



HUMAN RIGHTS

“When you deprive people of their right to live in dignity, to hope for a better future, to have control over their lives, when you deprive them of that choice, then you expect them to fight for these rights.”

Queen Rania Al Abdullah of Jordan

1. Human Rights Discussion

1. What are human rights? Can you think of any? What are the most important human rights?
2. Why do we need human rights? Who do we need protecting from?
3. Why are some people's human rights not respected?
4. Which groups of people need protecting more than others?
5. Do some people have more rights than others? If so, how did they manage to achieve this?
6. Are there any people who don't deserve human rights? Are there any circumstances under which a person should lose their human rights?
7. Which countries have a poor record on human rights?
8. Who is responsible for protecting and defending human rights? Which international organisations or NGOs are committed to protecting human rights? Are they doing a good job?

2. Human Rights Vocabulary

- **to speak out (against)** (verb) – *to express one's opinion about an issue, especially in opposition to it.*
- **to stand up (for someone/something)** (verb) – *to defend or support someone or something, especially when they are attacked.*
- **to violate** (verb), **violation** (noun) – *to break or disregard a rule, agreement or law; an act of violating a rule, agreement or law.*
- **human rights activist** (noun) – *a person who actively campaigns against human rights violations.*
- **group / collective rights** (noun) – *rights held by groups, rather than the individuals that make up that group.*
- **universal rights** (adjective) – *rights granted to all people regardless of their country or culture.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. Nazi Germany was responsible for some of the worst human rights **violations** in history.
2. Not everyone agrees with the idea of **universal rights**; some people say that these do not take into account the practices and customs of different cultures around the world.
3. Indigenous people demanded that the government respect their **group rights** to administer tribal law in their territories.
4. More than 300 **human rights activists** were killed during 2019 in various parts of the world.
5. Most people are too scared to **speak out** against human rights abuses.
6. Despite the assassination attempt against her life by the Taliban, Malala Yousafzai has continued to **stand up** for the right of girls to go to school.

Human Rights vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Would you speak out if someone's human rights were not being respected?
2. Who stands up for people whose human rights have been violated in your country?
3. What are some of the different ways that governments violate people's human rights?
4. Would you like to be a human rights activist? What are the risks of being a human rights activist? Do human rights activists face any danger in your country?
5. What is more important: individual rights or group rights? Why?
6. Does the concept of universal rights, mainly thought up by a small group of rich Western nations, disrespect the many different cultures around the world?

3. Video: The Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR)

You are going to watch a video by United for Human Rights called "The Story of Human Rights."

Watch the video here: <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-human-rights/>

While you watch the video, answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. Whom did Cyrus the Great set free?
a) serfs **b) slaves** c) peasants
2. Who trampled people's rights in the Roman Empire?
a) philosophers **b) those in power** c) Roman gods
3. In which country did a King first agree that no one could overrule the rights of the people?
a) England b) France c) The United States
4. Who had a revolution after the American Revolution?
a) The British b) The Romans **c) The French**

Sentence completion

5. The countries of Europe joined forces to defeat Napoleon after he declared himself Emperor of **The World**.
6. Mahatma Gandhi insisted that all people of **Earth** had rights.
7. **Half** the Jewish population of Earth were murdered during the Holocaust.
8. In response to the horrors of World War 2, the countries of the world joined together and formed **The United Nations**.

Short answer

9. How many adults are unable to read? **Over a billion**
10. How many people are trapped in slavery today? **27 million**
11. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights is little more than what? **Words on a page**
12. What did Nelson Mandela stand up for in the 1990s? **Social justice**

4. Human Rights Conversation Questions

1. Why has it been easier to implement political rights (freedom, equality, etc) than socio-economic rights (education, health, housing, working conditions, etc)?
2. What are some of the worst human rights violations in history? What are some current human rights issues in the world? What are some human rights issues in your country?
3. Should countries accused of human rights abuses be excluded from international sporting events such as the Olympics or the World Cup? Why or why not?
4. Are human rights only a problem in developing countries? Can you think of any human rights issues in developed countries?
5. Why might private corporations become involved in human rights abuses? Can you think of any examples when this has happened?
6. Is there a relationship between human rights and economic development?
7. Is it a contradiction that the responsibility of protecting human rights belongs to the same governments that commit human rights abuses?
8. What needs to change in order to provide greater protection for people's human rights in the world? Is there anything you can do? Do you think there will be more or less human rights violations in the future? Why?

5. Human Rights Writing Task

Write about your opinion of human rights. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- Why human rights are needed.
- How people's rights are violated.
- How people's human rights can be protected.

Alternative exam practice question:

The United Nations has been heavily criticised for failing to protect people's human rights around the world despite most countries signing up to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Why do human rights abuses continue to happen in the world, and what actions should the international community take against countries found to be responsible for human rights violations?