

I. Define Human Rights.

1. Respond to the following questions:
 - a. What does it mean to be fully human? How is that different from just "being alive" or "surviving"?
 - b. Based on this list, what do people need to live in dignity?
 - c. Are all human beings essentially equal? What is the value of human differences?
 - d. Can any of our "essential" human qualities be taken from us? For example, only human beings can communicate with complex language; are you human if you lose the power of speech?
 - e. What happens when a person or government attempts to deprive someone of something that is necessary to human dignity?
 - f. What would happen if you had to give up one of these human necessities?
2. Consider what we need to live (survival, human dignity, conveniences and luxuries). Discuss the following questions:
 - a. Should human rights address only what a human being needs to survive? Why or why not?
 - b. Should human rights also protect those things you classified under "conveniences and luxuries"? Why or why not?
 - c. Some people in the world have only what is necessary to survive while others have luxury and convenience. Is this situation just? Is it a human rights violation?
 - d. Can something be done to equalize the enjoyment of human dignity? Should something be done? If so, how? And by whom?
3. Adam Strom, of Facing History/Facing Ourselves, wrote, "The journey from empathy to action is a complicated one. It is one thing to care about something or someone, and quite another to find a way to stand up for the causes you believe in. And it's another thing still to stand up in a way that is both responsible and effective. How do we learn to participate?"
 - a. Define empathy.
 - b. Read Strom's above assertion. Especially in this complex and technological age, how do we convert mere "empathy" into action? How do we begin to care? How do we inspire others to care?
4. Read and discuss the comments of Eleanor Roosevelt, Chair of the UN commission that drafted the UDHR, on the importance of universal human rights standards:

Where, after all, do universal rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighborhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world. ~ Eleanor Roosevelt, The Great Question, 1958

 - a. What do you think Eleanor Roosevelt means by "universal rights"?
 - b. Some people feel that universal values or standards of behavior are impossible. What do you think?
 - c. Why do you think the UN chose the word universal instead of the word international when naming the UDHR?
 - d. Paraphrase the final sentence of the quotation. What does it say about individual responsibility for human rights? What do you think Eleanor Roosevelt means by "concerned citizen action to uphold" rights close to home?
5. The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** was intended to offer all people in all situations the equal justice, opportunity, and dignity of which Eleanor Roosevelt spoke. Then give a brief history of the UDHR. See Part I, A Short History of Human Rights for background information or use this as a reading.

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>
http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/hreduseries/hereandnow/Part-5/6_glossary.htm (a Human Rights glossary)

 - a. When and why was the UDHR written? (copy and paste the link where you found this information)
 - b. What are the primary concerns of this document?
 - c. How do these rights connect to your own definition of human rights?
 - d. Consider the concepts of moral legal and natural rights. Are human rights necessarily legal rights? Explain your response.

- II. **Declaration on the Prevention of Genocide:** Use <http://www.usmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007043> and <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/cppcg/cppcg.html> for the following questions
 - a. Who defined genocide and why did he feel the need to define this crime?
 - b. WHAT is this definition?
 - c. Which countries pushed for genocide to be considered a crime that could be committed during peacetime as well as war and should therefore subject to universal jurisdiction?

- d. Describe the three drafts of the Genocide Convention.
- e. Describe the problem with “semantics” when enforcing this document?
- f. Besides semantics, what are other problems with enforcing the Genocide Convention?

Genocide Convention Document: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/UNTS/Volume%2078/volume-78-I-1021-English.pdf> and <http://www.preventgenocide.org/law/convention/text.htm>

Use <http://www.usmmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007095> for the following questions

11. What was the Resolution 827?
12. When did the US ratify this document?
13. When was the first conviction for genocide? Describe.

Geneva Convention: <http://www.cfr.org/human-rights/geneva-conventions/p8778>

14. When was the Geneva Convention created?
15. Who does the Geneva Convention protect?

Armenian Genocide:

16. What was the Armenian genocide? http://www.nytimes.com/ref/timestopics/topics_armeniangenocide.html
17. Analyze Amal Clooney’s speech in response to the Armenian genocide case. http://viewpure.com/WJ9_vW6FcTs?start=0&end=016. After 100 years, why is it so important to recognize the Armenian genocide as a “genocide”?
18. How might the denial of genocide harm the victims and survivors? The perpetrators and successors? The bystanders?

Darfur/Sudan:

http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/26/opinion/george-clooney-on-sudans-rape-of-darfur.html?_r=0

19. *All* genocides are political. What does Clooney, Pendergrast, and Kumar state is the reason behind the ongoing genocide in Darfur/Sudan?
20. What has Sudan done to prevent international aid – state *at least* three actions?
21. According to Human Rights courts, what is the purpose of mass rape?
22. According to Clooney, Pendergrast, and Kumar, why did our attention shift away from Darfur?
23. According to Clooney, Pendergrast, and Kumar, why have international efforts been unsuccessful?
24. According to Clooney, Pendergrast, and Kumar, what two actions can be taken to stop the ongoing atrocities in Darfur/Sudan?

Syria Declared a Genocide

Go to [Intro Syria](#)

25. When did the conflict begin? Who is endangered?

Watch [Syria Declared a Genocide: United States Holocaust Memorial](#)

26. When did the U.S. declare that there was a genocide occurring in Syria? Why is this declaration historically significant?

Current Genocides: Go to <http://genocidewatch.net/alerts-2/new-alerts/>

27. List three ongoing genocides besides the ones researched above.
28. Scroll down to the map and hover over the countries and shadings. What surprises you about this map?