

Name: _____

Class: _____

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

By United Nations General Assembly
1948

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations on December 10, 1948. The document includes 30 articles that describe an individual's rights. As you read, take notes on how the United Nations defines universal human rights.

Preamble

- [1] Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable¹ rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent² of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse,³ as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

- [5] Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter⁴ reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,



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1. unable to be taken away
2. **Advent (noun)** the arrival of a notable thing or event
3. help in a difficult situation
4. the foundational treaty of the United Nations, stating its duties

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly

- [10] Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article I

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed⁵ with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

- [15] No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading⁶ treatment or punishment.

5. **Endow** (*verb*) to provide with a quality or ability

6. **Degrading** (*adjective*) causing a loss of self-respect

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement⁷ to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals⁸ for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

[20] Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.

2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to

7. the action of provoking someone to behave unlawfully

8. a court of justice

attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
- [25] 2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum⁹ from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

- [30] 1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

9. the protection a nation grants to someone who has been forced to leave their native country as a refugee

Article 18

- [35] Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- [40] 2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

[45] 3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration¹⁰ ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

[50] 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

10. payment for work or a service

Article 28

- [55] Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
3. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: Which statement identifies the central idea of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
 - A. It identifies countries that have successfully protected human rights.
 - B. It declares which countries are guilty of denying their citizens human rights.
 - C. It describes rights and freedoms that are not protected by the United Nations.
 - D. It establishes and protects the rights and freedoms of people all over the world.

2. PART B: Which detail from the text best supports the answer to Part A?
 - A. "Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations" (Paragraph 4)
 - B. "They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." (Paragraph 11)
 - C. "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind" (Paragraph 12)
 - D. "Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein." (Paragraph 59)

3. How does the structure of the Declaration contribute to its meaning?
 - A. It provides a list of human rights protected by the United Nations.
 - B. It provides steps on how to ensure that all people have equal rights.
 - C. It compares the rights that people in different nations have access to.
 - D. It compares rights that are and are not protected by the United Nations.

4. How does the discussion of equality contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
 - A. It emphasizes that people should have full access to their rights without denial of these rights based on their identity.
 - B. It establishes that no one person receive special treatment under the law based on circumstance.
 - C. It shows that there will be financial consequences for nations that fail to protect citizens' equality.
 - D. It highlights the importance of class equality to prevent jealousy among citizens.

5. What does the General Assembly mean when they refer to "every organ of society" in paragraph 10?
 - A. the functionality of a society
 - B. the health of individual citizens
 - C. the secretive aspects of a society
 - D. the different components of a society

6. What is the relationship between the accused and the justice system in paragraphs 20-22?
- A. People accused of a crime have fewer human rights than innocent people.
 - B. People accused of a crime must give up their human rights when found guilty.
 - C. People accused of a crime need their human rights protected more than others.
 - D. People accused of a crime have human rights that protect them during the trial.
7. How does the final article of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" contribute to the development of ideas in the text?
- A. It reiterates why the Declaration is necessary to protect people's rights.
 - B. It suggests that the Declaration may contribute to the destruction of human rights.
 - C. It stresses that the Declaration cannot be misused to interfere with people's rights.
 - D. It admits that the Declaration does not have any real power over other states of people.
8. What is the purpose of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
- A. to list the human rights violations taking place around the world
 - B. to define and protect essential rights for people all over the world
 - C. to force the beliefs and practices of the United Nations on all nations
 - D. to explain how nations will be punished if they do not adhere to the Declaration
9. What is the relationship between the human rights outlined in the Declaration and an individual's success in a society?

Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. How does the Declaration describe "universal human rights"? Why is it important for to protect universal human rights? In your opinion, which right or rights listed in the Declaration are the most important?
2. How do the articles in the Declaration help guide nations? In your opinion, which universal human rights do nations need to better secure or provide for its citizens?
3. Do you think fully adhering to the Declaration could help the world achieve peace? Why or why not? What is the relationship between human rights and peace?