

Human rights

1 Pre-reading

Explain what we mean by *human rights*. You can use these words to help you. Then check your answer by typing *human rights* into the Macmillan Online Dictionary www.macmillandictionary.com.

basic everyone express opinions society

2 Vocabulary

Match these words with the definitions 1–5. Then go to the Macmillan Online Dictionary www.macmillandictionary.com and check your answers by typing the words into the search box.

equality legal (adj) pursuit ratified slave

- 1 when an agreement is made official by signing it or formally accepting it
- 2 the state of being equal, especially in having the same rights, status, and opportunities
- 3 someone who belongs by law to another person and has to obey them and work for them
- 4 relating to the law
- 5 the process of trying to achieve something

3 Reading

Do an Internet search and match the name with the information and date about each important development in the history of human rights. You can use these websites to help you:

www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/me/c/cyrus_cylinder.aspx

www.bl.uk/treasures/magnacarta

www.britannia.com/history/docs/petition.html

www.ushistory.org/declaration

www.historyguide.org/intellect/declaration.html

www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml

Name	Information	Date
The Cyrus Cylinder	Established that all men are created equal with the same rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.	The USA, 1776
The Magna Carta	It freed slaves, allowed freedom of religion, and promoted racial equality.	The United Nations, 1948
The Petition of Rights	It guaranteed the rights of the church and gave people more legal and political rights, to ensure that the king followed the law of the land.	France, 1789
Declaration of Independence	A document stating the rights of man and the citizen to be born free and equal in rights.	England, 1628
The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen	A document setting out the rights and liberties of the people, as opposed to the prerogatives of the crown.	England, 1215
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights	The first document that listed 30 rights for all human beings, ratified internationally.	Babylon, Southern Iraq around 539–530 B.C.

4 Reading

Do an Internet search for *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and find out which of the 30 articles are violated in the following situations. You can use these websites to help you:

www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html

www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plain.asp

www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/people/features/ihavearighttofour_b/all_rights.shtml

- 1 The police arrest a man, then hit him until he makes a confession.

No torture

- 2 The government arrests a group of men and women, charges them with terrorism, then refuses to let them go before a judge or jury.

- 3 People only have the right to travel in certain areas of a country and at certain times.

- 4 A woman applies for a passport in the country where she was born and lives, and is refused.

- 5 A young man and woman turn 18 and want to get married, but their parents tell them they can't.

- 6 A journalist is arrested when he writes something against the government.

- 7 A government declares that women can't vote in a national election.

- 8 A family doesn't have enough money to pay for vital medicines it needs, and the government refuses to help them.

- 9 A child works all day to help earn money for the family and has no time or energy to spend time with other children.

- 10 A family doesn't have enough money to send its children to school.



5 Project

There are other specific human rights agreements such as *The Convention on the Rights of the Child*, *The Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women* and *The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*. Choose one of them and prepare a short presentation. Include these things:

- its history (what came before it/led up to it)
- where and when it was ratified and by whom (did any countries refuse to ratify it?)
- the most important articles
- anything you think is missing and should be there

You can use these websites to help you:

General

www.hrweb.org/legal/undocs.html

www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/about/history.asp

Children's rights

www.unicef.org/why/whyrights.html

www.amnesty.org/en/children

www.globalfootprints.org/page/id/0/7/

Women's rights

www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/womday97.htm

library.thinkquest.org/19269/Women's_Rights.html

www.localhistories.org/womensrights.html

www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

www.globalsolutions.org/human-rights/cedaw

Refugee's rights

www.unhcr.org/pages/49da0e466.html

www2.ohchr.org/english/law/refugees.htm

www.ria.gov.ie/en/RIA/Pages/Helpful_Advice_FAQs

www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home

www.amnesty.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=10398