



"Wanted in Prague" 1940  
poster by Adolf  
Hoffmeister (Holzer  
Collection)

## Lesson 6: Human Rights



This lesson begins with a review of the lessons learned, as presented by the author in Chapter 10 of *Adventurers Against Their Will*. The approach of the book—making use of letters to explore a historic event—is used to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of using primary sources to understand history.

The lesson also focuses attention on human rights. Students are broken into small groups to discuss and develop ideas about civil and human rights. Responses are used to center attention on the difference between civil and human rights and guide students to recognize that human rights are universal. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides background for discussion about how human rights were violated during the Holocaust, people whose rights are being violated today or are at greatest risk of having rights violated, and the challenges of organizations and individuals to protect fundamental human rights.

### Learning Objectives

Students will consider human rights and measures that have been put in place to protect human rights of people worldwide, as well as the challenges of protecting these rights when threatened by a government or a group in power.

Students will be able to:

- Review factors or trends that may have contributed to the inability of people to predict the Holocaust.
- Analyze the advantages and disadvantages of primary source materials such as letters in historical inquiry.
- Compare and contrast civil and human rights and the relationship between them.
- Analyze human-rights violations perpetrated before and during the Holocaust
- Assess the challenges involved in protecting human rights, rights violated throughout history, and rights most at risk today.
- Describe the factors that force people to flee their homeland.
- Discuss the plight of refugees in history and today.

### Florida Social Studies Standards:

SS.912.W.1.1: Interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources.

SS.912.W.1.4: Explain how historians use historical inquiry and other sciences to understand the past.

SS.912.W.1.6: Evaluate the role of history in shaping identity and character.

SS.912.W.7.6: Analyze the restriction of individual rights and the use of mass terror against populations in the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and occupied territories.

SS.912.A.6.8/SS.912.W.7.8: Explain the causes, events, and effects of the Holocaust (1933-1945) including its roots in the long tradition of anti-Semitism, 19th century ideas about race and nation, and Nazi dehumanization of the Jews and other victims.

SS.912.W.7.11: Describe the effects of World War II.

SS.912.A.6.3: Analyze the impact of the Holocaust during World War II on Jews as well as other groups.

SS.912.P.10.1: Define culture and diversity.

SS.912.P.10.3: Discuss the relationship between culture and conceptions of self and identify.

SS.912.P.9.8: Discuss the nature and effects of stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination.

SS.912.C.2.8: Analyze the impact of citizen participation as a means of achieving political and social change.

SS.912.C.4.3: Assess human rights policies of the United States and other countries.

SS.912.W.9.3: Explain cultural, historical, and economic factors and government policies that created the opportunities for ethnic cleansing or genocide.

### **Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies:**

ELA-RH.11-12.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

ELA-RH.11-12.1: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

ELA- RH.11-12.3: Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### **National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) C3 Framework Standards:**

D2.Civ.3.9-12. Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.

D2.Civ.5.9-12. Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

D2.Civ.10.9-12. Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

D2.Civ.12.9-12. Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.

D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.

D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

D2.His.6.9-12. Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.

D2.His.7.9-12. Explain how the perspectives of people in the present shape interpretations of the past.

D2.His.9.9-12. Analyze the relationship between historical sources and the secondary interpretations made from them.

D2.His.10.9-12. Detect possible limitations in various kinds of historical evidence and differing secondary interpretations.

D2.His.14.9-12. Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

D4.4.9-12. Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.

D4.6.9-12. Use disciplinary and interdisciplinary lenses to understand the characteristics and causes of local, regional, and global problems; instances of such problems in multiple contexts; and challenges and opportunities faced by those trying to address these problems over time and place.

D4.7.9-12. Assess options for individual and collective action to address local, regional, and global problems by engaging in self-reflection, strategy identification, and complex causal reasoning.

## **Preparation**

### ***Materials Required***

*Adventurers Against Their Will*

Chalkboard/chalk or whiteboard/markers

Computer for YouTube video

Handout: Universal Declaration on Human Rights, from  
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/#atop>

**Lesson Procedure**

**Build Background**

**15 minutes**

**DOK 1-3**

1. Begin the lesson by asking for general impressions of Chapters 9 and 10. Ask students to record at least one thing they have learned on their K-W-L chart. Allow a few minutes for students to do so, and then ask what facts stood out in the reading.
2. In Chapter 10, Schirm reflects on the challenges of her research and summarizes some of the key lessons she learned. Have students discuss the lessons they believe are to be learned from the Holocaust. Discuss the following questions:
  - What factors contributed to the inability of people to predict the Holocaust?
  - How did the multiculturalism of Czechoslovakia contribute to anti-Semitism?
  - What impact did the experience of living through the Holocaust have on Dr. Holzer's religious views? Is this what you would expect? Why or why not?
  - How did the Holocaust impact our understanding of history? How did it impact victims, such as Dr. Holzer? How did it impact other groups who lived during this time?
  - How did the world wars shape the identity of Americans? How did they shape the identity of Germans? Of other groups?
  - Joanie Holzer Schirm writes: "The letters teach us the truth that even in the darkest of circumstances, life offers the lucky ones a chance to transform themselves." Give an example from the book.
  - How does reading first-person accounts, such as the letters, impact our understanding of what happened? Do we learn more from such first-person accounts than from a history book or documentary about what happened? Why or why not?
  - What are some of the things a historian must keep in mind when relying on primary sources? (Guide students to understand that the letter writers did not have the benefit of "seeing the bigger picture." Eyewitness accounts are also biased, particularly when the sources are active participants in an event.)

**Small Group Activity****10 minutes****DOK 2-3**

1. Turn attention to the issue of the rights that were violated. Break students into small groups of three or four students. Provide large sheets of chart paper. Assign half of the groups the phrase “Civil Rights” and the other half “Human Rights.” Ask students to make a word web, listing words, phrases, laws, documents, and other things that come to mind when they hear the term they have been assigned. Allow groups 10 minutes to make their lists.

**Class Discussion and Analysis (pairs)****10 minutes****DOK 3-4**

1. Have groups post their lists. Use the lists to lead a discussion. What words or phrases were repeated most often?
2. Use differences in the lists to point out that human rights and civil rights are closely related, but that civil rights usually refer to rights that are protected by a government or constitution, while human rights extend beyond civil rights to all people, regardless of the government under which they live. Human rights focus on basic rights of life and having basic needs met.
3. Ask students what groups or organizations are responsible for protecting human rights. Explain that the United Nations (UN) is the most prominent protector today. Distribute the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). Explain that this was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948, in direct response to World War II and the Holocaust. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is generally agreed to be the foundation of international laws and treaties regarding human rights. (For more information about the history of the document, see <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml>.)
4. Have students work in pairs to read each of the Articles and mark those that they believe were violated during the Holocaust. Then, have students identify the human rights that they believe are violated by countries or groups today, providing specific examples if possible. Allow 10 minutes for pairs to read and discuss each article.
5. Lead a discussion of students’ reactions to the document. Raise the following questions:
  - Which rights were violated during the Holocaust?
  - Which rights are most at risk today? In what countries are these rights violated? What groups of people are most at risk?
  - What challenges does the United Nations face in protecting human rights?
  - What role does the “average” citizen play in protecting human rights?
6. Conclude by playing Save The Children’s “[Most Shocking Second a Day](#)” video.

**Individual Reflection****25 minutes****DOK 3-4**

1. Have students record their thoughts and feelings in their journals. Ask them to write and record the following questions:
  - How did the video make you feel? Do you think this could happen in your community today? Why or why not?
  - Of everything you learned today, what did you find the most surprising or upsetting? Why?
  - Vladimir “Vlada” Wagner writes in Chapter 10: “Hit someone and they will hit back. Befriend them and they will be your friends.” Do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not?

**Note:** If students do not have enough time to complete the reflection questions in class, they may be assigned as homework. Remind students to bring their K-W-L sheets and journal to class each period, as they will add to them for the duration of the unit.

**Assessment**

Consider students’ participation in small- and large-group discussions to assess their understanding of the reading assignment and their ability to make connections among ideas. Review the responses to the reflection questions to assess whether students recognize the complexity of the factors involved in protecting human rights of people in countries without a government that seeks to do so.

**Scoring Rubric**

6	The student has shown a rigorous comprehension of the applicable concepts. The responses indicate a strong cognitive association between the topical concepts and their practical application. The student has offered a full and accurate answer to all relevant sections. The appropriate subject-related vocabulary or terms are used correctly. There are no major errors, although some minor errors may be present.
5	The student has shown a full comprehension of the applicable concepts. The responses indicate a cognitive association between the topical concepts and their practical application. The student has offered a full and accurate answer to all relevant sections. The appropriate subject-related vocabulary or terms are used. There are no major errors, although some minor errors may be present.
4	The student has shown an acceptable comprehension of the applicable concepts. The responses may indicate a cognitive association between the topical concepts and their practical application. The student provided a full and accurate answer to most relevant sections. There are minor errors in the use of subject-related vocabulary or terms. There are minor conceptual errors or omissions.

3	The student has shown a minimal comprehension of the applicable concepts. The responses indicate a narrow attempt to associate links between the topical concepts and their practical application. The student made an effort to answer two or more relevant sections. There is limited use of subject-related vocabulary or terms. The response contains some major errors or omissions. The response shows minimal comprehension.
2	The student has shown some comprehension of the applicable concepts. The responses do not indicate an effort to associate links between the topical concepts and their practical application. The student made an effort to answer one or more relevant sections. The use of subject-related vocabulary or terms may be absent. The response contains many major errors and omissions. The response shows limited comprehension.
1	The student's response is inadequate. Subject-related vocabulary or terms are absent. The answer(s) contains many substantial errors or omissions. The response shows little to no comprehension.
0	The student has shown no comprehension of the concepts and/or the response is impossible to understand.

Prepared by APass Educational Group [www.apasseducation.com/](http://www.apasseducation.com/)

On behalf of Author Joanie Schirm, *Adventurers Against Their Will*  
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