

UNIT I: INTRODUCTION TO RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LESSON 1: ESTABLISHING CLASSROOM RULES, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OBJECTIVES:

- To establish rules that ensure a safe, respectful classroom environment for the study of *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief* or any subject.
- To engage students in reflection on what factors contribute to a respectful learning environment and encourage good class discussion.
- To establish the responsibility of the whole class for maintaining rules and relate this responsibility to that of all citizens for the promotion and protection of human rights.
- To illustrate the relationship of rights to responsibilities.

TIME: 50 minutes - variable, depending on whether assignments are done in class or as homework.

MATERIALS: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk.

I. PRESENTATION: INTRODUCING THE NEED FOR CLASSROOM RULES (5 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that the curriculum, *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief*, will involve the class in far-reaching discussions. Much of the subject matter will necessarily involve controversial topics, which some members of the class may have strong feelings about, both negative and positive. The goal of these discussions will never be to prove one position is correct and another wrong, but to explore different ideas in a spirit of acceptance, inquiry, and exploration.

Acknowledge clearly, however, that no one, including the teacher, is free from bias.

Step 2:

Remind the class that the purpose of studying this curriculum is to understand the meaning of religion, belief, and human rights. The second goal is to understand how everyone can become a responsible citizen, promoting acceptance and preventing discrimination based on religion or belief in their own communities. Point out that this goal can only be achieved when the classroom itself promotes acceptance and prevents discrimination.

Step 3:

Explain that for this reason the class needs to agree upon some classroom rules that will help to ensure that everyone's right to freedom of expression, respect,

privacy, and safety are respected, as well as their freedom of religion or belief and right to education and human rights education.

II. DISCUSSION: WHAT MAKES A GOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT? (13 minutes)

Step 1:

Start by asking, “*What makes a good discussion?*” Record student suggestions. Encourage observations about subjective feelings involved and the way others respond as well as objective, intellectual considerations.

Step 2:

Ask, “*What kind of classroom environment encourages a good discussion?*” Record student observations.

Step 3:

Ask, “*What kind of class environment helps you to learn?*” Record observations.

III. ACTIVITY: DEVELOPING CLASSROOM RULES (15 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that in order to ensure that their study of freedom of religion or belief can take place in a safe, accepting, and respectful environment, the class will try to draw up some simple classroom rules. These rules should apply to everyone, including the teacher.

Step 2:

Divide the class into pairs and ask each pair to develop five (or more) rules that they consider essential to promote this kind of class environment.

To the Teacher: In a very large class, the groups could be larger.

Step 3:

After a few minutes, ask each pair to combine with another to form a group of four and compare and combine their lists. The group of four should then write down the rules that they agree upon.

Step 4:

Ask for a representative of one or two groups to read each item on their list. After each suggested rule, ask for a show of hands from other groups who had the same or similar rule. List each rule that seems to have consensus on chart paper.

Ask if any groups developed rules that have not yet been mentioned and add these to the list if most people agree with them.

Step 5:

Observe that fewer rules are better than many and ask why this is so. Ask if any of these rules on the list could be combined.

Step 6:

Observe that clear rules are more likely to be observed. Ask for any suggestions on refining the language of the rules.

To the Teacher:

- *The exercise of refining the language of the list could be part of the assignment suggested below. Alternatively you may wish to have the original small groups take time in class to revise and refine the language.*
- *Try to keep the number of rules to a minimum, at least no more than 10.*

IV. ACTIVITY/ASSIGNMENT: INTERPRETING CLASS RULES AS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (time variable)

Step 1:

When the class has arrived at a workable list of rules, discuss how these rules can be enforced. Emphasize that responsibility for maintaining the rules rests with the whole class, not just the teacher.

Point out that each rule implies both a right and a responsibility. For example, if one rule states that no one should interrupt a speaker, (i.e. everyone has the right not to be interrupted), then this rule also implies a responsibility, (i.e., everyone has the responsibility not to interrupt or allow anyone to be interrupted).

Step 2:

Ask everyone to copy the class list of rules on a clean sheet of paper.

Then make this assignment, either for individuals as homework or in groups as cooperative classwork:

Assignment: Rewrite the class rules as statements of rights and responsibilities.

- Ideally express these statements of rights and responsibilities in the first person (e.g., “I have the responsibility not to interrupt or allow anyone to be interrupted”).
- Lists the rights in one column and the corresponding responsibility in the other. You may wish to use a chart or framework like that below:

RIGHT	RESPONSIBILITY
I have the right to speak without being interrupted.	I have the responsibility not to interrupt or to allow anyone to be interrupted.

Step 3:

Compare students' lists of corresponding responsibilities. Draw up a list that combines their ideas.

Step 4:

Copy the combined list of rights and responsibilities on chart paper and keep posted in the classroom. Explain that these rules, and their interpretation as rights and responsibilities, will remain posted in the classroom as reminders to everyone of how a respectful, safe classroom environment can be ensured for everyone to learn and develop to his or her full potential.

Make copies of this list and/or ask students to copy their list of classroom rules and keep this list for use during their study of *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief*.

To the Teacher: The skill of rephrasing rights as responsibilities will be repeated in a more challenging form in Lesson 5, "Freedom and Responsibility", pp. 22-24.

V. CONCLUSION (2 minutes)

Conclude by reminding students that enforcement of these rules is everyone's responsibility, just as it is every citizen's responsibility to see that everyone in the community enjoys the right to freedom of religion or belief.

UNIT I: INTRODUCTION TO RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LESSON 2: INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS

OBJECTIVES:

- To introduce the curriculum, *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief*.
- To introduce the relationship between **human needs** and **human rights**.
- To establish the principle of **human dignity** and its relation to human rights.

TIME: 50 minutes.

MATERIALS: Chart paper, markers, and glue or tape; set of Needs and Wants Cards for each pair of participants (See Handout 2A-2D).

I. PRESENTATION: INTRODUCTION TO *LIFTING THE SPIRIT: HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF* (3 minutes)

- A. Explain that **intolerance** and **discrimination** based on religion or belief contributes to many conflicts in the world. Ask students for some examples, both local and global, of such intolerance and discrimination.
- B. Explain that the class is going to begin a new curriculum, *Lifting the Spirit: Human Rights and Freedom of Religion or Belief*, that will help them to understand the meaning of religion, belief, and human rights, as well as how each of them can be responsible citizens, promoting acceptance and preventing discrimination in their own communities.

To the Teacher: You may wish to explain the terms **intolerance** and **discrimination**.

II. ACTIVITY: HUMAN NEEDS/ HUMAN RIGHTS* (20 minutes)

Step 1:

Divide participants into pairs and give each pair a set of Needs and Wants Cards. Give these instructions:

1. Imagine that you have a new government in your community that wants to provide all the people with the basic things they need and want. The cards represent the things the government thinks you might want. There are also four blank cards for you to draw and/or write any additional items you can think of.

* Adapted from Susan Fountain, *It's Only Rights: A Practical Guide to Learning about the Convention on the Rights of the Child* (New York: UNICEF, 1993), 9-14.

2. Your job is to divide the cards into two groups: 1) things you need and 2) things you want. If you neither need nor want an item, put it in a separate stack.
3. You have about 5 minutes to complete this part of the activity.

Step 2:

Ask two or three pairs to join another. Give each group of four or six a piece of chart paper and glue or tape. Give these instructions:

1. Divide the chart paper into three columns. At the top of the left-hand column write “NEEDS,” on the center column write “?” and on the right-hand column write “WANTS.” (See sample below)

NEEDS	?	WANTS

2. Compare your “Needs” cards, including those you created for yourself.
 - When everyone has the same card, attach one copy to the “Needs” column of your chart.
 - Where your choices differ, explain your thinking and try to come to agreement. If you cannot agree, place one copy of the card in the center column under “?”.
3. Do the same with your “Wants” cards, including those you created for yourself.
4. If you had a group of cards that were neither “needs” nor “wants,” compare those as well and try to come to agreement. If you agree, add them to the chart or discard them. If you cannot, add those to the “?” column.

Step 3:

Discuss the activity so far:

- *Which lists were longer, “needs” or “wants”? Why?*
- *How did you determine the difference between wants and needs?*
- *Which of your needs were material, such as food or shelter? Which were abstract, such as freedom of speech or religion?*
- *Do all people in the whole world have the same basic needs?*
- *Which items did most groups place under the “?” column?*
- *Which items caused the most disagreement?*

Step 4:

Continue the activity by announcing the following: *"The new government has found that for political and economic reasons it cannot provide citizens with all these benefits. Each group must eliminate three items from its "needs" list."* Give the groups a few minutes to discuss these decisions.

- *What did you give up? How did you decide?*
- *How would this elimination affect your life?*

Step 5:

Announce the following: *"The new government has found it necessary to cut back still further on needs. You must eliminate three more items from your "needs" list."* Give the group a few minutes to discuss these decisions.

- *What did you give up? How did you decide?*
- *How would this further elimination affect your life?*

Step 6:

Explain that the most basic needs of human beings are sometimes referred to as rights and that human rights are based on the things that everyone needs to be fully human. These needs include both material things and freedoms.

To the Teacher: Save these charts for use in Lesson 5, "Freedom and Responsibility", pp. 22-24.

III. ACTIVITY: HUMAN BEINGS/HUMAN RIGHTS (25 minutes)**

Step 1:

Write the words "HUMAN" at the top of chart paper or a blackboard. Below the word draw a circle or the outline of a human being. Ask participants to brainstorm what qualities define a human being and write the words or symbols inside the outline. For example, "intelligence," "sympathy."

To the Teacher: Suggestions may include negative qualities (e.g., greed, prejudice) or ambiguous qualities (e.g., aggressiveness /assertiveness, cunning/ cleverness). List these along with positive qualities.

Step 2:

Ask participants what they think is needed in order to protect, enhance, and fully develop the positive qualities of a human being. List their answers outside the circle, and ask participants to explain how each suggestion helps to enhance the qualities of human beings. For example, "education," "friendship," and "loving family." Discuss these questions about human dignity:

- *Based on this list, what do we need to live in dignity?*
- *Should all people have the things that permit them to live in dignity?*

** Adapted from *Human Rights Here and Now*, ed. Nancy Flowers (University of Minnesota, 1998), Activity 1, 38-42.

To the Teacher: For any negative qualities or ambiguous qualities, ask what is needed to overcome or control them and cross them off when a remedy is suggested. Only positive qualities should remain within the circle.

Step 3:

Explain that everything inside the figure or circle relates to **human dignity**, the integrity and wholeness of being human. Discuss these questions about human dignity:

- *What does it mean to be fully human? How is that different from just "being alive" or "surviving"?*
- *Can any of our "essential" human qualities, (i.e. those written inside the figure or circle), be taken from us? For example, only human beings can communicate with complex language; are you human if you lose the power of speech?*
- *What would happen if you had to give up one of these human necessities? Which quality would you choose to give up?*
- *What happens when a person or government attempts to deprive someone of something that is necessary to human dignity, (i.e. treats people as though they were less than human)?*
- *Can you think of examples where some people have been treated as less than fully human?*

Step 4:

Explain that everything written around the outline represents what is necessary to human dignity and that human rights are based on these necessities.

Write these three statements from the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** on chart paper or the blackboard. Explain that this document sets the standard for how human beings should behave towards one another so that everyone's human dignity is respected:

. . . [R]ecognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of the freedom, justice, and peace in the world . . .

Preamble
Universal Declaration of Human 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 [and sisterhood].*

Article 1
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

* *[and sisterhood] and [or her] are not found in the original text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They have been added here in order to more clearly portray the spirit of inclusiveness present in the document.*

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his [or her] personality is possible.*

Article 29 (1)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

IV. CONCLUSION (2 minutes)

Remind the group of the first activity, in which they had to decide about basic human needs and how they felt when they had to eliminate things they considered essential. Conclude by emphasizing that this new curriculum will explore the freedom of religion and belief as a basic necessity of human life and human dignity, that is, as a human right.

HANDOUT 2A



HOLIDAY TRIPS



YOUR OWN BEDROOM



**PROTECTION FROM
DISCRIMINATION**



EDUCATION



**MONEY TO SPEND
AS YOU LIKE**



SWEETS



HANDOUT 2B



DECENT SHELTER

**THE ABILITY TO
PRACTICE YOUR
OWN RELIGION**



**A PERSONAL
COMPUTER**



**CLOTHES IN THE
LATEST STYLE**



CLEAN AIR



**PROTECTION FROM
ABUSE AND NEGLECT**



HANDOUT 2C



HANDOUT 2D



**YOUR
AND BE**

**THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO EXPRESS
OPINION**

**MEDICAL CARE
WHEN YOU NEED IT**



UNIT I: INTRODUCTION TO RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LESSON 3: DEFINING *DIGNITY, RELIGION, AND BELIEF*

OBJECTIVES:

- To emphasize the importance of human dignity, equality, and difference.
- To clarify the use of *religion or belief* in this curriculum.

TIME: 50 minutes.

MATERIALS: Chart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk.

I. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)

Remind participants that the last lesson considered the relationship between **human rights, human needs** and **human dignity**. Ask participants to express this relationship in their own words.

II. DISCUSSION: EQUAL DIGNITY AND RIGHTS (15 minutes)

Step 1:

Reintroduce the quotations from the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** presented in Lesson 2, “Introducing Human Rights”, pp. 8-9:

. . . [R]ecognition 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 . . .

Preamble
Universal Declaration of Human 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 [and sisterhood].

Article 1
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his [or her] personality is possible

Article 29 (1)
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

III. ACTIVITY: DEFINING RELIGION OR BELIEF (15 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that the capacity for religion and belief is one quality universally recognized as defining human beings and as a result is recognized as a fundamental human right.

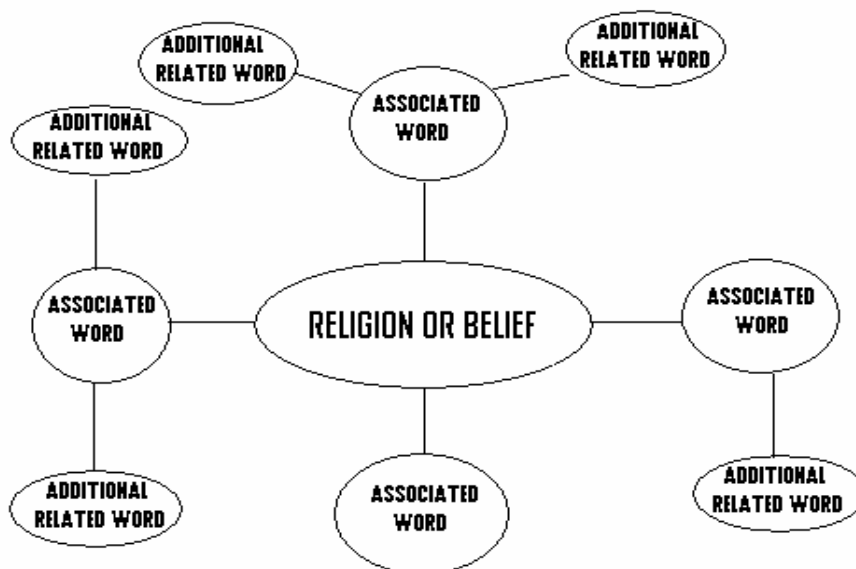
Discuss these questions related to equal dignity and human rights:

- *How can you explain the connection between “recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family” and “freedom, justice and peace in the world”?*
- *Are all human beings really equal? How can the UDHR claim, “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” when there are such vast differences among peoples?*
- *What is the value of human differences?*

Step 2:

Create an Ideas Web:

1. Ask students individually or in pairs to write the words “Religion or Belief” at the center of a sheet of paper. Ask students to offer examples of the words or phrases they associate with these words, and construct a web similar to the example below.
2. Ask each student or pair to compare the web they have constructed with another individual or pair and discuss their similarities and differences.
3. Ask the whole class to contribute to a group web, bringing the main points of agreement discovered in making and comparing individual webs.



Alternative Method:

Write the words "RELIGION" in the center of a circle on one side of the board or chart paper and "BELIEF" on the other. Ask students to offer examples of the words or phrases that associate with these words. After each suggestion, ask, "Is that related to religion or belief or both?" Record responses: write words that refer only to religion below the word "RELIGION" and words that refer only to belief under "BELIEF." If a word relates to both religion and belief, write it between the two words. Draw lines connecting each suggested word or phrase to the key words to which they apply and/or to other related words that are mentioned.

Step 3:

Ask the class to analyze and discuss the Ideas Web they have constructed:

- *Do the ideas and associations differ for the word "religion" and the word "belief"?*
- *Can this Ideas Web be applied to many religions or just the dominant religion(s) in this community?*
- *Can this ideas web be applied to beliefs other than formal religions?*
- *Does "religion" differ from "belief"?* Ask students to clarify their thinking and provide examples of what they mean.

Step 4:

Using the ideas generated so far, ask students to attempt to create formal definitions for both religion and belief. Either 1) generate a class definition and write it on chart paper or 2) ask students alone or in pairs to write their definitions and collect these for use later in Lesson 4.

IV. PRESENTATION (13 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that some people do not believe in a god or do not have a specific religion or belief. Introduce and explain the terms **theistic**, **atheistic**, **non-theistic**, and **agnostic**. Ask for examples of these terms from students' experiences.

Theism	<i>Religions or spiritualities with a supernatural reality.</i>
Atheism	<i>Faith in a natural or material reality; opposed to supernatural reality or supreme being. A person with this belief is called an atheist.</i>
Non-theistic	<i>Religions that do not have a supernatural reality.</i>
Agnosticism	<i>Having no religion; uncertain or in process of investigation. A person with this belief is called an agnostic.</i>

Step 2:

Explain that the word “religion” usually refers to a belief that includes a spiritual or supernatural reality.

To the Teacher: *You may need to explain terms like **supernatural** or **metaphysical**.*

Step 3:

Explain that when we speak of “freedom of religion or belief,” the word “belief” in this context refers to **theistic, non-theistic, atheistic** and **agnostic** convictions. Make clear that everyone has the right not to profess any religion or belief.

V. CONCLUSION (2 minutes)

Step 1:

Explain that this lesson was intended to initiate thinking about human dignity and the concepts of religion and belief. Emphasize that the concepts defined in this lesson will use these terms repeatedly.

Step 2:

Future lessons in *Lifting the Spirit* will explore in depth the meaning of religion or belief and consider the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the relationship of local government to religion or belief.