# How have international human rights developed?

*Activity sheet*

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is considered a useful starting point for research in international human rights law. Many other treaties and conventions have been agreed to since then. There have also been many human rights issues raised around the world.

## Research

Use your research skills to find out more about the history of international human rights from 1948 onwards. Identify 10 - 15 significant events.

Some places to start are:

- international human rights conventions
- awards and ceremonies that recognise human rights achievements
- key people that have lobbied for change
- changes to law and policy in Australia for the benefit of all.

The following list of links might be useful:

- Australian Human Rights Commission - http://www.humanrights.gov.au
- United Nations Cyberschoolbus - http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/res.html
- Amnesty International - http://www.amnesty.org/
- Human Rights Watch - http://www.hrw.org/
- Human Rights Internet - http://www.hri.ca/
- The Human Rights Council of Australia - http://www.hrca.org.au/
- Australian Human Rights Centre - http://www.ahrcentre.org/
- Universal Rights Network - http://www.universalrights.net/
- UN Information Centre of Australia - http://www.un.org.au/

## Create a timeline

Design a human rights timeline (either in your group or on your own). Consider the following design elements before you start:

- Spatially – how will you set out your timeline on the screen/page so it best conveys your information?
- Textually – how much textual information will you include? Try to summarise the information about each point of your timeline to convey the most important facts.
- Visually – how will you incorporate colour, pictures and other means of visual information? Have you got sample designs to guide you?

Be creative in your choice of media. As long as the important facts are there, your timeline could be presented as a:

- PowerPoint presentation
- web page
- photographic essay with captions
- play
- a piece of journalism
- artwork.

Be selective about the information you include in your timeline. For each event, one paragraph of information is generally enough.

## Class discussion

As a class, discuss what you've discovered about the history of international human rights. Make a case for the information you've discovered – explain why each event/development is important. Listen to your classmates' selections.

*Is there an event you left out?*
Make notes about major events/developments that you didn't include in your timeline that perhaps others did.

## Human rights in Australia

**Are some events more significant for certain groups of people? Are some events more significant in Australian history than others?**

Discuss the relevance of each idea to the development of human rights in Australia.

Add a 'layer' or 'thread' of events/developments relating to human rights in Australia to your timeline. Make it clear if they are directly or indirectly linked to international developments in your design. For example, Australia becoming a member of the UN in 1945 has a 'direct' link to our progress in human rights.

## Human rights heroes

*Collect a series of images for a display on human rights heroes.*

Every day different people work tirelessly to promote, protect and respect human rights. Every year the Australian Human Rights Commission recognise human rights advocates at the annual *Human Rights Medals and Awards* ceremony (see www.humanrights.gov.au/awards).

Identify 10 images of human rights heroes that *you* think deserve to be on your display. Use the scaffold below to explain why each of your 10 should be nominated. (This could be presented using PowerPoint or on your own school wall display).

For definitions on human rights see www.humanrights.gov.au/education.

| (insert image of person) | |
|---|---|
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Person in image (human rights advocate) | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |

## Human rights image library

*Collect a series of images for a display on the importance of protecting human rights.*

Throughout history many photographers and artists have captured images that reflect various human rights issues. Identify 10 images that highlight the importance of protecting human rights in Australia.

Use the scaffold below to explain why each of your 10 has been chosen. (This could be presented using PowerPoint or on your own school wall display).

| | |
|---|---|
| (insert image) | |
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Title | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |

| | |
|---|---|
| (insert image) | |
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Title | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |

| (insert image) | |
|---|---|
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Title | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |

| (insert image) | |
|---|---|
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Title | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |

| (insert image) | |
|---|---|
| Author (of photo/image) | |
| Title | |
| Context (when and where) | |
| Content (message in image) | |
| Justification (why you chose it) | |