2 Lessons about UNESCO
Professor Fernando M. Reimers

Total Time: 60 mins per lesson + study time
Age Range: 16+ year olds

This book contains two lessons that will allow teachers at the high school or faculty at the college level to engage their students in reflection about UNESCO’s mission. It includes also a series of short essays on Human Rights, the Right to Education, Teaching Human Rights and the role of Teachers and Universities in Teaching Human Rights which will be useful to educators interested in educating their students to advance the values of freedom and justice.

“...in a world where too many people who don’t know what they’re talking about, screech uninformed opinions into planetary megaphones, it is music to the ear to listen to Fernando Reimers speak the truth about the global education movement, UNESCO, human rights and, quite literally, world peace. Teachers are learning how to bring these subjects to life in our classrooms. Dr. Reimers guides us with a treasure of information...”

Lily Eskelsen
1989 Utah Teacher of the Year
President, National Education Association

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Teaching Two Lessons About UNESCO and other writings on Human Rights
Teaching Two Lessons about UNESCO

The US Secretary of State recently announced that the US would withdraw from UNESCO at the end of 2018. It is important that we, ordinary citizens understand the implications of this decision. To do this, they need to know what UNESCO is, and to understand the mission the organization advances.

This book contains two lessons that will allow teachers at the high school level or faculty at the college level to engage their students in reflection about the organization’s mission. I provide a collection of my previously published writings on Human Rights which will provide additional support those teaching these lessons.

I appreciate the editorial assistance of Kristin Foster, Ana Teresa del Toro and Tatiana Shevchenko in preparing this book.
Two Lessons About UNESCO


(with appreciation to Sabine Detzel, Soo-Hyang Choi, Cynthia Guttman, Alexander Leicht and Jordan Naidoo from UNESCO for the bibliographic references they provided as background to these lessons)

A group of graduate students, former students, colleagues and I developed these two lessons to assist high school teachers and college faculty in leading their students in a series of conversations which will help them gain introductory knowledge about UNESCO and think about how this organization contributes to Human Rights. The lessons could be used in a variety of ways. They can be inserted into an existing high school or college course, drawing appropriate connections with the discipline or focus of the course. They can be taught as an extra activity, outside the context of a course. They can also be facilitated by students, organized in the context of student organizations, or self-organized specifically for the purpose of gaining knowledge about a current event.

Summary and Rationale: These lessons are designed to help high school and college students understand the mission of UNESCO, the reason the organization was created, the work it does, how it is structured and funded, and how its work relates to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Grade: The lessons can be taught at the High School or College level. They can be taught in a variety of courses including social studies,
history, humanities, and can be integrated in courses in other disciplines.

**Time Frame:** These lessons could take a minimum of one hour of instructional time each, plus an additional three hours of independent work from students. The proposed discussions could be extended over a longer period than the suggested minimum of one hour. The lessons could be taught over a period of several classes, or in a single intensive two hour period.
Lesson One of Two Lessons About UNESCO.

Instructional Goal: In this lesson students will learn which are the Universal Human Rights and their history, and examine how these rights are relevant to their lives.

Understanding Goals:

- Why are Human Rights important?
- How does the United Nations relate to the advancement of Human Rights?

Some big ideas or enduring understandings from this lesson:

- Throughout history, great violence and harm has resulted from denying equal dignity to all and recognizing the shared humanity that unites us across differences in identity. The Genocide perpetrated against the Jewish people and other crimes perpetrated by the Nazis, during World War II, is an example of the consequences of not recognizing our common humanity and the violence this can lead to.

- In 1948, after World War II, Human Rights were formally recognized as a Universal Right to help create conditions that ensured equal dignity for all persons.

- The United Nations play an important role in the development and enactment of Human Rights.
Essential questions:

- What are Human Rights?

- In the wake of World War II what were the hopes that drove the crafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Creation of the United Nations and of UNESCO?

- What role does the United Nations play in the advancement of Human Rights?

Student Learning Objectives, the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify the rights contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

- Explain how the creation of the Universal Declaration relates to World War II.

- Define the concept of upstanders and bystanders, and relate those concepts to the genocide during World War II.

- Explain how their lives are influenced by the existence of Human Rights and hypothesize the implications of the suppression of some of those rights for their lives.

- Identify groups of people who are denied some Human Rights in their communities or in the globe, describe the rationale for this denial, and argue whether those rights should be restored.
Assessment:

Teachers will observe whether students have achieved the intended learning objectives from their participation in class discussion and from their written answers to the two questions which students must prepare prior to class. Students will write a short reflective essay on key takeaways learned during the class and teachers will use this essay to assess whether the learning objectives were met.

Sequence of Activities:

Before class 1.

In preparation for this lesson students will think about the following questions, and write down their answers which they will bring to the class:

Question 1. Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, identify five rights and reflect on the role they play in your daily life. Now imagine your life without five of those rights. What would change?


Question 2. Read the article ‘Anne Frank’s Final Entry’, Which Human Rights did Anne enjoy while living in the Annex?

Teacher explains the goal of the class, reminds students of the questions that they prepared before class. Asks them to take five minutes to share with the person next to them what issues these questions made them curious about. (5 minutes)

After the initial five minute discussion the teacher calls on a few students to hear the themes they are curious about, or to raise questions they would like to understand. (5 minutes)

Discussion of answers to the two questions students prepared for class and to some of the questions raised by students during reflection time. (10 minutes)

Teacher then presents the following statement:

“During World War II, 3% of the world population was murdered. Who was responsible? What responsibility did the rest of humanity have for this genocide? Why did more people not stand up to stop this violence? The United Nations was created to create conditions that would prevent such violence from happening again and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted to provide a foundation for the work of the organization”

Teacher shows the students the following video (6m:10s):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RR4VXNX3jA

Teacher asks the following questions to the students (15 mins). During the first five minutes students discuss these questions in pairs, during the remaining ten minutes students discuss in class:
Teaching Two Lessons about UNESCO and other essays on Human Rights

1. What is the significance of the declaration of Human Rights to you today?

2. What is the significance of a *common* Human Rights declaration that individuals share across the globe? How would it have made a difference to Anne Frank?

3. What is the importance of an organization like the UN in light of these rights?

Teacher engages the students with the following questions. (20 mins)
First ten minutes students discuss those questions in pairs, remaining time they discuss with the entire class.

1. Can you think of people in your community who are denied these rights?

2. Can you think of people across the globe who are denied these rights?

3. How can you protect these rights today?


To conclude the class the teacher asks a few students to identify key takeaways from the discussion.
Lesson Two of Two Lessons About UNESCO.

**Instructional Goal:** In this lesson students will learn about UNESCO, how the work it does relates to the Universal Human Rights and to the United Nations. They will also analyze the US decision to leave UNESCO and decide for themselves if the decision holds any significance.

**Understanding Goals:**

- UNESCO works across the globe in areas of education, Peace building, poverty eradication, science, culture, and intercultural dialogue.

- Understanding the US choice to leave UNESCO and to be able to better evaluate this decision.

**Essential questions:**

- What does UNESCO do and why is that work important?

- What are the implications of the US decision to leave UNESCO?

**Student Learning Objectives,** At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain how the creation of UNESCO relates to the inclusion of education as a Universal Human Right.

- Articulate how the achievement of universal education is important to the achievement of other Human Rights.

- Evaluate the implications of the US leaving UNESCO.
Assessment: Teachers will be able to check whether students achieved the learning objectives from their answers to the three questions they must prepare before class and from their participation in class discussion. Also, students will write a reflective essay at the end of class discussing their answers to the five questions that will guide the whole class discussion.

- How does the work of UNESCO relate to human rights?
- Why is this work important?
- What would it take to make UNESCO more effective?
- What are the challenges facing UNESCO?
- What are the likely consequences of the US withdrawal from UNESCO?

Sequence of Activities:

Before class 2.

Write your answers to the following three questions.

1. What is UNESCO?

Resources to guide your answer:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASJ0CYP8oNY
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001887/188700e.pdf

2. How does the creation of UNESCO relate to education and human rights?

3. What are the possible consequences of the US leaving UNESCO?
In-Class Activity - Discovering UNESCO - 30 Minutes

In small groups students investigate and discuss some of the work of UNESCO. [If feasible, based on the course you’re teaching, guide students to search for work done by UNESCO in this field. Try to connect to the particular class in which this is discussed. Use the list of resources provided at the end of this lesson and feel free to use bibliographic research to identify additional materials.]

As students investigate the work of UNESCO, they can reflect on the following questions: (Questions for discussion)

- Why is the work of UNESCO important?
- How does the work UNESCO does relate to human rights?
- What are the challenges facing UNESCO?
- What would it take to make UNESCO more effective?
- What are the likely consequences of the US withdrawal from UNESCO?
The teacher concludes the class by encouraging the students to explore the UNESCO themes, and pick one they are interested in and ask themselves: *how can I get involved?*

The themes can be accessed here:

*Whole class discussion- 30 minutes*

Teacher asks teams to summarize the results of their individual work investigating some of the work of UNESCO and their answers to the five questions for discussion and leads a short discussion on the question of what are the implications of the US leaving UNESCO.
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Additional Resources:

About UNESCO

http://en.unesco.org/

https://opendata.unesco.org/

http://www.unesco.org/new/en/unesco/about-us/who-we-are/history/

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001887/188700e.pdf

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASJ0CYP8oNY

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001812/181226e.pdf

“Qu’est-ce que l’UNESCO?”
https://www.facebook.com/FRANCE24/videos/10155213138766936/

About UNESCO and Global Citizenship Education

Three teacher guides on UNESCO’s priorities in Global Citizenship Education, Education for Sustainable Development, and Climate Change, developed for the UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet).

https://aspnet.unesco.org/en-us/Pages/publications.aspx
The ASPnet Best Practices contain many ideas and concrete examples of what schools, teachers and students can do to promote UNESCO’s ideals and values.
https://aspnet.unesco.org/en-us/Pages/Best-practices-sharing.aspx

**Global Citizenship Education**

Webpage: http://en.unesco.org/gced

Visuals:

Infographic 1:

Infographic 2:

Infographic 2 (Mother Language):

Videos:

Global Citizenship Education:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tPdtGrnj7sU&feature=youtu.be

Learning to live together in Peace through Global Citizenship Education: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KuKzq9EDr-0

Preventing violence through education:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79MTkVumCcQ

International Mother Language Day:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMDxUFbkE_M
UNESCO Works to build Peace:  
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ASJ0CYP8oNY

Documents:  
ABC of Global Citizenship:  

Teacher’s Guide on the prevention of violent extremism:  
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002446/244676e.pdf

Making textbook content inclusive: a focus on religion, gender and culture:  
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002473/247337e.pdf

Education about the Holocaust:  

Memory of the World:  

Documents:  
Education about the Holocaust and preventing genocide – a policy guide:  

Why Teach about the Holocaust?  
Education for Sustainable Development

Webpage:
http://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development

Videos:
Learning about Biodiversity
http://www.unesco.org/archives/multimedia/?s=films_details&id_page=33&id=2666

Education for Sustainable Development: Children speak up!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-W13crN8eU

Education for disaster preparedness:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USLHmwvpjX8

Learning to address climate change:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJbRnv7rMkk

Documents:
Education for sustainable development goals: Learning Objectives
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002474/247444e.pdf

Getting climate ready: A guide for schools on climate action
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002467/246740e.pdf

Towards a Learning Culture of Safety and Resilience. Technical Guidance for Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction in the School Curriculum
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002293/229336e.pdf
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Disaster Risk Reduction in School Curricula: Case Studies from Thirty Countries

Stay Safe and Be Prepared
Student's guide:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002287/228798e.pdf
Teacher's guide:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002287/228798e.pdf
Parent's guide:
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002289/228964e.pdf

Not just hot air: Putting Climate Change Education Into Practice
http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002330/233083e.pdf

Climate Change in the classroom: UNESCO course for secondary teachers on climate change education for sustainable development
http://www.unesco.org/new/en/ccesd

Climate Change Starter’s Guidebook: An issues guide for Education Planners and Practitioners

YouthXchange Climate Change and Lifestyles Guidebook