



Expressing Human Rights DIY Project

Civic Circle Area: Voice

The impact of COVID-19 continues to change our daily lives and routines, but volunteering and civic engagement are just as important as ever. This project can be modified to adhere to social distancing guidelines set by local and national authorities, to do virtually or to do at home and deliver via mail or drop off.

Use your creativity to depict human rights to help others learn about the [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/). Share the artistic expression with others and have them guess which article it depicts. This can be done as a public endeavor or within a smaller network.

Why Is It Important?

Throughout history, we have seen horrible acts against human beings, like what the world experienced during WWII and witnessed under the Nazis. In the aftermath of those atrocities, a global group came together to create the United Nations and started what would become the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

In an effort to help people understand these rights, the United Nations created a list of 30 rights, known as articles, in the Declaration. Help others learn about the UDHR and why it matters through this creative project.

What You Need:

- A copy of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (<http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>)
- A location to hold your event (to prepare, make and/or practice the creative expressions and then to perform or share them).
- Digital flyers to share via social media
- Materials to create art and performances, such as:
 - Large paper for murals
 - Paint and brushes. You can encourage people to bring their own art supplies.
 - Props (use items from home and ask others to bring items)
 - Instruments or other objects to create sound (be creative with what makes sound to create a song)
 - Paper
 - Pens
- Refreshments

Steps:

Note: This project can be a more public endeavor or take place within a smaller network, depending on community support and interest.



Preparing for the event:

1. Contact your local United Nations Association to see if they will partner with you. They could help with securing a location, creating additional partnerships within your community or serving as an expert to answer questions or provide information on human rights.
2. Find a location to hold the event, such as your school or community center. Confirm the date and time. Consider doing the event outside or in a large enough space to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
3. Publicize your event:
 - Create flyers to distribute as well as an electronic version to share across social media.
 - Consider putting the event on your local event calendars and reaching out to local media with a press release.
4. Through donation or purchase, have refreshments available for attendees.
5. Obtain materials for participants to use in their creative interpretation of the different human rights by borrowing and purchasing what is needed.
 - Be a conscious consumer: purchase supplies from companies whose values and policies reflect your own.

During the event:

6. Divide participants into groups, either randomly or based on the article they are interested in.
7. Provide a copy of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights to attendees and ask them to pick one of the articles to creatively express through a skit, mural, song, dance, poem or story.
8. As a group, have them create, practice and decide who is performing or presenting (if not the entire group). Some people in groups may enjoy coming up with ideas without participating in the performance.
9. Have them share the artistic expression with others and then let the audience guess which UDHR article it depicts to encourage conversation about human rights and how to recognize it as fundamental to being human.

Reflection Questions:

- How hard was it to depict human rights through artistic means?
- What kind of conversations came out of this experience? How did it make you feel? How do you think others felt?
- Why do you think we need a declaration to outline the rights of a human being? What can you do to help promote human rights in your daily life?