

Eleanor Roosevelt's Traveling Suitcase

Unit VII - Eleanor Roosevelt and the UDHR



Lesson 1:

“Where Do Human Rights Begin? In Small Places Close to Home.”



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 map 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. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site

Unit VII, Lesson 1



Title of the lesson: “*Where Do Human Rights Begin? In Small Places Close to Home.*”

Lesson grade levels:

P-3 9-12

4-6 Higher education

7-8

Subject area

Social studies

Social justice issues:

Civil rights

Democracy

Education

Environment/going green

Fair labor practices

Health

Housing

Human rights

Living wage

Immigration/migrant workers

Poverty

Other

Time requirement: 120 minutes

Objectives of the lesson:

- Students will know the legacy of Eleanor Roosevelt and her work with social justice issues.
- Students will know the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and how it impacts their lives and the lives of all people.
- Students will have an understanding of Eleanor Roosevelt’s impact on the country through her “My Day” columns.
- Students will understand how their choices affect others.
- Students will understand what it means to be an informed consumer.
- Students will know that they have a voice and can be an advocate for change.

New York State Learning Standards:

- **English Language Arts Standard 1:** Information and Understanding Intermediate Listening and Reading KI 1, PI 1, 5; Speaking and Writing KI 2 PI 3, 4; Commencement Listening and Reading KI 1, PI 1, 2, 4; Speaking and Writing KI 2 PI 1, 2, 4
- **English Language Arts Standard 3:** Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation Intermediate Listening and Reading KI 1, PI 1, 2; Speaking and Writing KI 2, PI 1, 2, 3,

- **Social Studies Standard 3:** Geography Intermediate KI 1 PI 1, 2; KI 2 PI 2, 3; Commencement KI 1 PI 4, 5; KI 2 PI 3
- **Social Studies Standard 4:** Economics Intermediate KI 1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; KI 2, PI 5, 6; Commencement KI 1 PI 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; KI 2 PI 3, 4
- **Social Studies Standard 5:** Civics, Citizenship, and Government Intermediate KI 1 PI 1, 3, 4; KI 2 PI 1, 5, 6; KI 3 PI 1, 2, 3; KI 4 PI 2: Commencement KI 1 PI 1, 3, 4; KI 2 PI 1, 2, 3; KI 3 PI 1; KI 4 PI 3, 4, 5, 6

Materials needed for the lesson:

- Biography of Eleanor Roosevelt specific to “My Day” columns, <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/who-is-er/q-and-a/q24.htm>
- The United Nations <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/who-is-er/q-and-a/q29.htm>
- and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/who-is-er/q-and-a/q30.htm>
- Human rights quote from Val-Kill Web site (scroll to *Human Rights*) <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/who-is-er/er-quotes/index.htm>
- Copies of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.nps.gov/archive/elro/teach-er-vk/documents/udhr.htm>
- Link to Youth for Human Rights International for clips on the 30 articles of the UDHR <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/index.htm>
- My Day Workers’ Rights – June 14, 1947 http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1947&_f=md000679
- My Day Environmental Justice http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1951&_f=md001946
- My Day Social Justice http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1951&_f=md002053
- Youth for Human Rights video on workers’ rights <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/videos/workers-rights.html>
- History of Human Rights video <http://www.humanrights.com/#/what-are-human-rights>
- ER introducing the UDHR at UN <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=435NAucIGSA>
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
- Simplified UDHR http://www.hrea.org/index.php_base_id=104&languageid=1&erc_doc_id=5211&category_id=24&category_type=3&group=
- Magna Carta http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured_documents/magna_carta/translation.html
- Bill of Rights lesson with handout of the Bill of Rights <http://www.crfc.org/pdf/conday6.pdf>
- Eleanor Roosevelt quote to display in the classroom

Student skills:

- Investigate
- Interpret
- Analyze
- Classify

Concepts:

- Social justice
- Economic justice
- Human rights

Vocabulary:

- Social justice
- Economic justice
- United Nations
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Human rights
- “My Day”
- Consumer
- Consumerism
- Equity
- National Parks Services
- Val-Kill

Technology requirement:

- Computer with Internet

Background information:

Every person has a right to food, shelter, education, play, the right to say what they think and be listened to, and the right to protection from abuse. In this program students will discover Eleanor Roosevelt’s role in the creation of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and discuss the relevance of these rights in their own lives.

On December 21, 1945, President Harry Truman wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt announcing that he had appointed her as a representative to the first session of the United Nations. This was a strategic move on the part of the President. Not only was Mrs. Roosevelt a well-known figure throughout the world but her presence, on such a high profile committee, gave recognition to women in government sanctioned positions.

On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Declaration of Human Rights. Eleanor Roosevelt was the chairwoman of this committee. She traveled the world to spread the message that all people were created equal and should be treated fairly. Eleanor Roosevelt’s dedication and perseverance laid the groundwork for future human rights. The Convention on the Rights of Children was adopted by the General Assembly.

Student activities:

- **Anticipatory set**

- The biographical pieces on Eleanor Roosevelt could be given as homework in preparation for the pre-visit class as well as the vocabulary words.
- Go over the vocabulary words, asking if there are any questions.
- Ask these questions:
 - What are human rights?
 - What did Eleanor Roosevelt say about human rights?
 - Who has the right to human rights?
- Read together the Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 17 and 25.
- Ask these questions and write responses on the board.
 - What are basic needs for all humans?
 - How do people in the United States and other countries get these needs?

- **Activity 1**

- Post around the room newsprint with the following topics written on them:
 - Food
 - Clothing
 - Toys and Technology
- Separate the class into three groups.
 - Ask each group to spend five minutes brainstorming examples for each of the topics.
 - Present them with some questions for consideration:
 - Food – What do you like to eat? Where is the original source of your food?
 - Clothing – What kind of clothing do you like to wear? What is it made of? Who makes it?
 - Toys and Technology – What are your favorite kinds of toys or technology? Who makes these items? What makes it possible for these items to work?
- When the activity is completed, go to each category and ask each group to explain why they listed their examples. Ask students which examples were common among the groups.

- **Activity 2 youth for human rights**

- Show students the History of Human Rights video
<http://www.humanrights.com/#/what-are-human-rights>
- Show students the clip of Eleanor Roosevelt introducing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to the United Nations General Assembly
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=435NAucIGSA>
- Have students go to the suitcase and retrieve the copies of the Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Distribute to the students the cards that have the names of these three documents on them.

- **Activity 3**

- Distribute to the students the cards labeled Social Justice, Environmental Justice, Workers' Rights and the "My Day" column that goes with each theme.
- Instruct the students to find the other students who have the same cards.
- Working together the students are to read the "My Day" column and answer the questions.
- After the activity is completed, each group reports out to the class the results of their work.
- Show students the videos that represent each of the justice issues.
Workers' rights <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/videos/workers-rights.html>
Environmental rights http://www.sciencedaily.com/news/earth_climate/recycling_and_waste/
History of Communism (homemade video rap, but gives a good overview of communism) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G0ozPZBnBfc>
- Using the videos as a starting place, begin a discussion with the students on how these rights affect them.

- **Culminating activity**

- Have the questions from the end of the unit on paper or on the board.
 - How did Eleanor Roosevelt make a difference?
 - What was her influence on humanitarian rights?
- Divide the class into groups and have the groups discuss the questions and write their collective responses.
- As a whole group, have one student from each of the smaller group report out their responses. Write these on the board.
- As a large group, ask the students to brainstorm ideas on how they can help their school and/or community understand what human rights are and how to become a conscientious consumer.
- Choose one activity to carry out.

Social Justice

**My Day—Eleanor Roosevelt
October 31, 1951**

En Route to PARIS, Tuesday—The other day I received a booklet from the Foundation for Economic Education called, "Morals and the Welfare State." What struck me was the little notice at the bottom of page 33, which states that the concepts of the welfare state in more detail but in condensed form are available as "The Communist Idea" series, which also may be obtained from the publisher of the above booklet.

I would like readers to turn first to the appendix in this booklet and read what is said about the welfare state idea. Here is a quotation: "The welfare state is a name that has been substituted as a more acceptable one for communism-socialism wherever, as in the United States, these names are in general disrepute."

I have no idea who backs this foundation, but it seems to me that much that appears in this pamphlet is dishonest in its thinking.

In the first place, the mere tying together of communism and socialism is dishonest. They are two quite different things.

We, in this country, happen to believe in enlightened capitalism. We certainly cannot dictate to any other country which chooses to have an economy that is either Socialist or Communist.

It is the other things that make us unable to live in the same world with the type of communism that exists at present in the Soviet Union. It is Russia's theory of a world revolution that they must promote and their underhanded infiltration into other countries with their doctrines which we cannot tolerate.

But to put the communistic label on what has been done in the United States to promote social welfare is not really honest because it has nothing to do with what we object to, as a people, in communism.

We can have opinions as to whether we think that all the things that have been done and euphemistically grouped together under the name of "welfare state" are wise economic measures. Or we may question the effect on the character of the people when the government assumes certain responsibilities in conjunction with the people. Whichever way you decide, however, does not make us Communist or Socialist.

We are a free people, and what we choose to do should not be labeled something which it is not.

Here is another quote: "The welfare state plan, viewed in full bloom of completeness, is one where the state prohibits the individual from having any right of choice in the conditions and place of his work; it takes ownership of the product of his labor; it prohibits private property. All these are done ostensibly to help those whose rights have been taken over by the welfare state."

This is nonsense.

This is a description of the present Communist state, but what we have in the United States has nothing to do with it. Our Federal government has neither removed the rights of the individual as to choice of conditions and place of work, nor has it taken over the ownership of the product of his labor. There is complete right to private property in this country and this effort to call what we have done to promote greater social justice a welfare state and then make that mean that we have adopted a Communist pattern is a completely untruthful picture.

Social Justice

Group III

- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
- Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- Fair and proper administration of laws conforming to the natural law that all person, irrespective of ethnic origin, gender, possessions, race, religion, etc., are to be treated equally and without prejudice.
- 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.

Social Justice

My Day Article: October 31, 1951

DVD: Shopping, sweatshops in Asia, Inside a Chinese factory, Slavery scandal, chocolate fair trade chocolate, slavery and chocolate, cell phone recycling, hidden flow, free the children, it takes a child, fair trade.

Focus Questions:

- What human rights are being violated in the video clips? (look in the UDHR notebook for hints)
- How are these rights exploited?
- Who are they exploiting?
- Why are they exploiting these people?
- Where do you fit into this chain of events?
- Are these similar issues that Eleanor Roosevelt wrote about in her “My Day” columns?
- Why did she write about them?
- What is your passion?
- What can you do about it?

Environmental Justice

**My Day—Eleanor Roosevelt
June 28, 1951**

HYDE PARK, Wednesday—I spent most of yesterday playing a part in the welcome for President Galo Plaza Lasso of Equador. I have begun to feel that with television and radio interviews and United Nations activities that I really have a personal acquaintanceship with the president and a personal interest in him.

The plenary session called for him at Flushing Meadows Tuesday morning was held in the small room used as a committee room during the General Assembly sessions. The President of the General Assembly, Nasrollah Entezam of Iran, welcomed him. President Plaza responded with a very good speech, after which he held a press conference while the rest of us greeted and chatted with many acquaintances. Then we all had luncheon in the delegates' dining room. I bade President Plaza good-bye out there though I hoped I would see him again and have the good fortune to meet his wife at the reception in the afternoon at the Waldorf-Astoria. When I arrived rather early he and his party had not yet shown up. We were greeted by the Equadorian consul and a very kind and attentive group of people, and after chatting for a while, I felt in all probability the president would be relieved to shake one less hand, so I slipped out and went back to the hotel to get ready for my return to Hyde Park.

In between my return from Flushing and going to the reception I spent an hour with the young editors which the magazine, *Mademoiselle*, gets together from the various colleges for the month of June. These young women asked me some of the most intelligent questions that have come my way in a great number of meetings. It is always rather exciting to find that young people are so keen and so understanding of the world problems that confront their generation.

I think, on the whole, that I get a far greater sense of courage from the younger generation than I do from their elders. It should be the reverse, of course, but it may well be that the flexibility of youth makes change easier to accept.

I received a letter today from the wife of the owner of a "Drugstore on Main Street, U.S.A." and I think excerpts are worth quoting.

She says, in part: "The removal of fair trade will cause economic havoc in our country. Fair trade means fair prices, not high prices. Without fair-trade protection a small merchant cannot compete with the large predatory department stores. It would immediately eradicate Main Street from every village and hamlet of the U.S.

"If that is the type of free enterprise we want then we are playing into the hands of monopoly and big business. The large-city department stores can sell their fair-trade merchandise below cost and make up the difference on a large variety of unknown brands. The small distributor, however, who sells only one commodity, whether it be drugs, liquor, hardware, shoes, jewelry, or rugs, has no recourse but to go out of business.

"No one benefits by cut-price, dog-eat-dog tactics, or milk at three cents a quart. Sooner or later the consumer suffers economically because he is indirectly affected in no matter what capacity he may contribute to our economy."

Environmental Justice

Group II

- No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment.
- Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- 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.

Environmental Justice

My Day Article: June 28, 1951

DVD: Shopping, What's on your plate, Migrant Farm Workers, Food Inc., US farmers, Fair Food, Sustainable Agriculture, Hidden Flow, recycling computers, White Gold, Sweatshops, BBC Globalization, It takes a child, Free the children

Focus Questions:

- What human rights are being violated in the video clips? (look in the UDHR notebook for hints)
- How are these rights exploited?
- Who are they exploiting?
- Why are they exploiting these people?
- Where do you fit into this chain of events?
- Are these similar issues that Eleanor Roosevelt wrote about in her "My Day" columns?
- Why did she write about them?
- What is your passion?
- What can you do about it?

Workers Rights
My Day—Eleanor Roosevelt
June 14, 1947

NEW YORK, Friday—I wonder if members of Congress are getting anything like the communications which I am getting on the Taft-Hartley Labor Bill. If they are, they must begin to be conscious of the fact that quite a number of people are not in favor of that bill. Sen. Robert A. Taft keeps insisting that it is really a bill designed to give both management and labor equal rights, but a great many people seem to think that it takes away rights which organized labor groups had acquired even before the Wagner Act was passed.

I have before me a telegram of several hundred words from the Chicago Typographical Union, and it reads as though it had been written by some men who were in a fighting mood.

They say: "Our members are aroused today as they never have been aroused before....Still more are we alarmed and resentful, being a realistic as well as an idealistic organization, at the fact that Sen. Taft would deprive us of things which we possessed fifty years before the Wagner Act was adopted. For example, power to bargain for foremen and assistant foremen....periodical elections to determine whether a majority of the employees in a given printing office wish to continue it as a so-called union shop, thereby compelling us to match resources in propaganda warfare with belligerent employers who wish to seduce our members from their natural allegiance to the oldest union in America."

* * *

If I were in the House or the Senate, I think it would trouble me a good deal that so many workers feel this legislation is going to be harmful and take away protection in the earning of their livelihood—which is, after all, something very important even to non-union workers.

As I have said before, I think that many average people in this country have been embittered by the actions of labor leaders which have endangered their home comforts and frequently their jobs. A coal stoppage, for instance, is a very serious thing. But I am told on very good authority that this bill will not make it any more possible to prevent John L. Lewis from bringing on a strike in the coal industry than it has been before. I think individual regulations made by unions for their members sometimes irritate the public. But I think these things are not fundamental and could be taken up and negotiated, whereas this bill seems to me to strike at the fundamental rights and protection of labor.

To pass it will, I think, lead to unending agitation and unrest; and it will not achieve the one thing which we need above all else to achieve—namely, increased production. The more goods we produce, the more the prices will come down. Labor is both a producer and a consumer, and it is of paramount importance that all over the world people get to work, produce jobs, produce goods, and begin to fill the needs of the people. This bill will not help to achieve this essential factor in our return to a normal situation under our present free-enterprise system.

Worker's Rights

Group I

- Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protections.

Everyone has the right to form and to

Workers Rights

- **My Day Article: June 14, 1947**
- **DVD:** "White Gold: The True Cost of Cotton," Shopping, inside Chinese factory, cocoa & child labor, hidden flow, fair trade, it takes a child.

Focus Questions:

- What human rights are being violated in the video clips? (look in the UDHR notebook for hints)
- How are these rights exploited?
- Who are they exploiting?
- Why are they exploiting these people?
- Where do you fit into this chain of events?
- Are these similar issues that Eleanor Roosevelt wrote about in her "My Day" columns?
- Why did she write about them?
- What is your passion?
- What can you do about it?

Elementary Lessons for Grades 1- 5

Activity 1

Anticipatory Set:

Read to the students the simplified articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ask students to describe the articles in their own words.

Student activities:

Activity 1:

- Separate the students into groups of four.
- Have the following list of articles from the Declaration of Human Rights posted in the room and read them to the students.
 - The Right to an Identity
 - The Right to a Family
 - The Right to Express Yourself and have Access to Information
 - The Right to a safe and Healthy Life
 - The Right for Special Protection in Times of War
 - The Right to an Education
 - The Right to Special Care for the Disabled
 - The Right to Protection Against Abuse
 - The Right to Protection from Harmful Work.
 - The Right to Special Treatment if Arrested
- Tell each group that they are to choose one of the rights.
- They are to demonstrate what that right means to them through one of the following ways: song, dance, poem, poster, rap lyrics, painting.
- When completed, students will present their interpretation to the class.
- After the presentations, ask students how the presentations made them feel about the human rights portrayed.

Extension activities for all grade levels:

- Look at what you wrote prior to this unit. Re-write your thought on what is just and what is not.
- Write a *My Day* like article on what the Universal Declaration of Human Rights could mean to oppressed peoples.
- Research how your class or school can get involved in your community, country, or abroad to help support “The Rights of the Child”
- Examples: Organize a coat or book drive or organize a cultural diversity day at your school.

***Lessons Produced by:
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