

# LESSON PLAN

P.1

## Introduce material

- Set the tone: material will be heavy, could be difficult to discuss. Each of us is coming to this material from a different position/perspective - many of us will have some kind of connection to human rights issues. Prompt students to reflect on how material to come has/could apply to their lives.
- While we have a lesson plan, we also have time for discussion - encourage students to ask questions/share comments.
- The issues we will be covering are complex, multi-faceted concepts, we will only be scratching the surface

## Brief Lecture on Human Rights and Genocide (approx. 20 minutes)

### Introduction to Human Rights

What are human rights?

- The UN Declaration of Human Rights
  - Civil and Political Liberties
  - Economic, Social, Cultural Rights

Where do human rights come from?

- Who gives them?
  - Idea is that they are like needs - they are elements that are necessary to live well.
  - Rights are interdependent, indivisible, and interrelated.

What factors influence the realization of human rights?

- Historical factors
- Social factors
- Declaration is not a legislative text. Not valid in court of law. Most states have, however, integrated human rights into their code of law, often as a way to combat discrimination.

First step to defending human rights is knowing human rights.



### Introduction to Genocide

What is genocide?

- Term coined in 1944 by Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in the wake of the Holocaust. Geno- coming from Greek work for race/tribe, and -cide from the Latin word for killing.
- The UN Genocide Convention (1948)
  - Rendered genocide an international crime - which members who sign the convention "undertake to prevent and punish."
  - Discussion Questions: Does anything surprise students about the official definition? What are some of the key elements to this definition?

Note: serious, violent crimes that do not fall under specific definition of genocide: crimes against humanity, war crimes, ethnic cleansing mass atrocities, defined in various international legal documents. Can link to current events (Ukraine, for example).

- What are some of the common elements and drivers of genocide?
  - Us vs. Them
  - Dehumanization
  - Deportation/forced relocation
  - Violence

# LESSON PLAN

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## Ideas for Activities

- Go through the UN Declaration of Human Rights, the Genocide Convention, the Convention on the Rights of the Child Article by Article as a class. Have students volunteer to read Articles aloud and have the class reflect on each Article after it is read. Encourage reflection on the language used (for example, 'dignity' and 'intent'), limits and opportunities of human rights, and give students background on the global context in which these documents were drafted.
- Introduce first hand accounts such as quotes, interviews, or film to students. When teaching about mass violence, first hand accounts are important to show what these processes look like to targets, and to allow students to better understand the impacts of mass atrocities. The danger with the use of first hand testimonies is that they offer an individual account. Using quotes comparatively can teach students about processes and themes so they understand both the universal and the particular. Utilizing guiding questions and/or viewing guides might help students reflect and engage with what they are reading/watching.
- Have students create a human rights and wrongs 'key terms' notebook with three columns - 1 to reflect on their understandings of each term at the beginning of the lecture or course, 1 to make notes on each term as they learn, and a final column to write out their final understanding of the term.
  - Ideas for terms: progress (in terms of human rights), dignity, dehumanization, genocide, reconciliation, etc.

## Discussion Questions

- What rights do you think you have?
- What violations of human rights do you see around you?
- In reading literature/watching film about genocide, what themes do you see?
- How do you see experiences of genocide relating to each other?
- How do you see or think the experiences of genocide impact survivors and society after the fact?
  - Why do you think it is important to recognize these impacts?
- Why do you think it is important to talk about the experiences of genocide after the genocides are over?
- Reflecting on what we've learned about human rights and genocide, how do you think learning about and respecting human rights could prevent genocide?

## Final Discussion

- Learning doesn't stop here! Remind students that this material goes well beyond classroom - think about what elements they can take into their everyday lives re: promoting equity, tolerance, reconciliation, awareness.
- Self-Care: being active/engaged citizens also requires taking care of yourself, check in with how you are processing the material we've discussed today, feel free to reach out to your teacher, or to us.