

# Topic 5:

## Human Rights and responsibilities in Ireland

### Learning Outcomes

- 5.1. Some of the rights of young people
- 5.2. Human rights principles
- 5.3. The idea of equality in relation to rights
- 5.4. Arguments about rights
- 5.5. State bodies for human rights
- 5.6. Evidence on the right to education
- 5.7. Participants in these debates

**See specification for full details of the learning outcomes**

## Topic 5: Human rights and responsibilities in Ireland

### Possible Learning Activities

- Facilitate a Table Quiz to gauge the level of student knowledge with regards to foundational human rights concepts and documents.
- Listen to Eleanor Roosevelt reading the UDHR.
- Invite students to create a timeline of key human rights documents from 1948 (UDHR) to the present. Their timeline could be a human timeline, where students line up in chronological order and each present a human rights document, or create a whole class written timeline.
- Invite students to work together in groups to create a human rights crossword puzzle or quiz relating to keywords associated with human rights (e.g. convention, declaration, United Nations, rights holder, duty bearer, universal, inalienable, indivisible, absolute right, limited right, qualified right, negative right, positive right etc.). Ask groups to swap puzzles/quizzes and complete. ([Link to LO 5.2](#))
- Invite students to locate news stories where human rights are protected, where rights are denied or where rights are in conflict. Using the UDHR or the UNCRC students should identify the specific article(s) relevant to their news story. ([Link to LO 5.1](#))
- Conduct a human rights auction using articles from the UNCRC. Each group of students is given a limited budget to bid on the human rights they believe are the most important for young people. Focus post-auction discussion the rights students consider to be most important and why. Categorise the rights chosen into absolute, limited and qualified rights and identify which rights are positive rights and which negative rights ([Link to LO 5.2](#))

#### LO 5.1 Some of the rights of young people

- Invite students to work together in pairs to read article 42 of Bunreacht na hEireann (the Irish Constitution) which relates to their right to education. In pairs, they should agree the key points and note anything surprising or interesting. Pairs should work together to make a detailed examination of this article, in order to come up with questions about that it means in practice.

### Useful resources

Table Quiz:

[Amnesty Ireland Celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - Class 1: Table Quiz](#) will introduce students to the UDHR and different bodies involved in the monitoring of human rights in Ireland and internationally

[Human Rights Explained](#)

This provides an excellent overview of human rights documents and bodies, from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission.

[Australian Human Rights Commission – Human Rights timeline \(early civilization-2005\)](#)

[Facing History and Ourselves UDHR Timeline \(1215-1976\)](#)

[Council of Europe, Glossary of Human Rights from Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young People](#)

- [UK Equality and Human Rights Commission, Glossary of Human Rights keywords](#)

[Free online crossword puzzle maker](#)

Simplified articles for the UNCRC

[Adapt the auction activity in: NYCI \(2014\) \*Setting our sights on rights\* \(page 19\)](#)

[Bunreacht na hEireann](#)

Explanation about the articles in the constitution relevant to education

- Invite students to find data to make the case for and against the right of parents to homeschool their children. Use a **carousel brainstorm** to record these arguments. Prepare a class debate on the issue.
- Investigate one European country that guarantees the right of parents to homeschool their children by law and one that does not, and present the reasons why in each case.
- Invite students to create a digital poster for young people describing the right to education as outlined in the UNCRC (articles 28 & 29) or Bunreacht na hEireann.
- Invite students to create a **Venn Diagram** to compare and contrast the relationship between the UNCRC and the UDHR.
- Facilitate a whole class discussion about the terms 'rights holder' and 'duty bearer,' as these apply to the way that students interact in school. Extend the discussion to a range of articles in the UNCRC and to situations or groups in Ireland to whom the terms 'rights holder' and 'duty bearer' apply ([Link to LO 4.1](#)).
- Invite students to read the opening statement of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs in January 2016 to the United Nation's Committee for the Rights of the Child on Ireland's record in relation to the UNCRC; watch coverage of the hearing; and examine the 'Concluding observations on the combined 3rd and 4th periodic reports of Ireland - 2016' outlining the steps recommended by the Committee for the Rights of the Child to strengthen the implementation of the UNCRC in Ireland. Ask students to identify recommendations which the State has an immediate obligation to implement, and those which can be progressively realised. Organise a **Placemat** activity focused on the question – Can Ireland afford to fully implement the UNCRC? Why? Why not? ([Link to LO 5.6](#))

**Carousel Brainstorm** methodology - *Building key skills through Politics and Society: Teaching your child at home (Ireland)*

[Home Education Network Ireland \(research links\)](#)

[Children's Rights Alliance information booklet on the right to education in Ireland](#)

[Free online digital poster creator](#)

**Venn Diagram** methodology - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

[International instruments \(includ. UDHR and UNCRC\) in relation to education](#)

[Information on the concepts of 'immediate obligation', 'progressive realisation' and what it means for states to implement rights 'to the maximum extent of their available resources'](#)

[Opening statement by Dr James Reilly, T.D., Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, at the UN Committee on the Rights of the Children review of Ireland, 14 January 2016](#)

[RTE Six-One News coverage of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child review of Ireland](#)

[Concluding observations on the combined 3rd and 4th periodic reports of Ireland](#)

**Placemat** methodology - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

## LO 5.2 Human rights principles

- Invite students to imagine that they are responsible for creating a new preamble for the UDHR or UNCRC. Their preamble should be in their own words and should include an explanation of the following terms: *universal, inalienable and indivisible*.

[Explanation of the terms: universal, inalienable and indivisible](#)

- While viewing the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' animation ask students to distinguish between the rights which are civil and political and those which are economic, social and cultural rights.
- Invite students to prepare 2-minute oral presentations explaining, with examples from the UDHR or the UNCRC, the meaning of either a negative or a positive right in their lives.
- Invite each student to choose either a civil and political right or an economic, social and cultural right and describe an individual or organization working to achieve this right in Ireland or elsewhere. ([Link LO 6.2](#))
- Role play the perspectives of different people/groups in a situation where absolute and non-absolute rights need to be balanced, or where rights are in conflict.

## LO 5.2 The idea of equality in relation to rights

- Display the text from Article 2 of the UDHR on the board. Divide the class into small groups, and ask them to rewrite it in their own words.
  - range of classroom activities on the theme of equality in relation to human rights, and nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal under Irish law can be found in the resources listed in the right-hand column.
- Identify examples of direct and indirect discrimination. In small groups choose one example of either direct or indirect discrimination in Ireland today, and create a **problem tree** which presents the causes, effects and possible solutions.
- Divide the class into groups and allocate each group one of the following examples of diversity. Invite groups to access census data from the CSO and NISRA to find evidence about the range and patterns of diversity on the island of Ireland:
  - Ethnic diversity and membership of the Traveller community
  - Language diversity
  - Religious diversity
  - Diversity of sexual orientation
  - Diversity of ability and disability
- Use a **jigsaw learning** activity to facilitate students to share what they have learned with the rest of the class

[Universal Declaration of Human Rights animation](#) (4.31 mins)

[Combat Poverty Agency \(1998\) Contemporary issues and human rights](#), page 27 – information re categorization of UDHR articles

[Amnesty \(2010\), Geography, Development and Human Rights](#), pages 3-9

### Thinking about Thinkers

Introduce [Milton Friedman's](#) arguments on the respective roles of economic liberty and other rights in underpinning political and social freedom.

[Amnesty UK, Right Here, Right Now - Teaching citizenship through human rights. Lesson 6, on Balancing Rights](#), pages 63-75

[Mary Gannon & Aoife Ruane-Kelly \(2012\) Equality and Diversity: Building a culture of equality in our schools](#)

[An Coimisineir Teanga, Language rights – A resource for teachers](#)

[Direct/indirect discrimination explained](#)

**Problem Tree** methodology - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

[Nine grounds explained](#)

[Central Statistics Office web site](#) is very useful, particularly if student look at the section entitled 'General Statistical Publications'

[Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(NISRA\)](#)

**Jigsaw learning** methodology- *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

## LO 5.4 Arguments about rights

- Engage the class in a **critical questioning** session using the different arguments about human rights presented in the bullets in LO 5.4 as the basis of the questions posed. Focus on questions that probe evidence and reasoning, and prompt the students to apply the arguments to their own environment/context. In the case of the last two bullets ask students to link their conclusions to their earlier discussions and activities about the right to education. ([Link to LO 4.3](#))
- Ask students to choose one of the arguments presented in LO 5.4 which they would be prepared to support. Invite them to use the **argument mapping** methodology to graphically display the structure of their thinking in coming to a conclusion about this argument.
- Use a **hotseating** methodology to get students to assume the position of the thinkers linked to the arguments presented in LO 5.4, and argue their point of view by answering questions from the rest of the class while 'in character'.
- Invite students to work together in small groups to situate the arguments presented in LO 5.4 on a left-wing, right-wing spectrum. Ask students to suggest a political philosopher or sociologist who would support each view and include these in their graphic.

## LO 5.5 State bodies for human rights

- Use the **peer teaching** methodology to facilitate students teaching each other about the various Human Rights bodies on the island of Ireland.
- Ask students to create a table comparing the roles and functions of these bodies.
- Compare and assess how these bodies operate and their level of effectiveness.

## LO 5.6 Evidence on the right to education

- Divide the class into small groups. Provide weblinks or distribute extracts from relevant research reports which provide evidence about whether or not the right to education is enjoyed equally by everyone in Ireland.
- Remind students of the skills of **skimming** and **scanning**.
- Provide a worksheet to support groups to gather key facts.

**Critical questioning methodology** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

### Thinking about Thinkers

Link these arguments to the ideas of [John Locke](#), [Robert Nozick](#), [Kathleen Lynch](#), [Martha Nussbaum](#) and others.

**Argument mapping methodology** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

**Hotseating methodology** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

**Mapping theorists across the left-right wing spectrum** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

**Peer teaching methodology** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

[Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission](#)  
[Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission](#)

[NIRC: About us](#) (includes downloadable powerpoint)

[Ombudsman for Children Office](#)  
[Northern Irish Commissioner for Children and Young People](#)

**Skimming and scanning methodologies** - *Building key skills through Politics and Society*

- Ask groups to consider their research material using one lens from the following sets of perspectives:

#### A

- equality of access
- equality of participation
- equality of outcome

#### B

- Gender
- Family/social status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Dis/ability
- Race
- Ethnicity, including membership of the Travelling community

- Facilitate group work to allow students share findings and evaluate the evidence presented.
- Conclude this topic by inviting students to consider what is the purpose of education from a sociological perspective? Is its primary purpose to get young people to conform and fit in to society or to transform society? Or is it something else?

[Education at a Glance: 2014 OECD Country Indicators – A country profile for Ireland](#)

[Children’s Rights Alliance, Report Card 2016](#)

[Children’s Rights Alliance, Are we there yet? Parallel Report to Ireland’s 3rd & 4th combined report under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

[Learning in Focus - The Primary Classroom: Insights from the Growing Up in Ireland Study](#)

[Higher Education Authority \(2013\), How Equal? Access to Higher Education in Ireland](#)

Kathleen Lynch & Baker (2005) ‘Equality in education: An equality of condition perspective’, *Theory and Research in Education*, 3(2), pp.121-164

Kathleen Lynch, *Economic Inequality creates Educational Inequalities*, Village magazine, No 2013

Anne Lodge and Kathleen Lynch (Eds.) *Diversity at School*.

Central Statistics Office web site

### LO 5.7 Participants in these debates

- Invite students to create a ‘thinker profile’ for either John Locke, Robert Nozick, Paulo Freire, Martha Nussbaum, Kathleen Lynch, or another thinker of their choosing relevant to the learning outcomes covered in Topic 5. The profile should address the following headings:
  - When and where the thinker lived, and how events of their time shaped their thinking
  - Main theories/ideas relating to Topic 5
  - Relevant quotes from thinker
  - Contribution of these theories/ideas
  - List of works consulted in compiling profile

### Thinking about Thinkers

Introduce the ideas of [Paulo Freire](#) who believed that education should not be about transferring information, but rather should be ‘the practice of freedom,’ and enabling learners to transform their world, [Martha Nussbaum](#) who believes that a liberal education is one which encourages learners to engage with and critically evaluate their own perspectives and the perspectives of others so that they can act as global citizens and [Kathleen Lynch](#) who believes that social class inequalities are reproduced through schooling.

## How will students show evidence of their learning?

### Examples of ongoing assessment

- Create a short video or Animoto video slideshow highlighting an example of discrimination which is of concern to you. Your presentation should relate to one or more of the nine grounds under which discrimination is illegal in Irish law and also refer to one or more of the articles in the UDHR. Suggest what can be done/is being done to address this issue.
- Present your assessment on Ireland's record as a duty-bearer in the realisation of the right to education as outlined in the UNCRC.
- Choose one of the arguments about rights (LO 5.4) and examine it in detail. Evaluate the merit of the argument using examples from your own environment.
- How does class position influence the life chances of teenagers growing up in Ireland today?

## What am I looking for? (Sample criteria for success)

- Describe an example of discrimination with evidence
- Explain why this issue is of concern
- Link the issue to the UDHR or the 9 grounds
- Make recommendations about what can be done to resolve this issue by young people and others (e.g. State)
- Gather key findings and data from appropriate sources about Ireland's record
- Evaluate the evidence on the Irish state's provision of the right to education as outlined in the UNCRC
- Come to their own conclusion backed up with the evidence.
- Recognise the components of the argument such as assumptions, reasons, counter-arguments and conclusions
- Present the argument in a clear and coherent manner with examples
- Make a judgement about the argument and be able to give solid reasons for the judgement
- Explain what is meant by 'social class'
- Explain how a person's social class position and his/her life chances are linked
- Give examples of how social class influences a person's chances (e.g. education and/or health and/or employment)
- Back up with research data