



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE

21 SEPTEMBER 2017 | #peaceday

www.un.org/peaceday

TOGETHER: Respect, Safety & Dignity for All

**Helping Students Work TOGETHER to Build a Caring
School/Community/Nation/World
With Respect, Safety and Dignity for All**

The International Day of Peace, on September 21, gives teachers and students (and even whole schools) an opportunity to model how to become a community that works **TOGETHER** to provide Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.

A good starting point is to look at the guiding principles underlying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the United Nations in 1948.[†] Article 1 of the Declaration states:

Article 1

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.[‡]

What does this mean in our school? In our community? Students at every grade level can draw from their own experience, their own sense of what is fair and work with each other to envision ways that their immediate community (their classroom, their school, their neighborhood, their city) can become a welcoming space for everyone.

Some examples of how this exploration might be carried out through project-based lessons follow.[§] They are keyed to different grade levels. However, if a class is drawn to any activity, regardless of the grade level where it is listed, teachers are invited to adapt it to their students' appropriate grade level and learning styles, with activities that address grade-appropriate language arts standards and social studies framework criteria.^{**}

The sections that follow include ideas for Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12:



Grade Level: K-5 and above (adapt as appropriate across grades)

Topic: Caring School Climate

Unit Goal(s): Students study Article 1 (Right to Equality) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and explore issues of kindness, equality, fairness and community. Students distribute kindness coins (or stickers or cards) to friends and family and create a **TOGETHER** poster or collage of student art and/or a **TOGETHER: Respect and Friendship** book.

1. The Basics: Students:

- a. Discuss why Article 1 (Right to Equality) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is important and why it is a human right
- b. Participate in a read-aloud story.
2. Discuss the story using the Think/Pair/Share strategy.
- b. Role-play respect
- c. Role-play kindness
- d. Keep a **TOGETHER** journal throughout the activity – ideas, experiences, lessons learned

2. The Basics: Class

- a. Make a kindness sharing time in class each day
- b. Share experiences about showing kindness and respect to others
- c. Practice ways to show kindness and respect in the classroom and other places.
2. Obtain kindness coins/stickers/cards; decide where/how to distribute them.

3. Generate human rights responses and make predictions about their impact on the community

What could we do? What will happen if we do that?

The students:

- a. Discuss possible ways (solutions) to treat people with kindness and respect every day and make predictions about their effectiveness.
- b. Role-play the solutions.
- c. Discuss the concept of kindness coins/stickers/cards and make predictions regarding how people will respond to being given such a token.
- d. Plan the **TOGETHER** poster or collage and/or the Respect and Friendship Book. What will it look like? Where will the class display it?
- e. Carry out the **TOGETHER** activities the class has agreed upon
- f. Reflect on what has happened. **Key Question:** What did we learn?
- g. Plan a class celebration for the International Day of Peace.

Grade Level: 6-8 and above

Topic: Human Migration – Immigration, Refugees and Community

Unit Goal(s): Students study human migration (in an interdisciplinary unit if possible). They identify and take action on issues related to human migration, immigration, or refugees and present the results through a class project (newsletter, poster presentation, spoken word, etc.)

Introduction:

The 2017 International Day of Peace theme is drawn from **TOGETHER**, a coalition of UN agencies, nations, business leaders, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals who promote respect safety and dignity for refugees and migrants. **TOGETHER** members seek to change negative narratives on migration and to strengthen the social cohesion between host communities and refugees and migrants. The principles underlying **TOGETHER** and the 2017 Day of Peace are drawn from core principles embodied in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**:

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 14

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

These articles of the UDHR were drawn from many sources, including the principles expressed in the United States' Declaration of Independence, Constitution and Bill of Rights. Particularly relevant here are the rights identified in these documents that apply to all "persons" without distinction:

From the Declaration of Independence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that **all men** are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

From the U.S. Constitution as Amended:

Preamble

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the **general Welfare**, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves

and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Amendment IV

The right of *the people* to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall *any person* be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment XIV

1: All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive *any person* of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to *any person* within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

How have our ancestors worked to promote and protect these human and civil rights? Who within our schools, families, and communities promote and protect these human and civil rights?

1. The students:

- a. Read a diverse selection of migration stories.
- b. Create Origin Stories about their families or people with whom they live, share their drafts in pairs.
- c. Read Origin Stories in a classroom storytelling festival.

2. The students:

- a. Read articles about immigration issues relevant to the community or state to develop awareness of migration issues.
- b. Collect a variety of information about migration and compile it into a Migration Journal or a Migration graphic display
- c. First in small groups and then through whole class exchange and discussion:
 - i. Create a working definition of the human rights of migrants and refugees.
 - ii. Create working definitions of justice and injustice, informed by the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as well as the UDHR, and apply them to migrants and refugees

3. The students explore migration and asylum through a justice/injustice lens:

- a. Choose one or more issues facing migrants, refugees and the communities that receive them
- b. Apply the definitions of human rights, justice and injustice developed through
- b. Form task forces to explore ways their community (or their school) can address that issue in a human rights friendly way
- c. Create model plans of action.
- d. Present their plans of action to their classmates in a class town hall meeting.
- e. Based on feedback from the class town hall, develop recommendation for
 - i. How their school can help migrant students feel safe and respected at school
 - ii. How their community can help migrant and refugee families feel safe, respected, and welcome.



GLOBAL PEACE DAY INITIATIVES:

Minute of Silence/Moment of Peace: In 1984, in commemoration of the annual International Day of Peace and in solidarity with the United Nations, the NGO *Pathways To Peace* inaugurated the ***Minute of Silence at 12:00*** Noon in each time zone, resulting in a “***Peace Wave***” around the world. Individuals, organizations, communities and nations are invited to participate in this shared and practical act of peacebuilding on ***September 21***.

Grade Level: 9-12

Topic: US History –The Struggle for Respect, Safety and Dignity for All.

Introduction:

In the United States today migrants and refugees are not the only identifiable groups of persons whose safety and dignity are under challenge. Citizenship does not always assure equal treatment or equal safety. People of Color, Racial and Ethnic Minorities, LGBTQIA persons, members of certain religions, persons with disabilities and other identifiable “others” can become the objects of prejudice based on stereotypes and threats from hate groups whose purpose is to deny their full participation in the life of the community.

In the period after the Civil War, the U.S. Constitution was amended to extend protections of the Bill of Rights to actions by the states, as well as by the Federal government. Yet, in the Post-Reconstruction period, many of the old discriminatory laws and practices were reinstated by states and tolerated by the Federal government. Many of these Post-Reconstruction discriminatory laws and practices were successfully challenged in the latter half of the 20th Century.

Nonetheless, many of today’s community conflicts echo these other periods in United States history when the high principles proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence were not applied equally to all.

Unit Goal(s): Students compare a human rights-related era or event in US history to a similar current issue and develop a response

1. The students:

- a. Select an era or event in history in which differences of race, ethnicity, and/or gender resulted in different treatment under law in ways that denied equality of respect, safety and dignity to all. Students may choose legally supported denials of equal protection of law that were applied, for example, to Blacks, Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans, Women, etc.
- b. Explore actions, beliefs, debates from this era or event and identify how they affected the access of different groups to equality of respect, safety and dignity.
- c. Start a reflection journal documenting perceived acts of justice or injustice done to various groups of people or individuals during this era or event.
- d. Read relevant selections from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, the your State Constitution, your State’s Human Rights Act, any municipal human rights ordinance and, where appropriate, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and match them to the identified justices/injustices.

2. The Students:

- a. Form groups and create a “common” story of the era or event

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- b. Tell the common stories to the class. Students should explain at least one example difference in treatment among categories of persons that undermined equality of respect, safety and dignity.
- c. Select a similar current event to research and compare the actions and statements of key participants today with the actions and statements of key participants during the historical event or era.
- d. Survey some community viewpoints of the current issue and compare them to community viewpoints in the other historical period. What community values and beliefs can be drawn upon to uphold equality of respect, safety and dignity for all in our community? What prejudices and stereotypes found in parts of the community continue to threaten equality of respect, safety and dignity for all?
- e. Make predictions about the possible outcomes of the current issue based on the historical era or event. What threats to equal respect, safety and dignity for all members of the community continue to exist today?

3. The Students:

- a. Brainstorm possible actions to take that would help to change an identified injustice or support a current act of justice today and possible outcomes of those actions.
- b. Identify one or more steps that students can take **TOGETHER** to strengthen Equality of Respect, Safety and Dignity for All at the level of school, community, state, or nation.
- c. Students present their plan at a school assembly or a community gathering.
- d. Students identify further actions they will undertake **TOGETHER** to strengthen peace in their community through respect, safety and dignity for all.

* **TOGETHER** is a global initiative that promotes respect, safety and dignity for everyone forced to flee their homes in search of a better life (<http://www.un.org/en/events/peaceday/>).

† As appropriate, help students understand the conditions that led to the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the aftermath of World War II and the Holocaust. Explore the decisive role played by the United States in writing the Declaration, under the guidance of Eleanor Roosevelt, Chair of the UN Human Rights Commission)

‡ Explore the meaning of “brotherhood”. Nowadays, we might use more gender neutral words like “fellowship” or “community” or “mutual respect”, but this commitment to universal “brotherhood” was a big step forward.

§ These lessons are drawn from two main sources: This Is My Home, a K-12 Human Rights Curriculum from the University of Minnesota’s Human Rights Resource Center (<http://hrusa.org/thisismyhome/>), Amnesty International’s Becoming a Human Rights Friendly School Toolkit (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/human-rights-education/human-rights-friendly-schools/>),

** See the National Council for the Social Studies C-3 Framework for College, Career and Civic Life (<https://www.socialstudies.org/c3>)