;

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/>

LESSON EXTENSION RESOURCES:

A. #1, #2, and #4 above are excellent sources for keeping current on human rights abuses as they continue to occur throughout the world.

B. Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights Annual Reports:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/AnnualReportAppeal.aspx>

C. Annual Reports of the UN Human Rights Council:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx>

D. Periodic Review of UN Member States Human Rights Conditions:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/UPRSessions.aspx>

MODIFICATIONS OR ADAPTATIONS OF THE LESSON FOR DIFFERENTIATED LEARNERS:

1. Students who have difficulty because of having limited English proficiency or who require other accommodations may benefit from being grouped with high-achieving students in the class.
2. Students who struggle with reading comprehension will be asked to review their selected sources with the instructor during extra help periods to ensure that they are understanding the meaning behind their research.
3. If students with reading deficiencies are having difficulty finding valid sources, the instructor may provide those students with sample research articles and review how to analyze these articles.

Human Rights in Africa Project

Rationale: Human Rights abuses have been a central theme in our study of world civilizations in this course. While we have often discussed the abuses that have occurred historically and are still occurring today, rarely have we discussed ways that these abuses can be stopped and prevented. In a group with your classmates, you are going to research a Human Rights abuse occurring in Africa, create a report and proposal about it, and present your findings to the class.

Procedure/Requirements:

Paper:

- You will work with partners to turn in one finished paper. This paper will be a minimum of three pages and a maximum of five pages.
- Your paper must cite at least three credible sources that pertain to your topic. (We will have one day in the library to find these sources.)
- The first part of your paper will provide information and details about your specific topic. The goal is to inform the reader about the situation, and explain why your human rights abuse is problematic and needs to be addressed.
- The second part of your paper will create a strategy for dealing with the human rights abuse. Your plan should state clearly what change will occur, and why you believe that will improve the situation. Be creative and thoughtful, but also be realistic. Bear in mind that in much of Africa, resources are limited.
- Research non-governmental organizations that already exist (such as Amnesty International) and consider how they may contribute to your cause. Also consider what remedies the victims of the human rights abuses may need to overcome the adversity they are facing.

Presentation:

- Your group will create a ten-minute presentation that will outline the results of your research.
- The first five minutes should introduce the human rights abuse. What kind of information did you find? How bad is the problem? Who is being affected?
- The second half of your presentation should focus on your proposed solution. How are you going to help the victims of the abuse? What actions can be taken to prevent the abuse from happening in the future?

Paper Rubric

| Criteria | Inadequate | Developing | Proficient | Skilled | Exceptional |
|-------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| Content | Paper presents inaccurate findings, and/or does not offer a solution to the problem | Paper includes limited information that does not explain the full story of the human rights issue. The solution offered is not thought-out. | Paper includes a basic, accurate understanding of the human rights issue. The solution is thought-out, but not detailed. | Paper includes an advanced understanding of the human rights issue, and offers a pragmatic and detailed solution. | Paper includes a comprehensive understanding of the human rights issue. It offers a carefully considered and detailed solution that can be implemented. |
| Works Cited | Paper includes no works cited page. | Paper includes inaccurate or non-academic sources. | Paper includes academic sources, but is not cited using proper MLA format. | Paper includes at least three quality sources that are cited using MLA format, with few errors. | Paper includes at least three high-quality sources that are cited using MLA format, with no formatting errors. |
| Mechanics | Sentence structure is sloppy. Frequent spelling and/or grammar mistakes. | Sentence structure is not varied. Many spelling and/or grammar mistakes. | Some variety in sentence structure and writing style. Some grammar and/or spelling mistakes. | Writing contains variation in sentence structure and has style. Few grammar and/or spelling mistakes. | Writing is clear and varied in structure. No grammar and/or spelling mistakes. |
| Formatting Requirements | Page length is not met. Standard text formatting (12 point, double-spaced, 1" Margins) is not followed. | | Some formatting requirements are incorrect. | | All formatting requirements are met. |

Presentation Rubric

| Criteria | Inadequate | Developing | Proficient | Skilled | Exceptional |
|-----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| Presentation of Information | Audience cannot understand presentation because information is presented in an illogical or confusing sequence. | Audience has difficulty following presentation because information is not presented in an interesting and/or logical sequence. | Major topics are presented in a logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow. | Most required topics are presented in a logical interesting sequence which audience can follow. | All required topics are presented in a logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow. |
| Subject knowledge | Demonstrates incomplete subject knowledge during presentation. Omits important and/or relevant information. Is unable to answer questions accurately. Over-reliance on notes. Does not include information about the human rights abuse or a proposed solution. | Demonstrates incomplete subject knowledge during presentation. May omit important and/or relevant information. May answer questions incompletely or inaccurately . Vaguely describes the human rights issue and/or solution | Demonstrates subject knowledge during presentation by presenting accurate, relevant information and answering class/teacher questions accurately but without elaboration . Identifies the human rights issue and a solution, but is not specific. | Demonstrates strong subject knowledge during presentation by emphasizing important points and answering all class/teacher questions thoroughly and accurately . Presents a clear and detailed description of and solution to the human rights issue. | Demonstrates full and sophisticated subject knowledge during presentation by emphasizing the most important, relevant points and answering all class/teacher questions with explanations and elaboration . Clearly describes the human rights issue, and provides a through and detailed action plan to solve it. |
| Delivery | Entire presentation is delivered from notes. No eye contact is made with audience. Delivery is too quiet to be heard by entire class. Important terms are mispronounced. Speed is either much too fast or slow to be understood clearly. | Much of presentation is delivered from notes. Little eye contact is made with audience. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation at times. Some important terms are mispronounced. At times, speed may be too fast or slow to be understood clearly. | Notes are used only as a guide for the presentation, but referred to frequently. Eye contact is made with the audience. Speaks clearly and audibly to be heard by entire class. Most terms are pronounced correctly. Speed is appropriate. | Notes are used only as a guide for the presentation. Regular eye contact is made with the entire audience. Speaks clearly and audibly to be heard by the entire class. All terms are pronounced correctly. Speed is appropriate. | Presentation is delivered with very little use of notes . Maintains eye contact with the entire audience throughout the presentation. Speaks clearly and audibly, using easy to understand language to convey complex ideas, pronouncing all terms correctly. Speed is ideal. |