

# The Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## MODULE 1

## LESSON 1

## CREATIVE CHANGEMAKERS

Lesson Length:  
**60-90 minutes**

### Objectives

After this lesson, students will be able to

- make connections between Eleanor Roosevelt and themselves.
- consider the role personal experiences play in relationship to the community and beyond.
- make connections between the UDHR, themselves and the world.

### Required Materials/ Technology

- Internet Connection
- Writing paper and utensil
- [Language Version of UDHR](#)
- [Full text of the UDHR](#)
- KWL Chart Handout
- UDHR Reflection Handout

### Links

- [Eleanor Roosevelt, first lady and humanitarian](#)
- [Eleanor Roosevelt | Mrs. President | History](#)
- [Eleanor Roosevelt's Fight for Human Rights](#)
- [Everyone Has the Right: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
- [Everybody \(subtitled\)](#)

### Overview

Students will learn about Eleanor Roosevelt and her involvement in the drafting and ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Then students will explore the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reflect on how it applies (or not) to their communities and the world at large.

### Guiding Questions

- Who was Eleanor Roosevelt?
- What is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?
- How do stories help inspire us to make positive change in the world?
- How do our personal experiences inform the issues we care about?

### Standards

**RI.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**RI.2:** Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

**SL.1b:** Work with peers to set rules for collegial discussions and decision-making (e.g., informal consensus, taking votes on key issues, presentation of alternate views), clear goals and deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

**WHST.1.C:** Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.

**SEL: Self-awareness:** The abilities to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.

# KWL Chart

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

TOPIC:

Know

Want to Know

Learned

# UDHR Reflection

MODULE 1

LESSON 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Summarize each of the three articles of the UDHR you selected. Write down your thoughts about the significance of each article and how it is not being upheld in some parts of the world today.

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Article# \_\_\_\_\_

Article# \_\_\_\_\_

Article# \_\_\_\_\_

1. Inform the students that they will learn about Eleanor Roosevelt. Explain that she left a profound imprint on history, not just because she was the wife of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, but because she left behind a lasting and deep legacy of change-making. Make sure to tell students that Roosevelt was the chairperson of the committee which drafted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Also, tell them that the significance of this will become evident as they continue with this lesson and with the Creative Changemakers curriculum.
2. Distribute the KWL chart to the students. Explain that they will use this chart to organize their thoughts and the information they will learn from this lesson.
3. Explain to the students how the KWL chart works:  
The students will enter any information about Eleanor Roosevelt they already know in the “Know” section of the chart. They will enter anything they want to learn about her in the “Want to Know” section of the chart. Finally, they will enter anything new they learn about Roosevelt during the lesson in the “Learn” section of the chart. This new information may come from you or from the videos you will share with the class.
4. Ask the students to enter “Eleanor Roosevelt” in the “Topic” section of the chart. Then give the class a few minutes to fill out the “What I Know” and the “What I Want to Know” sections. If time allows, ask students to share what they have written down so far.
5. Show selected videos. We recommend the following order:
  - [Eleanor Roosevelt, first lady and humanitarian](#)
  - [Eleanor Roosevelt | Mrs. President | History](#)
  - [Eleanor Roosevelt's Fight for Human Rights](#)
6. After viewing the videos, instruct students to revisit their KWL charts and to fill in what they learned in the “Learn” section of the chart.
7. For discussion or personal reflection, ask students these questions:
  - What did you find most relatable about Eleanor Roosevelt?
  - What aspects of her life were more difficult to relate to?
  - What was inspiring about her life?
  - How does Roosevelt's work still impact our world today?
8. Next, tell students that they will learn more about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Tell them that this document's name is long, so it is often referred to by its acronym, the UDHR.
9. Show these selected videos:
  - [Everyone Has the Right: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)
  - [Everybody \(subtitled\)](#)



10. After the video, have students think about human rights and what they are. Ask them to consider the idea that there are rights every single human should have. Divide the students into pairs or small groups. Tell them for the next part of the class, they will pretend to be Eleanor Roosevelt and her committee, but on a smaller scale. Instead of drafting an entire document of thirty articles, they will brainstorm and select three basic human rights that every single person should have. Encourage each group to share their selections with the class.
11. Next, distribute copies of the UDHR, asking students to remain in their pairs or small groups. Tell them that the UDHR is a long and complicated document that speaks to a lot of ideas. Tell them to take their time as they read the document, to discuss it among themselves, to mark it up, and to make comments. These comments may be observations, questions, or their own thoughts that are being triggered as they go along.  
*\* Both the full text and the plain language versions of the UDHR are linked to this lesson. We recommend that teachers select the document that best suits the needs of their classes.*
12. Model ways to respond to the document through “think aloud” responses such as:  
“I was surprised to read that all humans have a right to rest and relaxation.”  
“I wonder, who do these rights apply to? And who enforces them?”
13. As students spend time annotating their copies of the UDHR, ask them to consider the implications of being denied or allowed these rights, and how that might impact one’s life.
14. Distribute the “UDHR Reflection” handout. Tell them for homework, they will each review their annotated copies of the UDHR. They will reflect on their group discussions and then choose the three articles of the UDHR that resonate with them most. They will use the handout to summarize each article they chose and share observations about how each article is not being upheld in some parts of their community or the world at large.
15. For the next class, ask students to complete both the KWL Chart and the “UDHR Reflection” handouts.