

CHAPTER 1

HUMAN RIGHTS

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WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

- Human rights are **rights** or **entitlements**, which belong to us all because we are human beings
- Human rights are **universal**: they apply to all people, everywhere, without exception, in all countries of the world
- Human rights are **inalienable**: you cannot lose or transfer your human rights

“Human rights are inscribed in the hearts of people; they were there long before lawmakers drafted their first proclamation.”

Mary Robinson, Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

WHAT ARE MY RIGHTS?

You have **economic, social and cultural rights** relating to the material necessities of life, such as the right to:

- Adequate housing;
- Health;
- Work;
- Social security.

You have **civil and political rights** including:

- Freedom to express yourself;
- Access to information;
- A right to life;
- A fair trial;
- Freedom from torture;
- Privacy and respect for your family life.

Underpinning all of these is **the right not to be discriminated** against because of race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. There is **no hierarchy of rights**.

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

Mary Robinson, Former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

A POTTED HISTORY OF RIGHTS

Many people think the development of human rights law is one of the greatest accomplishments of the twentieth century. Human rights did not begin with the United Nations though, societies throughout history have developed systems of justice that encouraged fairness for all people.

2100 BC

The Persian Empire. The Emperor of Persia creates the first written legal code. It promises to “make justice reign in the kingdom and promote the good of the people”.

600 BC

India. Buddha preaches morality, reverence for life and non-violence.

500 BC

Greece. The ancient Greeks use words for “freedom of speech” (isogoria) and for “equality before the law” (isonomia).

400 BC

China. Philosopher Mozi travels around China to try to stop rulers from starting wars.

30-33 AD

Palestine. Jesus Christ preaches equality, tolerance, forgiveness and love among people.

500 AD

Saudi Arabia. Muhammad Ibn Abdullah, founder of Islam, preaches that Allah is compassionate, just and peaceful.

1215 AD

England. King John signs the *Magna Carta*, which gives rights to feudal barons, but also says that no freeman should be imprisoned or exiled unless the law allows it.

1789

United States of America and France. The American constitution protects freedom of speech, religion and peaceful gatherings. In the same year in France the National Assembly passes the *Declaration Of The Rights Of Man*, stating that “men are born free and remain free and equal in rights”.

1848

Germany. Karl Marx publishes the *Communist Manifesto*, calling for workers’ rights and an end to poverty.

1865

United States of America. Following the Civil War, slavery is abolished in the US by the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution.

1893

New Zealand. New Zealand becomes the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote.

1916-1945

India. Gandhi preaches non-violence in India, campaigning for equality and understanding between all people.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

After the horrors of World War II it was felt in many countries that an international charter on **human rights** would reduce the chances that such atrocities would be repeated. As a result, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was established and by 1948, a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) had been drawn up. The UDHR is an important document for curbing unjust behaviour by governments.

Though the Declaration itself is not legally enforceable, the International Covenants that emanate from it (e.g. the International Covenant on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights) are ratified by individual countries and are often incorporated into the appropriate national legislation which makes the laws outlined enforceable. Countries that are signatories to such conventions are expected to submit reports on their national compliance to the appropriate UN body. ‘Watchdog’ organisations also help to monitor compliance.

The word **‘rights’** is used in a number of different contexts to include **legal, moral, and human rights**. Those rights, which are thought to have universal application, are known as **human rights**. **Law lays down legal rights**. Some countries (such as the US) have a Bill of Rights. In others, such rights are written into their Constitutions, **as in Ireland in the Irish Constitution**.

It is important to distinguish between wants, needs and rights. A want is a desire, whereas a need is a necessity and a right constitutes an entitlement.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STRUCTURE OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The idea of human rights became stronger after World War II. The extermination by Nazi Germany of over 6 million Jews, Sinti and Romani Gypsies, homosexuals and persons with disabilities horrified the world. Trials were held in Nuremberg and Tokyo after World War II, and officials from the defeated countries were punished for committing “war crimes”, “crimes against peace” and “crimes against humanity”. Governments then committed themselves to establishing the United Nations (UN), with the primary goal of bolstering peace and preventing conflict. People wanted to ensure that never again would anyone be unjustly denied life, freedom, food, shelter or nationality.

On 10th December, 1948 the UN Commission on Human Rights, guided by Eleanor Roosevelt’s forceful leadership, produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that outlined our fundamental rights and freedoms.

Its preamble states that the... “Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

United Nations Structure and Treaty Documents

With the goal of establishing mechanisms for enforcing the UDHR, the UN Commission on Human Rights proceeded to draft two treaties in 1966: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and its Optional Protocol¹ and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Together with the UDHR they are commonly referred to as the International Bill of Human Rights. The ICCPR focuses on such issues as the right to life, freedom of speech, religion and voting. The ICESCR focuses on such issues as the right to food, education, health and shelter. Both covenants extend rights to all persons and prohibit discrimination.

¹ Very often, human rights treaties are followed by “Optional Protocols” which may either provide for procedures with regard to the treaty or address a substantive area related to the treaty. Optional Protocols to human rights treaties are treaties in their own right, and are open to signature, accession or ratification by countries who are party to the main treaty.

The Council Of Europe

The Council of Europe is the regional mechanism for human rights in Europe and its main treaty is the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR) which establish a range of civil and political rights. The ECHR was given further effect in Ireland by the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003. Individuals can enforce their ECHR rights in the Irish courts, but may also take a case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg if they have “exhausted all domestic remedies”. The European Social Charter governs social and economic human rights.

The European Union And Human Rights

The European Union's human rights system includes a Charter of Fundamental Rights as well as anti-discrimination legislation. The anti-discrimination directives promote equal treatment in the workplace, housing, education and the provision of goods and services, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, religion and belief, disability, sexual orientation and age. The European Court of Justice (ECJ), in Luxembourg makes sure that the European Union's legislation is interpreted and applied in the same way in all European Union countries, so that the law is equal for everyone. It ensures, for example, that national courts do not give different rulings on the same issue. The Court also makes sure that EU member states and institutions do what the law requires.

The Good Friday Agreement

The Good Friday Agreement (1998) was signed by the British and Irish Government. This provided for the establishment of the Irish Human Rights Commission as well as the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.

The Irish Constitution

The Irish Constitution (1937) contains many fundamental rights. In articles 40 to 44 it deals with personal rights, family rights, education rights, private property and religious rights.

The Equality Law In Ireland

The Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004 prohibit discrimination on the following nine grounds:

- Gender;
- Marital Status;
- Family Status;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Race;
- Sexual Orientation;
- Religious Belief;
- Membership of the Traveller Community.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 prohibit discrimination and promote equality in the workplace.

EXERCISE 1

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

AIM

Students will explore their prior knowledge of human rights.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Reviewed what they already know about human rights;
- Increased their understanding of the meaning of human rights.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Information processing, being personally effective, critical thinking and communicating.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of statement (handout section 1.3, pg 36).



LENGTH

15-20 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Look at each of the statements (handout section 1.3, pg 36). Place a tick in the appropriate box to indicate whether you think the statement is true, false, or if you are not sure.
2. Make some notes here about any of the statements (handout section 1.3, pg 36) where you answered “I’m not sure”. How would you change the wording of any of the statements to make them easier to identify as “true” or “false”? Discuss your observations.



Activists with banner outside the Colosseum, Rome, Italy 2008. © Amnesty International.

EXERCISE 2

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

AIM

Students will have an understanding of the nature and extent of human rights.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Understood the meaning of the term “human rights”;
- Been introduced to the UDHR and other human rights documents and to some of the Nuremberg Laws;
- Practiced skills of listening and responding to the views of others, negotiating, consensus building and drafting.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Working with others, critical thinking, information processing and being personally effective.

MATERIAL NEEDED

Decision cards statements: (handout section 1.4, pg 37), a large sheet of heavy paper/blackboard/flipchart and a blank sheet of paper.



LENGTH

Full class

STEPS:

1. Divide the class into groups consisting of 3 to 5 players;
2. Hand out decision cards from handout section at end of this chapter;
3. On a large sheet of heavy paper/blackboard/flipchart draw three concentric circles;
4. The circle in the centre of the board is marked: **IN EVERY CASE;**
5. The circle (moving outward) is marked: **IN MOST CASES;**
6. The third circle is marked: **IN SOME CASES;**
7. Hand out a sheet of paper to each group and markers for groups to record their lists of rights.

PLAYING THE GAME

STEPS:

1. Give each group of 3 to 5 players a set of cards. (*Note:* An odd number of players makes it somewhat easier to reach consensus). One person in the group should deal out all the cards. It doesn't matter if some people get more cards than others;
2. **Without talking to anyone else**, each person reads through his/her cards and places each one **face up**, where he/ she thinks it should go on the board. For example, if one of the cards says: **Torture is wrong**, and the person thinks that torture is wrong **IN EVERY CASE**, he should place the card face up in the center circle. If he feels it is wrong **IN MOST CASES**, he places the card in the middle circle. If he thinks it is wrong only **IN SOME CASES**, he places it in the outermost circle;
3. When everyone in the group has decided where to place his/her cards on the board, **still without talking**, every one looks carefully at the cards that have been placed on the board by the other members of the group. If a player feels that a card has been placed in the wrong section, he/she turns it over so that it is now face down on the board;

4. When everyone has had a chance to consider each of the cards on the board, the cards that have **not** been turned over are those on which the group agrees;
5. Each group now looks together at each of the cards which is face down. The group's job now is to reach **consensus** (a group decision) on where each of these cards should go. (In each case the group might want to find out who put the card in this section of the board and who turned it over);
6. The cards in the centre of the board describe rights which all believe should apply to everyone – no matter who they are, regardless of age, gender, religion, etc. – in all circumstances. These comprise the group's list of **human rights**. On the large sheet of paper provided, each group should use the markers to make a list of these rights,
7. Each group should now share its revised list with the other groups. The game can end here or move on to Step 8; if Step 8 is included, wait to share lists until after Step 8 is completed;
8. The group now looks at the cards in the other two sections of the board (**IN MOST CASES**) and (**IN SOME CASES**) and examines the language of these cards, looking for ways to re-write the language in such a way that these cards too can be moved to the centre section (**IN EVERY CASE**). If such language can be found and consensus reached to move the cards, these statements are also added to the list of human rights;
9. After the groups have shared their lists, the UDHR (in its simplified version) is introduced. Students can now compare their rights with those articulated in the UDHR.

EXERCISE 3

RIGHTS, ASSERTIONS OR ENTITLEMENTS?

AIM

Students will decide which of these statements are human rights and which fall into other categories, such as assertions, entitlements etc.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Gained an understanding of the difference between human rights and other needs that while important do not fall into the category of human rights;
- Discussed their answers with classmates.

NCCA KEY SKILLS

Critical thinking and information processing.

MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of statement (handout section 1.2, pg 35).

LENGTH

15-20 Minutes

EXERCISE 4

NEVER AGAIN

AIM

Students will understand that Government sometimes violate human rights through domestic law.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Gained an understanding of how some states attack human rights;
- Understood the importance of ensuring that all human rights in the UDHR are protected.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Communication, critical thinking and information processing.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of UDHR statement (handout section 1.1, pg 34)

Photocopy of Nazi Laws passed against German Jews 1933-35 (handout section 1.5, pg 38).



LENGTH

15-20 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Give each student the handout from the resource section on the Nazi Laws passed against German Jews 1933-35 and the UDHR;
2. Ask each student to read through this list on his/her own and mark or underline those sections which break one of the human rights listed in the UDHR;
Note: Some students may notice that, in removing many human rights, the Nazis were not actually breaking German law. They had legally passed valid new laws which denied basic human rights. Legal rights may not be the same as human rights;
3. Have students compare and discuss their lists.



Iranian girl demonstrates in Iran, 12 June, 2009. © Amnesty International.

EXERCISE 5

GIANT STEPS

AIM

Students will empathise with others who do not have their human rights protected.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Understood the difficulty in participating in society when one's human rights are denied;
- Increased their understanding of what it means to live without human rights;
- Improved their understanding of human rights.

NCCA KEY SKILLS

Communication, critical thinking and information processing.

MATERIAL NEEDED

This activity works best in a large classroom, hall or corridor. It has less impact in a smaller space. Photocopy and read out the role cards and statements (handout section 1.6, pg 39).

LENGTH

15-20 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Print out a role card for every student. Ideally there will be a number of students with the same role cards. If the students have contradicting opinions on particular issues, it will become evident and create a good opportunity for debate;
2. It is important to begin the discussion by reminding all the students that while they may not agree with the opinions of others, they must be respectful towards others;
3. Before you begin the class, encourage the students to develop empathy with the character on their role card. Ask students to think about who they are, where they live, how many are in their family, and so on;
4. Now ask everyone to stand in character with their backs against the wall at one end of the room. Explain that you are going to call out statements. After each statement is read, each person must take a giant step, a baby step, or stay where they are depending on what the statement means to them: take a giant step if you can do it quite easily; take a baby step if you can only do it with difficulty; don't move if you can't do it at all. Emphasise that the aim of the exercise is to try to experience what life is like for their character – it is not about reaching the end first!
5. Now call out the first statement. Once everybody has responded, you may wish to ask them to explain what they did and why;
6. Choose more statements from the list, read them out, and allow participants to make their move. When all the statements have been read begin the discussion.

Discuss With Your Class

- Who got furthest along? Why do you think that they got further than others?
- Who got left behind, and had least opportunity to move along?
- In real life, do you think that some people get further along than others?
- How did you feel when you could move?
- How did you feel when you couldn't move?
- How did you feel when others were moving faster than you?
- How did you feel when others were moving slower than you?

- Teachers can say: “I notice how those in front didn’t look back when they were taking giant steps ahead... did you think about the others when you were ‘winning’ the activity?”
- Do you think that there are people in your community that do not have equal rights?
- What do you think could be done to allow (a character) to achieve equal rights?

EXERCISE 6

THE HUMAN RIGHTS BOATS

AIM

Students will consider which rights in the UDHR are the most important to them.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Gained a deeper understanding of human rights;
- Outlined what they themselves think of as the most important human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Being personally effective, communication, critical thinking and information processing.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of the UDHR summary (handout section 1.1, pg 34) and scissors.



LENGTH

25-30 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Hand out a copy of **UDHR Summary** to each student. Allow time for students to read all the articles;
2. Divide students into small groups;
3. **The Human Rights Boat** - Cut out each article from the copies of the summary of the UDHR so that each group has all 30 articles;
4. Each group should imagine that they are on a boat containing the 30 rights in the UDHR. Explain that the boat is sinking and, in order to keep it afloat, they have to throw out the rights, one by one, until there are only 5 rights left. Each group must decide which of the five rights in the UDHR are most important, and which they would therefore like to keep. Unwanted rights can be thrown on the floor;
5. Ask groups to feedback, giving reasons why they decided to keep certain rights and not others.

EXERCISE 7

EQUAL RIGHTS

AIM

Students will become aware of the ways in which the rights of different groups of people are violated.

OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Explored ways of challenging the discrimination and prejudice faced by gay people;
- Thought about the content of the UDHR and how they might like to expand or update it.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Being personally effective, communication, critical thinking and information processing.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexual (LGBT) rights (handout section 1.7, pg 41).



LENGTH

20 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Hand out the information sheet on LGBT rights;
2. Discuss with the class the questions below;

Discussion Questions

- How are the basic human rights of lesbians and gay men abused?
 - What factors allow such abuse to happen?
 - Ask students to discuss: What might the effects of such bullying be on a young gay person?
 - What can schools do to challenge homophobia?
3. Give students the UDHR to look at. Ask:
 - Do any articles guarantee the right to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transvestite?

EXERCISE 8

PACK YOUR BAGS

“We walked for days, for months, thousands of miles. We slept on the ground and often had to eat leaves to survive. People shot at us. Many boys were killed. What happened to my parents? I don’t know. But now we are here, to a new life. And I have seen snow for the first time.”

Quoted from one of the *Lost Boys of Sudan*, who resettled in the United States

Source: www.unhcr.org



AIM

Students will learn about refugee rights.



OBJECTIVES

Students will have

- Understood that refugees are generally not able to plan their migration in advance; consequently they end up ill-prepared to face the incredibly difficult situations ahead of them.



NCCA KEY SKILLS

Critical thinking and information processing.



MATERIAL NEEDED

Photocopy of the Information sheet on refugee rights (handout section 1.8, pg 42).



LENGTH

20-25 Minutes

STEPS:

1. Tell the students that they will be given two minutes to gather their belongings, whatever they choose, since they are being forced from their house and community, and will most likely not return. Students should be given those two minutes to brainstorm and write down what they should take;
2. If possible or appropriate, in order to make the situation more realistic, distractions, such as making noise or turning off the lights can be applied;
3. Begin a class discussion by using the questions below;

Discussion Questions

- What did you take with you? Why?
- Why did you think you would need these things?
- Why were the lights turned off? And the noise?
- Did you take identification/documentation with you? Why would you need this? If you did not bring this, how can you prove who you are?

4. Hand out the information sheet on refugees' rights (handout section 1.8, pg 42).



Police beating protestors, Bagua, Peru, 5 June 2009. © Amnesty International.



Mashimoni Squatters' Primary School, Kibera slum, Nairobi, Kenya, 2003. © Amnesty International.



HANDOUTS

HUMAN RIGHTS

HANDOUT 1.1

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (UDHR): SHORTENED VERSION

This handout is used in the following exercises and in all classes.

Exercise 4: Never Again / pg 26

Exercise 6: The Human Rights Boats / pg 28

Previous image - Shoes demonstrating gender based violence, Womens Aid Conference, Dublin, Ireland, 2000. © Amnesty International.

1. Everyone is born free and has dignity because they are human.
2. Everyone has equal rights regardless of differences between people such as gender, colour, religion, language, wealth or political opinion.
3. Everyone has the right to life and the right to live in freedom and safety.
4. No one shall be held in slavery.
5. Everyone has the right not to be hurt, tortured or treated cruelly.
6. Everyone has the right to be treated as a person under the law everywhere.
7. The law is the same for everyone and should protect everyone equally.
8. Everyone has the right to ask for legal help when their basic rights are not respected.
9. No one should be arrested, imprisoned or expelled from their country without good reason.
10. Everyone has the right to a fair trial, if accused of a crime.
11. Everyone has the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, if accused of a crime.
12. Everyone has the right to privacy.
13. Everyone has the right to travel within and outside their own country.
14. Everyone has the right to seek asylum in another country, if they are being persecuted in their own country.
15. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
16. Everyone has the right to marry and have a family.
17. Everyone has the right to own property on their own or with others. No one should have their property taken from them without good cause.
18. Everyone has the right to their own free thoughts, conscience and religion including the right to practice their religion privately or in public.
19. Everyone has the right to say what they think and to share information with others.
20. Everyone has the right to meet with others publicly and privately and to freely form and join peaceful associations.
21. Everyone has the right to vote in regular democratic elections and to take part in the government of their country.
22. Every country must do its best to ensure that everyone has enough to live a life of dignity.
23. Everyone has the right to work for a fair wage in a safe environment and also has the right to join a trade union.
24. Everyone has the right to rest and leisure time.
25. Everyone has the right to a home, enough food and health care.
26. Everyone has the right to education and to free primary education.
27. Everyone has the right to take part in the cultural life of their community and the right to benefit from scientific and artistic learning.
28. National and international laws and institutions must make possible the rights and freedoms set out in this declaration.
29. Everyone has the responsibility to respect and uphold the rights of others in their community and the wider world.
30. No one has the right to take away any of the rights in this declaration.

HANDOUT 1.2

RIGHTS, ASSERTIONS OR ENTITLEMENTS?

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 3: Rights, Assertions or Entitlements? / pg.25

	HUMAN RIGHT	OTHER
The right to life, liberty and security of person		
The right to remain silent		
The right to bear arms		
The right to freedom of thought		
The right to freedom of speech		
The right to party		
The right to own property		
The right to freedom of religion		
The right to drink alcohol		
The right to work		
The right to privacy		
The right to a nationality		
The right to your opinion		
The right to drive		

HANDOUT 1.3

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS?

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 1: What are human rights? / pg 23

Every person has rights which cannot be taken away from them	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
Every right has a corresponding responsibility	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
The individual is the most important unit in society and has to come first	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
The group is the most important unit in society and has to come first	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
Rights must ultimately be consistent with religious principles	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
People have basic economic rights	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
People have basic obligations towards the environment	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
Within a society, Indigenous People may have special rights	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
Basic rights can never be taken away	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
All people have equal rights	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE

HANDOUT 1.4

DECISION CARD STATEMENTS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 2: Where Do you Stand? / pg.24

1. Killing is wrong.
2. No-one should be kept as a slave.
3. After a certain age, people should be able to marry whomever they choose.
4. People should be allowed to say or write what they wish.
5. All people should be treated equally. It should not depend on such things as their gender, appearance, or the country they come from.
6. People in prison should be told why they are being held.
7. People should be allowed to criticise the government.
8. People should be allowed to talk to and meet anyone they wish.
9. People should not be forced to work.
10. A person accused of a crime should be tried by someone who has nothing to do with the case.
11. People should be allowed to travel and leave their country if they wish.
12. Private letters and telephone calls should not be intercepted.
13. People should be allowed to have, or not have, whatever religious beliefs they wish.
14. All people have a right to belong to a country.
15. All people have the right to medical help if they are ill.
16. All people have a right to education. Parents have the right to choose the kind of education to be given to their children.

HANDOUT 1.5

NAZI LAWS PASSED AGAINST GERMAN JEWS 1933-35

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 4: Never Again / pg. 26

February 1933	Emergency laws are passed to prevent people from “acting against the country’s interests”. These allow the police or army to search any house they wish and give the government power to lock up anyone writing or making speeches which criticize what is going on. The death penalty is brought in for anyone found guilty of setting fire to a building, damaging the railways, or plotting against the government.
March 1933	Jewish people are forbidden to serve on juries.
April 1933	No Jew can work in government. No Jew can join the police. No Jew can work in the law courts. No Jew can work as a doctor or dentist in a hospital.
June 1933	Jews are not allowed to enter cinemas, theatres, or art galleries, or to use sports facilities.
July 1933	It is declared that the Nazi party will be the only party in Germany. Anyone who tries to form another political party will be sentenced to up to three years in prison.
September 1933	People can inherit farmland only if they can prove there is no Jewish blood in the family going back as far as 1800.
September 1935	Marriage or sexual relations between Jews and other Germans is forbidden.

HANDOUT 1.6

ROLE CARDS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 5: Giant Steps / pg 27

ANGUS

You live on a farm with your family in Donegal, Ireland. The weather is harsh and the farm work is difficult but you really like it. Your grandparents live with you and you enjoy listening to your grandfather's stories about Ireland. Times are hard and your parents always seem to be worried about making ends meet; there is even talk of the family leaving the farm and moving to the city so your parents can find work.

MAYA

You are a 15 year-old living in the Bronx area of New York. Your mom is a single parent and tries to make ends meet by cleaning houses and living on assistance from the state. Your neighborhood is pretty dangerous and you don't feel safe at night. You try to work hard at school but it is hard when the school is run-down and overcrowded.

KANDESHIE

You are a 10 year-old living in Namibia and have just moved into a new modern house in the capital city, Windhoek. Your father has been promoted and now has a good job with the government. He is even talking about sending you to a new school in South Africa where you will get a much better education.

NIAMH

You live with your parents, your two brothers and sister in Cork, Ireland. Your house is big and you all have your own bedrooms, which you think is great because you have lots of study to do for your exams. You are planning to go to university next year where you would like to study Computer Science.

PAULO

You are eight years old and live in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Every day you work by selling peanuts on the street. You live in a small house with your family but sometimes because of rows at home you sleep the night on the Cathedral steps.

MARIA

You are a 30- year old. You had polio as a baby and now you need a wheelchair to get about. You like reading but the local library has steps so you cannot go in without help.

PATRICK

You are a Traveller who lives on a site with your family in a caravan. You have been to four primary schools, each in a different town. Now that you are 12 you don't go to school anymore.

ÁINE

You live with your mother and sister. Your hobby is woodwork. You would like to do this for your Junior Certificate but the subject is not taught in the girls' secondary school you attend.

SHIRIN

You are a female refugee from Afghanistan. Your parents have been killed and your uncle has brought you to Ireland with his family. You are all waiting to be told by the Irish government whether you can stay. You are Muslim.

DECLAN

You are 50 years old and are unemployed. You live in Darndale in Dublin, Ireland. You have tried to get work but you have been told you don't have enough skills. You like to read a lot.

SANYA

You are 12 years old and live in Hyderabad, India. Your father cannot find work so you have a job in a sewing factory. You work for about 10 hours every day. You earn about 15-20 rupees, depending on how fast you work. Sometimes you get a day off, but you don't earn any money on that day.

CATHERINE

You are 82 years old and you live alone in a small town in rural Ireland. Your daughter lives in Australia. You see her about once a year, usually.

TROY

Your name is Troy. You are 19 years old. You were found guilty of murdering a police officer and you are on death row in a prison in America. You don't know when your execution will be. Your lawyer is still trying to get you off because he says there is no real evidence linking you to the murder.

BLESSING

Your name is Blessing. You are 18 years old and live in Turkana, which is in Northern Kenya. Your family herd cattle. You have never been to school. Girls from Turkana don't usually go to school.

HANDOUT 1.7

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSSEXUAL (LGBT) RIGHTS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 7: Equal Rights / pg.29

In countries all over the world, individuals are targeted for imprisonment, torture and even murder, simply on the grounds of their sexual orientation. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transsexuals (LGBT) may be subject to such persecution at the hands of private individuals or government agents. Abuses may take such subtle forms as everyday hostility, harassment or neglect. In such cases, unsupportive authorities may refuse to protect the basic rights of gay men and lesbians, leaving them vulnerable to exploitation, sexual attack, public or domestic violence and even murder, all without help from the law. In other instances, governments themselves carry out abuses: Unfair trials, imprisonment, ill treatment (including false “medical cures”), torture (including rape), and execution are among the violations recorded by Amnesty International. Lesbians and gay men were targeted by the Nazis for extermination, but despite the clear indication of their particular vulnerability to human rights abuses, they were not specifically included in the framework for international human rights protection in the UDHR or in subsequent human rights conventions.

The stigmatised position of gay men and lesbians around the world and the lack of recognition of sexuality as a basic human right contributes to their experiences of ill treatment at the hands of the authorities. A recent report by the National Office for Suicide Prevention of the Health Service Executive examined the experiences of more than 1,110 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender in Ireland. Its key findings on the experiences of LGBT schoolchildren were that 58% reported the existence of homophobic bullying in their schools; over 50% were called abusive names by their fellow students, 72% felt they couldn't be themselves at school, 60% said that there wasn't a teacher or adult in school that they could talk to. (Source, Gay and Lesbian Equality Network)



Gay Pride Parade in Istanbul. © Amnesty International.

HANDOUT 1.8

INFORMATION SHEETS

This handout is used in the following classes/exercises

Exercise 8: Pack Your Bags / pg.30

THE 1951 CONVENTION RELATING TO THE STATUS OF REFUGEES

The process of developing a body of international law and conventions concerning refugees began in the early part of the 20th Century under the League of Nations (the predecessor of the United Nations). The process was completed in 1951 when a special UN conference approved the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Since 1952, when Denmark became the first state to ratify the Convention, 140 states have acceded to the Convention.

The 1951 Convention (with its subsequent 1967 Protocol², which removed geographical and temporal restrictions from the Convention) is the key legal document in setting the standards for the treatment of refugees. Influenced by the 1933 Refugee Convention and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1951 Convention provides a broad definition of refugees, allows refugees the freedom to practice religion and provide religious education to their children, access to courts, elementary education and public assistance. In the field of housing and jobs, the Convention states that a refugee should be treated at least as favourably as other nationals of a foreign country.

The Convention constitutes one of the most remarkable achievements in the long battle for realization of the ideal of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction, and has been recognized as a principle of international customary law.

Source: United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees.

For more information, you can access the UNHCR website at www.unhcr.org

REFUGEES ARE

- People who have suffered human rights abuses and been forced to flee their homes;
- People who have crossed into another country to seek safety from persecution;
- People who if they return home would face possible death, torture or violence;
- People who would return home as soon as they could, but cannot because they fear for their lives;
- People - (men, women and children) forced to take desperate measures to save their lives.

Source: Amnesty International (Australia)

²Very often, human rights treaties are followed by "Optional Protocols" which may either provide for procedures with regard to the treaty or address a substantive area related to the treaty. Optional Protocols to human rights treaties are treaties in their own right, and are open to signature, accession or ratification by countries who are party to the main treaty.