

SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER

RAISING NEW VOICES IN
HUMAN RIGHTS.

Sparking Change; Becoming a Human Rights Defender

Digital Lesson



Day 1

SPEAK TRUTH
TO POWER

Why is Understanding Human Rights Important?

“It means a great deal to those who are oppressed to know that they are not alone. Never let anyone tell you that what you are doing is insignificant.”

—Desmond Tutu

- Why is knowing you are not alone during a difficult time so important?
- What obligation do we have as human beings to support each other? Why?
- What do you think Desmond Tutu meant when he included the final line from the quote?



Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Building the World We Want

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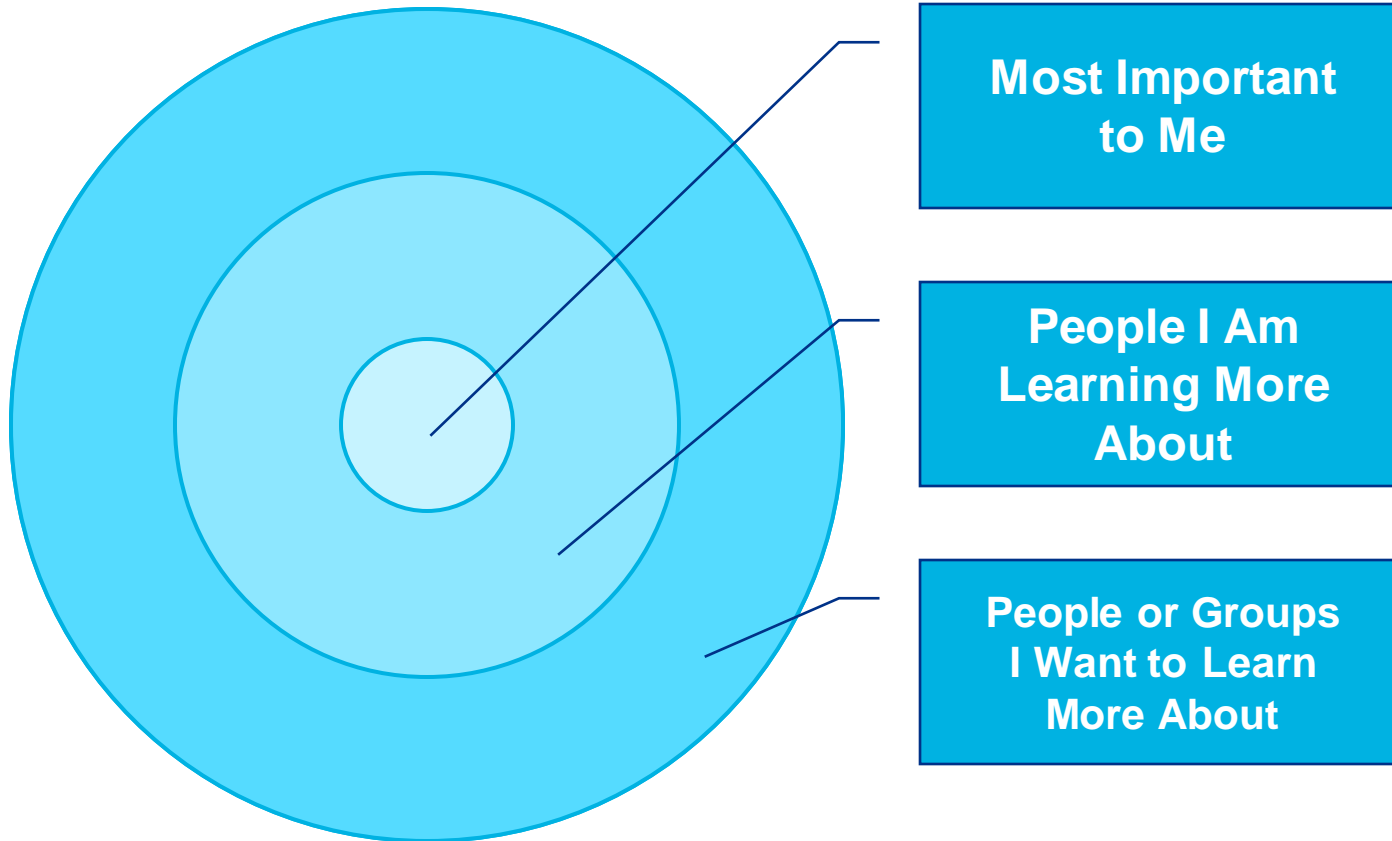
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was written following World War II when the international community vowed to “never again allow atrocities like those of that conflict to happen again.”



Circle of Human Concern

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Reflect on your UDHR sort, what groups of people in your life are currently within your current Circle of Human Concern?



Speak Truth to Power: Human Rights Defenders

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- What inspired your human rights defender to become passionate about their issue?
- What problem did they identify, and who was most impacted by the issue?
- What characteristics/traits did you notice about the human rights defender you explored? (may require inference)
- What methods or level of action did they use to impact change?



Interactive Defenders Map

<https://www.speaktruthtopowerinschool.com/defenders-map>



Silent Conversation Protocol

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Rotate three times around the classroom to each question.

Round 1

Read the question on each poster and answer with your thinking.

Round 2

Now read your classmates' responses and write **connections** that you made to others' responses.

Round 3

Chart any questions that arise as you think about the ideas, responses, and comments of others. Add any last minute questions or thoughts.

Reflect Using the 3 Ys Thinking Routine

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The 3 Ys Thinking Routine

- Why might this topic matter to me?
- Why might it matter to people around me [family, friends, city, nation]?
- Why might it matter to the world?



What Human Rights Issues Matter Most To Me?

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works.”

—Eleanor Roosevelt

- Why must we consider the small places where human rights begins?
- How do individual experiences inspire the fight for human rights?
- What do you think Eleanor Roosevelt meant when she included, “In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot see on any maps of the world”?
- How does the quote connect to your circle of human concern?

Finding Themes in Defending Human Rights

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What inspired your human rights defender to become passionate about their issue?

What characteristics/traits did you notice about the human rights defender you explored?

Emerging Themes

What methods did they use to impact change?

What problem did they identify, and who was most impacted by the issue?

What Inspires You?

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How can your own unique characteristics shape your journey as a human rights defender?

MY SELF-INVENTORY STUDENT HANDOUT 3

Directions: Use the prompts below to reflect and become more self-aware of your role in advocating for others and ways in which you may be most interested in getting involved or raising your consciousness to the concerns of others. Please place a mark on where you feel most appropriate.

I believe that people are inherently connected to each other.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Disagree Strongly

I have an obligation to stand up to injustice wherever I see it.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Disagree Strongly

I care about others, but events or issues around the world are not on my radar.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Disagree Strongly

I believe that even small actions matter in supporting others.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Disagree Strongly

I want to everyone to live safe, secure, and prosperous but I am just not sure how to help.

Strongly Agree Agree Not Sure Disagree Disagree Strongly

Notes:

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MY SELF-INVENTORY STUDENT HANDOUT 3

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Building Understanding and Taking Action

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“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home—so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works.”

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PLAN Framework

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Problem: Create a problem description that defines the issue being discussed.

- Consider an issue or conflict that impacts a group in a negative way. Which articles of the UDHR are involved?

List: Brainstorm a list of reasons why the issue exists

- When considering your list, continue to ask “why” the issue exists. This interrogation can lead to new thinking about systemic causes.

Action: Develop and act on an action plan to solve the problem

- Keep in mind that “action” can mean many things and can evolve over time. You might consider what could be immediate vs. long-term action

Notice: Notice successes as part of ongoing evaluation and refinement

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Day 3

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What Can I Do to be a “Human Rights Defender”?

What are some ways that you have witnessed people improving the lives of others?

Ways to Take Action

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“Small acts when multiplied with millions of people, can transform the world.”

—Howard Zinn

Be Informed

Be a Leader

Be Engaged

Be the Change

Stories of Human Rights Defenders

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Mari is a 13 year old from Flint, Michigan known globally as Little Miss Flint. Born on July 6th, 2007. She first rose to the public spotlight when her letter to President Obama about the water crisis prompted him to visit the city and survey the water crisis for himself. That visit ultimately led to him approving \$100 million dollars in relief for the city of Flint. Her young age has not prevented her from making a significant impact on the dialogue around environmental racism and confronted the entire country with the reality faced by victims of state negligence. Her youthful honesty prevents political leaders from being able to ignore the consequences of neglectful leadership. She gives voice to the unheard hardships of Americans trapped by a collapsing and toxic infrastructure.



Mari Copeny
Flint Water Crisis

Stories of Human Rights Defenders

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Ashton Mota gained attention nationally when he challenged the gender rules at his Lowell, Massachusetts middle school. At 13 years old, the now 15-year-old student came out as transgender and worked tirelessly to advocate for his rights and the rights of others as his school navigated the complexities of deciding which restrooms and sports teams transgender students would be assigned to. Since then, Mota continues to create a space for students like him to flourish and took his advocacy on the road as a young ambassador for the Human Rights Council. Now, he continues to use his voice to build a safer world for members of the LGBTQ+ community.



Ashton Mota
Transgender Rights

Evaluating and Revising Our Plans

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Be Kind

Treat others with respect. Choose your words wisely and remember how much thought each person put into their work. Always start with a compliment.



Be Specific

Focus on particular areas of improvement. You may only choose one or two, so that the person receiving the feedback does not feel overwhelmed.

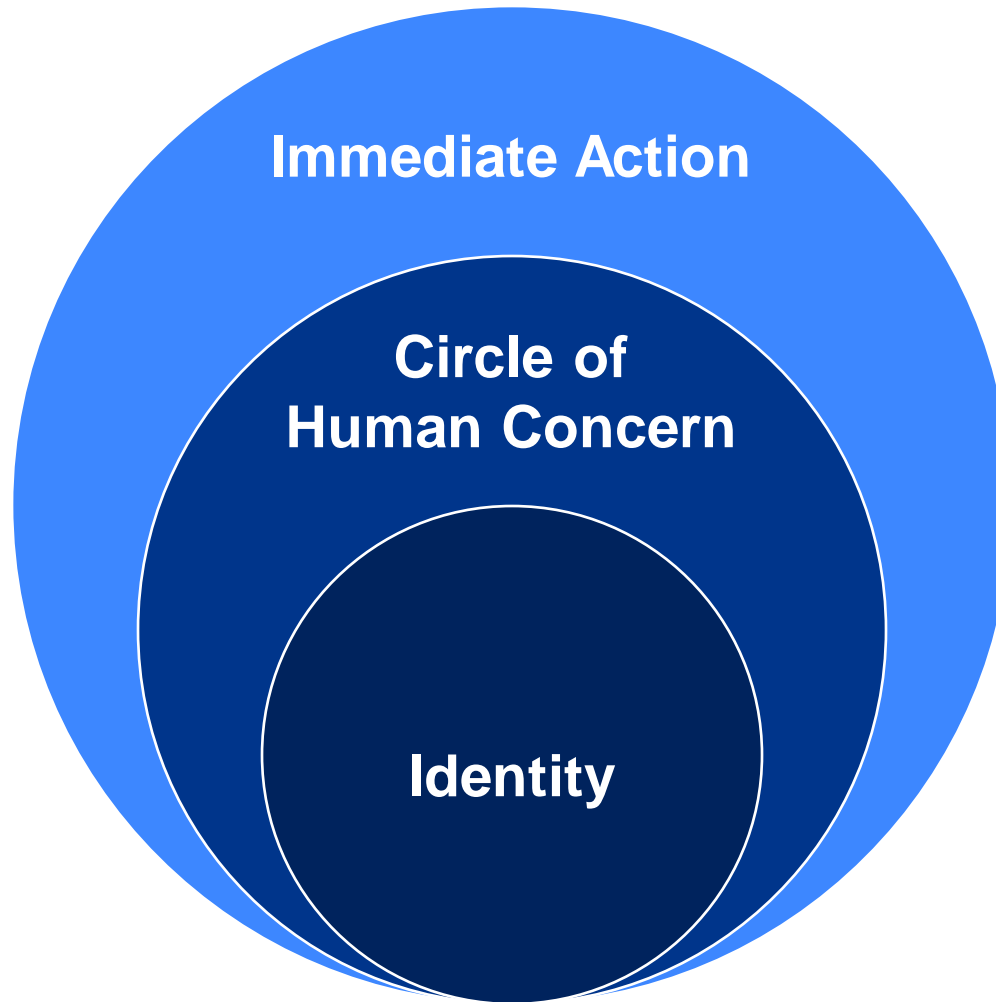


Be Helpful

The goal is to help your partner see aspects of their work from a new lens, think of something in a new way, realize something they may have left out, or find additional ways to improve. Offer specific suggestions or ask questions that may help your partner to think through their topic.

Let's Think About Our Journey

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